Impact of coaching on IT specialists' professional development: An empirical analysis

El impacto del coaching en el desarrollo profesional de los especialistas en TI: un análisis empírico

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Abstract

The role of coaching in the professional self-realisation of IT specialists is gaining relevance in the context of rapid changes in the labour market and increasing requirements for adaptability and the development of career competences. Modern IT companies increasingly use coaching techniques to improve employee performance and develop professional growth strategies. The study aims to assess the impact of coaching on the professional self-realisation of IT professionals, particularly in forming career strategies and developing critical competences. The research methodology includes literature analysis, surveys of IT professionals at different levels, and quantitative analysis of the collected data. The study results showed that individual and team coaching contributes to increased professional confidence, soft and technical skills development, and more effective career planning. It has been found that the most significant barrier to achieving career goals is the lack of technical competences and employer support, which can be addressed through the introduction of corporate coaching programmes. The study's practical significance lies in using the data to create effective professional development programmes in IT companies. The results also emphasise the importance of promoting coaching among IT professionals to ensure their competitiveness.

Keywords: coaching, education, professional self-realisation, IT specialists, career development, competences, motivation, leadership qualities, teamwork, corporate culture.

Resumen

El papel del coaching en la autorrealización profesional de los especialistas en TI está ganando relevancia en el contexto de los rápidos cambios en el mercado laboral y las crecientes exigencias de adaptabilidad y desarrollo de competencias profesionales. Las empresas de TI modernas utilizan cada vez más técnicas de coaching para mejorar el rendimiento de los empleados y desarrollar estrategias de crecimiento profesional. El estudio tiene como objetivo evaluar el impacto del coaching en la autorrealización profesional de los profesionales de TI, en particular en la formulación de estrategias profesionales y el desarrollo de competencias críticas. La metodología de investigación incluye análisis de la literatura, encuestas a profesionales de TI en diferentes niveles y análisis cuantitativo de los datos recopilados. Los resultados del estudio mostraron que el coaching individual y de equipo contribuye a aumentar la confianza profesional, el desarrollo de habilidades blandas y técnicas y una planificación profesional más eficaz. Se ha descubierto que la barrera más importante para alcanzar los objetivos profesionales es la falta de competencias técnicas y de apoyo de los empleadores, que se puede abordar mediante la introducción de programas de coaching corporativos. La importancia práctica

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del estudio radica en utilizar los datos para crear programas de desarrollo profesional eficaces en las empresas de TI. Los resultados también enfatizan la importancia de promover el coaching entre los profesionales de TI para garantizar su competitividad.

Palabras clave: coaching, educación, realización profesional, especialistas en TI, desarrollo de carrera, competencias, motivación, liderazgo, trabajo en equipo, cultura corporativa.

Introduction

The processes of professional self-identity of IT specialists has been an essential issue in the world's highly dynamic and competitive job environment caused by technological development. This change makes career mobility, career self-management and competence requirements primary concern for individuals and organizations. In this regard 'coaching' has been identified as a practical solution for the process of self and organisational transformation. However, information about its application and effectiveness regarding IT specialists is still insufficient. Current studies indicate the psychological and methodological features of coaching, revealed through views on career path, motivation, and competence development (Kryukova et al., 2023; Khanetska, 2024a). The focus is on coaching, accordingly it is given to each person as well as to the team, with the problem-solving and task-completion stress. Nevertheless, the literature revealed that coaching effectiveness depends on the professional practice and cultural environment (Zobenko, 2020; Vedina et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, some areas worthy of further scientific research are still uncovered: Broad and generalizable applicability of the type of coaching programmes developed specifically for IT specialists; the inclusion of such a form of activities into organizational culture. However, there are issues regarding the availability of the services and the cost that makes the possibility of the service to reach more people a good area of study. That structure of this study is intended to cover these gaps. The first section includes a brief review of current trends in coaching and its applicability to the sphere of IT. The second section analyzes the research method used in the study and descries the means applied in data collection and analysis. The existence of coaching effects on career planning, motivation and skill enhancement, as well as limitation to implementation is also discussed under the results and discussion sections. As a final measure, the study proposes strategies for the promotion of coaching and the application of practice as the Source of Realization of Professional Self.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of coaching as a means to enhance the professional self-actualization of IT specialists, identify the major characteristics of this process, and offer practical guidelines for enhancing the efficacy of the coaching process. In order to meet these aims, the study contrasts modern tendencies of coaching, assesses the leisure acquire in career management and competence development, and defines the prospects of widening the usage of coaching services proving the IT domain.

