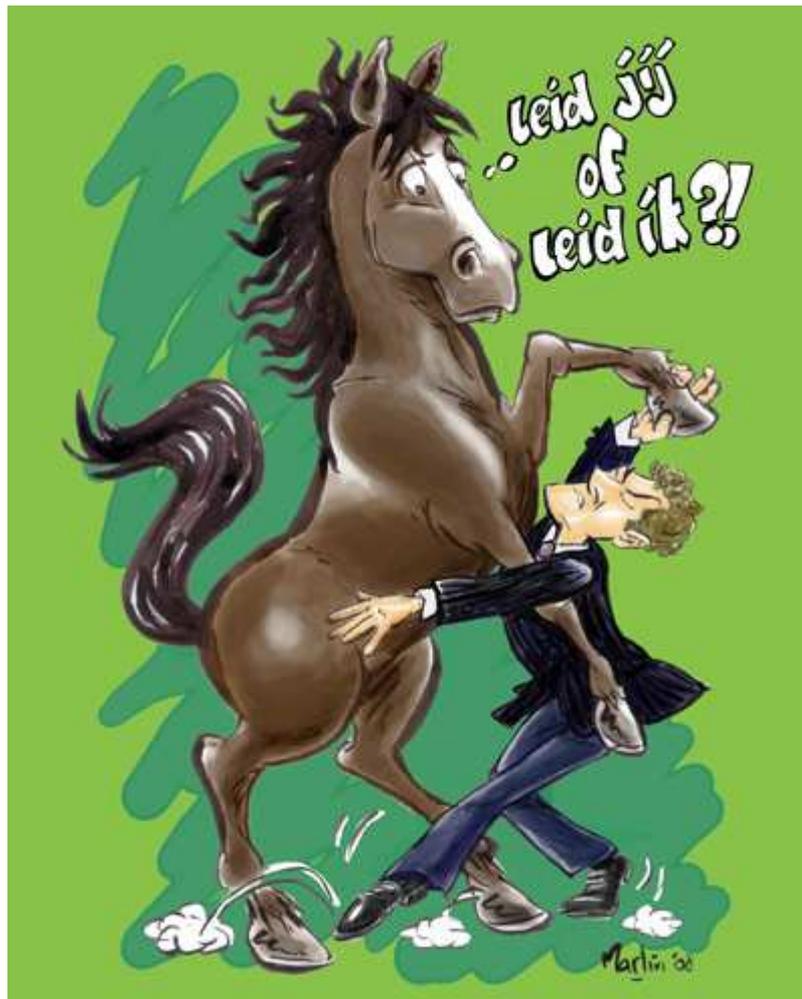


Entrepreneurial spirit or equine heart?

The competencies of the equine entrepreneur



R.M. Mennink

June 2010

Image Front page: Martin Gelder 2008

Thesis report

Entrepreneurial spirit or equine heart?

The competencies of the equine entrepreneur



Student: R.M. Mennink

Coaches: Mrs. I. Lier (Alfa Accountants en Adviseurs)
Mrs. F. Veerkamp (Alfa Accountants en Adviseurs)
Mr. H. van Tartwijk (Hogeschool Van Hall-Larenstein)

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Preface

As a little girl of three years old, maybe four, you start drawing your first horse. One with an egg shaped body, four sticks as legs and of course a nice full tale. At night you were dreaming about what it would be like to ride such an amazing animal.

Then a few years later the walls of the bedroom are covered with posters of horses. No wallpaper can compete with this. Every night before falling asleep watching at your own herd and after that dreaming about having an own horse.

Then there comes the moment that you can look for that one horse, which will be special to you. Suddenly you are standing in front of that horse. You are watching this horse in the eyes and you know that everything is right.

For 6 whole years and 3 months I was able to enjoy everything he was willing to teach and give me. A listening ear and a shoulder when you need it most. Lots of fun when he was allowed to have another go into the forest.

Unfortunately there will be a day when these ways will separate. The day when he gets a new home. You know that it will be better for both. You choose for the future. But your feelings are not cooperating yet. You will have the feeling that you are throwing all these years away. The only thing that will be left to do is find him the best home, he could ever wish for.

The feeling of emptiness, impotence says. Being bored, because suddenly you can not visit your best friend anymore. But you will know that this will be temporary, because once there will be a new best friend. Than the memories will show up. All the beautiful and hard moments that those 6 years together contained.

Now there remains a girl graduating at Alfa Accountants en Adviseurs on the competencies of the equine entrepreneur. Having contact with inspiring people, all sharing the same passion, plays a major role. The passion and emotion that pushes the professionalism and pragmatic attitude away. Concluding with these entrepreneurs that there is too much emotion involved in the industry.

The only suitable conclusion for myself will be: that is me. I am one of so many. A person to whom the emotion play a major role.

I would like to thank Irene Lier and Franca Veerkamp for being involved in the research. The conversations we had, resulted in having a clear view of the final goal of this report.

In special I would like to thank Hans van Tartwijk, for the coaching of this research. During my research I overwhelmed Hans with emails and visits. It was very pleasant that Hans always had some time for me. I am grateful for all the constructive criticisms he gave me.

Rianne Mennink

‘Mensen met paarden hebben de hemel op aarde. Maar komen ze te sterven, dan valt er niets te erven.’

Samenvatting

Achtergrond

De samenwerking tussen paard en mens is ongeveer 5000 jaar geleden tot stand gekomen (Churchill and Crook et al). De schatting is dat er op dit moment tussen de 400.000 en 450.000 paarden in Nederland zijn. De paarden worden gehouden voor verschillende doeleinden, maar veruit de grootste in omvang is die ten behoeve van de recreatie en ontspanning. Er zijn naar schatting 450.000 recreatieve paardensporters in Nederland (MinLNV, 2007).

De paardenhouderij is een zeer marginale sector (Boersma, 2003). Er zijn slechts enkele bedrijven welke rendabel of zelfs winstgevend draaien (MinLNV, 2006). De verwachting voor het jaar 2010 is dat de omzet van de sector tussen de 1,4 (Frits Sluyter, SRP, 2010) – 1,8 (Fortgens, KNHS, 2010) miljard euro ligt.

Om voor de toekomst een economisch duurzame sector te bereiken, zal een aanzienlijk deel van de sector zich verder moeten professionaliseren. Om dit te bereiken kan de sector zelf werken aan verdere professionalisering van de bedrijven en aan kennisvergroting bij bijvoorbeeld particuliere paardenhouders. De sector dient hierin het initiatief te nemen. (MinLNV, 2006; Gerda Verburg, 2010)

Algemeen wordt aangenomen dat om tot de juiste mate van professionalisering te komen, er op bedrijfsniveau het een en ander zal moeten veranderen. Een ondernemer dient over de juiste kennis en vaardigheden te beschikken om in staat te zijn, zijn bedrijf rendabel te maken. Met andere woorden een ondernemer moet competent zijn. Binnen de verschillende bedrijfstvormen in de paardensector, zijn verschillende competenties belangrijk.

Het doel van dit onderzoek is het identificeren en definiëren van de benodigde competenties van een hippisch ondernemer, welke nu en in de nabije toekomst actief is in het primaire segment, om in te kunnen spelen op de ontwikkelingen in de markt. Binnen het primaire segment bevinden zich verschillende hippische ondernemers. Voor de vier meest voorkomende ondernemers (ondernemer in een fokkerij/handelsstal/manege/pensionstal) is een competentieprofiel opgesteld.

Onderzoeksmethode

Allereerst is er een verdiepend literatuuronderzoek uitgevoerd. Het literatuuronderzoek is voornamelijk gebaseerd op de drie belangrijkste onderwerpen van dit onderzoek, namelijk de paardensector, ondernemen en competenties. Na het uitvoeren van het literatuuronderzoek is er contact gezocht met verschillende experts binnen de paardensector. Met deze experts heeft een interview/gesprek plaats gevonden.

