Methodology for processing the personal development plan of a project manager in education

National Institute for Further Education

pm 250+

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Content

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Introduction

This Methodology for processing the personal development plan of a project manager in education was prepared as part of public contract no. C/10/110 "Project manager 250+ competence profile of a project manager in education" by PM CONSULTING, s.r.o., (PMC), in cooperation with the National Institute for Further Education (NIDV).

The creation of a personal development plan follows up on previous documents, especially on the competence profile of a project manager in education and on the Methodology for testing the competence level of a project manager in education.

The purpose of this document is to define the philosophy of the automatic creation of a personal development plan and to provide methical instructions for possible specification in the form of a personal consultation.

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1. Automatic creation of a personal development plan

As was stated previously in the methodology of knowledge testing, a project manager in education should have a certain set of competences which should be developed to a certain level. In other words, in some elements it suffices that a project manager in education is on, e.g. level 2 (awareness), while in other elements this requirement could be higher. Various levels of development in individual competences lead to different options and methods for objectively measuring them (see Table 1).

Table 1 Options for objective assessment of development level competences of a project manager in education

#	KEY	OBJECTIVE MEASUREMENT METHOD
1	INCOMPETENCE	May be measured by a test containing closed questions. For each of the competence areas, a set of 10 questions is provided which focus on the principles, methods, techniques and tools which may be used within the given competence. The level of the development of the given area of competence is assessed based on the number of correctly answered questions.
2	AWARENESS	
3	KNOWLEDGE	
4	APPLICATION SKILLS	This may be measured by using examples, which the evaluated manager would need to solve within a long-term test – a case study and subsequent analysis and interview with a reviewer (reviewers).
5	CONTEXTUAL APPLICATION SKILLS	May be measured, e.g. via a Project report, where the evaluated manager describes their approach and application of methods on a specific project in their own practice. The project report will be evaluated by independent reviewers, who will also have a personal interview with the evaluated manager to specify or verify certain aspects of the Project report, or the level of competence of the given project manager.

Due to the fact that the competence profile of a project manager in education requires competence levels of 2 (awareness) or 3 (knowledge), testing is carried out in the form of a test with the following process:

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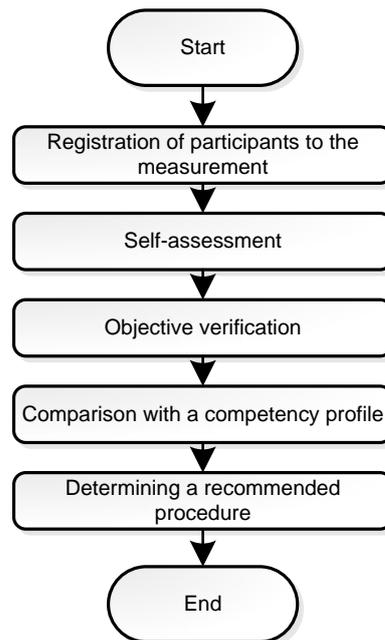
Figure 1 Process for evaluating competence levels

Applicants whose level of competence are to be tested based on the competence profile of a project manager in education must first register with the contact person for the PM 250+ project or in another defined manner. The applicant then performs self-evaluation of their competence levels in individual elements. They have the option of learning about the competence profile and its requirements in individual competence levels. After self-evaluation the applicant can undertake the test itself, which will measure their current level of competence in individual elements.

The measured values are compared to the self-evaluation and requirements of the competence profile (see Figure 2).

