

UNIVERSITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE
Doctoral School of Public Administration Sciences

Stréhli Georgina

NEW WAYS OF PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGEMENT TRAINING
- SCOPE OF APPLICATION OF ACTION LEARNING METHOD IN
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Doctoral (PhD) thesis

THESIS BOOKLET

Supervisors:

Dr. Kovács Gábor c. r. ddtbk., university teacher

Dr. habil Szabó Szilvia, university associate
professor

Budapest, 2022

TABLE OF CONTENT

1.	FORMULATING THE SCIENTIFIC PROBLEM.....	3
2.	HYPOTHESES OF THE EXAMINATION OF THE RESEARCH TOPIC... 5	
	2.1.THE OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH AND ITS RESULTS TO BE OBTAINED	5
3.	OVERALL CONCLUSIONS - VERIFICATION OF HYPOTHESES	7
	3.1.VERIFICATION OF HYPOTHESES	9
	3.2.SCIENTIFIC RESULTS, PRACTICAL UTILITY AND FURTHER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES	16
	3.3.FURTHER RESEARCH AREAS AND EXPLOITATION POSSIBILITIES OF THE RESULTS	17
4.	POSSIBILITIES FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE METHOD IN NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE - PROPOSALS.....	19
	LIST OF PUBLICATIONS	25

1. FORMULATING THE SCIENTIFIC PROBLEM

The reason and relevance of my subject matter were given by the challenges of the current situation of public service organisations. By the 21st century, socio-economic development is creating more and more complex systems, the operation of which falls largely on public services. These systems require a highly qualified and prepared workforce, thus both public services and human resource management professionals face serious challenges. Furthermore, the attitude and needs of generations newly entering the labor market, radically differ from those of the older generations. As a result, requirements for leaders have significantly changed in recent years. More and more tasks have to be solved with fewer resources in a continuously changing environment, where differences between generations appear more sharply at work as well.

Looking at the organisational operation from another aspect we come to the same conclusion. It is of high importance that public administration is able to maintain its respect. And it is only possible if public administration can adapt quickly and flexibly to changes. However, the core condition for this is that the organisation prepares its operation for constant changes. At the same time, the efficient operation of the organisation is highly dependent on the effectiveness of the managers. And this depends on how flexibly managers are able to adapt to the expectations and to what extent they can improve their and their colleagues' competencies. I started my research related to my doctoral thesis by taking all these into consideration.

The main goal of my dissertation is to be able to offer an efficient and also realistic solution, that could help the concerned organisations and managers find their most suitable tools and methods. And by using them effectively, they can build the frameworks, adequate structures and operational mechanisms, which are indispensably needed for successful organisational functioning in the 21st century.

My dissertation begins with an overview of the professional literature on the subject, in which I analyze the conceptual development of leadership. By reviewing the models, I aim to present how the theories regarding leadership have evolved and how the concept of leadership has changed. It clearly can be seen, that the definition of leadership, the different approaches, and research carried out on the subject reflect the changes of the era, but also the social and organisational transitions. In connection with, and as a part of the above changes, dealing with the leadership-related questions of the generation management theory is unavoidable, similarly

to the place, role, and significance of emotional intelligence in leadership. I believe, that if I manage to carry out a complex examination of the highlighted questions, the expectations towards leaders of the 21st century will be identified and determined.

The COVID epidemic made the smooth conduct of the research and the collection of materials for the background literature research difficult. The prolongation of the time originally planned for the research work resulted that the whole dissertation, its conclusions, recommendations, and proposals being better founded and more developed. The results of the empirical research carried out in 2018 and 2019 - as the current operation and characteristics of the examined corporation are well known – show significant changes, neither regarding the activity of the organisations nor in the attitude and mentality of leaders, thus the results of the surveys can be of good use.

In the United States, in 2016 I participated and also obtained a diploma in an Action learning team coach training course. That is when I started thinking about how it could be possible to successfully incorporate this completely new methodology in Hungarian public service adult education (further training, management training) systems (public administration, law enforcement). Testing the mastered methodology live, I realized that without the reforms that seem necessary, the Action learning methodology in leadership trainings can only be adapted in the current public service adult education systems with low efficiency. I defined the focus, objectives, and issues of my research work in order to facilitate the successful Hungarian adaptation of the highlighted methodology and the latest solutions related to the management tasks and management training. As part of this, I paid lots of attention to identifying what public service leaders think of the functioning, processes, and organisational culture of public service, of leadership as such, of the place and role of leaders, of the features of their personality and expectations, of the expectations towards them, and of the adult education systems for the improvement of leaders.

With regard to public service, Hungarian researchers have barely dealt with learning, exploring, or solving the above issues. As for my intention, my accomplished work may partially fill the existing gaps, and - among other things - complement the research results known so far, especially in the field of understanding the expectations and needs of public service leaders, and those they are facing with. I took advantage of the fortunate circumstance, that in the past years I have been employed in the improvement of the different public administration and law enforcement leaders, so I expanded my research work to investigate these two professions.

