

## PERSONAL QUALITIES IN THE CONTEXT OF SALES MANAGER COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

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### Abstract

**Research purpose:** The aim was to identify the personal qualities needed to develop sales manager competences.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** The methods used were theoretical—systematic analysis of literature sources; empirical—employers' research questionnaire; descriptive statistical data analysis.

**Findings.** Having analyzed the competencies and personal qualities required for a sales manager, one can observe the tendency to look at the future specialist in a modern way. Both authors and respondents emphasize that the future employee must take the initiative to improve his/her professionalism. When comparing the competencies, required for the manager, indicated by the scientists and employers, the conclusion is that a large part of managerial competencies are partly or entirely of generic competences origin deriving from the personal qualities. For example, creativity in solving problems is a personal feature, but the ability to solve problems creatively must be accompanied by the ability to base the decision on appropriate knowledge. On the other hand, use of special knowledge must be based on creativity in the search for the necessary information, which is again a matter of personal qualities.

**Originality/Value/Practical implications.** Based on the results of the research carried out, the authors of the article propose measures to improve a sales manager's competence development(a) by training a sales manager, to reduce the scope of strategic knowledge subjects in the study process, and fill in loose credits with the subjects that develop the student's competences to identify perfectly the functional values of the products and services sold and to sell them but not just to offer as low price as possible; and (b) in the descriptions of management study programs, to emphasize the orientation to changing labor market factors: increase of personal responsibility, promotion of creativity and individual initiative, continuous learning and adaptation to changing conditions.

**Keywords:** social and personal skills; competence; development.

**JEL codes:** I23

### Introduction

The main objective of the studies, conducted by the higher school, is to train a specialist for the labor market who is able to adapt to the changing conditions of economic life. Under the conditions of information technology development and globalization of economy, the knowledge and skills of the employees become the main competitive advantage. In order for a prospective specialist to successfully cross the boundary from knowledge to practical application of the knowledge, not only a number of different modules combining theory with practice should be included in the prospective employee competence development process, but also the conditions of the employers' interests. In modern business, the emphasis is on the change of organizational culture and work organization—flexible working conditions, development of nonhierarchical relations, increase of personal responsibility, promotion of creativity, and individual initiative and continuous learning. Employers want to hire not only knowledgeable managers of modern management, planning, finance, marketing, and sales techniques, but also who are able to apply them effectively in the work environment. Therefore, the requirements for occupation include not only the competences acquired in the study process, but also the student's personal qualities.

There is noncompliance between the process of organizing higher education studies and the interests of the business world to develop the competences of specialists within management field. Although the study program descriptions emphasize the orientation to changing labor market factors, employers are not always satisfied with the competences acquired by future employees.

The aim of the research is to identify the personal qualities needed to develop sales manager competences. Research objectives are:

1. To perform the analysis of competence concept and sales manager competences
2. To identify employers' expectations for sales manager competences
3. To perform the analysis of the study subjects necessary for acquiring sales manager competencies
4. To evaluate the influence of personal qualities for acquiring sales manager competencies

### **Literature Review**

In literature sources, the term “competence” is defined in various ways and is not yet fully explored. The authors of the article have discovered various definitions of competence that are presented in Table 1, when examining scientific literature.

**Table 1. Definitions of the competence concept**

<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Competence described</b>
Good (1959)	Ability to apply the basic principles and techniques of certain content in practical situations
Dictionary of international words (1969)	Scope of any institution or person's scope of authority; question area in which a particular person has knowledge, experience
Jovaiša (1993)	Ability to perform the activity well by qualification, skills, knowledge; it is the power to do something; highly skilled knowledge
Ivanovic and Collin (1997)	Effectiveness, ability to perform the tasks required at work
Boyatzis (1982)	Individual characteristics that are causally related to effective or better performance
Spencer and Spencer (1993)	An essential characteristic of an individual that is associated with higher quality work in a particular job or situation; the characteristics of the individual, highlighting the versatility of the competence, ensuring the continuity of the personality, and creating the preconditions for predicting the behavior of the person in various operational situations
Grzeda (2001)	Ability to apply professional skills in practical situations
Makštutis (2001)	Compliance with duties, ability, knowledge, understanding of what to do and how to do in the workplace in accordance with job requirements (defined by organization statutes or regulations according to criteria, resources, norms, indicators)
Sokol (2001)	A combination of skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to accomplish the job task or role
Martinkus, Neverauskas, and Sakalas (2002)	Matching knowledge and skills and adapting them to specific circumstances, performing management functions, taking into account environmental and situation limitations
Petasis (2003)	Ability to perform specific tasks using a combination of knowledge, abilities, skills, and personal qualities