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Graphic representation of measurement results
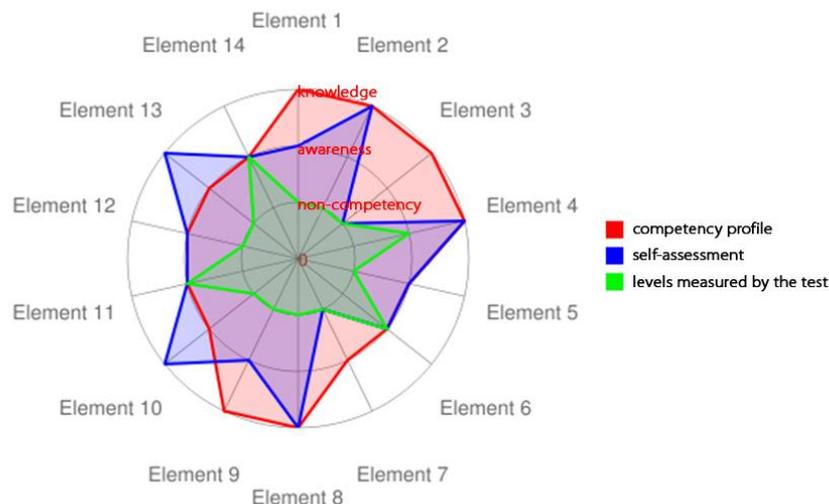
Figure 2 Example of a graphical comparison

Based on discovered differences, possible recommendations for future development are formulated for each of the fourteen elements of competences:

- In case of INCOMPETENCE, these are: "It would be a good idea to expand your knowledge of this element. We recommend education in the areas: (x), e.g. within the offer of the PM 250+ project."

- In case of AWARENESS, these are: "Your knowledge of this element is relatively good. We recommend further education in the following areas: (x), to complement current knowledge, e.g. within the offer of the PM 250+ project, or use the follow-up services of this project, such as, e.g. (y)."

- In case of KNOWLEDGE, these are: "Your knowledge of this element is very good. We recommend using the follow-up services within the offer of the PM 250+ project, such as, e.g. (y)."

The specified education in the area of (x) and follow-up services (y) are linked to the follow-up offer of the PM 250+ project, however both variables can be defined in general and other education or follow-up services may be mapped.

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2. Development plan link to the PM 250+ education offer

An education cycle comprising 8 cycles is currently being prepared within the PM 250+ project. The introductory module is mandatory for all participants, who then choose from the following 7 modules based on their own education and development needs. The total time granted is 250 lessons (140 on-site lessons and 110 remote lessons). The mandatory module is designed as an e-learning course, while the subsequent optional modules will have a combined form, i.e. 20 on-site lessons (3 days) and 15 hours of online study in the LMS Moodle environment.

Mandatory module:

A Role of project management in education policies

Optional modules:

B Strategic organisation management

C Change management

D Department and process management, planning, IT support for project management

E Finance and financial instruments

F Human resources management

G Quality management, controlling, risks

H Soft skills

A number of these modules contain information which may increase the competence of the project manager in education (the primary focus is placed on reaching the required level of competence), despite it not being a completely reciprocal list and the subjects not always completely overlapping. Mapping is described in the following table:

A. Professional competences of a project manager			Education modules
1.	Project integration management	The PM integrates and manages all aspects of the project, as well as the linkage of the project to its close and wider surroundings.	**B** Strategic organisation management **C** Change management **D** Department and process management, planning, IT support for project management
2.	Project extent	The PM specifies the real borders of the project and	**C** Change management

	management	manages its contents and extent.	**D** Department and process management, planning, IT support for project management
3.	Project time management	The PM specifies a time frame for the project and manages all project activities in compliance with this time frame.	**C** Change management **D** Department and process management, planning, IT support for project management
4.	Project financial management	The PM coordinates and manages the financial aspects of the project.	**E** Finance and financial instruments
5.	Project quality management	The PM determines, coordinates and controls quality aspects of the project and the quality of outputs.	**G** Quality management, controlling, risks
6.	Project risk management	The PM protects the success of the project by coordinating and managing the risks and uncertainties of the project; they systematically search for and utilise opportunities to strengthen or improve any aspect of the project.	**G** Quality management, controlling, risks
7.	Project change management	The PM coordinates and controls changes in the project..	**C** Change management
8.	Work with information and documentation	The PM efficiently works with project information and documentation.	**D** Department and process management, planning, IT support for project management
A. Social competences of a project manager			**Education modules**
9.	Communication and negotiation	The PM creates and maintains the framework for efficient communication within the project and between the project and its surroundings.	**F** Human resources management
10.	Team leadership and motivation, teamwork	The PM organises, leads, manages and motivates the project team on its way to fulfilling the project objectives.	**H** Soft skills