2. HYPOTHESES OF THE EXAMINATION OF THE RESEARCH TOPIC

As the result of my research I wish to prove or refute the following proposals:

- I. I assume, that the expectations and attitudes of the Hungarian public service leaders and their subordinates differ from one another. Based on this I assume, that a certain Hungarian public administration and law enforcement leadership profile can be identified, which reflects the leaders' attitude and expectations towards the personnel. (H1)

- II. I assume, that the targeted leader trainer system, which is based on surveys, shall focus on the changes in the leaders' mindset. (H2)

- III. In case we adapt the studied method to the specificities of the public sector, the methodology of Action learning can effectively be applied as part of the public service leadership training system both in public administration and law enforcement. (H3)

In order to examine the hypotheses and formulate well-founded conclusions, I considered a comprehensive literature review necessary, and I also used the results of my own empirical research to prove the assumptions of the hypotheses.

2.1. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH AND ITS RESULTS TO BE OBTAINED

The main issue of this dissertation is how to increase the efficiency of the activities of the present administrative and law enforcement leaders. Related to the definition of the research hypotheses and the main problem, my research objectives are as follows:

- Theoretical research regarding the expectations of the 21st century circumstances towards leaders.
- Empirical research to understand the ideas of the leaders with regard to the organisation and management.

- Defining the necessary development directions of both professions' management training, after mapping the organisational and leadership approach.
- Developing a strategy based on empirical research and theoretical review, which will facilitate the formation of an up-to-date, scholarly, and flexible management development system.

In order to be able to answer cautiously the above questions, I tried to examine the problem from several angles, and build up my empirical research accordingly. The above figure demonstrates the correlations between the research and the structure of the dissertation.

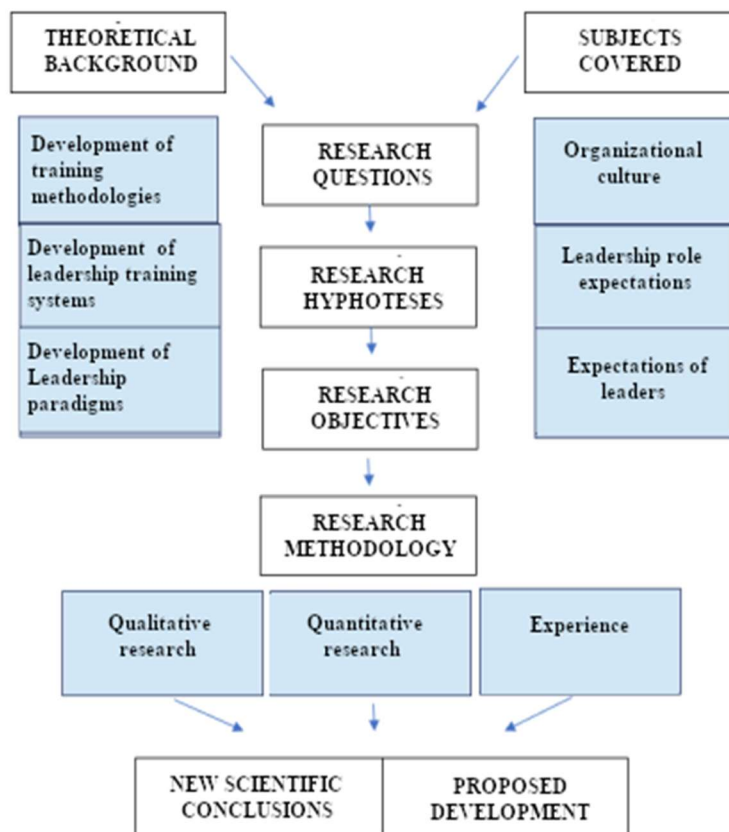


Figure 1: Demonstration of the correlations of the dissertation (Source: own editing)

3. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS - VERIFICATION OF HYPOTHESES

In my dissertation, during the theoretical overview, I demonstrated the presently most frequently used form of education methodology, and then I covered the development of management training. Within this topic, I prioritised the administrative and law enforcement systems. Then I was dealing with the most important management theories. With the help of empirical research, I assessed the mindset and attitude of administrative and law enforcement leaders from different aspects. Thus, I managed to find answers to the questions formulated in the first chapter of this essay, and I was able to fully complete the assigned tasks. The results seemed to be educational and at some points were uprising even for me. Based on the above I had enough material to examine the hypotheses and formulate the proposals.

Before presenting the examination of hypotheses, I would answer the question I posed in the title of the dissertation: Do we need to find a new way for leadership development? The answer: Yes, we do, since leaders are in need of changing their attitudes, and need of new solutions, if they want to reflect on the new challenges they are facing. Leaders need practical, realistic, concrete support. If it is so, we, the educators also have to be able to build new techniques in education.

I have approached the issue from three sides.

1. What do leaders think about the needs the personnel expresses towards them? (In connection with this, I would mention the different approaches arising from generation gaps.) And on the other hand, what needs are expressed by the leaders. Based on the results, we can conclude that there is a significant difference between the leaders' and subordinates' opinions. According to the research, it is also clear, that the need for the 'old' system and sense of vocation is significantly expressed. In other words, it is desired, that young people have the same attitude as the older generation. However, this is less feasible in a similar form as before, since generation Z entering the labour market grew up in a completely different socialization environment, as a result of which they will relate to their workplace differently. It is essential to resolve these differences for effective cooperation.

2. It appeared several times in the essay, as an explanation for a phenomenon, that the processes within the organisation shall be developed ensuring fast, flexible adaptation. On the one hand, organisations have to be prepared for the environmental challenges due to the rapid changes of the social, economic and technological development. Organisational knowledge and organisational learning are becoming more and more important. On the other hand, organisations have to carry out more and more complex tasks and responsibilities efficiently, because citizens also judge the efficiency of the state operation based on the operation of the public service as well. Practically it is the quality of the services provided by public services will be the first impression.