Naar aanleiding van de literatuur en de gesprekken zijn er vier competentieprofielen opgesteld voor de verschillende hippische ondernemers. Om het profiel zo passend mogelijk te kunnen maken diende het profiel getoetst te worden. Dit is gedaan door middel van bedrijfsbezoeken. De gesprekken vonden in elk geval plaats met de bedrijfseigenaren op hun eigen locatie. Aan het eind van elk gesprek werden de ondernemers gevraagd een enquête in te vullen. Via deze enquête/vragenlijst zijn de competentieprofielen getoetst op basis van gedrag en prestaties.

Naar aanleiding van de Principle Components Analysis, is het 'algemene' deel van het competentieprofiel aangepast.

Conclusie

De paardensector wordt gekenmerkt door veredeld hobbyisme. Hierdoor ontbreekt het de sector aan professionaliteit. Hier staat tegenover dat er binnen de sector geen duidelijke leiding en richtlijnen zijn. Niemand heeft het totaaloverzicht over de verschillende deelsegmenten.

De sector zal de komende 5 jaar in zijn geheel naar een hoger niveau moeten worden getild. Dat zal worden gestimuleerd door onder andere de plannen vanuit het MinLNV met betrekking tot het welzijn en de identificatie en registratie. De sector moet er echter voor waken, dat de plannen en richtlijnen worden opgesteld door personen zonder vakkennis.

Competenties op het gebied van ondernemen zijn erg belangrijk voor een hippische ondernemer. De huidige hippische ondernemer is nog geen echte ondernemer te noemen. Veel van de ondernemers leven op het 'eiland' van hun eigen bedrijf.

Competenties op het vakspecifieke gebied zijn minstens zo belangrijk voor een hippische ondernemer, als competenties op het gebied van ondernemen. De huidige hippische ondernemer heeft duidelijk vakkennis. Waar de hippische ondernemer nog kan winnen, is op het gebied van klantencontact.

Opmerkelijk is dat de pensionstalhouder de enige hippische ondernemer is welke niet competent is, zowel op het gebied van ondernemen als op het vakspecifieke gebied.

Aanbevelingen

Omdat dit onderzoek slechts met een beperkte populatie is uitgevoerd, is het aan te raden de competentieprofielen te testen op een grotere populatie. Deze populatie dient ten minste 150 deelnemers te bevatten. Wanneer de competentieprofielen op een grote populatie getest gaat worden, is het sterk aan te bevelen de deelnemers te bezoeken.

Voor de hippische ondernemers is het van belang dat zij zich bewust zijn van de sterke en zwakke punten van hun bedrijf. Daarbij is het belangrijk dat de ondernemer duidelijk voor ogen heeft waar hij met het bedrijf heen wil.

Tijdens dit onderzoek werd aangegeven door de deelnemende ondernemers dat vakkennis van groot belang is voor adviseurs. Door middel van het hebben van vakkennis kan er een grote sprong met betrekking tot de kwaliteit van een advies worden gemaakt.

Het is van groot belang dat de paardensector naar een hoger niveau wordt getild. Hierin kan Alfa Accountants en Adviseurs bijdragen, door middel van een goede communicatie met overkoepelende instanties en de ondernemers zelf.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Motive

The collaboration between horse and human started approximately 5000 years ago (Churchill and Crook et al). The estimation is that there are between 400.000 and 450.000 horses present in the Netherlands. The horses are kept for several purposes, but by far the largest in size is the purpose of recreation and relaxation. There is an estimated amount of 450.000 recreational equine athletes present in the Netherlands (MinLNV, 2007).

The equine industry is a very marginal industry (Biersma, 2003). There are only a few companies who run profitable or even break-even (MinLNV, 2006). In the year 2004 the turnover of the equine industry was estimated at 1,2 billion Euros (Boersma, 2003; MinLNV, 2006). Of the total amount of 1,2 billion 425,4 million Euros turnover comes out of the direct equine farming, 415,8 million Euros out of the indirect equine farming and 332,8 million Euros comes out of the studbooks and sport (Boekema et al., 2005). In the year 2005 the turnover would have increased to 2 billion Euros, however it is unclear what this estimation is based on (Rijksen et al., 2005). The expectation for the year 2010 is that the turnover of the equine industry will be between the 1,4 (Sluyter, F., SRP, 2010) – 1,8 (Fortgens, I., KNHS, 2010) billion Euros.

To be able to achieve a sustainable economic industry in the future, a substantial share of the sector needs to be professionalized. For example improvements in the maintenance of the enterprise, animal care, attention to landscape and environment, making use of the available knowledge on different domains and improvements in the prudential thinking. To achieve this, the industry itself should work on further professionalization of the enterprises and knowledge magnification for for example private horse keepers. The industry needs to take the initiative in this. (MinLNV, 2006; Verburg, G., 2010)

In general it is accepted that to come to the best degree of professionalization, several things need to be changed at enterprise level. This starts at the awareness of the current situation. An entrepreneur must have the proper knowledge and skills, to be able to get his enterprise to at least a break-even position. Or in other words the entrepreneur needs to be competent. Within the different types of enterprises in the equine industry, different competencies are important.

Alfa Accountants en Adviseurs is a consulting firm for small and medium enterprises and the agricultural industry. Within Alfa Accountants en Adviseurs the department 'Equine farming' is working for the equine industry. To be able to tailor their advices better and to stimulate the professionalization of the equine industry, the demand is created to know which competencies are important to an equine entrepreneur in order to be successful in the equine industry.

1.2 Research objectives

The objective of this research is to identify and define the necessary competencies of an equine entrepreneur (who is active in the primary segment now and in the near future) in order to be able to respond to the developments in the market. Within the primary segment different equine entrepreneurs are present. A competency profile will be developed for the four commonest equine entrepreneurs (entrepreneur in a breeding stable/trading stable/riding school/livery).

1.3 Research questions

On the occasion of the research objectives the main research question will be:

What are the necessary competencies for an equine entrepreneur in the primary segment and what do they look like?

To come to an answer to the main research question, some sub questions were defined. These are as follows:

- What is the current market situation in the equine industry and what are the expectations?
- What is entrepreneuring?
- What are competencies?
- What competencies does a breeding stable owner need and what do they look like?
- What competencies does a trading stable owner need and what do they look like?
- What competencies does a riding school owner need and what do they look like?
- What competencies does a livery owner need and what do they look like?
- Are the current equine entrepreneurs competent?

1.4 Procedure

Firstly a literature study is conducted. The purpose was to get as much information as possible about the subjects entrepreneuring in the equine industry and competencies in general.

After the literature the organizations which have a helicopter view on the equine industry (Sectorraad Paarden, KNHS, Ministerie van Landbouw, Natuur en Voedselkwaliteit, Aequor) were contacted.

On the occasion of the conversations a general competency model for the equine entrepreneur was developed. Next to this general model some specific competencies by type of enterprise were developed, resulting in four enterprise specific competency models.

Through a questionnaire the general competency model and the enterprise specific competency models were tested.

More information about the procedure/research method can be found in chapter 5.

2. The Dutch equine industry

2.1 Introduction

The collaboration between human and horses started approximately 5000 years ago. Nowadays in the Netherlands the horse is mainly used for recreation, sport, breeding and trade.

As a result of the shift of the agricultural oriented equine farming to professional equine farming aimed at sport and recreation, the industry has lost its clarity. There are professional enterprises, but also hobbyists to a large extent (Sectorraad Paarden, 2004).

2.2 The scope of the Dutch equine industry

In the most recent published report (Agricola et al., 2008) an estimation has been made, based on the agricultural census and literature, that in the Netherlands between 400.000-450.000 horses are being kept (Fortgens, KNHS, 2010; Sluyter, SRP, 2010) at approximately 81.000 locations.

2.2.1 Horses

At the companies in the agricultural census in 2008 approximately 144.000 horses and ponies were registered. This is not even half of the total estimated population. Here it concerns horses and ponies on agricultural enterprises larger than three 'Nederlandse grootte-eenheden (nge)¹. This counts for the principal enterprises as well as part-time enterprises (Hoogeveen et al., 2009). To the equine farmers the agricultural census is not an obligatory (PVE). This means that companies where only horses are kept are not included in the agricultural census. Therefore the amount of horses of for example riding schools and private horse keepers mainly remains out of view.