Literature Review

New research puts a lot of emphasis on coaching in the workplace, especially for career advancement and especially in information technology. According to Kryukova et al. (2023), coaching is crucial in the context of change, whereas Khanetska (2024a) underlines the necessity of career coaching to form long-term orientations for workers. According to Vedina et al. (2020), team coaching is one of the useful strategies to enhance interaction in group assignments; thus, Dzikovska (2019) stresses adding coaching methods into the learning processes to foster critical thinking. Some authors distinguish technical and soft competences. Gadatsch (2023) forcefully argues for the generation of contemporary technical abilities; Kryukova et al. (2023) perspective on the ramifications of soft skills for collaboration. Khanetska (2024b) has presented the theory of the predisposition to or orientation on the given conditions as one of the essential attributes for success. Chayka & Zelenin (2024). have stressed leadership coaching as one of the elements in the construction of strategic visions.

There are also works concerning the influence of corporate culture. Several researchers presented ideas about coaching, where Kryukova et al. (2023) and Merrill et al. (2023) suggest that it may be used to enhance the level of employee engagement and motivation, and Vedina et al. (2020) highlight that the application of coaching in organisations' strategic management is vital. Similarly, as Moura and Silva (2019) observe, coaching may impact career prioritisation and influence professional growth, as Patti and colleagues (2012) investigate. Research looks at the issue of computer specialists employing coaching to address professional ripple effects. Iswarya et al. (2024) compared the effectiveness of coaching programmes for stress reduction. Chaika (2024) submitted a paper concentrating on personality factors and success. The significance of coaching programmes to enhance job satisfaction is discussed by Purohit et al. (2021), and the analysis of professionalism development in an international context is investigated by Zaharopoulos (2024).

Coaching in the context of authentic work as a key to improved satisfaction of employees is discussed by Lozovetska et al. in the yet-to-be-released work of 2024. Chaika (2023) pays significant attention to the socio-psychological predictors of career decision-making that are critical in forming the career plans of IT specialists. It is valuable to use data collected from coaching to assess the effect of coaching on the development of mentors in professional learning programmes that can be applied in corporate institutions. Zobenko (2020) notes that the use of coaching technologies in training future professionals can be effective, especially in the context of the learning environment.

Lifelong learning, as described by Batsurovska (2023) learning, should incorporate coaching methodologies, especially for engineering personnel to promote flexibility besides strengthening their analytical abilities. Coaching is described as the coaching being an effective learning strategy with the transformative capacities in specific educational and organisational settings; Příloha 2: Bisquerra Alzina (2014). According to Ridai (2024), career coaching proved to be a major need to meet career interest and break existing barriers among Ukrainian IT professionals. According to Zobenko (2020), the logical use of coaching technologies in the formation of qualified future professional, especially those in the field of psychology and pedagogy, can develop competencies needed by professionals. Taken together, these studies provide a picture of how adaptable is coaching as a form of development with respect to the profession and the field of study.

Batunova et al. (2021) focus on online learning for IT professionals to demonstrate how it is possible to modify the coaching approach for online delivery. Zamlynskyi et al. (2021) discuss the effects of human resource management through coaching to determine the effects on the employees' competitiveness. Zamlynskyi et al. (2020) consider the issue from the position of the flow of innovative development, in which coaching is employed to resolve organisational conflicts. According to Purohit et al. (2021), there are factors affecting the graduates' job preferences, and coaching should be included for better results. Thus, analysing the perspectives of career-related learning in the monograph, Lozovetska (2015) also pays considerable attention to the aspects and the significance of using the coaching models of personal career development. However, there is still an issue of low availability of such services for IT specialists because of the lack of knowledge or money. More specifically, the stability and efficacy of coaching approaches in the long term and different organisational and cultural settings need to be investigated.

While the review of the current methodologies presented here has provided authors' insights into the findings, more can be desired given that the approaches borrow from qualitative assessments and normally take small sample sizes. Few attempts are made to analyse the overall role of coaching with respect to business and personal career management. Also, although some researchers point to the effectiveness of coaching in relation to technical aspects, many do not take into account the organisational problems which may include physical and/or financial access. This research seeks to address these gaps to some extent, by using both quantitative data analysis as well as qualitative findings obtained from this study. In turn, it aims to offer the more inclusive account of the nature and purpose of coaching within these IT workers' professional experience.

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The presented study's goals are well in line with the existing literature, Kryukova et al. (2023), and Khanetska (2024a) ideas of the strategies for working in the highly unstable environment and the long-term career plans' development. However, this research expands on such findings by incorporating organisational and cultural factors seldom considered in prior research. First, the integration of several coaching approaches enhances the study's relevance and helps to address the problem of a lack of theories that can be utilized in various contexts to implement practicalcoaching models.

