How important are questions on competencies in supervision and coaching for our profession?

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More and more discussions on training times, higher examination requirements, ebbing numbers of training candidates and changed demands in the field of application of supervision and coaching make it necessary to take a critical look at training courses and examination procedures. Developments at the university level, bachelor and master studies, credit points according to the Bologna study and changed discussions about curricula of university studies in the European countries lead to standardizations and adjustments within Europe. All these developments agreed for university degrees have been given a new foundation: curricula for study courses are defined on the basis of core or key competencies to be achieved.

The conditions and reference criteria for these processes of change are listed in a position paper of ZEVA (Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency of universities in Germany). The deliberations, it says, are focused on societal development: shortened innovation cycles, dynamised professional profiles, working and learning at different locations, increased mobility and – linked to that – change of profession and job, interdisciplinary team work, intercultural cooperation and increased self-employment. All these factors have an influence on training conditions and thus on the comparability of university training within Europe. Consequently, the courses of studies have to be defined via key qualifications and key competencies.

Key competencies are placed in the following context:
“The enhancement of such competencies aims at situational qualification requirements such as knowledge, skills and abilities as well as personal features such as attitudes and values.” [Quotation translated] These competencies are then defined as

- **Method competency**
- **Social competency**
- **Self-competency**
- **Technical competency**

Method competency is defined by the following elements in this process: learning strategy, teaching skills, media skills, consulting skills, information gathering, research skills, planning management, project management and innovation management.

The elements of **social competency** comprise e.g. the ability to act entrepreneurially, transfer skill, team skill, conflict skill and multilingualism as well as openness for the approach to international and intercultural orientation.

The elements of **self-competency** comprise self-management, willingness to perform, professional flexibility, mobility, creativity, empathy and ethical behaviour.

The elements of **technical competency** comprise technical components.

The following combinations of key competencies are developed for the different courses of studies:

General standards:

- Bachelor studies
  - Self-competency
  - Method competency
  - Social competency

  The self- governance aspect prevails over the technical aspect in the basic courses of studies.

- Master studies
  - Technical competency
  - Method competency
  - Social competency

All these developments also comprise an altered awareness of concepts such as qualification, skills, abilities and aptitudes.

These terms have a rather direct reference to the subject and are therefore replaced by the term "competency" in curricular planning since the latter combines the direct subject reference with the context and the situation. Competency is more comprehensive since this term does not only denote the objective (qualification) requirements of the situation but also the subjective resources and potentials of a person. Competency (unlike other concepts such as capability, skill or qualification) stands for the ability of the concrete individual to organise themselves.
"Competency" describes an aspired expectation profile of requirements to act, expected action processes, ethical attitudes and positions and a variety of options to act in certain situations.

The term "curriculum" (unlike "competency", which describes processes such as qualifications, abilities, skills, aptitudes, features and variables) denotes the organisation of learning by the concrete individual. "Curriculum" describes a learning/teaching and acquirement process that is structured according to taxonomic steps.

We can therefore follow Prof. Eysenck's definition:

> **"Competency** unlike other concepts such as capability, skill or qualification stands for the ability of the concrete individual to organise themselves"

Competency thus comprises**:**

- **Abilities**
  stand for solidified systems of generalised psychophysical *processes of acting.*

- **Skills**
  stand for components of activities that have been automated by practice; they have the individual behaviour in convergent, requirement-oriented *situations of acting.*

- **Aptitudes**
  stand for probabilities of success in which persons of certain individual characteristics meet given professional or other *requirements of acting.*

- **Qualifications**
  stand for clearly describable complexes of *knowledge, skills and abilities.*

- **Variable**s
  as constructs of differential psychology, stand for classes of continuous or discontinuous features in which individuals differ (e.g. intelligence, neuroticism, extraversion, etc.) but which are not accessible through direct observation and can only be tapped via other, observable data (Steyer & Eid 2001: 99ff). They are *subject-centred.*

- **Features**
  stand for different forms of manifestation of the *personality* of the individual that can be distinguished by measuring and that are typical for them.

One example is the Kasseler-Kompetenz-Raster (KKR, Kassel Competency Grid), which is listed below. It is mentioned in order to illustrate how far research has come in formulating and investigating competencies.