3. In order to be able to evolve the needed and targeted development directions with due care, it is necessary to examine the factors relevant to the operation from all sides. Consequently, the third point is getting to know the characteristics of the subordinate staff, since achieving adequate performance depends on the performance of the human resources. As a result, it is advisable for organisations to form an environment, which helps the staff to achieve better performance. To achieve this, we need to know their ideas, needs, and motivation; in my thesis, I have presented several research results related to this topic. I have also covered the related generation theories. In addition, I have presented findings, which describe the needs of employees, but there have been targeted law enforcement quests on this topic as well.

In my opinion, the interview, the questionnaire survey, and the literature search and examination equally pointed out, that we are facing increasingly urgent issues with regard to both professions, and that leaders play a key role in the solution. Not only by taking the position of authority, but rather as the leader of a well-functioning team. This could perhaps be a keyword, as most of the results of my research indicate it. No matter from which side I examine the roles of a leader or which level's opinion I am asking, cooperation, teamwork, and team spirit are highly important both in public administration and law enforcement, but none of the participants think that these are sufficiently effective. In addition, the typical characteristics of the organisational culture of public administration show no signs either. According to the results, law enforcement managers would feel more comfortable by reducing autonomy, however, if we examine the changes in the environment, it is obvious, that the 'old' system, the herd instinct and the methods of direct control would be more and more difficult solutions. The summary of the experiences of methodology verified the same. Based on the above, a

development solution is needed, where the core element is the improvement of team cooperation, either within the group or in the joint work of the different special fields. Furthermore, analyses also pointed out that organisations have to find a solution for developing the organisational culture and also for a change in attitudes.

As I did it before with my conclusions, I would present my suggestions separately, per profession, this might help to tinge the image.

3.1. VERIFICATION OF HYPOTHESES

- I. I assume, that the expectations and attitudes of the Hungarian public service leaders and their subordinates differ from one another. Based on this I assume, that a certain Hungarian public administration and law enforcement leadership profile can be identified, which reflects the leaders' attitude and expectations towards the personnel. (H1)**

Public administration

Regarding the scrutiny of my first hypothesis, I have to admit that the experiences I gained through my work led my attention to examine the topic since the attitudes of participants towards their colleagues were tangible during the trainings. Although the literature and the relevant research highlighted the expectations of civil service workers.

In the theoretical part of my dissertation, reviewing the generation theory and international and domestic studies describing the criteria of the 'expected' or efficient leader, I came to the conclusion, that currently the most effective in civil service is if the leader carries out his activities in transformative style. Accordingly, it is of high importance that they rapidly react to internal and external environmental changes, which is impossible without a spirit of confidence and a culture of giving feedback. This type of leader provides autonomy for the colleagues and considers team cohesion important.

The analysis of the examinations carried out on the subject, and my own research have also shown, that from the leaders' part there is an obvious need for strengthening teamwork and cooperation, both parties agreed on this, which typically appears in their communication and expectations, and is reflected as an expectation. My empirical research has shaded the idea of cooperation, meaning that not all leaders agree on the importance of cooperation with all colleagues. They much more expect cooperation among colleagues, than they expect it from

themselves. This is why it is important to mention that the older the leader was, the less he felt the need for cooperation. This was complemented by the research carried out on the subject by Márton Gellén (2015), which illustrated that the management behaviour defined for leaders as democratic management behaviour, actually contains several autocratic elements, which are against cooperation and teamwork. Nevertheless, a research in public administration in 2018 (Stréhli-Klotz, Szakács, 2020) highlighted, that subordinates feel, that cooperation among colleagues and teamwork is poorly encouraged. Thus, generation theory and research both prove, that the attitude of leaders and the experience of subordinates differ in many cases.

As for the second part of the hypothesis, I mainly focused on the theoretical research. I concluded, that in most cases the efficiency of the transformative leadership style was proven. I have presented the main characteristics of this style in my dissertation. Most international studies I have examined showed similar results, that is due to the reflection on environmental and social changes, which I also discussed earlier.

Based on this premise I wanted to see what leaders think of their own position in public administration. What are their characteristics? Based on this it can be determined what style they can identify with and how they are thinking of leadership. So, my assumption is that there is a profile characteristic of public service managers, which reflects their own attitudes as well.

In order to verify this, I used the analysis of the two larger units of my own empirical research as a basis, with the help of which I am able to prove my hypothesis. The results highlighted, that the most important for them is their social role which is mainly complemented by operative functions. In addition to the social role, the leader, who can be categorized as an Egoist (as I call it) manager type, and the Rule-based type, whose main concern is compliance with the guidelines, also appear prominently.

Moreover, the assessment of the organisational culture also shows, that they are basically satisfied with the current environment both in terms of environmental changes and autonomy. They would only expect greater commitment from colleagues.