Methodology

This work utilized both quantitative and qualitative research methods with a view of approaching the investigation of the role of coaching in the self-actualization of IT specialists holistically. To increase the generalizability of the results and achieve a rich, diverse sample, the study was designed with the following characteristics:

Questionnaire Development and Validation: a number of questions were designed specifically to cater for the main parts of the study, the following: career plan, coaching awareness, working experience, and perceptions on coaching services. While developing the process, the authors conducted assessment of the validated instruments applied in other similar studies and reconciled them to required academic standards. The questionnaire underwent a two-stage validation process: review from an expert and the pilot test. Five experts of the domain scrutinised the questionnaire based on the clarity, relevance and content validity of the test items. Next, a pilot test was also administered with 15 IT professionals to check reliability to remove any unclear or multi-faced items. To confirm their internal consistency, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was computed which gave an acceptable value of 0.85.

Sampling and Data Collection: the participants in the study came from various organizational roles in IT profession and they were Junior, Middle, Senior IT personnel and Team Lead/Manager. To achieve this, purposive sampling was adopted and respondents comprise of professionals in software development, IT system support and freelancing of various ranks in the industries. The data were collected between June and August 2024 via Google Forms, LinkedIn, Facebook professional groups, and Telegram. Further responses were obtained through a filled in corporate newsletter from the participating IT organizations, thus considering regional diversity. To obtain the truthful responses, the participants' identity was not disclosed.

Data Quality Control: one of the important steps was an A stringently controlled quality of the data collection process. Entries that were left partially or filled in erratically were excluded from the study by tracking responses made by the participants. Self-duplicates were detected based on the unique record numbering and the quality of data used for data cleaning methods was robust. These steps made certain that only positive responses were used in the final analysis.

Statistical Analysis Techniques: quantitative data was analyzed by use of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Data analysis was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and the graphs were created using Microsoft Excel. Measures of dispersion involved calculating table frequencies, percentages, and means of the data in order to describe the data. Chi-square tests and ANOVA were used to establish marginal homogeneity and significant differences for the career development variables and the professional levels and influence of coaching. Pearson's correlation test was used to establish the relationship between the career aspirations, the extent of using coaching services and perceived benefits. Also, Tableau was applied to build in-live solutions that helped to analyze crucial insights and trends more interactively.

Comparative and Qualitative Analysis: in order to make the comparison, this study's results were compared with the prior findings, including the studies of Kryukova et al. (2023) and Khanetska (2024). Content analyses of the worked examples of open-ended questions in the questionnaire were done to explore

common themes of perceived barriers and opportunities towards the provision of coaching services in the IT field.

Such an approach of the analysis of research objectives safeguards a comprehensive investigation of the importance of coaching for professional self-fulfillment. Explicitly outlining the research method and the process of operationalizing the variables and the statistical analysis and quality assurance, the study follows research best practices.

Results

The contemporary concept of coaching is one of the primary levers for communication in professional training, including IT specialists, in the context of continuously enhancing adaptability to changes. The main approaches to using coaching include the following aspects:

1. Individual coaching is the most personal solution that relates to the needs of a particular inflicted expert. With the help of 'strengths' and 'areas of improvement', it became possible to define the further evolution strategy of the individual. Its main advantage is the supposedly free choice of instruments and methodologies considering the client's ethical-moral principles and objectives. According to Kryukova et al. (2023), individual coaching can increase professional self-confidence and enhance decision-making competence. With this approach, any qualified IT professionals working in this capacity can be easily trained in new technologies. It also enhances their general employability status in the labour market, thus assuring sustainable employment progress.
2. Team coaching concentrates on enhancing the effectiveness of a team or a group to meet his or her goals. It promotes team members' appreciation of each other, which is valuable given the nature of project activities in the IT sector. According to Vedina et al. (2020), team coaching entails determining the role of each participant in the team, thus eliminating conflict. This applies to teams in the organisation because it leads to better interaction, faster decision making and improved results. Coaching is also applied to the creation of a support system in the organisation, which is helpful in the creation of a practical and desirable working environment. The result of this approach is an improvement in the productivity of the entire team and the satisfaction of the team members from working collectively.
3. Career coaching focuses on the individual's career and overall objective in career life. It assists clients in defining their career objectives and creating a strategic vision with the right strategies. As Khanetska (2024a) highlighted, career coaching involves interest, ability and demand both inside and outside people. This is particularly crucial in the IT organisation due to the fast pace of technological improvement, which demands constant change. Coaching prevents dead-end situations in the workplace and can prepare a person for the transfer to a new, higher level of job responsibility. It also contains resources for successful job search eCommerce, bargaining working conditions, and oneself in the marketplace.
4. IT professionals hoping to become managers or project leaders need leadership development coaching. Its target is developing strategic thinking, emotional intelligence, and motivation. According to Zobenko (2020), leadership coaching is essential to develop team management, decision making and adaptation skills. When coached through this, professionals learn how to spend resources, delegate tasks, and create an environment for good. Coaching also helps develop the ability to find solutions to conflicts and communicate with different personalities. This makes professionals competent in their role to lead in a professional environment.
5. Coaching integration into the educational process prepares future professionals for independent planning and realising professional targets. According to Dzikovska (2019), coaching is a pedagogical technology that promotes critical thinking, independence, and responsibility. Learned education coaching techniques help students grasp who they are and which areas they can develop more. The knowledge of IT allows students to adapt to rapidly changing technologies and employer needs. In addition, coaching is a learning process that develops time management, teamwork, and communication skills. The result is that this approach improves the efficiency of professional training and the competitiveness of graduates in the labour market.