Year	Amount horses agricultural census	Amount ponies agricultural census	Total horses and ponies agricultural census	Total horses and ponies estimation
1985	41.320	20.760	60.080	
1990	49.930	19.660	69.590	
1995	70.120	29.930	100.040	± 400.000
2000	78.890	39.350	118.240	
2005	87.810	45.510	133.320	± 420.000
2008	93.170	50.910	144.080	

Table 1: Development amount horses and ponies in the Netherlands (CBS-landbouwtelling, Sectorraad Paarden (2005), Rijksen, et al. (2005))

¹ Nge-values equine farming

Livery horse	1,79
Riding school horse	3,07
Breeding mare	1,87
Youngster	0,244
Training horse	3,64

Source: DLV Paardenhouderij, 2008

Since July 1st 2009 every horse and pony in Europe needs to have a chip and a European passport. Yet it is not possible to make a reliable estimation of the amount of horses in the Netherlands based on these data. This caused by the fact that the passports are issued by thirty different studbooks, where the data is administered in different ways.

2.2.2. Enterprises with horses

The amount of locations where horses are kept is estimated at approximately 81.000 locations (Agricola et al., 2008). According to the agricultural census there are 16.110 enterprises where horses are kept in the year 2008, with approximately 8,9 horses per enterprise. Table 2 shows that the amount of enterprises with horses is decreasing. However the average amount of horses per enterprise is rising.

Year	Amount of enterprises with horses and/or ponies	Average amount of horses and/or ponies per enterprise
1985	19.480	3,2
1990	17.940	3,9
1995	18.990	5,3
2000	19.920	5,9
2005	17.690	7,5
2008	16.110	8,9

Table 2: Development amount of enterprises with horses and ponies in the Netherlands (CBS-Landbouwtelling)

The amount of enterprises with a few horses is decreasing, while the amount of enterprises with more than 40 horses compared to 1990 is more than fivefold (Table 3). As the size increases, the specialisation increases as well. Enterprises with more than 16 horses are often specialized.

Amount horses and ponies per enterprise	Amount horses and ponies	Specialization grade animals (%)	Amount enterprises with horses and ponies	Specialization grade enterprises (%)
1	2.670	0	2.670	0
2	6.070	8	3.030	8
3	6.190	25	2.060	25
4	5.980	32	1.490	32
5	5.210	38	1.040	38
6-10	20.050	52	2.660	51
11-15	12.120	63	950	63
16-20	10.060	71	560	71
21-40	29.440	79	1.010	79
> 40	46.300	88	620	87
Total	144.080	66	16.110	33

Table 3: Amount of horses and ponies and amount of companies with these animals and the specialization grade to size 2008 (CBS-landbouwtelling)

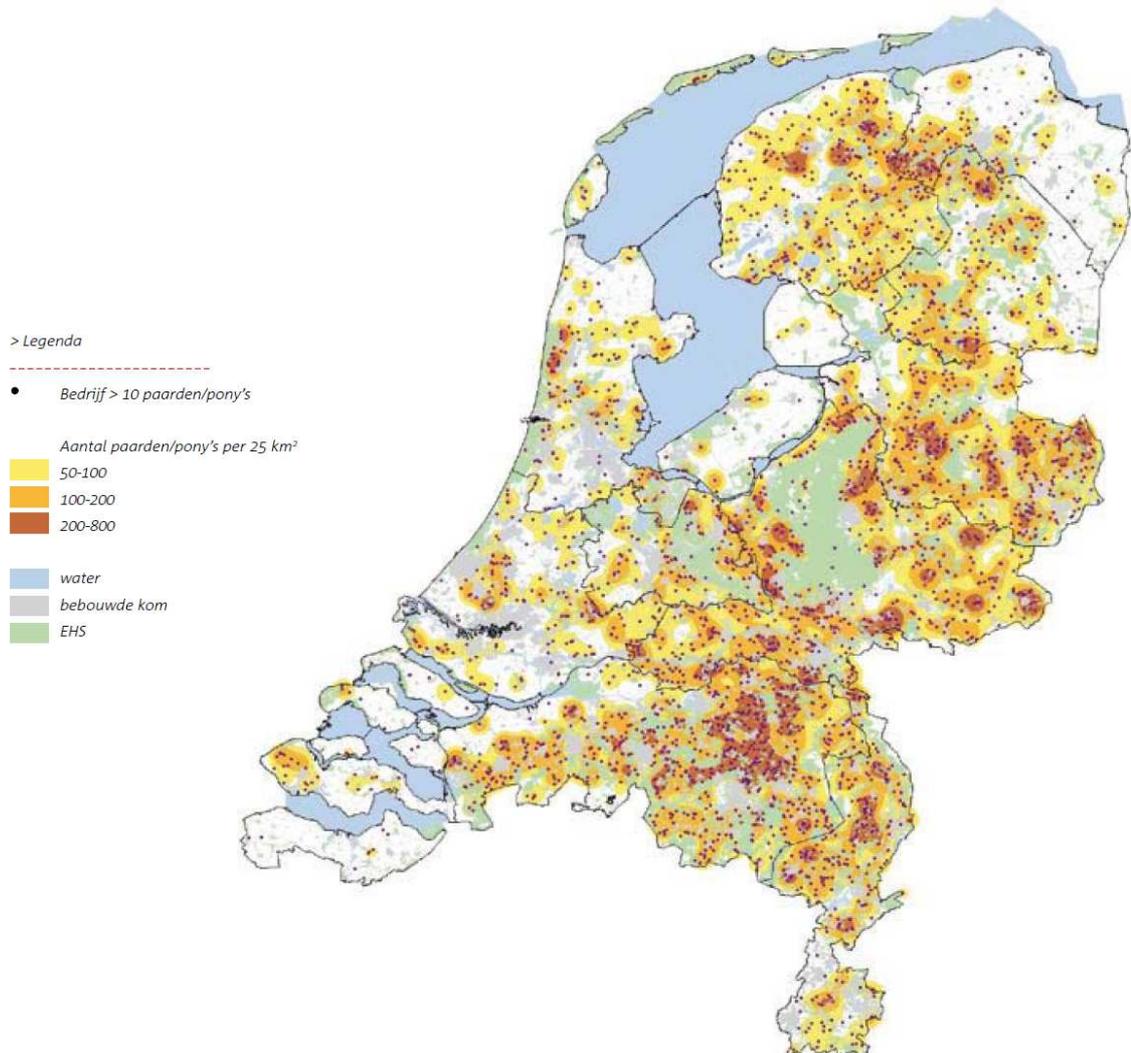


Figure 1: Density equine enterprises in the Netherlands based on the information of the Landbouwtelling 2004 (Alterra, 2006)

The equine industry is a very marginal industry (Biersma, 2003). There are only a few companies who run profitable or even break-even (MinLNV, 2006). In the year 2004 the turnover of the equine industry was estimated at 1,2 billion Euros (Boersma, 2003; MinLNV, 2006). Of the total amount of 1,2 billion 425,4 million Euros turnover comes out of the direct equine farming, 415,8 million Euros out of the indirect equine farming and 332,8 million Euros comes out of the studbooks and sport (Boekema et al., 2005). In the year 2005 the turnover would have increased to 2 billion Euros, however it is unclear what this estimation is based on (Rijksen et al., 2005). The expectation for the year 2010 is that the turnover of the equine industry will be between the 1,4 (Sluyter, F., SRP, 2010) – 1,8 (Fortgens, I., KNHS, 2010) billion Euros.

2.3 The structure of the equine industry

The equine farming has a large variety of manifestations. Distinction is made between the usage-oriented equine farming² and the production-oriented equine farming³.