In conclusion, the first hypothesis in terms of public service was partially verified, because the approach of the involved parties corresponds at the level of ideas and opinions. Nevertheless, the ideas are only partially realized, which can be attributed to two reasons. In their answers, the leaders express their expectations of themselves, but in reality, it rarely

appears. Based on the studies I assume that this phenomenon can also be attributed to several reasons. On the one hand, the regulated environment of the organisational culture restrictedly suitable to encourage cooperation and teamwork, on the other hand, the insufficiency of the leadership toolkit means a challenge. In addition, the attitude, which correctly shows what the characteristics of the leaders of the current public service personnel are, can clearly be outlined from the leaders' answers. The results show, that the social-coordinator role is the most typical in public administration. However, these data can be analyzed from several aspects. Compared with the results of the international studies, and also in terms of compliance with the external environmental expectations. **The latter statement was clearly verified.**

Law enforcement:

Regarding the examination of my first hypothesis, I discover several similarities in terms of data collection and the end result, comparing the attitudes of managers in the public service. My experiences during the law enforcement management courses provided a good basis for the evaluation of the results as well. Nevertheless, the professional literature and relevant studies also make unanimous statements on the topic.

In law enforcement, there are several studies available, in which the opinion of the personnel is analyzed from a different point of view. According to these, the most important for them are the financial benefits and feedback and appreciation from the leaders. Examining it from the generations' point of view: the expectations expressed by young people are similar. The important factors are on the one hand the financial benefits, on the other hand, the feedback, the recognition, the involvement in decision making and understanding the cause-and-effect relations. There might be lots of similarities in the opinion and expectations of co-workers. But it is interesting, that the two areas show great similarities regarding management style.

The international and domestic research in the theoretical part of my dissertation clearly concluded, that currently the most efficient is the transformative style in law enforcement as well. It is not closely linked to the verification of the hypothesis, but I consider it important, that the research also points out that a leader will be successful if reflects the needs of subordinates and is able to flexibly adapt to environmental changes. Cultural expectations and the system of tasks in the organisation are not primary.

In contrast, the empirical research I conducted pointed out, that even though the importance of cooperation is emphasized, it is much more pronounced related to the senior managers. Kind of a herd spirit is expected regarding the personnel, in other words, the team spirit and the

feeling of fellowship are articulated as a need. While they miss and expect commitment or dedication from employees with regard to questions of the organisational culture. These expectations and needs were confirmed by the interviews as well.

Regarding the examination of the second part of the hypothesis, I proceeded similarly. As I mentioned in the previous section, researchers consider the transformative leadership type the most efficient at the police as well. Along this, I wanted to know whether - regarding law enforcement - it is possible to determine a profile of a leader of law enforcement. Beyond that, I assumed the results would differ in the two professions as well.

As a result of my empirical research several factors can be described with regard to law enforcement, based on which several types can be defined. The Coordinator-strategist, who is acting along the principles appears the most prominently, followed by the Pack Leader. The results of the two mentioned factors reflect the majority of the respondents' opinion, while the ones I named Resigned and the Egoist lag behind the two previous ones.

In conclusion, my first hypothesis regarding law enforcement was verified, with the fact that by now several studies prove that belonging to the generations Y and Z show typical characteristics and attitudes, which differ from the others (Csutorás, 2020) and which presume different expectations for the employer and leader as well. In contrast, leaders, even today approach the question through the lens of their own generation, and expect from their employees an attitude that corresponds to the idea of their own generation. This is also confirmed by the fact, that law enforcement also has a typical leadership profile, which - also in this case - can clearly express the dominant ideas and attitudes characteristic of the area. The results show, that the Coordinator-strategist role is the most typical, in which human orientation is less dominant. In contrast, the second factor focuses much more on this area. However, this result can be assessed from several aspects. It can be compared to the results of the international studies, and also in terms of compliance with the external environmental expectations. In addition, I believe, that the question is worth analysing in the context of the results of organisational culture as well.

II. I assume, that the targeted leader trainer system, which is based on surveys, shall focus on the changes in the leaders' mindset (H2).

Public administration

The hypothesis, also as a result of several studies, can be considered verified. In connection with the previous hypothesis, it can be stated, that feedback, teamwork, and efficient cooperation are extremely important for generations Y and Z and they count on involving them in decisions affecting them. The analysis of questions related to the expectations towards leaders clearly showed that leaders also think cooperation and teamwork play a significant role, as the questions regarding outstanding leaders confirmed the same. At the same time, as I have already mentioned in the analysis of the results, subordinates feel it less.

In case of questions related to training needs, the need for development regarding conflict management and motivation expressed by leaders, appear much more often. Leaders might probably feel that this is what they need the most for performing their tasks. Based on this it can be assumed, that lots of group phenomena are due to communicational problems. Because of this, I believe, that the trainings shall be organized in a form, where the formation and development of communication and cooperation extend to the whole group, so that leaders and subordinates understand each other's intentions and motivations. Individual development is obviously necessary, but it is inevitable to build a culture of communication and the involvement of subordinates in decision-making.

Beside the above, the examination of the elements of organisational culture is also connected to the fulfilment of the hypothesis, which was not pronounced in terms of public administration. Therefore we can find some factors, which are typically important for leaders, such as the need for greater autonomy, but factor analysis did not show significant results. Based on these we can conclude, that the development of the organisational culture is among the aims of future organisational development projects.

All in all, the second part of the hypothesis is verified, firstly because in my opinion leaders have to reflect on environmental changes, in this case on the needs of young generations. Secondly, because environmental effects also include the ability of flexible adaptation to the external environment. And thirdly the different ideas mentioned in my first hypothesis also show that in addition to the expansion of equipments, the formation of attitudes relating to leadership is inevitable for managers. In order to achieve the appropriate results, a training system is needed that is able to reflect the above-mentioned expectations in a targeted manner.