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Existing approaches to coaching demonstrate its versatility and effectiveness in the professional development of IT professionals. The choice of a particular approach depends on the development goals, specifics of professional activity, and expected results.

Considering the impact of coaching techniques on forming a career strategy for IT professionals is crucial. *Identification of goals and priorities.* Coaching techniques help IT professionals clearly define their career goals and priorities. Through an in-depth analysis of personal values and professional ambitions, coaching allows clients to realise what skills and knowledge they need to develop. Khanetska (2024b) emphasises that this process contributes to creating a clear career vision that meets both the needs of the professional and the requirements of the market. This allows professionals to focus on the tasks that best contribute to their professional development. It minimises the possibility of taking the incorrect opportunity for a job or a career pathway. This also prevents burnout due to an expectation and reality gap.

Key competences development. Coaching aids in identifying, developing, and nurturing the distinctive professional competences needed for professional growth. IT can include technical soft skills such as communication, leadership, and critical thinking. Kryukova et al. (2023) stress that coaching for changing technological trends allows employees to adapt to changes in the market and be relevant in the labour market. Personalised training, feedback and motivational techniques are used to achieve this. IT professionals are more competent in acquiring degrees and can carry out sophisticated work professionally. Furthermore, competence development enhances their attractiveness in the job market.

One of the most essential advantages of using coaching methods is the ability of specialists to change in the IT sector constantly. This is important because technology is changing quickly, and professionals must be ready. Balakhtar, Bondarchuk, & Kazakova. (2024), Zobenko (2020) notes that coaching promotes the development of flexible thinking and the ability to learn new knowledge and technologies quickly. This gives professionals an advantage when they must respond to uncertainty or change their career path. Adaptability not only helps professionals stay at the current level but also actively move up the career ladder. As a result, it increases their resilience to challenges related to changes in environmental or working conditions.

Improving self-presentation skills. Coaching techniques help IT professionals develop the self-presentation skills necessary for successful employment or career advancement. The professionals learn to effectively present their achievements, demonstrate their strengths, and set expectations. Khanetska (2024b) emphasises that self-presentation skills are critical in today's competitive environment. They help to establish connections with employers, clients and colleagues. In addition, these skills contribute to successful job interviews and building a positive professional image. As a result, IT professionals get more opportunities for career development.

Increasing the level of motivation. Coaching helps to maintain a high level of motivation for IT professionals on the way to achieving their career goals. Professionals receive support and inspiration through regular meetings with a coach to overcome difficulties and achieve their goals. Kryukova et al. (2023) note that motivation is essential to career success. Coaching also allows professionals to understand their internal drivers better and encourages them to develop themselves. This helps not only to achieve current goals but also to develop long-term career strategies. As a result, professionals feel more satisfied with their work and professional path.

The study of the impact of coaching techniques on the professional self-realisation of IT specialists was conducted using a questionnaire. A special questionnaire was developed, which contained questions covering the following aspects: the level of professional experience of the respondents, their career goals, awareness and experience of using coaching services, assessment of the impact of coaching, as well as the primary professional barriers and the most valuable aspects of working with a coach.

The sample included IT professionals from different levels: junior, middle, senior, and executive positions. Respondents working in various IT sectors participated in the survey, which allowed us to obtain representative data. The survey was conducted online using specialised data collection platforms such as Google Forms, which made it easy for respondents from different regions to participate. The main focus was on IT professionals working in software development and IT systems support companies as well as freelancers involved in the IT sector. The questionnaire was distributed through professional social networks such as LinkedIn and specialised groups on Facebook and Telegram targeting the IT community. In addition, several IT companies agreed to participate in the survey and used internal corporate newsletters. More than 126 IT professionals of various professional levels (Junior, Middle, Senior, Team Lead/Manager) participated in the survey. This approach ensured the collection of representative data covering various aspects of the use of coaching services and their impact on career development in IT. The respondents answered anonymously, which helped to increase the accuracy and sincerity of the information provided.