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11.	Performance management and result orientation	The PM efficiently manages their personal performance and the performance of the project team with a focus on the goals and results of the project.	**F** Human resources management
12.	Preventing and managing critical and conflict situations	The PM proactively prevents the creation of critical and conflict situations, and efficiently handles them if they arise.	**H** Soft skills
C. Contextual competences of a project manager			**Education modules**
13.	Project management in the context of an organisation.	The PM understands the wider context of the environment of the project.	**B** Strategic organisation management
14.	Ethics, law and social responsibility	The PM thinks about and acts in compliance with the principles of law, ethics and the rules of social responsibility. The PM expresses respect to values related to the project and the people they come into contact with.	**B** Strategic organisation management

3. Development plan link to the offer of other services within the PM 250+ project

Participants of measurement which receive grades of level 2 (awareness) or 3 (knowledge) will be offered (recommended) to use further, subsequent services, which will be offered within the PM 250+ project. This includes the following types of provided support:

- material audit of the project,
- electronic consulting and portal for project managers in education,
- personal coaching,
- preparation for IPMA certification and IPMA certification.

It is very difficult to use automated methods to properly and correctly select the correct form of further support. To provide a truly individual offer which mirrors real needs, it is recommended to go to a personal consulting session and create a development plan with a PM 250+ project consultant.

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There is also reason to believe that the specification of needs will require the advance knowledge of additional information about the applicant for a personal development plan. The necessary set of information may easily be obtained e.g. through a questionnaire with the following questions:

1. What is the name of your current position?

2. How large is your organisation (number of students, teachers, further comments)?

3. How many projects are being resolved by your organisation at this moment (realised projects, projects in preparation)?

4. What is the general approach to projects in your organisations?

5. Do you know of any standardised approach to project management?

6. Which projects do you come into contact with in your position, and how?

7. What is the area you would like to improve the most regarding projects? (What do you feel are your greatest weaknesses?)

8. How do you expect projects to affect you in the future?

9. What interests you most in projects?

10. What do you dislike the most about projects?

A questionnaire containing questions similar to those specified above, which will be sent and completed before the actual personal consultation, will allow the PM 250+ consultant to prepare for the expected intents and needs of the appropriate applicant for the personal development plan.

However, it is necessary to note that all prerequisites and speculations need to be verified and possibly modified at the beginning of personal consultations. A proposal of a scenario for a personal consultation session is provided below.

Consultation for the personal development plan of project managers in education

The consultation will constitute an individual interview with an expert on project management and professional development of project managers, attended by the participant of the online competence profile test for project managers in education. The subject of the consulting session will first and foremost revolve around the development plan generated by

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the online application. Additional information about the applicant, such as, e.g. their organisation and position, will be obtained by the consultant from the questionnaire sent before the meeting (see above). The time limit of the consulting session is 30 minutes for 1 participant, while maintaining the individual approach. Consultations follow the agreed upon procedure, the consultant uses their professional approach to provide a friendly and open atmosphere, and the interview is directed in a positive direction. In the introduction, the participant is informed of the objective of the personal meeting, followed by a discussion of the results of the online test and joint identification of weak and strong areas of the project manager. In conclusion the consultant will recommend a suitable approach for professional development and possibly inform of the supporting activities offered within the PM 250+ project.

Conclusion

The creation of a personal development plan is completely individual, which may only be resolved automatically up to a certain expectation, especially in the elements of competences which the person in question is not strong in. This mostly comprises a structured offer of suitable courses and training sessions focusing on the addition of required knowledge and skills.

For advanced personalities or elements which are on higher levels, basic education no longer makes much sense and the applicant should follow a personal development plan, e.g. through the use of follow-up services within the PM 250+ project.

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