Law enforcement:

Generational expectations and manifestations are equally typical of workers of both professions, regarding the training expectations conflict management and communication are the most necessary development aims for the respondents. This shows, that the opinions regarding further training systems in law enforcement brought similar results to those of public service. Competence development trainings can significantly support the management staff in finding more efficient solutions, but at the same time, it happens that the development plan is not elaborated in a targeted manner and the selection of the training is not always carried out according to the needs and not in a targeted manner, which may result in decreased commitment.

Interviews clearly pointed out that cooperation of leaders of the same special field is especially important, which is granted by the coordination sessions.

The third pillar of the examination of the hypothesis is laid in the results of the organisational culture. Results show that leaders - similarly to public service - would expect greater commitment and dedication from employees, but at the same time they think, the employees would need less autonomy than currently. In my opinion, this contradicts the Strategist role expectations, which were mentioned with regard to leadership roles. All these results point out that the young generation and the external environmental expectations affect in opposite directions.

Overall, the second hypothesis was verified, because the expectations coming from the personnel and the expectations regarding the leadership role and the environment - which also include the subordinates' attitude towards work and the organisation - run on a separate track. In my opinion, in order to retain the young generation and increase their performance, it is necessary to understand the principles and learn their application in practice which can increase efficiency Results also show that in their case it is not at all about the lack of management toolkit, since the analysis reflects a significant approach.

III. The methodology of Action learning can effectively be applied as part of the public service leadership training system both in public administration and law enforcement. However, it has to be adapted to the specificities of the public sector (H3).

Public administration

I presented the verification of my hypothesis in the third part of my research through the experience of the application of the Action learning methodology. In this context, it can be stated, that this technique works well in a lot of groups, where an atmosphere of trust has evolved, and it is also an important criterion, to what extent the theme touches personal leadership competencies. When searching for a solution can be referred to the organisational processes, the group can be involved much easier. Therefore, I consider the possibility of applying Action learning-based case processing progressive. But at the same time, the group sessions made it clear to me, that the theoretical models basically reflect well on the biggest challenges of the leadership staff. But it has also been proven, that the features of the public sector affect the success of training courses. It is necessary to take this into account when applying the method.

The third hypothesis was also verified, but the process described by the original model should be complemented by a number of aspects in the course of the application in the Hungarian public administration. I consider it extremely important to develop the process according to the composition of the group on the one hand, on the other hand, based on the nature of the relationship between them, and also professional composition. This way it will be able to connect to the aims defined in my dissertation.

Law enforcement:

As I have already mentioned in the previous point, I found proof regarding my third hypothesis during my experiences. The application of Action learning in law enforcement was a little different in public service. In our case, the training course of law enforcement leaders and the subsequent follow-up training made testing of methodology possible. In this environment, it worked extremely efficiently in the targeted development of leaders and in their awareness raising. At the same time, the training is a one-time opportunity, since it is subject to the appointment. Experiences showed me, that the environment and trust creation are of core importance for a successful application. In addition, I think that in the case of a solution similar

to public administration, these experiences could have developed similarly. This also shows that the efficiency of methodology can be increased significantly by incorporating it in the given framework. In order to achieve this, the methodology shall be adapted accordingly.

The third hypothesis was also verified, but the process described by the original model should be modified taking several aspects into consideration when applying it in law enforcement, and it shall be arranged with more theoretical background. In addition, I consider it extremely important to develop the process according to the professional composition of the group. I will cover its form and working principles in relation to the proposals I made.

3.2. SCIENTIFIC RESULTS, PRACTICAL UTILITY AND FURTHER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

My research experiences, conclusions and proposals offer flexibly applicable solutions for the development of Hungarian public service leaders, which reflect the organisations' current and future challenges. My results can serve as a basis for further research, which helps organisations answer the arising challenges and needs in a targeted way. Taking the aspects of both leaders and workers into consideration, they can develop the strategy and the operational principles of leader development in a focused manner.

Scientific results:

- 1. I have defined a leadership profile characteristic of public service and law enforcement, which also reflect the currently prevailing approach and needs.**
- 2. I have defined the attitudes and needs of public administration and law enforcement leaders related to organisational culture, to which the system of leadership training, and the Action learning methodology I proposed, must respond.**
- 3. I have compared the attitudes of public service leaders, the effective leadership style described by professional literature, and the ideas of the subordinate colleagues, and then I formulated the necessary development directions based on these.**
- 4. I have created the model of leadership development based on team coaching, and Action learning adapted to public service. I have made proposals to its strategic introduction in both professions I have studied.**

- 5. My empirical studies and secunder research both pointed out, that the Hungarian public service leader training must be laid on new bases, which offers a targeted solution for the leaders and organisations.**

Practical application of scientific results:

- My proposals may serve as a basis for developments for the effectiveness of the leadership training systems, which are operating in the Hungarian further training, and the ones partly carried out within that.
- The results of my research can be used at a strategic level when developing certain initiations, targeted at organisational development and organisational culture change, mainly by mapping the attitude of Hungarian public service leaders.
- The empirical data of my research and its conclusions can serve as the basis of conducting a more extensive examination, with the help of which more differentiated results and correlations can also be described. With the help of this, more targeted measures can be implemented during the leadership development measures initiated by public service organisations.
- My experiences with team coaching and my proposals related to its application can be useful for professionals, and during the elaboration of organisational measures.
- The solutions of Action learning methodology efficiently applicable in public service can be used as part of the further training system.
- My proposals for the system-level application of the Action learning methodology that I examined can be taken into account during the development of further training systems, and for public service bodies and for experts as well.
- In addition, my results can be used as foundations for research, related to the management personnel of the hierarchic public service systems, and as an opportunity to compare further research.