The responses were analysed using quantitative methods, including calculating shares and percentages for each category of responses. The study also included comparing the impact of coaching on various career aspects, such as planning, technical and soft skills development, motivation, and stress management. In addition, information was gathered on the main obstacles IT professionals face and expectations regarding implementing coaching services in organisations.
Let us graphically analyse and present the data (Figures 1-7).
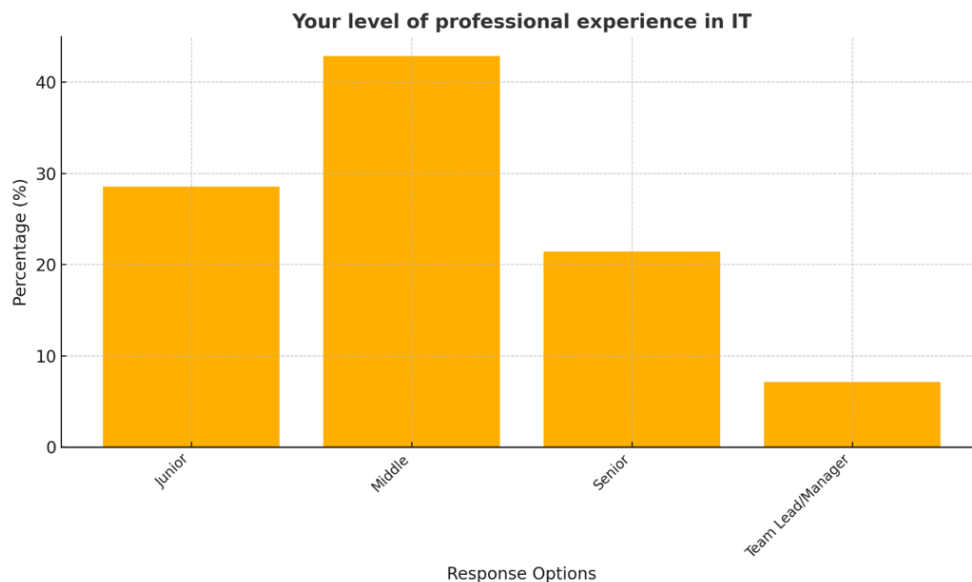
Figure 1. Results of the survey of IT specialists on the impact of coaching on their professional self-realisation.

The survey showed that the largest share of IT professionals belongs to the Middle level (42.86%), while only 7.14% hold managerial positions. Among the professional goals, the most frequently mentioned was the development of technical skills (51.43%), which significantly exceeds other goals, such as changing specialisation (14.29%). Coaching is familiar to 68.57% of respondents, but only 41.43% have used these services. The most significant impact of coaching is increased confidence (52.14%) and improved career planning (31.43%). The main obstacles to achieving career goals include lack of technical skills (36.43%) and lack of support from the employer (31.43%). The most crucial aspect of working with a coach is career planning (49.29%), while 71.43% of respondents noted a significant or moderate impact of coaching on their development. These data indicate the significant role of coaching in shaping the professional strategy of IT professionals.

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Figure 2. Analysis of barriers and needs of IT professionals in career development.

Among the main obstacles to achieving career goals, IT professionals most often mentioned a lack of technical skills (36.43%) and a lack of support from their employer (31.43%), which is significantly higher than the share of respondents who noted low self-esteem (27.14%) or lack of a career plan (18.57%). As for the aspects of working with a coach, the most useful are career planning (49.29%), motivation and stress management (45.00%), and soft skills development (38.57%). Only 11.57% of respondents mentioned other aspects. In addition, 61.43% of respondents consider it advisable to introduce coaching services in their organisation, in particular for developing a career plan (47.14%) and improving professional skills (32.86%). Time management training is less popular (20.00%). The data shows that technical and soft skills remain critical areas for improvement, while employer support is a significant factor for successful career development.
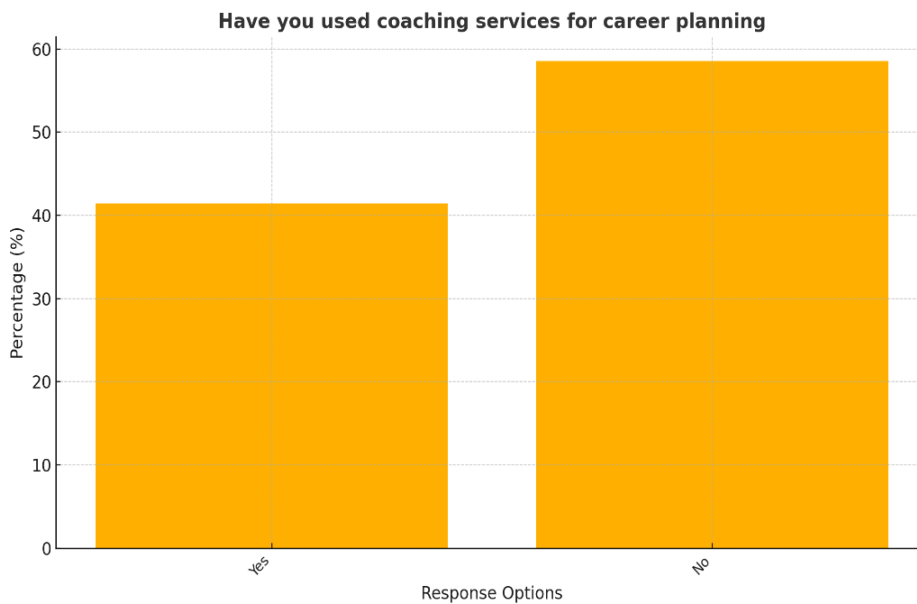

