

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK WHILE CHOOSING SPORT ANIMATORS

(Preliminary communication)

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Abstract

The study is devoted to the technology of selection of sports animators by application of competency approach. Innovation is the created competency framework as well as the identification of some common and specific competencies. Their practical application leads to optim selection of sports animators because greater detail is achieved. The aim of this research study is the application of the competency framework while selecting sport animators. In order to determine the profile of the study (42 people comprised), we applied the method of competency oriented interview. The obtained results could be used while creating sports animator's profile.

Key words: *men, women, sports animation, competencies, competency approach, competency framework, common competencies, specific competencies, interview*

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays each of us is challenged to make flexible adjustment to the dynamically changing and complicated surrounding world. This fact itself requires competencies helping us to form our personal and professional attitude as well as becoming a creative part of the company organization. That is why observing modern social and economical, informational and communicative space using competency approach becomes necessary to provide a set of competencies. Hamel (1991). the end of previous century declares that, „real competition is the one of the competencies which becomes more and more popular“. Evolutionary development and approval of the competency approach as well as related to it notions „competence“ and „competency“ is a continuous process dating 50 years ago.

According to Hartle (1995) „competency“ is,“ a distinctive feature of the individuals whose function is to help them represent themselves perfectly while practicing their jobs “ Hoffman (1999), declares that the purpose of defining the notion of “competency“ is,“ to improve the efficiency of the individual in their work. Interesting is Zeer's (Zeep) (2002), point of view who defines competencies as „personal skills to put into practice their own competency“. This definition shows author's personal opinion related to the semantic difference in the notions of „competence“

and „competency“. He accepts as more general the one of „competency“. Selevko (Селевко) (2004) supports this opinion expressing his point of view about the meaning of „competence“ which is „the personal attitude of the individual towards the competence which belongs to him/her as well as the approach towards the activities he/she practices.“ In order to avoid synonymous usage of the two notions or their mutual exchange, Tsankov (Цанков) & Genkova (Генкова), (2009), give acceptable solution as they generalize that, „competency“ is much more normative and alienated from the individuality than „competence“ which is personal's own feature close to integrality“. To summarize, „competence“ comes as a consequence of the individual's self-development, their personal features, and aggregation of the knowledge, skills, flexible way of thinking and summarizing of their experience, while „competency“ means prerequisites for the „competence“ itself.

There are various classifications of the competencies. According to Armstrong (2003), we distinguish so called: *behavioral* („soft“) competencies that determine the particular expected way of employees' behavior in order to achieve high quality results (emotional intelligence, communication, resistance to change, proactivity, team working, skills to take decisions, striving achievements, skills to motivate, leadership,

etc.; *technical* (functional, „hard”) competencies which are related to the particular professional skills and abilities, i.e. what all the employees should know and be able to do in order to work properly and effectively.

Milkov (Милков (2001), offers classification which is very close to Armstrong’s one. According to him competencies are skills divided into: *hard skills* that one acquires through educational programs, and are cumulative experience, and training product; *soft skills*-emphasize individual’s behavior and manage interpersonal relations on the basis of emotional and behavioral skills. Owning this set of competencies is a prerequisite for shaping personality as a highly qualified, motivated and adaptive to changing workforce.

Within applying the competency approach Domracheva (Домрачева) (2007), defines following main types of competency: „*key competencies* – universal and transferable to various educational, professional and life situations; *basic competencies* – they show the specificity of a particular professional activity; *functional competencies* – set of characteristics related to the particular activity that reflects a range of functions typical of a particular workplace”.

Having in mind all above listed theories, different classifications of various types of competenc, most appropriate is differentiation of competencies in two main groups: first group: *common* (key, basic, „soft”) competencies related to the vision, mission, value, specificity, strategy of the company which also define desired knowledge, skills, attitudes, value and behavior of all employees second group: *specific* (functional, technical, „hard”) competencies that refer to the particular activities in the company and are related necessary for a given position or a group of positions in a corresponding functional direction: knowledge, skills, values, approach and behavior.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Object of this study is the sport animators’ competencies, competency framework and profile and its subject is the application of the competency approach in animators’ selection. The aim of this research study is the application of the competency framework while selecting sport animators. It contains a set of competencies related to the specificity of the sport animation activity.

Here are some tasks which correspond to the target:

1. Identification of the competencies that are going to become a part of the competency framework.
2. Formation of the competency framework containing common and specific groups of competencies.

Application of the ready competency framework in sport animators’ selection.

When constructing the competency framework following competencies have been identified: common – communicative skills (written and oral); adaptability/flexibility; team working skills; - skills for decision

making and problem solving; resistance to stress; specific: knowledge of sports terminology in a foreign language;-planning and organization of sports and animation activities; sports preparedness; creative skills; - skills to motivate and influence.

After discussions with some employers in the field of tourist animation competency framework has been used while conducting selection for sports animators.

The competencies, identified by the competency approach, helped about in achieving deeper and more differentiated evaluation of candidates wanting to occupy a particular position. In order to determine the profile of the study sample (42 people taken part in the selection), method of competency oriented interview as well as a structured questionnaire (related to gender, age, education, professional qualification, language knowledge and skills of the candidate, knowledge of sports and its extent) was applied.