**3.3. FURTHER RESEARCH AREAS AND EXPLOITATION
POSSIBILITIES OF THE RESULTS**

In order to develop the methodology more carefully, an overview and comprehensive analysis of the leadership training system of the two professions is necessary. Consequently, the

summary of the goals and effects of the leadership training systems is realised as a secondary result of the research.

The results of the empirical research show that in the public service leaders must comply with special expectations. During the research I carried out, I accepted the - within the framework of the GLOBE research - leadership profile formerly described by Bakacsi Gyula (1998), and I carried out my own research along with its results. With this examination, with a wider sample, it would be possible to develop a public service and law enforcement profile. In addition to understanding the leaders' point of view, the research can be extended to the subordinates as well. As a result, the similarities and differences between the two sides' views could also be seen. In the same way, the attitudes can also be seen with the help of the examination, related to organisational culture.

Basically, I think, that the continuous follow-up and measurement of the Hungarian public sector would provide an adequate base for the creation of training systems and their continuous development. This will help a more targeted formation of the training systems, which supports the organisation to adapt to changes more flexibly and more quickly.

In my opinion, the examination of public service organisations in an international context is an additional research opportunity. It could be an interesting field to investigate what characteristics the cultural environment of the organisations operating with similar tasks possesses. In this way, the results become comparable from which regional tendencies are also detectable. In addition, the operational principles, characteristics of the organisations and their efficiency are also identifiable. In order to compare the results of all the above, we would obviously need more extensive research, immersing international partner organisations as well.

Among the barriers to my primer research, I have to mention the low number of senior leaders taking part in the analysis. I was only able to make the interviews with the leaders, who were at my disposal and provided their time during the period of my research, and even in the survey research, only a small number of them filled out the questionnaire.

Among the barriers to my secondary research, I have to mention, that a huge number of international literature is available on the theme. Especially regarding the methodology of Action learning, a lot of good practices can be found. I worked mainly based on case studies and references in the English language. The barriers of the essay limited the wider introduction of the specialized literature on the subject.

4. POSSIBILITIES FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE METHOD IN NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE - PROPOSALS

Strategic proposals

The introduction of Action learning could be a form of leadership training on its own as well, since the leader, who participates in a team coaching session, will gain lots of experience. In my opinion, it is most efficient in case it adapts to the currently evolved or evolving leadership training system. Consequently, I can see two possible ways of its adaptation.

1. In public administration there is no, or only evolving regulatory system for training similar to law enforcement, that has been created based on the new public service career path. On that basis, the Action learning methodology can be integrated into the system in a relatively plastic way. Action learning fits well in skill-based trainings, or can even be used by creating separate teams. In the system of training requirements it allows the transmission of such a basic competency kit, with which the Leader training and Further training Center can provide a complex knowledge base into the hands of leaders. Several further development processes can then be built on these bases.
2. Regarding law enforcement bodies, competency-based trainings are traditionally part of leadership trainings. In the course of reviewing the further training systems, I presented the legislative obligations for law enforcement bodies, the hierarchy of the training system, and also the leadership trainings within that. Thus, it can provide the possibility for incorporating a new method, keeping the frameworks and aims of the original training. In case the training is not changed, but the action learning appears as part of certain modules, the training will be enriched by new elements and will be more efficient. This way the participants would elaborate a topic in small groups, which the theme owner would share with the group separately or collectively. So, some topics could be replaced by for example certain parts of problem-solving, assertive communication or providing feedback modules. The presentation and applicability of the process might be illustrated by a briefly presented case. My experiences as a trainer so far pointed out, that although during the course leaders learn the basic forms, and

techniques needed for good communication, nevertheless they face difficulties when putting it into practice. When a leader presents a difficult or problematic situation, the group and other participants can more easily see the causes of the problem as well. On the one hand, the questions help us discuss the situation more detailed, and examine it from several angles. On the other hand, they also help find the solution and provide a good basis for analyzing the process as well. Thereby, the communicational forms - both for the theme owner and the group - can be presented. The questions asked by the lead trainer can make the efficient solutions during communication more tangible. In addition, in case it can be linked to the discussed theme, the theory can be explained through the problem, and thus can replace a whole module. I have to admit, that it can only happen if the lead trainer is properly prepared and able to create an atmosphere of trust. The lead trainer can present the application of a technique through a concrete example, which helps the everyday application at the future place of service as well.

Follow-up is of high importance in both cases (Szakács, Szakács, Bokodi, 2011), the aim of which is to provide team members with the possibility to share their experiences, successes, and failures, which happened to them after the training ended. The continuation of those skills is realized in this work, which they learned during the meeting, as well as the participant gets feedback on the applied patterns, which evolved in the period in between. This creates an opportunity to fine-tune, and further develop the solution methods¹. Follow-up is also good for the group to refresh former themes and problems and for the participants to share solutions and related consequences. In this way, they are able to discuss the experiences of the applied techniques in an atmosphere, where a spirit of trust has already evolved and in which they can discuss even more difficult problems that have arisen ever since. Another outcome might be the maintenance of the group and the evolved professional community, which can partially reduce the feeling of leadership loneliness. In order to achieve the main goal of follow-up, mainly that the training which was limitedly accessible and only as a reference, should be provided much more cautiously and in an interdependent system.