Figure 3. Use of coaching services for career planning among IT professionals.
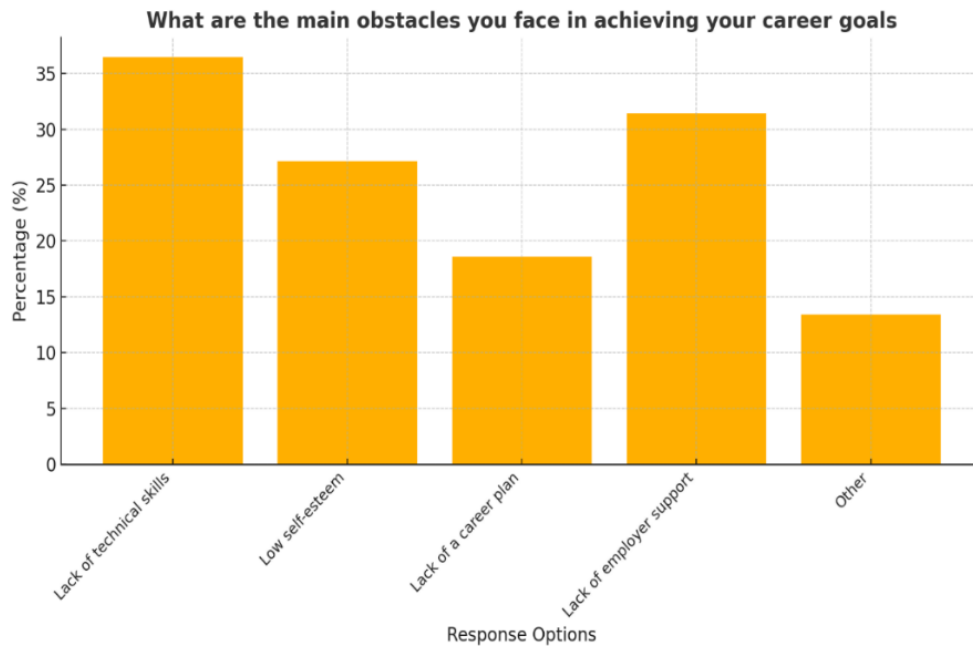
The data shows that most respondents (58.57%) have not used coaching services for career planning, while only 41.43% have. This gap of almost 17% indicates that a significant proportion of IT professionals do not seek coaching, possibly due to a lack of access or awareness. More than 40% of coaching service users indicate a demand for such services in the IT sector. It is worth noting that this indicator is essential for analysing the effectiveness of coaching and its impact on career development. The results also indicate the potential for broader implementation of coaching aimed at developing career strategies. This analysis can help IT organisations develop appropriate employee support programmes.