Petkevičiūtė and Kaminskytė (2003)	Ability allowing to achieve effectiveness in the particular organization using adequate ways in order to seek organization's strategic goals
Karlof and Lovingsson (2006)	Ability to use knowledge, skills, and experience to solve problems in order to achieve organizational goals
Jovaiša, Laužackas, Spūdytė, and Tutlys (2008)	Functional ability to adequately perform certain activities
Pacevičius and Kekytė (2008)	The combination of professional knowledge, abilities, and skills and the ability to adapt them to the requirements of the work environment
Cambal (2012)	Ability to apply professional knowledge, skills, personal qualities in practice and achieve desired company results

Analysis of the definitions in Table 1 shows that the concept of competence has changed little over half a century, so it is worthwhile to further analyze Guy Le Boterf's (2010) concept of competence in a rather detailed and innovative way. He argues that the primary meaning of the concept of competencies was formed in 1970, but despite the fact that over 45 years there were a lot of workshops, courses, lectures, and discussions of this topic, competency can be described as *a whole of knowledge, skills and behavior*. The author seeks to turn the competence into an investment object, taking into account the competitiveness of the companies and those who will have to offer their competences to the labor market. To this end, he proposes 15 ways of reasoning on the subject of competencies, from which the proposal to consider *competence as a process rather than the sum of sources* is very relevant in the opinion of the authors of this article. It is not enough simply to list the sources (knowledge, skills, behavior); it is necessary to distinguish what is meant by "to be competent" and "to have competencies." "Being competent" means being able to function successfully and competently in an operational situation by fully mobilizing the combinations of available sources (knowledge, skills, behavioral attitudes, ways of thinking, and physical inborn inclinations). Meanwhile, "having competencies" only means having sources for competent activity. It can be concluded that the availability of sources is a necessary but not sufficient condition for competent activities. It can be recognized that a person acts competently in a particular situation, when he/she is able to combine and mobilize the available personal resources (knowledge, skills, behavior) and media (databases, colleagues, experts, networks of other professions) and implement effective professional practice.

It is important to know what you are aiming for in developing employee competencies: whether they are more competent or that they have more competences, because both are not the same thing. In the first case, it will be necessary to help the employees implement good professional experience in a group of mastered situations by mobilizing appropriate source combinations, and in the second case, it can be limited to the acquisition of sources only.

When analyzing the concept of competence, one has to realize that companies want their staff not only to have competencies but also to act competently in mastering different professional situations. It is therefore necessary to adopt a completely new approach to competence. A professional worker is not limited to performing identically repetitive tasks. He is able to use the acquired sources in a new environment and apply them in different contexts. This means horizontal transfer (extending mastery of the same type of problem or situation) or vertical transfer (mastering the most difficult situation) (Guy Le Boterf, 2010). Transferring competences is not as easy as transporting an object, because professional competence is inseparable from its application field. It can be concluded that the field of application is part of the competence, and to be competent means to be able to act effectively and continuously in similar situations.

*Analysis of competencies needed in sales manager's practical work.* Knowledge and abilities of employees of modern companies become the main competitive advantage. Companies seeking to implement competencies development means tend to start thinking about the definition of competence. An employee can have many competencies (knowledge, skills, behavior), but is unable to act competently in a particular situation. According to Guy Le Boterf (2010), what separates employees is not their knowledge, but their ability to use that knowledge effectively in a long-term operational

situation. It can, therefore, be concluded that a competent person is one who is able to establish effective links between sources and practices in order to master professional situations and achieve the most effective goals.

According to Lambert et al. (2009), all competencies needed by the sales manager can be divided into four groups: partnering, insight, solution, and effectiveness. The authors of the article have noted different competences that are presented in Table 2, when examining scientific literature.