In public administration there has not evolved a training system alike the one of law enforcement, thus a new structure is necessary, the detailed presentation of which I will provide

¹ For learning more of its importance, see also: Bakacsi – Bokor – Császár – Gelei – Kovács – Takács: Stratégiai emberi erőforrás vezetők. Bp., JKJ Kerszöv, 2004.

in the following chapter. I believe, that the related follow-up system could also be established easily.

In the structure of law enforcement short (2-3 days long) annual revisional trainings are advisable. The themes also cover current events in addition to the formerly discussed topics and problems. In this way, the training can be easily integrated and at the same time, it can be carried out as part of the further training system.

Feedback, sharing the achieved results and experiences are all important parts of a development process. In addition, reviewing new challenges, and the evaluation equally show the importance of follow-up in both professions.

In my opinion uniform, strategic-level steps should be taken in order to achieve the above-mentioned goals. Public administration has to decide on their expectations towards leaders, and its policies regarding organisational culture. As leaders play an essential role in the changes of the organisational culture, they are in the center of developments, and the shaping of their attitudes is indispensable. At the same time, this is possible by developing system-level solutions, that are carried out at a strategic level.

I think, that all the above can be achieved the most efficiently by establishing an internal coach network, that is able to manage the problems locally, within the organisation. It would have several advantages. On the one hand, the significant role of trust regarding the depth of the problem-solving process could also be felt during the experiences I have described. On the other hand, in this case, the training can flexibly answer the arising problems both regarding organisation and time.

At the same time, I consider it important, to have the completed trainings and the development measurable. Feedback and evaluation can also be established by building up the network and centrally supervising it. Based on the above I have articulated the following proposals for the further development of the public service and law enforcement training system:

1. I suggest creating a **network of coaches and trainers** participating in the application of Action learning in public service, controlled by a central body (in public administration it is NKE Vezetőképzési és Továbbképzési Intézet (UPS Institute of Management Training and Further Training), in law enforcement, it is BM Vezetőkiválasztási, Vezetőképzési és Továbbképzési Főosztálya (MI Department of Selection of Leaders, Leadership Training and Further Training). The center is

responsible for professional competency and also their continuous training of the experts working for the bodies. Thereby the center will get continuous feedback and there is the possibility of evaluation as well. I believe, that it will trigger initiations for efficiency measurements² as well, which may provide objective feedback for both the bodies and the center, and it can provide information for further developments as well.

2. **Further training system:** Internal trainers can carry out team coach sessions for individual requests in the framework of further training system as well. This requires to be admitted in the accredited training list of the team coach further training system, and the definition of the credits that can be assigned to it. Due to the speciality of the methodology, it can only be successful with more flexible rules. Following the internal trainings, the body organizes the course within its jurisdiction.

3. **The central body:** It basically provides coordination tasks. It ensures the quality of the service of the internal training network, occasionally the possibility of cooperation regarding both professions. In addition, it is also responsible for the elaboration of the operational terms and conditions.

The preparatory training organised by the central body ensures proper preparation of the other bodies. In order to maintain the above, it organizes further trainings, and is continuously in contact with its coaches. In addition, it provides the possibility for participating in supervision sessions and provides support in the formation of peer groups.

The basic operational procedure of the internal trainer network and the tasks of the central body are summarized in figure 2.

² ROI: See in footnote No.8: Return on Investment.

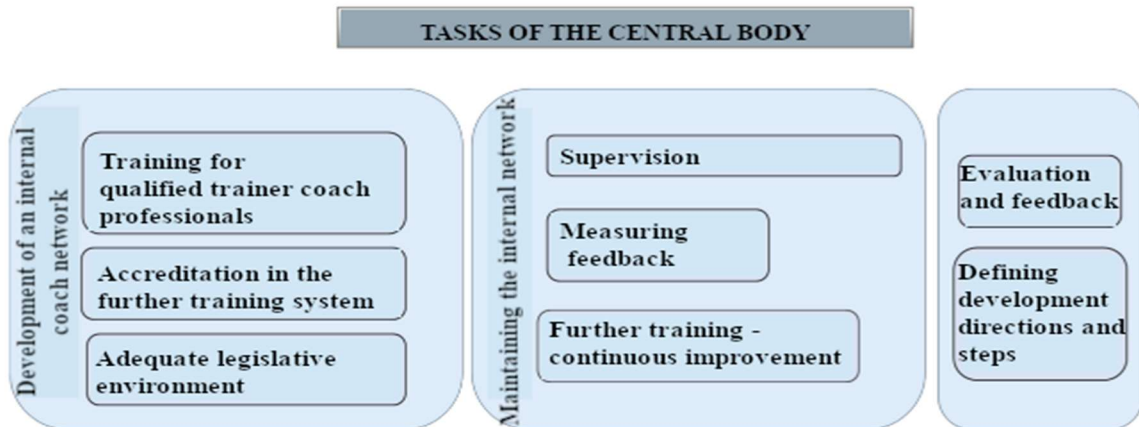


Figure 2: The tasks of the development of the internal coach network

Proposals for formation of groups regarding both professions:

The entire public administration is functioning along special principles, and the formations of organisations differ from the elements of the market in a lot of places. It can obviously be advantageous and also disadvantageous from several aspects. Nevertheless, it offers much more possible solutions, since it might be suitable in many ways to launch the developments even at the system level. In the following, I am going to summarize the feasible application fields in public service.