An equine farm can concern a commercial⁴, semi commercial⁵ or hobby⁶ equine farm (Wijk-Jansen et al., 2009)

Equine farming includes an entire column of sub-segments with the belonging types of enterprises. Several publications formulate other sub-segments. Figure 2 shows the result of the combining of these publications.

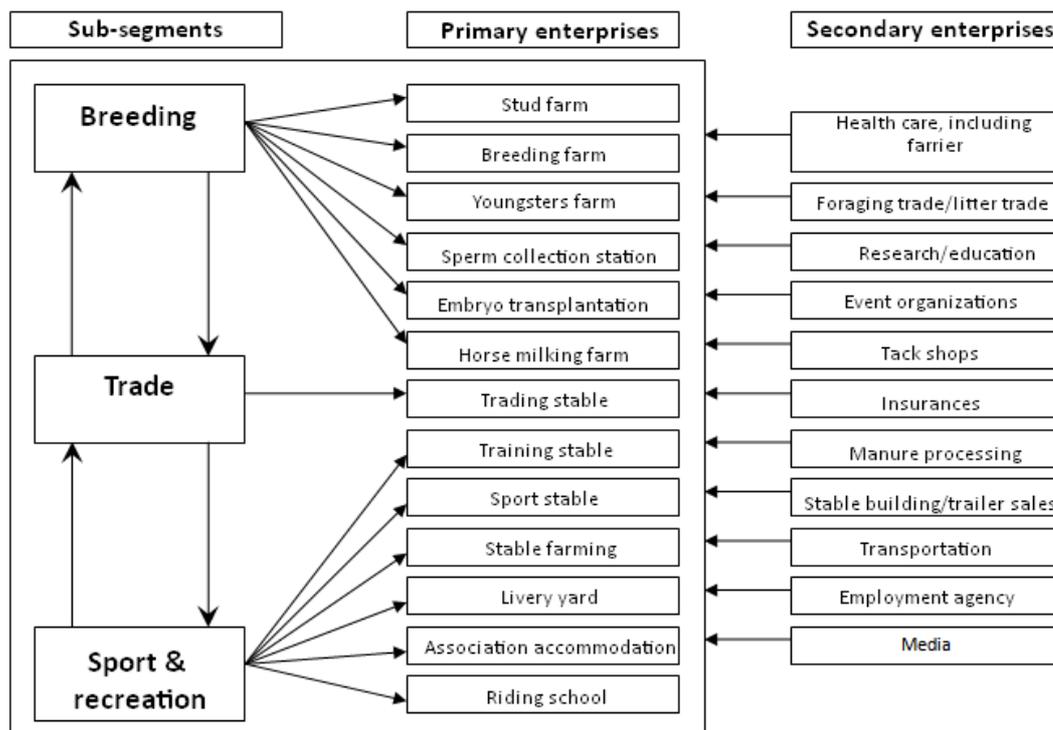


Figure 2: Structure of the equine industry (composed out of Beleidsnotitie Paardenhouderij, SRP, 2004; Paardenhouderij en Ruimtelijke ordening, PVE, 2004)

² An equine farm where the riding with horses is primarily orientated at the rider.

³ An equine farm s which exclusively or principally have acts on and/or with horses that are primarily focussed on the generating, schooling, training and trading of horses.

⁴ An enterprise is called commercial when there is a full equine farm orientated at generating a sufficient operation result.

⁵ An enterprise is called semi commercial when the existence in the equine farming is not totally dependent of the generated operation result, but in terms of size and character can not be named hobby.

⁶ At a hobby equine farm horses are kept on a small sacel. A hobby equine farm is not oriented at generating turnover.

2.3.1 Breeding

Equine breeding includes the process of the beginning of a foal until the training of the young horse. In the Netherlands breeding is mainly done with licensed studbook registered horses. The 30 licensed studbooks in the Netherlands (PVE, 2010) secure the quality of the breeds. The high quality control makes the Dutch horses very popular in foreign countries. The studbooks are representing about 40.000-45.000 coverings per year (Sectorraad Paarden, 2004; Rijksen, 2005). The 'Koepel Fokkerij' is a consultation structure for all the in the Netherlands licensed studbooks.

Within the equine breeding different types of enterprises are present, namely: stud farm, breeding farm, youngsters farm, Sperm collection stable, Embryo transplantation enterprise and horse milking farm.

It seems hard to predict how many horses are used for breeding in the Netherlands. During the 'Nationaal Paarden Congres 2005' Mr. Bijvoet (KWPN) stated the following; "On a yearly basis there are approximately 42.000 coverings and inseminations performed. This means that there are also 42.000 mares used for breeding⁷. The amount of stallions was around 1.600 in the year 2005⁸. On a yearly basis approximately 38.000 foals are registered⁹. These animals will be in the youngster stables for approximately 3 years. This means that there are 114.000 youngsters in the youngster stables per year. The amount of not registered foals is estimated at 2.000. This makes that the total amount of horses used for breeding is estimated at 160.000 in the year 2005."

During the years 2005-2008 the horse population as recognized in the agricultural census grew with 8,07% (from 133.320 to 144.080). This means a growth of approximately 2,6% per year. When this trend, assuming proportional growth, is continued to equine breeding there should be approximately 182.000 horses used for breeding in the year 2010.

The total turnover of the equine breeding is estimated at 81 million Euros for the year 2010.

Equine breeding will always exist within the equine industry. Assuming the fact that there is only a little import and export within the equine breeding, the growth of the equine breeding is dependent on the amount of coverings and inseminations. A small growth is expected (\pm 2,6%).

2.3.2 Trade

Within the trade distinction can be made between the domestic and foreign trade. In the Netherlands there are two organizations for equine traders, namely the 'Centrale Bond van paardenhandelaren in Nederland' (CEBOPA) and the 'Verenigde Sportpaardenhandel Nederland' (VSN). The CEBOPA is aimed at the trade in horses used for slaughter and recreation, while the VSN is aimed at the trade in sport horses in all the disciplines.

Within the trade there is only one type of enterprise present, namely the trading stable.

The yearly amount of exported sport horses, breeding horses and slaughter horses is quite high. The size of the private equine trade is not known.

⁷ Mares that aborted their foal before September are not registered as a covering or insemination. 42.000 is therefore an underestimation.

⁸ Of an amount of the studbooks the deployable stallions for the year 2005 were known. When the amount is compared with the size of the studbook and this is extended to the other studbooks, the amount of stallions will be around 1.600.

⁹ Amount of registered coverings and inseminations x birthpercentage of 90% (Rijksen et. al, 2005)

Though the expectation is that the private equine trade is very extensive, because of the offers on the different internet sites as Marktplaats.nl and Sporthorses.nl.

The professional equine traders may join the CEBOPA and the VSN. In January of the year 2010 121 members are registered at the CEBOPA and 60 members are registered at the VSN. Several years ago there was the possibility to join the 'Bedrijfschap voor de Handel in Vee (BHV). However this organization does not exist anymore from January 2007.

The total turnover in the equine trade is estimated at 82 million Euros for the year 2010.

The expectation is that there will remain a market for the qualitative better horses. For the qualitative average horse the market within the Netherlands, but also in the rest of Europe is fairly satisfied. People are more and more striving for quality, so here is an opportunity.

2.3.3 Sport and recreation

In the Netherlands there where 456.000 persons of an age of 8 years and younger active in the equine sports in the year 2006 (ZKA Consultants and Planners, 2006). Equine sports is a term that represents all forms of riding and driving. A distinction is made between recreational riding and riding in official competitions. Of the equestrians 80% just ride in a recreational context and 20% is participating in competitions. Over 210.000 persons are joining the Koninklijke Nederlandse Hippische Sportfederatie (KNHS) (KNHS, 2010).

The equine sport is more and more practiced on a professional level. The amount of sport stables that offer employment is therefore rising. These sport stables are performing horses (of third parties) in sports, are training horses (of third parties) and offer instruction (Sectorraad Paarden, 2004). The concerns of the sportive rider are represented by the KNHS and the 'Stichting Nederlandse Draf- en Rensport' (NDR).