**Table 2. The competencies needed by the sales manager**

Competence	Authors					
	Vakola et al. (2007)	Piercy et al. (2009)	Punwatkar And Varhese (2014)	Barber and Tietje (2006)	Kim and Hong (2005)	Bush (2012)
<b>Partnering</b>						
Aligning to customers		x	x	x	x	x
Building relationships	x	x	x	x		x
Communicating effectively	x	x	x	x	x	x
Negotiating positions			x	x	x	x
Setting expectations				x	x	x
Spanning boundaries				x		x
<b>Insight</b>						
Analyzing capacity			x	x	x	x
Building a business case		x		x		x
Evaluating customer experiences		x	x	x	x	x
Gathering intelligence			x	x		x
Identifying options				x		x
Prioritizing stakeholder needs			x	x		x
Understanding business context	x	x		x		x
<b>Solution</b>						
Articulating value			x	x	x	x
Facilitating change		x	x	x		x
Formalizing commitment			x	x		x
Leveraging success		x		x		x
Managing projects				x		x
Resolving issues			x	x	x	x
<b>Effectiveness</b>						
Accelerating learning		x		x		x
Aligning to sales processes		x	x	x	x	x
Building business skill		x		x	x	x
Embracing diversity		x		x		x
Executing plans		x		x		x
Solving problems				x	x	x

Making ethical decisions			x	x	x	x
Managing knowledge		x	x	x	x	x
Maximizing personal time		x		x	x	x
Using technology		x		x		x

The analysis of the competencies required by the sales manager in Table 2 shows that all four competencies groups are considered important by the researchers. In summary, it can be stated that

- Partnering competencies enable the effective creation and leveraging of relationships within the sales context and facilitate sales interactions.
- Insight competencies enable the development of robust analysis and synthesis skills. They permit salespeople to use information effectively and efficiently.
- Solution competencies enable the effective development of strategies and support for the resulting solutions.
- Effectiveness competencies enable the demonstration and development of personal effectiveness and responsibility.

Time has passed when the career has been planned in advance and for life. Existing companies are in the process of constant reorganization and development, and so the skills of adapting to the new business context are very strongly appreciated. This means that the employee must not only keep the job, but also adapt to the changes taking place and influence the workplace.

A modern manager needs to create a supportive environment seeking to maximize the likelihood for his employees to take a combination of effective, initiative, and mobilizing sources. Employees with the greatest learning abilities will be most preferred. Accordingly, competitive companies will have to provide their employees with opportunities for learning, changing jobs, and performing various functions. Therefore, in management study programs, for competence development students need to pay much attention to those study subjects that develop learning abilities and promote professional mobility.

There are many definitions of competence available, but no single definition has been widely accepted. From an operational perspective, competences seem to cover a broad range of higher-order skills and behaviors that represent the ability to cope with complex, unpredictable situations. Human resource executives need to evaluate sales candidates on the basis of not only their conceptual knowledge, but also their skills and professional and personal values.

Prospective employees need to raise their level of intelligence, know how to use information technology, know foreign languages, acquire new competencies, and improve the ones they already possess. For these reasons, educational institutions are developing existing study programs and creating new ones. Business schools must provide students with the knowledge and all information they need in order to meet the demands and expectations of employers. Therefore, there is a need for dialogue between business and educational institutions. In order to evaluate the employers' opinion on the sales manager's competencies in practical work, the authors of this article conducted a survey of employers.

### **Research methodology**

In the first stage of the research, theoretical research method is applied—analysis of competence concept, based on Lithuanian and foreign authors' research works and publications, was carried out to evaluate its role in a competitive labor market. In the second stage of the research, the empirical research method is applied—employers' questionnaire survey was carried out in order to find out the employer's expectations regarding the competences acquired during the sales manager's studies. The research was conducted from December 2017 to January 2018

Applying the targeted selection and predefined selection criteria, the authors of this article chose trade companies as a whole, employing at least 10 employees and located in the municipalities of Marijampolė, Kalvarija, Kazlų Rūda, Šakiai, Vilkaviškis, Birstonas, and Prienai. A total of 114 trading

companies were selected (excluding company branches and affiliates). The chosen method of data collection—questionnaire, which was carried out using the least costly form—was a purposeful and targeted electronic questionnaire. An invitation to participate in the research by e-mail was sent to selected institutions. The questionnaire was created on the website [www.manoapklausu.lt](http://www.manoapklausu.lt). A link to the questionnaire was sent to the selected institutions. If the company has branches, the link to the questionnaire was sent to the parental company. In total, questionnaires were received from 28 companies.

