

What is KOAN-PM (KOAN Project Management Inventory)?

The KOAN-PM is the very first and only behavioural competency online instrument in the field of project management that is not based in the self-image of the project manager/ team member but on their deeper personality. This makes it possible to predict the behaviour and competencies on a very accurate way and determining developmental needs of project managers/ team members (improving both of their hard and soft skills).

K **Knowing the competencies of your Project Managers is of strategic value for your organization?**

Is important to have project managers with right competencies and KOAN-PM can help you with identifying people who have them.

O **On which Project Manager could you rely on to finish difficult tasks?**

If you don't know, KOAN-PM can help you.

A **Are ambitions of project managers in sync with the project management needs?**

KOAN-PM can bring you answer on this question.

N **Nominating the best Project Manager for challenging projects is difficult for you?**

KOAN-PM can help you with choosing the right person.

P **Plan to create a training strategy to stretch Project Managers' potential?**

KOAN-PM can help you identify areas of training.

M **Manpower optimisation is essential to you for the success of complex projects?**

KOAN-PM can help you during optimisation process.

KOAN-PM can help you identify and measure both behaviour and competencies of your Project Managers.

WHY USE THIS TO MEASURE THE BEHAVIOUR AND COMPETENCIES?

Almost all existing questionnaires for project management are conceptual by nature. This means that the questionnaire consist of very transparent items. Project managers filling out these questionnaires understand easily what the item is intended to measure. As a consequence, this questionnaires measure one's self-image rather than the real personality. It also makes it easy for project managers/ team members to direct the results the way they want to be perceived or they believe one should be for a certain position.

During 7 years creating the KOAN-PM, experts intended to develop the most accurate predictor of the true competencies of a project manager. To reach this goal they used an empirical approach of all the existing research methods for personality & competency tools. This is the strongest research method leading to the highest prediction and the least vulnerable on cultural differences but at the same time it also is the most exhaustive approach, putting a high demand on the quality of the data gathering. This method helps to reveal these items that have no obvious relationship with the researched concepts but that do have a strong predictive relationship in reality. **The project manager/ team member filling in the questionnaire has thus no idea what exactly is measured by a specific items which makes it utmost difficult to direct the answers towards a clear goal. The result is a strong prediction of the personality, competencies and work style of the concerned project manager/ team member.**

WHAT YOU GAIN?

The **KOAN-PM report** consist of two parts:

The first part is a very extensive and detailed description of the work style of a manager, during the four project phases (name of each phase depends on which project terminology used – PMBoK, PRINCE2):

1. **Initiating**/ Starting up a project.
2. **Definition**/ Planning/ Directing a project.
3. **Executing the project**/ Controlling a stage and Managing a stage boundary.
4. **Embedding**/ Closing the project and learning.

At the end of the description of each phase, an overview is given of the strengths and limitation of the concerned project manager, verbalized in short and powerful statements.

The second part consist of a figure-based evaluation of the scores on 8 competencies:

1. Respecting and commanding respect.
2. Developing support.
3. Creating involvement.
4. Result-orientation.
5. Creating clarity.
6. Managing information and maintaining control.
7. Organizational orientation.
8. Self-confidence and flexibility.

Each competence is broken down in 8 very concrete and different behaviours for every competence.

On each of the behaviours a score is given that indicates whether this behaviour represents an obstacle for success, development point, a positive characteristic up to a distinctive quality. This way you can define development points of your project managers.

HOW TO APPLY THE RESULTS OF KOAN-PM REPORT:

1. As a Clarifying Report For Self-Assessment

The Project Manager obtains a concise, eloquent and well-grounded insight into his Strengths and Areas of Development. This helps him/ her to focus on areas that he/ she still needs to work on (both hard and soft skills), thereby reinforcing strength as well as eliminating an obstacle.

2. As Preparation for Training:

For the Individual:

The textual part helps the participant to prepare and to verbalise things better. An important advantage of having the 'data of measurement' is that the participant starts the training with an increased level of self-insight. This way, one has a better view on the effective use of one's energy at a professional level.

For the Trainer:

The competency model can be used as a measure that helps to map strengths and weaknesses of the participants. The trainer can work with subgroups that share the same strengths or limitations. Or work with subgroups where the extremes meet each other.

3. As Support for Selection, Internal Promotion or Setting Up Project Groups:

During an assessment, the candidate can be given the document for reading as an introduction for an open dialogue. By revealing the information, the ownership is shared with the candidate and all elements get debatable. The candidate also gets a way better insight into why he she is or is not the right candidate.

4. As Basis for Formulating Development Questions:

The instrument can serve as framework for making choices on developmental goals. The competencies can be used as questions to be asked to the professional environment during a 360° (PM 360°) feedback cycle. The result can be compared with the personal scores in order to compare one's own potential (the being) with the perceived behaviour (the doing). This way, one has a better view on his effective professional energy balance.

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HOW KOAN-PM HAS BEEN DEVELOPED?

The basic assumption at the beginning of the research was that successful project managers have number of specific competencies.

In the first phase of the research experts focus was concentrated on describing these competencies by the use of two methods. Firstly they interview a number of highly respected project managers from various sectors applying the behavioural event interview technique to describe situations they considered as a success. Aiming to isolate successful behaviour, they required them to describe in detail how they dealt with the specific situations. The project managers were also required to describe in detail situations they had experienced as a failure.

Secondly, a number of questions have been sent to Operational managers and HR managers, to answer about the key success factors for project management. Based on those two methods, experts have been able to phrase 120 behaviours leading to success in project management as well as 20 behaviours that represent major pitfalls and can be considered as obstacles for success.

During the next phase, experts studied the empirical relationship between the KOAN-PM questionnaire and the 140 behavioural indicators above, starting with requesting the participating project managers to fill out the KOAN-PM questionnaire.

The list of behaviours was then given to a large number of project managers and people from their professional environment to rate the respective project managers with using list of this behaviours. Around 1,500 participants were involved in this research which took 7 years.

Statistical evidence was used to understand the impact of the difference in the answers and link it with the competencies. By comparing the answers pattern with the reference group, it becomes possible to make a prediction based in the **KOAN-PM** itself about the likelihood of the manifestation of a behaviour.

As a consequence the results digs deeper than the self-image, brings to light a more profound understanding of the basic personality and – last but not least – gives a clear insight of the potential, the strengths and limitations on a very concrete level, description of behaviour.