The mass of the equestrians is practising the sport on a recreational basis. Recreation means the performing of the equine sport without any form of a competitive element. The recreation is divided by riding schools, private individuals and passive equestrians. The concerns of the recreational equestrian are represented by the KNHS and the 'Stichting Recreatie Ruiter' (SRR). The 'Federatie van Nederlandse Rijsscholen (FNRS) is a branch organization of riding schools, livery yards, training and competition stables.

Within the sport and recreation there are several different types of enterprises, namely: sport stable, training stable, stable farm, livery yard, riding school and association accommodation.

The sub-segment sport and recreation is very large within the Dutch equine industry. The ratios are sometimes hard to distinguish, because lots of enterprises are practising a combination of activities, for example riding school combined with livery.

Within the sport and recreation the riding school and livery yard are the most important enterprises. The average price for a livery stable was approximately € 280,- in the year 2008 (Kuijf et al., 2008).

The average amount of horses on a riding school was estimated at 55 in the year 2005 (Rijksen et. al, 2005). The amount of riding school that was registered at the 'Kamer van Koophandel' (KVK) was 1341 at the 1st of January 2010. This means that there are approximately 73.500 horses used at a riding school.

Assuming that the turnover of the lessons per riding school horse per year is approximately 4.900 Euros (Kuijf et al., 2008), the turnover of the lessons of the riding schools would be 360 million Euros in the year 2010.

The expectation is that the amount of equestrians will slightly rise during the coming years. The sport will be easier to accessible for a larger target group. There is an opportunity in the transformation of the image of the equine sport being a girl sport, to a sport for everyone.

2.4 The expectations for the coming 5 years

The expectation for the coming 5 years is that the equine industry will remain growing. However this is depending on the year 2010. Until now the equine industry did not notice a lot of the financial deterioration. The year 2010 will in this be a decisive year (Sluyter, SRP, 2010). The most important developments will be in the field of welfare, identification and registration, education and within the grassroots. This will be established through legislation, several researches (for example on the field of welfare) and an improved information provision (Fortgens, I., KNHS, 2010; Sluyter, F., SRP, 2010).

3. Entrepreneurship

3.1 Introduction

'The essence of entrepreneurship is being different (Casson, 1999)'. 'Entrepreneurship can be defined as the personalized drive and capability to commercialize (bring to market realization) a product, service, process, or business idea (Knudson et. al, 2004)'. 'Entrepreneurship is the carrying out of new combinations (Schumpeter, 1934)'.

These are only a few examples of the many definitions present in literature, regarding entrepreneurship. The amount of definitions is simply determined: this equals the amount of persons that have been busy doing research on entrepreneurship. Because every researcher tries to introduce new elements in the concept, it is unlikely to find a definition of entrepreneurship that would suit everyone (Risseeuw et al., 2003).

The interest for entrepreneurship has grown strongly the past years. This is resulting in a growth of the amount of researches in the field of entrepreneurship. Next to this there are more and more possibilities on education in entrepreneurship.

In this chapter the concept entrepreneurship will be explained. A definition will be defined, which will be held as guiding for this research. After that the enterprise and entrepreneur will be discussed.

3.2 What is entrepreneurship?

With the existing research in mind it can be supposed that in a definition of entrepreneurship there is almost always attention for the following questions: Is the entrepreneur someone who takes risks, is the entrepreneur an innovator, is the entrepreneur a starter, is the entrepreneur creating balance or is the balance disturbed by the activities of the entrepreneur (Risseeuw et. al., 2003).

Often entrepreneurship is associated with the starting of a new enterprise. This is however not necessary. An existing enterprise can be entrepreneurial as well. Entrepreneurship can therefore be seen as a characteristic of organisations in general and can be measured by analysing the behaviour of the managers of the enterprise when they are performing entrepreneurial activities. Entrepreneurial enterprises are enterprises where the top managers are applying entrepreneurial management styles, as shown by the strategic decisions of the enterprise and the operational management (Covin et.al., 1986).

The most common enterprise within Europe is the micro, small and medium enterprises (KMO's in the Netherlands also called MKB). To the category KMO's belong enterprises where are working less than 250 persons and of which the year turnover does not exceed the 50 million Euros or the yearly balance sheet total does not exceed the 43 million Euros (Uittreksel uit artikel 2 van de bijlage bij Aanbeveling 2003/361/EG).

The following figure shows when an enterprise is a micro, small or medium enterprise.

Categorie ondernemingen	Personeelsbezetting: arbeidsjareenheden (AJE)	Jaaromzet	of	Jaarlijks balans-totaal
Middelgroot	< 250	≤ 50 miljoen EUR <small>(in 1996: 40 miljoen EUR)</small>	of	≤ 43 miljoen EUR <small>(in 1996: 27 miljoen EUR)</small>
Klein	< 50	≤ 10 miljoen EUR <small>(in 1996: 7 miljoen EUR)</small>	of	≤ 10 miljoen EUR <small>(in 1996: 5 miljoen EUR)</small>
Micro	< 10	≤ 2 miljoen EUR <small>(nieuw)</small>	of	≤ 2 miljoen EUR <small>(nieuw)</small>

Figure 3: Thresholds since June 2006 (Source: European Committee, 2006)

There are different forms of KMO's. These forms are described in annex 1.

Innovation is a concept that is mentioned in almost every definition of entrepreneurship in literature, since the contribution of Schumpeter. It is therefore regarded as one of the most important aspects of entrepreneuring. Innovation means the creation of a new product, service, market, process or organization.

The recognizing and exploiting of opportunities is of essential importance to entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial opportunities are in the situations where new or adjusted products, services, raw materials and organizational methods can be sold for a higher price than the production costs. The opportunities are not only in new, but also in adjusted means. Many opportunities are associated with innovation. In innovation there are often simple developments seen, which are often adjustments to something existing.

In the context of this research entrepreneurship will be defined as follows:

Entrepreneurship is a certain mentality and process associated with individuals, who posses a set of competencies (for example creativity, risk taking), in which these competencies are shown in distinctive entrepreneurial behaviour (bringing a business idea into a success), next to the daily management. (CEC, 2003b)

3.3 What is an entrepreneur?

Entrepreneurs are highly motivated individuals. They are moving in the starting of new enterprises, the launching of new products or the opening of new markets. Entrepreneurs are goal oriented and possess the possibility to maintain a high energy level for a longer period of time (Knudson et. al., 2004). In short, entrepreneurs are persons that are entrepreneuring.

A successful entrepreneur is someone who knows what he wants, so has a clear vision on the market, product and production process. An entrepreneur realizes the set goals by taking the right decisions on the right time with perseverance. Thereby he takes initiative, is innovative, communicates easily and believes in his own abilities. By investing forward-looking from his vision, by taking risks, he will be able to create a good return on investment. Furthermore an entrepreneur is someone who knows what the customer is asking for and he will make sure that he will be able to produce this in a way acceptable for the society. Thereby he knows how to deal with laws and regulations. Finally he is performing the work with pleasure at an enterprise that suits him (Van Uffelen et. al., 2005). There are several entrepreneurial situations existing. These are described in annex 2.

In the context of this research the entrepreneur will be defined as follows:

The entrepreneur is an individual who founds or leads an enterprise with the purpose of creating a financial healthy and market leading position. The entrepreneur is mainly characterized by innovative behaviour and the strategic management in business.

3.4 What is entrepreneuring in the equine industry?

In the equine industry it is mainly of importance that the entrepreneurs are aware of the fact that the industry is constantly moving. Often it turns out to be the case that the entrepreneurs are solely orienting on their own enterprise and are therefore living on an 'island'.

It is of great importance that the entrepreneurs are thinking ahead and are constantly working with the developments in the market around them. They need to form themselves a view on what the sector will look like over 5 years and how their enterprise will fit this view. From there it can be concluded what the entrepreneurs need to do, in order to get a better position in the market. In the equine industry there are still too few thoughts about this.