- A session organized by workers from different professional areas belonging to one management level, within the general organisation. In this case, beyond the individual challenges, reviewing the main processes and common points, and tasks, which require cooperation are all parts of the themes of the sessions.
- Regarding public administration, for workers of the same field, controllers, or leaders, the homogeneous design and development of processes, the formation of cooperational frameworks and management of challenges may all be topics of the Action learning session. Training of professional groups, such as leaders being active in the same field of government office, and their solutions found during the sessions can already affect the whole organisation.
- Regarding law enforcement, the coordination sessions perhaps provide the possibility for sharing knowledge, but as I have already mentioned, the statistical approach has a controversial effect on the formation of cooperation. In my opinion, the commitment of senior leaders towards cooperation might establish the basis of solutions similar to the

ones of public administration, because if for example with regard to the districts of Budapest, the organized cooperation among the leaders of certain professional fields of police stations (eg.: security, crime) could be realized, there would be more common actions among the districts. Though it seems like a small change, if it was realized, it could entail the modification of several system regulators. Nevertheless, I believe that then it would also be followed by a significant attitude change.

- In law enforcement Action learning can be incorporated in addition to the above, as part of the already mentioned leadership training courses, and it can also be applied well during the follow-up trainings.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

<https://vm.mtmt.hu/www/index.php?AuthorID=10050792>

Stréhli Georgina: Development trend of public service organizations BELÜGYI SZEMLE: A belügyminisztérium szakmai tudományos folyóirata (2022)

Paksi-Petró Csilla; Stréhli Georgina: Coaching szemléletű fejlesztés a közszolgálatban. Jó gyakorlatok, fejlesztési potenciálok a rendvédelemben és a közigazgatásban: Jó gyakorlatok, fejlesztési potenciálok a rendvédelemben és a közigazgatásban
BELÜGYI SZEMLE: A belügyminisztérium szakmai tudományos folyóirata (2010-) 69: 12 pp. 2167-2187, 21 p. (2021)

Paksi-Petró Csilla; Stréhli Georgina: Recent coaching trends in the civil service sector - a comparative international analysis focusing on Hungary
International Journal Of Arts, Humanities & Social Science 2: 11 pp. 68-78., 11 p. (2021)

Paksi-Petró Csilla; Stréhli Georgina: Az életre szóló tanulási élmény – Innovatív módszerek a közigazgatási vezetőképzésben: a coaching szemléletű fejlesztés
In: Peres, Zsuzsanna; Pál, Gábor (szerk.) Ünnepi tanulmányok a 80 éves TAMÁS ANDRÁS tiszteletére. Semper ad perfectum Budapest, Magyarország: Ludovika Egyetemi Kiadó (2021) 735 p. pp. 507-522., 16 p.

Fási Csaba; Kövendi, Eszter; Stréhli-Klotz Georgina; Szakács Gábor: A helyi önkormányzatok emberierőforrás-gazdálkodásának, a személyi állomány helyzetének vizsgálata Budapest, Magyarország: Nemzeti Közszolgálati Egyetem Közigazgatási Továbbképzési Intézet (2020), 295 p.

Stréhli-Klotz Georgina: Emberi erőforrás fejlesztése a közszolgálatban
Budapest, Magyarország: Nemzeti Közszolgálati Egyetem Közigazgatási Továbbképzési Intézet (2020), 49 p.

Stréhli-Klotz Georgina: Vezetőnek lenni a közszolgálatban?
BELÜGYI SZEMLE: A Belügyminisztérium szakmai tudományos folyóirata (2010-) 68: 6 pp. 137-149., 13 p. (2020)

Stréhli-Klotz Georgina (szerk.); Szakács Gábor (szerk.): A közszolgálati tisztviselők élet- és munkakörülményei, társadalmi helyzete Magyarországon
Budapest, Magyarország: Nemzeti Közszolgálati Egyetem Közigazgatási Továbbképzési Intézet (2020), 318 p.

Stréhli-Klotz Georgina: Law enforcement agencies and action learning approach – a potential tool for leadership development
European police science and research bulletin 2017: SCE 3 pp. 187-196., 10 p. (2017)

Stréhli-Klotz Georgina: A stratégiai alapú integrált emberi erőforrás gazdálkodás bevezetése action learning módszerekkel In TAYLOR: gazdálkodás- és szervezéstudományi folyóirat. 2016 8. évf. 24. sz. pp. 46-50.

Stréhli-Klotz Georgina: Action learninggel a versenyképességért
HR ÉS MUNKAJOG 7: 11-12 pp. 31-35., 5 p. (2016)

Stréhli-Klotz Georgina: Akciótanulás, mentorálás, coaching: A coachingtól a mentorálásig
In: Szabó, Szilvia; Szakács, Gábor (szerk.) Közzolgálati HR-menedzsment
Budapest, Magyarország: NKE Szolgáltató Kft. (2015) 340 p. pp. 199-202., 4 p.

Bokodi Márta; Szabó Szilvia; Stréhli-Klotz Georgina; Petró Csilla: Közzolgálati Humán
Tükör kutatás: Strukturált interjú: Közzolgálati humán tükör, 2013 (résztanulmány)
Budapest, Magyarország: Magyar Közlöny Lap- és Könyvkiadó (2013), 50 p.