### Research results

First of all, the question “Does your company need a sales specialist?” was given, to which 64.3% of the respondents said they needed, 21.4% of the respondents replied that the work of this specialist was performed by other employees, 3.6% of the respondents stated that such a specialist is unnecessary. It should be noted that 10.7% of the respondents chose the answer “other” and explained that their company needed a sales specialist rather than a sales manager. This shows that specialists in this field are really needed in Marijampolė and nearby municipalities.

The second question in the questionnaire asked the respondents to evaluate the student’s ability to apply the acquired knowledge. To achieve this, the study program envisages two learning outcomes: to apply national and European Community legislation and wide sales management knowledge for effective and innovative management solutions. When evaluating the first learning outcome, 42.9% of the respondents answered that these learning outcomes are appropriate and partially appropriate, respectively, 10.7% completely appropriate, and 3.6% inappropriate.

When evaluating the second learning outcome—in order to make effective and innovative management decisions the student will apply a wide range of marketing and sales knowledge—it was found that 17.9% of the employers think this learning outcome is completely appropriate, 53.5% appropriate, 25% partially appropriate, and 3.6% completely inappropriate.

The next question aimed to evaluate the student’s ability to conduct research. For this purpose, the study program envisages three learning outcomes. Upon graduation, the student will assess the impact of the company’s external environment on business and the company’s potential. This learning outcome was evaluated as appropriate and completely appropriate by 82.1% of all respondents and partially appropriate by 5% (Table 3). For whether the student will be able to analyze and evaluate sales trends in the local and international market, 96.4% of the respondents evaluated as appropriate and 3.6% partially appropriate. For whether the student will be able to carry out market research and apply the results for project implementation and realization of products and services, 92.9% of the respondents evaluated appropriately, whereas the rest of the respondents (7.1%) indicated that this learning outcome is partially appropriate. After analyzing the results, it can be concluded that the student’s ability to carry out research and the expected learning outcomes of the study program are appropriate.

**Table 3. Evaluation of research conducting capability (%) ( $n = 28$ )**

Learning outcome	Completely inappropriate and inappropriate	Partially appropriate	Completely appropriate and appropriate
Will evaluate the impact of the company’s external environment on business and the company’s potential	0	17.9	82.1
Will analyze and evaluate sales trends in the local and international market	0	3.6	96.4
Will carry out market research and apply the results for project implementation and realization of products and services	0	7.1	92.9

In the fifth question the respondents made suggestions and comments on the fourth question. Here, the respondents confirmed that market and targeted consumer research is of particular importance to sales

management professionals and indicated the importance of practical work in this area. In their opinion, graduates, who have just graduated, are not given the task to do research in the company because they are not expected to be able to do it without practical experience. In addition, having gained practical experience, these skills and knowledge will need to be relearned and reacquired, because after a long period of time they will be lost. In the sixth question of the questionnaire, the respondents evaluated the student's special abilities. The results of the responses are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4. Evaluation of special skills (%)**

<b>Learning outcome</b>	<b>Completely inappropriate and inappropriate</b>	<b>Partially appropriate</b>	<b>Completely appropriate and appropriate</b>
Will organize activities of the marketing unit and ensure performance	3.7	11.1	85.2
Will apply new marketing strategies in the marketing and sales process	3.7	18.5	77.8
Will manage the elements of marketing and international marketing complex by applying appropriate marketing tools	3.7	11.1	85.2
Will organize logistics process in the company and adapt sales logistics objects to the proper functioning of the company	3.7	7.4	88.9
Will apply basic logistical principles and choose optimal distribution channels	0	7.4	92.6
Will apply quality management standards in the process of creating the company's added value	7.4	7.4	85.2
Will know provision sources of financial, material, and other resources, how to use them effectively, will know accounting and management	3.7	22.2	74.1
Will apply the principles of business ethics and intercultural communication in relation with business clients	0	15.4	84.6

