

### Myriads of competences that interweave our lives

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## 1. Introduction

In order to manage work and career successfully it is essential to possess the proper resources and competencies [1]. It always depends on the context or situation what we actually mean by this term. Competencies are job-related. Job competencies are such knowledge, skill and ability parts that play a central part in career management and which can be influenced by the individual [2]. Personal competences are also significant in employability.

Employability is a management theory which acknowledges that employment and market performance arise from the initiative, creativity, and competencies of all employees. Employability may be described as a set of qualities, abilities, expertise, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should have to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy.

Nowadays, the world is shrinking as it is turning into a global village, while leaders from different cultures are realizing that they need to work together. It also implies communicating across cultures. Due to partly communication technology, the boundaries are blurring between the public, private and NGO sectors and people are struggling to understand one another. Cultural intelligence is one of the factors that can help mutual understandings.

Effective cross-cultural communication enables business professionals to build relationships and avoid offending or insulting one another. When forging new teams, successful project managers recognize and acknowledge that different countries and backgrounds cause people to behave differently.

In international business, the seller usually expects to adapt to the cultural norms of the buyer. Visitors to other countries should be aware of local customs, traditions and protocol. The importance of thorough knowledge of international business practices cannot be understated for companies, seeking to negotiate global partnerships. By focusing on working with people, instead of just making the current deal, we can develop a long-term relationship that benefits both parties. By recognizing that different cultures respond to formality differently, perceive time differently and express themselves differently, we can market, sell, manage or negotiate more effectively with people in other cultures after we have acquired the socio-cultural competence.

The aim of the research was to shed light on the fact how many competences we have, and we actually use day by day for our social contacts.

## 2. Material and method

As the main method of research, qualitative examination was carried out mainly relying on collected international

## MYRIADS OF COMPETENCES THAT INTERWEAVE OUR LIVES

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**Abstract:** The subject of the paper is to highlight the importance and role, competences play in our lives.

**Aim of research:** We are not aware of the fact, either, how many competences we have, and we actually use day by day for our social contacts.

**Result of research:** Personal competencies (can) enhance employability, the chances of being successful and competitive in the labour market together with some personality traits that make a powerful impact on hiring decisions. Communication skills and linguistic competence also add a lot to selecting the ideal candidate not to mention intercultural and multicultural communication together with cultural intelligence, all of which have become essential in our globalised world. Socio-cultural competences are also regarded as key issues nowadays.

**Conclusion:** One of the objectives of the paper was to give an overview of the most frequent key competencies that are prevalent not only in the labour market, but also in everyday situations. The present analysis mainly contains key findings from professional literature.

**Keywords:** competence, personal, communication, intercultural, cultural intelligence, socio-cultural competence.

literature. Afterwards, based on a semi structured interview guide (and free flows of discussion), focus group interviews took place in heterogeneous groups.

In the second phase the qualitative data were processed, and their relations were explored. The author was also curious to know what types of competences people use and what kinds we are actually aware of.

## 3. Results

One of the main findings, the participants agreed on, was that one cannot merely rely on the degree to land on a good job. They need the right mix of skills, abilities and personal qualities to open up opportunities. Your degree subject and academic ability may influence your career choice, but your skills, values, interests and personality will be just as important in choosing a career.

The world of work is in a state of continual change. Employers are looking for graduates and trainees, who are enterprising, resourceful and adaptable and who can also possess a range of skills, which can be used in a wide variety of settings. These are known as employability skills. You should aim to develop skills that are sought by employers and that also reflect your own personality, interests and abilities.

*What skills do employers expect from graduates?* – this is one of the key questions, this paper is striving to answer.

Employers appreciate a set of skills, including communication, team working, leadership, initiative, problem-solving, flexibility and enthusiasm. Many skills overlap with one another. By improving one skill, you may also improve in a number of others.

Competences play in important part in education, although it is also true that not always the competences that are a must on the labour market are developed in education [3, 4].