4. Competencies

4.1 Introduction

The great interest for the concept competency arose in the middle of the nineties of the previous century, when a new trend in the theory of strategic management among the managers spread the idea that competencies are a condition for the success of an enterprise (Roe, 2002). Now it is hard to imagine a world without the concept competency. However the meaning of competency is not consistent at all. With the same word often something else is meant. In the literature many definitions are available. Also in practise there is lots of confusion about what competencies actually are. Next to this there are doubts about the value of working with competencies for the enterprise.

Also in the equine industry competencies are of a growing importance. Students are often educated based on the competence based learning system. Next to this the equine entrepreneur is becoming aware of the importance of competencies (Sluyter, 2010).

4.2 What are competencies?

Competencies exist on different levels. In general competencies are distinguished at enterprise level, function level and personal level (Byham et. al.).

Competencies are contextual bounded knowledge, attitudes and skills that are indivisible connected (holistic character), where also emotional, motivational, normative and ethnic aspects play important roles (Simons). Or with other words: it is a multiplication of (existing) expertise with the (existing) behavioural repertoire (Hoekstra et. al., 1999). Here the behavioural repertoire is of a crucial importance. It is not only about knowing how something works, but also about the ability to perform adequate actions in a specific context (Lans et. al., 2006).

In the context of entrepreneuring, the following quote gives a clear image of being competent: *'Being entrepreneurial competent does not only refer to the know-how to write a business plan, but it also implies recognizing and acting on opportunities, taking initiative and action, for instance by convincing investors to invest money in a project, and relating to potential suppliers and buyers. It implies that the competent entrepreneur is actually able to identify and further exploit an opportunity within a specific context'* (Lans et. al., 2008).

The architecture model of competencies shows how competencies are built (Figure 4). Competencies are based on sub-competencies and on knowledge¹⁰, skills¹¹ and attitude¹². Competencies are formed out of that through a learning process in the concrete working situation. Knowledge, skills and attitudes are formed through learning processes that occurred partly during work, partly at school or in daily life. What is learned is determined by the mental construction, the personality and other characteristics such as interests and behavioural styles (Roe, 2002).

¹⁰ With knowledge is meant that what someone learned about facts, relations, techniques and procedures within a certain domain.

¹¹ With skills is meant that what someone learned by practice and is capable of performing.

¹² With attitude is meant how someone is drafted against persons or cases. Thereby the combination of having awareness of (cognitive aspect), doing something to (action aspect) and enjoying of (affective aspect).

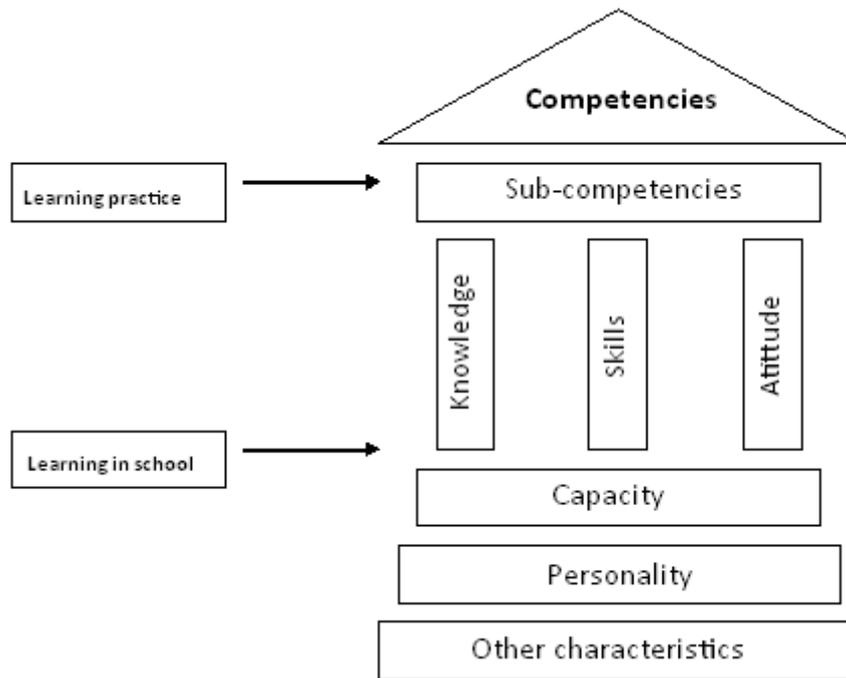


Figure 4: Architecture model of competencies (Source: Roe, 2002)

To be able to develop competencies it is important to be able to identify and measure them. Therefore in the year 2005 a competency profile was developed (Lans et. al., 2005). However more recent research showed that this profile was not sufficient. Therefore the three factor model was developed. In this model a division is made in 3 competency factors, namely; analysing, initiating and networking (Lans et. al). This model will be used for the development of the competency profile of the equine entrepreneur.

The development of competencies is subject to the developments of the market. When the situation in the market changes, there will be a shift in the necessary competencies. This means that developed competency profiles need to be updated regularly.

Within a competency profile behaviour indicators and performance indicators are of great importance. Through these indicators it is able to test whether if the entrepreneur is showing the 'right' behaviour and if this is resulting in proper management.

5. Research method

In this chapter the method used for this research will be explained. It contains a qualitative research. This means that the amount of data is limited, but carefully selected. In annex 4 an overview with the participants can be found.

5.1 Literature study

First a literature study was carried out. A literature study is of great importance in order to get more background information about the subjects to be covered. Next to this it informs the reader about the motive and the purpose of the research, as well as the current situation in the research field.

The outcomes of the literature study are used for (partially) answering the first 3 research questions:

- What is the current market situation in the equine industry and what are the expectations?
- What is entrepreneuring?
- What are competencies?

It is of importance that it is explained with which definitions and situation there will be worked in the research. This offers the reader a clear view. The used literature was selected by using the internet and the university library of Wageningen UR.

5.2 Conversations with experts of the organisations with an helicopter view on the equine industry

It is very important that the information offered in the literature is adjusted with the practical situation. Therefore different experts were contacted. These experts are working at different organisations with a helicopter view on the equine industry, namely: KNHS, Sectorraad Paarden and Aequor. With these experts a single interview/conversation took place.

The outcomes of these interviews are used for (partially) answering the following research questions:

- What is the current market situation in the equine industry and what are the expectations?
- What is entrepreneuring?
- What competencies does a breeding stable owner need and what do they look like?
- What competencies does a trading stable owner need and what do they look like?
- What competencies does a riding school owner need and what do they look like?
- What competencies does a livery owner need and what do they look like?

The experts were asked several questions. These questions can be found in annex 12. The questions are developed on the occasion of the literature study.

Next to the several equine organizations there were many consultations with Quente (approximately once every two weeks), with regards to the concept competencies. Quente is an organization which stimulates entrepreneurial learning (for more information see www.quente.nl). Specific the contact took place with Mr. Ir. T. Lans.

He did multiple researches in the field of competencies and entrepreneuring in the agricultural industry as well as other industries. The purpose of contacting Mr. Ir. T. Lans was to get more clarity on the following subjects:

- What does a competency profile look like?
- Of what should a competency profile consist?
- How should a competency profile be developed in order to be able to test it?
- What is the best way to test a competency profile?

The consultations resulted in that the choice was made for the 3 factor model for the developing of the competency profiles. Mr. Ir. T. Lans contributed in the development of the competencies in the field of entrepreneuring. Next to this it led to the fact that indicators were coupled to the competency, in order to be able to test the profile.

5.3 Development of the competency profiles

On the occasion of the literature and the conversations 4 competency profiles were developed for the following equine entrepreneurs:

- Breeding stable owners
- Trading stable owners
- Riding school owners
- Livery yard owners

These competency profiles all contain a 'general' part, this general part contains competencies in the field of entrepreneuring (10 'entrepreneurial' competencies). Next to this an 'enterprise specific' part was developed for the 4 most important types of enterprises (namely: breeding stable, trading stable, riding school, livery yard). This part contains competencies related to the main activity of the enterprise (5 'enterprise specific' competencies). This makes that there are 4 competency profiles were developed.