The study program description indicates that having completed the study program, the student will organize the activities of the marketing unit and ensure performance, manage the elements of marketing and international marketing complex by applying the appropriate marketing tools, and will use quality management standards in the process of creating the company's added value. When analyzing the results of Table 4, it was found that even 85.2% of the respondents evaluated these abilities as appropriate. For whether the student will be able to apply new marketing strategies in the marketing and sales process, 77.8% of the respondents evaluated as appropriate and completely appropriate, 18.5% partially appropriate, and 3.7% completely inappropriate. For whether the students will be able to organize the logistics process in the company and adapt the sales logistics objects to the proper functioning of the company 88.9% of the respondents evaluated as completely appropriate and appropriate, 7.4% partially appropriate, and 3.7% inappropriate. For whether the student will be able to apply the basic logistical principles and choose optimal distribution channels, 92.6% of the respondents evaluated as appropriate and completely appropriate and 7.4% partially appropriate. For whether the students will know provisional sources of financial, material, and other resources, will know how to use them efficiently, and will know accounting and management, 74.1% of the respondents chose the categories appropriate and completely appropriate, 22.2% partially appropriate, and 3.7% completely inappropriate. For whether the student will apply the principles of business ethics and intercultural communication in relation to business clients, 84.6% of the respondents evaluated it as appropriate and completely appropriate and 15.4% partially appropriate. It can be concluded that the teachers have planned the appropriate learning outcomes of the study program in order to train a competent sales management professional, but as Guy Le Boterf (2010) pointed out, it is important for the graduate to be able to

function successfully and competently in operational situation by fully mobilizing available resources (knowledge, skills, behavioral attitudes, ways of thinking, physical inborn inclinations) combinations.

It should also be noted that in the proposals and comments submitted, the respondents argue that special skills are more in line with the executive's competencies than the manager's, and too much focus is on marketing and too little on sales. They, therefore, suggest adjusting special skills, taking into account the amount of knowledge the manager needs, claiming that the executive needs to "grow up" by continuous learning, as a good executive does not end when he finishes his studies. In addition, necessary strategic knowledge is minimal at the beginning of work; they can gain this knowledge later, going deeper into the specifics of work.

The significance of managerial competence for effective activity is also confirmed by the evaluation study of Lithuanian executives' attitude to managerial competence (Bakanauskienė, Bartnikaitė, 2006), which states that personal qualities are the most important, while managerial skills and theoretical management knowledge have lower priority. Therefore, the following questionnaire questions evaluated the student's social and personal abilities. Three learning outcomes were presented for social skills evaluation (Table 5).

**Table 5. Evaluation of social skills (%) (*n* = 27)**

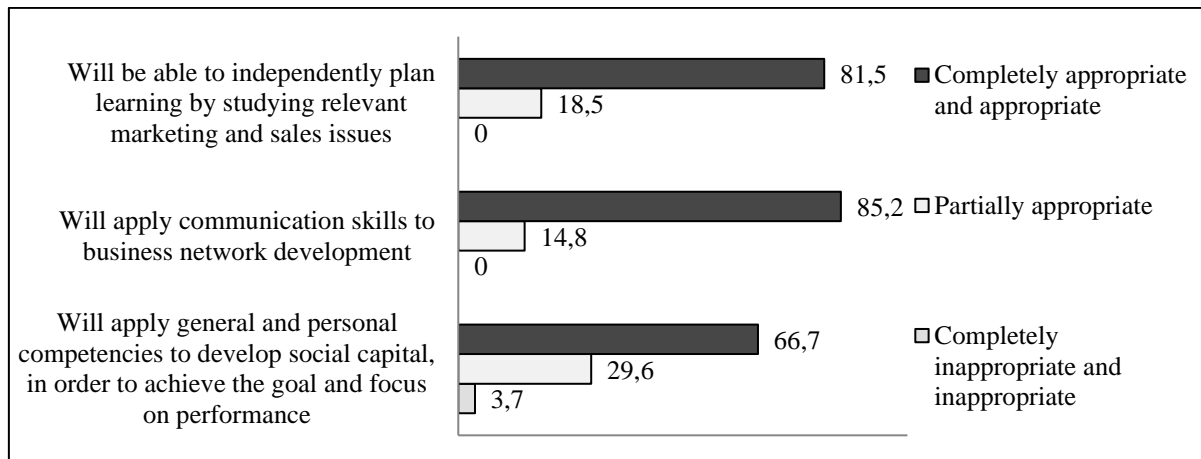
<b>Learning outcome</b>	<b>Completely inappropriate and inappropriate</b>	<b>Partially appropriate</b>	<b>Completely appropriate and appropriate</b>
Will represent the company in the national and international business environment	3.7	29.6	66.7
Understand and apply the principles of social responsibility in dealing with internal and external stakeholders	0	14.8	85.2
Will be able to clearly, reasonably convey generalized marketing and sales information to company specialists in intercultural space	0	18.5	81.5