According to [5], the job competency is an underlying characteristic of a person that leads to or causes superior or effective performance. Another useful resource is the book, written by [6] 10 years later, in which more than 1500 competency models can be found. As a result, competency profiles were born for certain positions, which could quickly be reviewed. The well-spread definition for competencies by Spencer and Spencer is the following: ‘Competencies are underlying characteristics of an individual that is causally related to criterion-referenced effective and/or superior performance in a job or situation’ [6, p. 9].

Students think that good communication skills, IT and foreign language skills are necessary in most cases for a successful career. ICT is followed by negotiation techniques. At present there is a need for adequate knowledge, tailored to labour market requirements, which can be used in practice, too. Developing personality traits and personal competencies are also stressed nowadays. Students also agree that gaining new

knowledge is also essential for success. This also highlights the viability of concepts, such as lifelong learning.

According to the results, certain skills and abilities are inevitable to become a successful employee or entrepreneur (flexibility, decision making, discretion, taking risks and endurance), but if one would like to have a job of an international manager, they should possess some more competences, such as the cross-cultural, multicultural competence with the socio-cultural competence and cultural intelligence.

The key to cross-cultural business is understanding partners well enough to make cultural adjustments. This raises the issue as to which side should make the adjustments. A practical rule of thumb is that business transactions should favour the cultural norms of the social infrastructure, on which they primarily rely. Cross-cultural business normally takes place in a trade language, which is normally a matter of convenience, reflecting the competencies of the parties involved [7].

The Internet is equally adept at supporting multiple communication practices. Such web sites as Facebook and other forms of social media can facilitate networking with strangers, but they can equally well support the family and other trust relationships typical of relationship-based cultures. Thus, despite the globalization of commerce, intercultural communication skills remain important in business, and may become even more so in an increasingly multi-polar world economy.

In addition to competences we also need cultural intelligence. Cultural intelligence (cultural quotient or CQ) in short can be defined as the capability to relate and work effectively across cultures. It is a theory within management and organisational psychology, suggesting that understanding the impact of an individual's cultural background on their behaviour is essential for effective business. It also measures an individual's ability to engage successfully in any environment or social setting [8].

Originally, cultural intelligence was developed by the research done [8] as a researched-based way of measuring and predicting intercultural performance. The term is relatively recent: early definitions and studies of the concepts were given by P. Christopher Earley and Soon Ang in the book *Cultural Intelligence: Individual Interactions Across* [9] and more fully developed later by David Livermore in his book [10].

The concept is related to that of cross-cultural competence [11], but goes beyond that to actually look at intercultural capabilities as a form of intelligence that can be

measured and developed. According to Earley, Ang, and Van Dyne, cultural intelligence can be defined as “a person's capability to adapt as s/he interacts with others from different cultural regions”, and has behavioural, motivational, and metacognitive aspects.

Anyone can improve their cultural intelligence. According to [12], an expert on cultural intelligence, there are four things that contribute to it:

1. Drive.
2. Knowledge.
3. Strategy.
4. Action.

Livermore states that you must develop each of these to be culturally intelligent [13].

#### 4. Discussion

The objective of the paper was to highlight what key business competencies can increase employability and the success of employees. In addition to some personality traits, the importance of the so-called modern entrepreneurial competencies (ICT: communication, foreign language, IT) has been revealed, which is in perfect harmony with the requirements of the business sector. It is suggested to develop these competencies more intensively either under institutionalised circumstances (at schools) or non-formal education.

However, it must be noted when talking about the role of personal competencies, that updating them and putting a proper stress on them is of vital importance in the content of the training, which could promote (better) harmonisation between the labour market and education.

In communication, what is proper and correct in one culture may be ineffective or even offensive in another. In reality, no culture is right or wrong, better or worse—just different. In today's global business community, there is no single best approach to communicating with one another. The key to cross-cultural success is to develop an understanding of, and a deep respect for, the differences.

As a result, the further appreciation of competencies in the future was proved, based on the opinion of the respondents. We live side by side with so many competences, we are not even aware of. In addition, it was also concluded, that it is necessary to improve and develop personal, cultural and communicative competences in addition to the professional and general skills and abilities. It is one of the points where the dialogue between the labour market and education could be improved and also an area, where further research must be conducted.

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