Individual competencies, combinations of competencies
One basic competency
Persönlichkeitsinventar zur Integritätsabschätzung (PIA, Personality Inventory for Integrity Assessment)
BCI (Bambeck Competence Instrument)
Test zur beruflichen Orientierung und Planung (TOP Test, Test for Professional Orientation and Planning)
Leistungsmotivationsinventar (LMI, Performance Motivation Inventory)
Lernpotential-Assessment Center (LP-AC, Learning Potential Assessment Center)
Das Multi-Motiv-Gitter (MMG, The Multi-Motive Grid)
ICA Instrument for Competence Assessment
Founders Check
Revidierter Allgemeiner Büroarbeitstest (ABAT-R, Revised General Office Work Test)
Knowledge diagnosis based on associating and structure-setting
The staff selection process “Soziale Kompetenz” (SOKO, Social Competency) of the Bavarian police)
Situational interview for measuring cooperation knowledge
Group check
Two basic competencies
IAI Score Card of Competence
Partial activity lists as method of competency assessment
Work samples and situational questions for measuring workplace-related competencies
Das Führungsrad (The Competency Wheel)
Siemens-Führungsrahmen (Siemens Leadership Frame)
Three basic competencies
Four basic competencies
Kasseler Kompetenz-Raster (KKR, Kassel Competency Grid)
Competency measurements in multimedia scenarios: pro facts – a computerised assessment centre
SYNPRO-FAI (leadership analysis instrument)

!Response 360°-feedback
Assessment sheet for social and method competencies - smk99
Competency balance sheets
Die Kompetenzbilanz (The Competency Balance Sheet) – an instrument for self-assessment and professional development
Qualipass – documentation of personal and technical competencies
Comprehensive competency grids
KODE Kompetenz-Diagnose und -Entwicklung (Competency Diagnostics and Development)
KODE X–Kompetenz-Explorer (Competency Explorer)
Competency compass
nextexpertizer and nextcoach: competency measurement from the perspective of the theory of cognitive self-organisation
Entwicklungsorientiertes Scanning (EOS, Development-oriented scanning)
The Eglio System
The internet recruiting tool PERLS
Commercial providers
Opus Organisations- und Potential-Untersuchungs-System (organisation and potential examination system)
WM-Kompetenz-Check (competency check) – questionnaire for recording relevant competency for knowledge management
DISG-Persönlichkeitsprofil (personality profile), behaviour in concrete situations
INSIGHT MDI – leadership check
Behavioral Event Interview (BEI)
Emotional Competency Inventory (ECI)

Also developments related to personality, relationship and group aspects are examined – the following list gives some examples:

Commitment (Engagement – EN)
Success confidence (Erfolgszuversicht – EZ)
Flexibility (FX)
Flow (FL)
Fearlessness (Furchtlosigkeit – FU)
Internality (IN)
Compensational endeavour (Kompensatorische Anstrengung – KA)
Pride of performance (Leistungsstolz – LS)
Willingness to learn (Lernbereitschaft – LB)
Difficulty preference (Schwierigkeitspräferenz – SP)
Autonomy (Selbständigkeit – SE)
Self-control (Selbstkontrolle – SK)