When analyzing the responses, it was found that 66.7% of the respondents believe that the learning outcome "Will represent the company in the national and international business environment" is completely appropriate and appropriate, 29.6% partially appropriate, and 3.7% inappropriate. When evaluating the learning outcome, "Whether the student will understand and apply the principles of social responsibility in dealing with internal and external stakeholders," 85.2% of the respondents consider it to be appropriate and 14.8% partly appropriate. Of the respondents, 81.5% believe that the student will be able to clearly and reasonably convey the generalized marketing and sales information to the company's specialists in the intercultural space.

Responding to social student abilities, the respondents once again suggest narrowing the study program and name it Sales Management, stating that Sales Management also includes marketing solutions, and that these professionals are now needed.

The study program Sales Management has provided three personal skills. The evaluation of the student's personal skills is presented in Figure 1.





**Fig.1. Evaluation of personal skills (%) (n = 26)**

When analyzing the responses, it was found that the respondents appreciated personal skills. Of the respondents, 66.7% consider that the student will apply general and personal competences in the development of social capital in order to achieve the goal and focus on performance, 29.6% only partially agree with it, and 3.7% disagree. More than 80% of the respondents agree that the student will apply communication skills to business network development and will be able to independently plan learning by studying relevant marketing and sales issues, whereas 14.8% and 18.5%, respectively, partly agree. Summarizing the results of the research it can be concluded that the learning outcomes envisaged in the study program are appropriate.

*Analysis of personal qualities required for a sales manager.* In the knowledge economy, the difference in competitiveness is no longer just about the quality of production or services. The ways in which sales are made are very important, and the image that customers create on a company is usually the quality of communication. Guy Le Boterf (2010) stated that behavior, rather than the acquisition of technical skills, is the biggest problem. The success of a team or productivity and effectiveness of a performance group as a whole is increasingly dependent on the quality of the relationship. Collective relationships are influenced decisively by employee behavior, expressed in terms of personal qualities: ability to listen, economic judgment, persistence, initiative, curiosity, and others. The image of modern organizations is mainly influenced by correct and calm behavior of managers (Wrede-Grischat 2008), excellent manners to increase development in organizations. Therefore, during the research, the respondents were asked to indicate which of the given personal qualities are important and very important, partially important, and unimportant and completely unimportant. The findings of the research are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6. Evaluation of personal qualities (%).**

Personal quality	Unimportant and completely unimportant	Partially important	Very important and important
Analytical thinking	0	0	100
Strategic thinking	0	0	100
Logical thinking	0	0	100
Entrepreneurship	0	7.1	92.9
Confidence	0	0	100
Ability to work fast	3.6	25	71.4
Communicability	0	3.6	96.4
Pleasant appearance	7.1	25	67.9

Empathy	3.6	21.4	75.0
Creativity when solving problems	0	7.7	92.3
Effective communication with customers	0	0	100
Tactfulness	0	0	100
Diligence	0	3.6	96.4
Autonomy	0	7.1	92.9
Initiative	0	3.7	96.4
Ability to implement one's ideas	0	10.7	89.3
Flexibility	0	10.7	89.3
Ability to work in a team	0	3.7	96.3

When analyzing the results, it was found that all respondents (100%) consider personal qualities such as analytical, strategic, logical thinking, effective communication with customers, and tactfulness as very important and important. Over 90% of the respondents consider all the other features presented, such as entrepreneurship, communicability, diligence, autonomy, and initiative, as very important and important for a sales manager.