In order to be able to test the competencies, indicators were coupled to all the competencies. These indicators were developed with regards to the received information of the equine organizations and Quente. For each competency the question was asked:

- What behaviour and what hard data should an entrepreneur be able to show in order to meet the competency?

5.4 Testing of the competency profiles

5.4.1 Interviews

Interviews took place with entrepreneurs of:

- Breeding stables
- Trading stables
- Riding schools
- Livery yards

The enterprises were arbitrarily selected. It was tried to find a balance with regards to the amount of entrepreneurs per type of enterprise. The purpose was to visit 16 enterprises. This means 4 enterprises per type of enterprise. The interviews took place with the enterprise owners at the locations of the different enterprises. During the interview the entrepreneurs were asked the following:

- What is the current market situation in the equine industry and what are the expectations?
- What is entrepreneurship?

The specific questions can be found in annex 13.

In the end of every interview the entrepreneurs were asked to complete a questionnaire. Of the 11 interviewed entrepreneurs 9 completed a questionnaire.

5.4.2 Questionnaires

There were 4 questionnaires developed for the following equine entrepreneurs:

- Breeding stable owners
- Trading stable owners
- Riding school owners
- Livery yard owners

The questionnaires were spread among the entrepreneurs in two ways, namely by enterprise visits and by the internet. The completing of a questionnaire during an enterprise visit offers the entrepreneur the possibility to ask questions with regards to the questionnaire. Next to this the researcher already gets an impression of the performances of the entrepreneur and the enterprise. The only criteria for taking part in the interview as well as the questionnaire, was that the company exists for longer than 1 year.

The indicators (coupled to the competencies) were translated/transformed to questions for the questionnaire. This offered the possibility to test if the right indicators were formulated and eventually if the current entrepreneurs are competent.

The questionnaire consists of 2 parts, namely the 'general' part and the 'enterprise specific' part. For the answering of the questions a 4 point Likert scale was used. This ensures that the entrepreneur answers the questions positive or negative and not neutral. The risk with testing of indicators in a questionnaire is that the entrepreneurs give socially desirable answers. For this reason the questions were arbitrarily asked in a positive or negative form. The questionnaire is designed with the programme Microsoft Office Word. The questionnaires can be found in annexes 8 until 11.

5.5 Data processing

The data collected of the questionnaires were processed with the programme SPSS. This programme makes it possible to compare a large amount of data with each other. The most important test for this research was the Principal Components test. This test was used with the purpose to check if the competencies were developed in the right way. A Principal Components test or factor analysis consists of 3 steps, namely the assessing of the data, factor extraction and factor rotation.

First a factor analysis was conducted for the general part, the entrepreneurial competencies. After that the factor analysis was conducted for all the enterprise specific parts.

The factor analysis works as follows. Within the factor analysis the Catell's scree test is used. This test shows how many factors (competencies) the model should contain. For the determination of the amount of factors, it is of importance that the Eigen value of each factor is 2,0 or higher. This was showed in a table. Then the Scree plot was examined. It shows how many factors the profile should contain before the change of trend of the figure. When the information is combined the amount of factors can be determined.

After the determination it is of importance to interpret the factors. This is done by the Variamax rotation. The indicators show different loads on the different factors (competencies). When an indicator has a loading of 0,6 of higher this belongs to the specific factor where is loads.

As an extra check the homogeneity of the different indicators belonging to the different factors was tested. This was done with the Cronbach's Alpha test.

On the occasion of the outcomes the competency profiles where (if necessary) adjusted.

5.6 Are the current entrepreneurs competent?

To be able to test whether the entrepreneurs are competent scores were granted to the different competencies. Per indicator a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 4 points could be scored. An entrepreneur is competent, when he scores a minimum of 75% of the maximum score.

6. Results

In this chapter the result will be published on the basis of the research questions. The conversations with the experts of the different equine organizations showed that every equine entrepreneur need to posses of competencies related to entrepreneuring. Research questions 4, 5, 6 and 7 all cover general part of the competency profiles. Therefore after research question 3 first the general part of the competency profiles will be showed.

The research consisted of 3 parts, namely:

- The conversations with the organizations with a helicopter view on the equine industry
- The interviews with the entrepreneurs
- The questionnaire

6.1 Response

For the conversations with the organizations with a helicopter view on the equine industry, 9 organizations were contacted. Of these organizations 3 of them participated in the research, namely: KNHS, Sectorraad Paarden and Aequor.

For the interviews with the entrepreneurs 30 enterprises were contacted. Eventually 11 interviews took place with the owners of different primary enterprises within the equine industry.

For the questionnaires 285 enterprises were contacted. There were 16 enterprises that participated in the questionnaires (9 of them also participated in the interviews).

Of the total amount of participants (interviews + questionnaires) 17 % had breeding as the main activity, 28% trading, 33% riding school and 22 % livery.

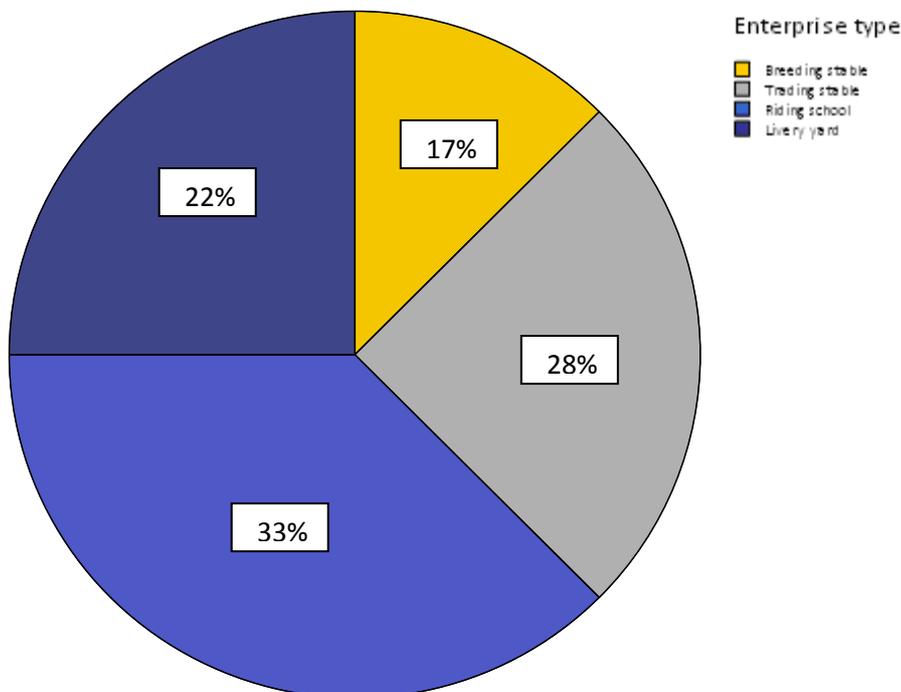


Figure 5: Participating types of enterprises

Of the participating enterprises 50% was located in, 6% in Noord-Holland, 6% in Zuid-Holland, 13% in Utrecht, 6% in Flevoland, 6% in Drenthe and 13% in Friesland.