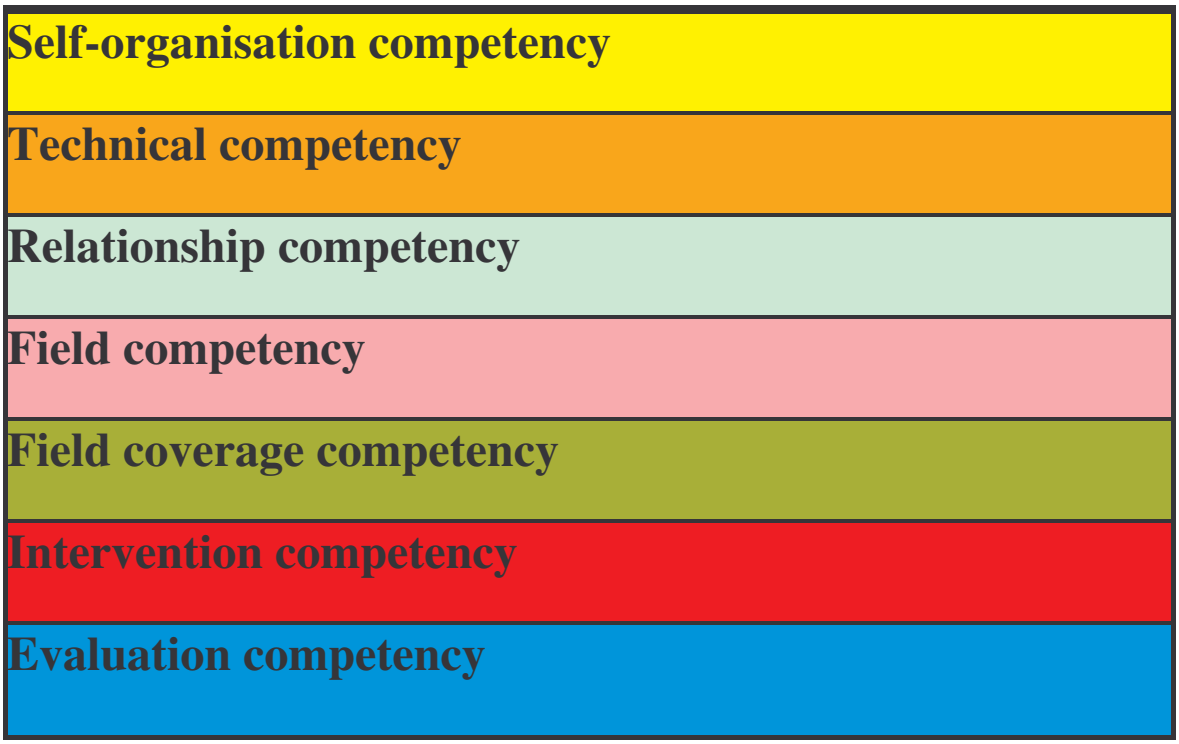
Dimensions of the personality

Assertiveness
Self-reflection
Willingness to decide
Acceptance
Lack of social fear
Emotional stability
Extraversion
Fairness
Communication
Conflict management
People leadership

Derivation of **competency development measures** from an analysis with the **Kassel Competency Grid (KKR)** for a competency development in a company for the position of the foreman.

Competency facet	Weakness	Competency development measure
Technical competency	Making links for the problem analysis, e.g. show causes and effects	1. Shared illustration of the process chain (e.g. with meta-plan) 2. Job rotation and/or work in other groups along the process chain 3. Regular exchange of the group speakers of upstream and downstream areas 4. Regular exchange with upstream and downstream areas
Method competency	Summary Summary of results	5. Phases of reflection 6. Feedback for group speakers (moderator)
Social competency	Reprimand / discount Discount of others, pointed remarks	7. Joint definition of team and meeting rules (talk with each other instead of about one another) 8. Feedback rounds as a part of coaching 9. Rotation foremen / group speakers 10. Job shadowing in other groups 11. No formation of ranking orders among groups (by superiors!)
	Moaning Stressing the negative current state, doom-saying	12. Regular group talks 13. Coaching of groups (quarterly) 14. Appeal: don't set the bar too high
Self-competency	Authoritarian elements Reference to hierarchies and responsibilities	15. Coaching and training of superiors (don't understand ideas as criticism but actively ask for them) 16. No participation of foremen in group talks (unless wished by staff); admit experiences

The afore-mentioned competency developments motivate to also develop core and key competencies for supervision training. These seven key competencies should now be transferred into a proposal for **key competencies for supervisors**, and they could also apply for coaching and organisational development.



Self-organisation competency comprises all elements of conscious governance of one's own personality in consulting, **technical competency** comprises all the knowledge about methods of organisation of a supervisory process with language, media, texts, dolls, etc.; this also refers to clarity in the contract of the process. **Relationship competency** comprises all elements of transference and counter-transference, latent and immediate events in the supervisory process. **Field competency** comprises all the context-related knowledge that exists in a professional field, e.g. clinics, social work, companies of a certain business, as well as in a specific field of work and in specific work roles, e.g. executive, management, staff level. **Field coverage competency** comprises the ability to acquire the basic competencies of a field of work and to focus on reflective methods of observation and it also refers to the preservation of a distance of intervention if the field competency is still low. **Intervention competency** comprises the broad field of interfering with processes correctly, securely, effectively and with a sustainable effect, within the meaning of "stepping in between"; it thus comprises intervention on the personal level as well as intervention on the systemic level of events within companies or institutions. **Evaluation competency** finally describes the abilities of evaluation, which are so important for supervision. Evaluation refers to the appraisal of individual processes and of a longer-term activity as a supervisor in order to redirect evaluated knowledge into the supervisory processes for continuous quality improvement.

The panels of the EAS should continue the work in order to define these core and key competencies for the fields of supervision, coaching and organisational development.

The advantage we as supervisors, coaches and organisational developers have is that we train and work in a comparable competency grid. This comparability is a precondition for research and evaluation and serves quality assurance as well as societal and professional recognition. This quality assurance will then bear comparisons with university education and quality standards. Moreover, we also have a unique basis within Europe in the field of “non-university” education and in the consulting professions.

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