Having analyzed the competencies and personal qualities required for a sales manager, one can observe the tendency to look at the future specialist in a modern way. Both authors and respondents emphasize that the future employee must take the initiative to improve his/her professionalism. When comparing the competencies required for the manager, indicated by the scientists and employers, the conclusion is that a large part of managerial competencies are partly or entirely of generic competences origin deriving from the personal qualities. For example, creativity in solving problems is a personal feature, but the ability to solve problems creatively must be accompanied by the ability to base the decision on appropriate knowledge. On the other hand, use of special knowledge must be based on creativity in the search for necessary information, which is again a matter of personal qualities. Therefore, based on the results of the research carried out, the authors of the article propose measures to improve a sales manager's competence development:

- By training a sales manager, to reduce the scope of strategic knowledge subjects in the study process, and fill in loose credits with the subjects that develop the student's competences to identify perfectly the functional values of the products and services sold and to sell them but not just to offer as low price as possible.
- In the descriptions of management study programs, to emphasize the orientation to changing labor market factors: increase of personal responsibility, promotion of creativity and individual initiative, continuous learning and adaptation to changing conditions.

*Limitations and Future Research.* There are a couple of limitations in our current research that offer opportunities for refinement and development in future research. First, our study does not rely on competency scales that have already been validated in the sales research such as those offered by other researches. However, because we felt that employer might require a distinctive set of competencies, we thought it was more important to have sales management executives, deemed executives, to generate their own list of competencies. Another limitation of our research is that the response rate we obtained (24.6%) is somewhat low. Based on targeted selection and predefined selection criteria, the authors of this article selected a sample of trading companies with at least 10 employees located in the research environment. Future research can be used to validate our findings among additional samples.

## Conclusions

1. The concept of competence presented in scientific literature emphasizes the totality of knowledge, skills, and behavior, but an innovative approach to competence is required—to

consider it as a process rather than a set of sources. The availability of resources is a necessary but not sufficient condition for competent activities. This means that in order to be competent in a competitive labor market, one must be able to function successfully and competently in the operational situation, by fully mobilizing the combinations of available sources (knowledge, skills, behavioral attitudes, ways of thinking, physical inborn inclinations).

2. From an operational perspective, competences seem to cover a broad range of higher-order skills and behaviors that represent the ability to cope with complex, unpredictable situations. Human resource executives need to evaluate sales candidates not only on the basis of their conceptual knowledge, but also on the basis of their skills and professional and personal values.
3. Management study programs is closely related to changes in the labor market, which cause significant changes in the study process, one of which is the development of social and personal skills. As a result, study programs descriptions need to emphasize a new concept of career paradigm that includes designing and managing your career, continuous learning and change, and adapting to different conditions.
4. The employers' attitude to the development of students' special abilities is very important in the process of developing managerial competences. The study shows that employers appreciate the learning outcomes of the study program in order to train a competent marketing and sales manager, but points out that special skills are more in line with the executive's competencies than the manager's, with too much focus on marketing and too little on sales. The employers suggest adjusting special skills, taking into account the amount of knowledge the manager needs, claiming that the executive needs to "grow up" by continuous learning, as a good executive does not end when he finishes his studies. In addition, necessary strategic knowledge is minimal at the beginning of work; they gain this knowledge later going deeper into the specifics of the work.
5. An employer survey of marketing and sales manager study subjects showed that lecturers selected the right subjects to develop managerial competencies. In the comments on the questionnaire, respondents suggested that subjects such as Trade Organization Technologies, Trade Business Management, Modern Technologies: Business Testing Systems, and Sales Management Systems be included in the study program. This demonstrates the benefits of employer surveys in developing a program to develop a competent marketing and sales manager.
6. The analysis of the personal qualities required for the sales manager has shown that employers appreciate personal qualities that contribute to the success of a team or productivity and effectiveness of a performance group as a whole. Comparing the competencies indicated by the scientists and employers that are required for the manager, it can be said that a large part of managerial competencies are partly or entirely of general competencies origin, derived from personal qualities.

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