Each candidate has been interviewed separately. The interview lasted between 15 and 25 minutes. Having in mind very short time given to the interviewee, number of the competencies included in the competency framework was reduced to ten.

RESULTS

Distributed by „gender”, proportion of the share of men is higher but with a slight difference as compared to women; 57% interviewees were men and 43% women.

Data related to age of the surveyed show that most candidates, both men and women, belong to the age group of 20-23 56% men and 67% women or 62% of the total number of respondents. This fact is not unexpected because there is an age limit (up to 25) for when applying for the position of a sports animator. Number of applicants aged up to 19 is relatively small (for males and females) - 17% and according to the data for women there is a large number of females 25 years old - 6 people which is 33 % of the total share of the interviewed women.

In the „education” category following distribution has been achieved: the highest percentage of the applicants belongs to secondary and secondary vocational education – 59% men (from the total number of men)

Table 1. Distribution of types of sports and knowledge of them

Types of sport	Degree of knowledge					
	Excellent		Good		Satisfactory	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Volleyball	13	12	9	8	4	4
Basketball	9	8	9	8	0	0
Football	9	8	9	8	0	0
Swimming	7	6	10	9	0	0
Gymnastics	3	3	7	6	0	0
Aerobics	5	5	4	4	0	0
Table tennis	4	4	8	7	0	0

Table 2. Types of competencies and the extent of their knowledge

Type of competency	Extent of knowledge			
	Excellent (%)	Very good (%)	Good (%)	Unsatisfactory (%)
Communicative skills	12	38	34	16
Adaptability/Flexibility	10	32	42	16
Team work skills	14	29	37	20
Skills for decision making and problem solving	9	24	33	34
Resistance to stress	15	25	37	23
Sports terminology in a foreign language	6	26	42	26
Planning and organizing of sports and animation activities	10	31	29	30
Sports preparedness	11	34	40	15
Creative skills	8	41	32	19
Skills to motivate and influence	7	33	39	21

and 50% women or 55% of all who have taken part in the selection. There are no female candidates with professional bachelor degree while there are six males or 14% of the total number of respondents. Only half of the people declared their achieved professional qualifications belonged to the field of economics, pedagogy and information technology.

Information about the knowledge of the sport is as follows (Table 1): all applicants have indicated that they know more than one sport, but to varying degrees. Dominant sports are: volleyball, football, aerobics, gymnastics and table tennis. They are an integral part of every sport and animation program.

Note: The sum of the percentages exceeds one hundred, as respondents gave more than one answer

No men among respondents have declared that they know gymnastics while women do not know football. During the interview some discrepancies between the shown and declared knowledge of the particular type of sport have been found out. Interviewees assessed the level of their knowledge as excellent, however during the selection they performed well or poorly. These results show that the level of knowledge of the specific competency of sports preparedness among the applicants is very low.

Study of the particular competence demonstrated by the applicant requires interviewer's experience and preparation in order to achieve deep insight and success in retrieving information. Interviewer should be able to estimate on the basis of the particular situations whether the applicant has got the right competency and to what extent. This again depends on the experience of the interviewer in choosing accurate and guiding questions while conducting interviews, his/her communicative skills and abilities to construct his/her speech, attitude of the candidate, etc.

Applying competency framework and completed interview based on the competency approach, following results and conclusions about common and specific groups of competencies have been achieved (Table 2). Regarding the communicative skills (written and oral) 12 % showed an excellent level, 38% - very good, 34% - good and 16% - unsatisfactory.

The competence of adaptability/flexibility or the ability of quick adapting to the changing environment is divided by the level of knowledge as: excellent – 10 %, very good – 32 %, good – 42% and 16% - unsatisfactory.

66% of all taken part in the selection have shown *good* and *very good* knowledge and practice of competency „teamwork” (which is of main importance for each sports and animation program to be organized and performed successfully). The skill for decision making and solving problem hinders future animators. Usage of this competency depends on the experience gained and team working. Dynamic and stressful daily activities of the sports animator require the ability to overcome some stressful situations. The level of stress resistance is low. Most of the applicants (62%) find it difficult to overcome some factors that influence human mentality.

Foreign language competency is essential for the realization of the sports animator who must know sports terminology in a particular language. Applicants, assessed as very good and good the level of their English proficiency, found some difficulties while speaking foreign language. This again shows that the self-assessment is excessive and does not match the actual applicant performance and knowledge.

Planning and organizing of sports and animation activities is a competency belonging to the competency framework, that determines to which extent the candidate has reached while examining the specificity of the sports

animation as a whole.

Various areas of professional qualifications of the applicants reflect the creative skills that require creativity, innovation, ingenuity, inventiveness. Level shown by the applicants has been assessed as *very good* and *good* (73%).

CONCLUSIONS

Analysis show much more precise selection of sports animators, which is the result of applying the competency framework. This increases the precision performance of the selection because we are sure that the successful candidate meets the requirements for the position held. Requirements identified as competencies being a part of the competency framework, are essential in making sports animator's profile.

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