Most respondents assessed the impact of coaching on their career strategy as moderate (39.29%) or significant (32.14%), which makes up 71.43% of the respondents. Only 17.86% reported a minimal impact, while 10.71% felt no effect. It is noticeable that the positive impact of coaching prevails, demonstrating its value in professional development. The smallest percentage of respondents in the "No impact" category indicates that it is rare for coaching to be of no benefit. These data underline that coaching programmes should be integrated into the corporate culture to enhance the professional development of specialists. However, the existence of categories with minimal or no impact indicates the need to optimise coaching methods and consider individual needs.
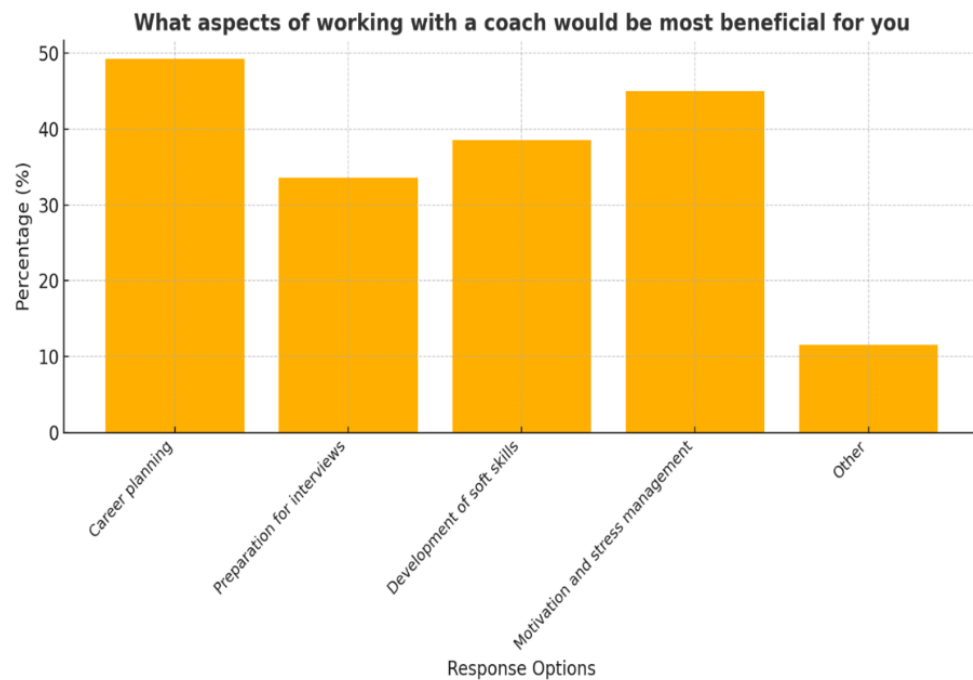
The most significant obstacle to achieving career goals was the lack of technical skills (36.43%). Lack of employer support is the second most crucial problem, which 31.43% of respondents mentioned. Low self-esteem was mentioned by 27.14% of participants, while the lack of a clear career plan was a problem for 18.57% of respondents. Other obstacles accounted for the smallest share of 13.43%. The analysis shows that technical and organisational aspects remain the main challenges for IT professionals. This data underlines the importance of developing technical competences and creating a supportive work environment with clear career opportunities.
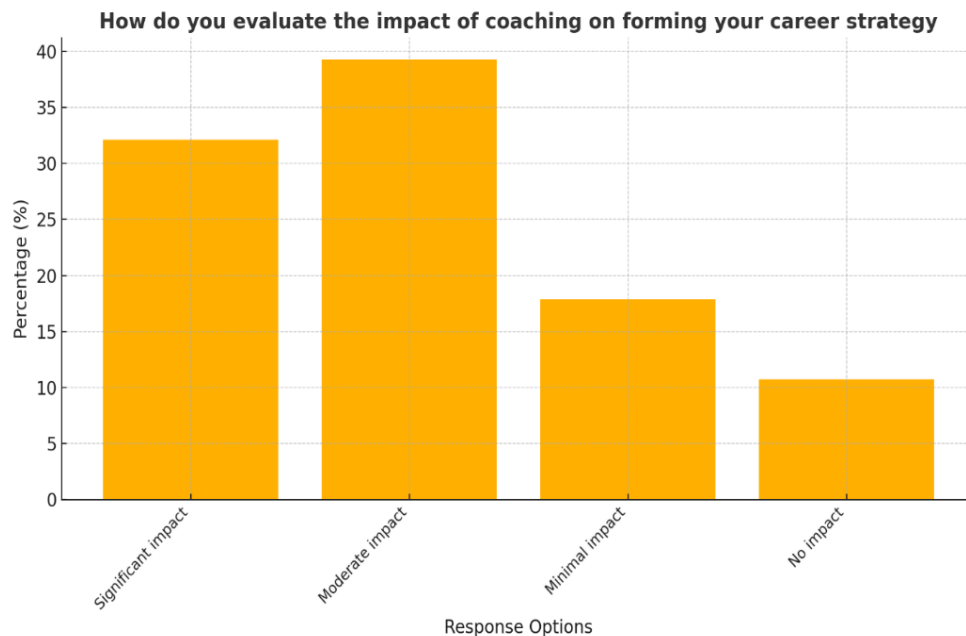
Figure 4. Evaluation of the impact of coaching on the formation of a career strategy for IT professionals.

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Figure 5. The main obstacles to achieving career goals of IT professionals"

Figure 6. The most valuable aspects of working with a coach for IT professionals.

The most helpful aspect of working with a coach was career planning, which received 49.29% of the vote. Motivation and stress management came in second with 45.00%. Developing soft skills was essential to 38.57% of the survey participants while preparing for interviews garnered 33.57%. Only 11.57% of respondents chose other aspects. These data indicate that career planning is a crucial need among IT professionals, and psychological support and soft skills development play an essential role in their

professional growth. The relatively low interest in preparing for interviews may indicate that respondents are more interested in long-term strategies than in one-off events.

Figure 7. Feasibility of implementing coaching services in IT organisations.

Most respondents (61.43%) consider introducing coaching services in their organisation appropriate, while 38.57% share the opposite opinion. This more than 22% gap indicates a significant interest in such services among IT professionals. Positive responses indicate an awareness of the benefits of coaching, such as skill development and career support. At the same time, the share of negative responses indicates a certain amount of scepticism or lack of awareness of the effectiveness of coaching. These findings highlight the importance of promoting coaching techniques and developing programmes considering employees' needs. The introduction of coaching can be a vital tool for increasing staff motivation and efficiency.

Table 1.
The main factors of successful professional self-realisation of IT specialists

Factor	Meaning	Research/Example	Recommendations
Technical competence	A high level of technical skills is the basis for career growth.	Gadatsch (2023): Developing modern technical skills ensures competitiveness in the labour market.	Continuous training, certification, and participation in professional training.
Soft Skills	Communication, teamwork, leadership, and critical thinking are vital skills for collaboration in the IT environment.	Vedina et al. (2020): Soft skills development promotes effective interaction in team projects.	Integrate soft skills training into the professional programmes of IT companies.
Motivation and goals	Clearly defined career goals and high internal motivation contribute to rapid development.	Khanetska (2024b): Professionals with clear plans achieve higher levels of job satisfaction.	Use coaching to identify and adjust career plans.
Working environment	A friendly corporate culture, flexibility and support for development contribute to self-realisation.	Kryukova et al. (2023): Investing in staff training increases talent retention.	Create corporate mentoring and coaching programmes and provide opportunities for professional development.

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Continuous training	Continuous improvement of skills and knowledge through courses, training, and certifications is essential to remain competitive.	Dzikovska (2019): Curricula with coaching contribute to developing professional competences.	Support employees' participation in training courses, such as Coursera, Udemy, or specialised training.
Mentoring and coaching	Mentoring helps to navigate difficult professional situations and identify the best ways to develop.	Merrill et al. (2023): Coaching increases confidence in decision-making.	Implement corporate coaching and mentoring programmes for employees at all levels.

Source: developed by the author based on survey data (Khanetska, 2024 b) and analysis (Merrill et al., 2023).

Discussion

The study found a significant impact of coaching on the professional self-realisation of IT professionals, which is confirmed by the survey data. According to the research of Kryukova et al. (2023), this is consistent with the fact that coaching is crucial for the development of such critical competences as technical and soft skills. Although most respondents (71.43 per cent) expressed a positive impact of coaching, a share of professionals (17.86 per cent) responded that there was no or little impact. This may be explained by both the implementation weaknesses of coaching programmes and the absence of an individual approach to the needs of employees.

The data on the importance of technical skills for career advancement (36.43%) supports the findings of Gadatsch (2023), who emphasises the need to continuously improve technical competence to maintain competitiveness in the labour market. At the same time, the lack of employer support (31.43%) is consistent with the findings of Vedina et al. (2020), which point to the importance of creating a favourable working environment. Particular attention is drawn to the difference in the use of coaching services: only 41.43% of respondents used them, despite the awareness of 68.57% of professionals. This gap indicates the need to increase the popularisation of coaching techniques. Khanetska (2024 a) notes that career coaching should facilitate adaptation to changing market conditions, but the study results show that some IT professionals remain outside these opportunities.

The findings on career planning as a critical aspect of coaching (49.29%) are consistent with Khanetska (2024b), who emphasises the importance of a long-term career vision. At the same time, soft skills development (38.57%) highlights a multidimensional one and soft skills training is needed in corporate programmes. Zobenko's (2020) findings also point to the vital lesson of adaptability to change. However, while most of it passes with flying colours, some limitations exist. Specifically, it also needs employers to support it and the lack of awareness of the benefits of coaching. However, more research is needed to develop optimal models for the implementation of coaching services.

Overall, the study's results indicate that significant possibilities exist for using coaching as an instrument for the professional self-realisation of IT professionals. Future research should attempt to explore the details of coaching implementation in different contexts and assess the long-term impact of coaching on adaptation to technological changes.

Conclusions

The study demonstrates a significant service of coaching to the professional self-realisation of IT specialists in the face of rapid changes in the labour market. The literature finds that coaching can provide input in building career strategies, building critical competences, and stimulating employees' motivation. The obtained results are novel in establishing a relationship between the type of coaching (individual, team, career) and the professional development level of IT specialists. It facilitates the transformation of the coaching technique to fit specialist needs, thus promoting the working efficiency of such techniques. The study's practical significance lies in the possibility of using its results to develop corporate coaching

programmes that will help increase the productivity and competitiveness of IT companies. The results may also be helpful for educational institutions that train future IT professionals. Among the study's limitations is the lack of a sufficiently broad geographical coverage of the sample, which may affect the representativeness of the results. In addition, the limited number of aspects of coaching studied indicates the need for further analysis expansion. The study results indicate the potential of coaching for solving IT specialists' professional development problems. However, further research should focus on assessing the long-term effects of coaching and its adaptation to different industries and cultural contexts. Implementing corporate coaching programmes focusing on developing technical and soft skills, as well as maintaining employee motivation and adaptability to technological change, is recommended. The main directions for further research include analysing the effectiveness of coaching in the context of interdisciplinary cooperation and assessing its impact on the emotional intelligence of specialists.

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