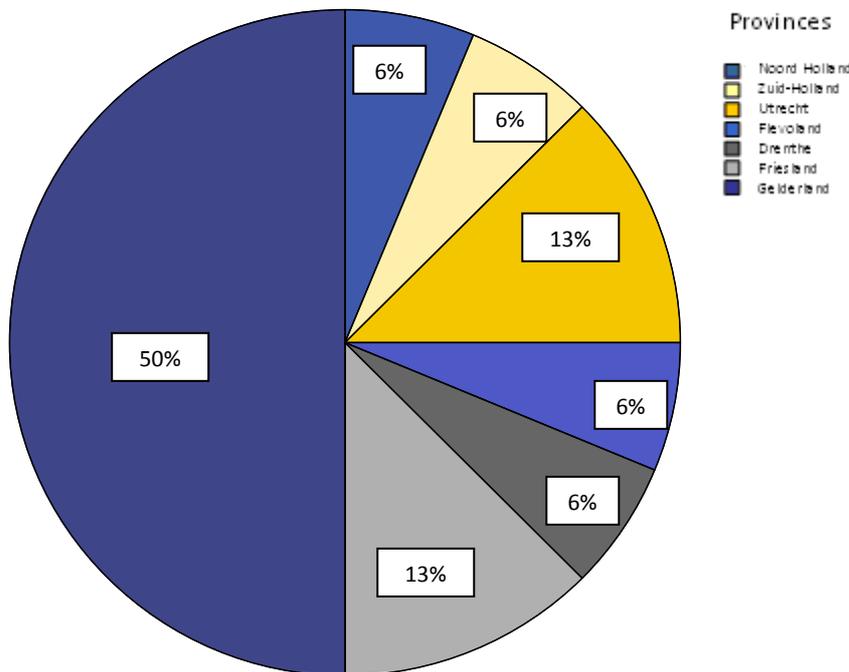


Figure 6: Represented provinces

6.2 What is the current market situation in the equine industry and what are the expectations?

All interviewed entrepreneurs stated that the equine industry is characterized by refined hobbyism. As causes were mentioned: the enterprises that origin of hobby that runs out of control (3/11) and agricultural enterprises who switched to the equine farming (1/11). According to the interviewed entrepreneurs this makes that there is much to be improved in the field of professionalism. Mentioned is that there is less corporate structure (2/11) and a primary way of doing business (3/11).

The equine industry is an industry driven by emotion (11/11). This emotion is also mentioned to be one of the causes of the degree of professionalism in the industry (11/11).

One entrepreneur mentioned explicit that within the equine industry all the different elements (trade, breeding and sport and recreation) are dependent on each other, but that there is nobody who has the total overview over these elements. The entrepreneur stated that there should be clear guidelines in the industry.

The equine industry is experiencing the consequences of the economical deterioration (11/11). Especially the trade was strongly reduced the past year (4/5). In the equine breeding the amount of coverings reduced with an estimation of 15% (2/3). This year is seems that there is even less interest (2/2). Within a period of 5 years the expectation is that the smaller enterprises will disappear (6/11). The quality of the remaining enterprises will rise (4/11). This means that there will be a higher degree of specialization (1/11).

The majority of the entrepreneurs do not worry about the plan of the Sectorraad Paarden and the ministry of agriculture (10/11). However there are worries that the plans will be created by people without know-how of the industry (11/11)

The biggest threat for the equine industry is the outbreak of an equine disease (11/11).

6.3 What is entrepreneuring?

Of the participating entrepreneurs in this research, 94% thinks that they are an entrepreneur.

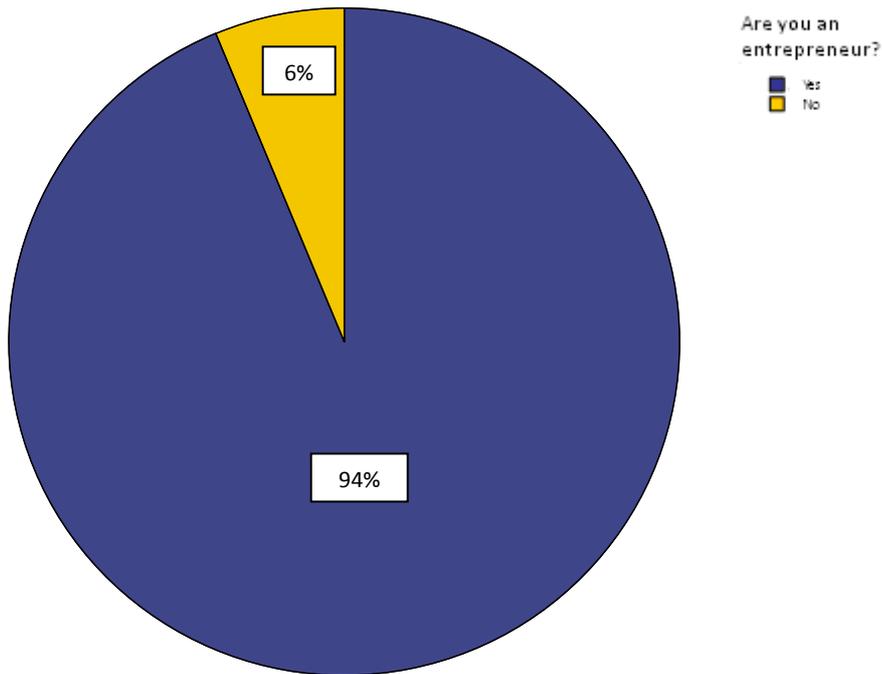


Figure 7: Entrepreneurial perceptions

Of the participating entrepreneurs, 94% is of the opinion that entrepreneuring is very important in the equine industry.

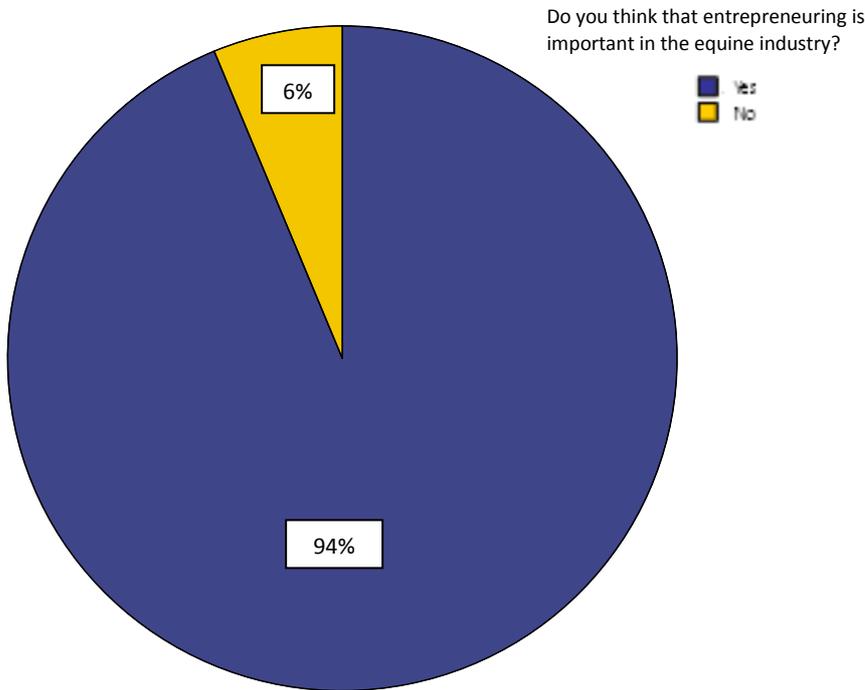


Figure 8: Perception of the importance of entrepreneuring in the equine industry

According to the interviewed entrepreneurs entrepreneuring is creating turnover (6/11). The entrepreneur should want to do business as good as possible, with the eventual goal of having a profitable enterprise (1/11).

One of the entrepreneurs stated a very explicit definition for entrepreneuring; “Successful entrepreneuring is the creation of more value. This does not necessarily have something to do with money, but can also be in the form of knowledge. Important is some sustainability. Next to this building and maintaining relationships are also important and of course the product. Entrepreneuring is capital intensive, labour intensive and there are risks involved. The entrepreneur should keep it simple and work with a healthy mindset.”

Other keywords that are of importance are; freedom (1/11), know-how (11/11), progressive (7/11), quality (8/11), service (2/11), growth (6/11), innovation/improvement (7/11), perseverance (8/11).

6.4 The 'general' part of the competency profiles

On the occasion of the conversations with the different experts and the literature, 4 competency profiles were developed. These competency profiles all contain the same 'general' part. The indicators belonging to this part can be found in annex 3.

Competency domain		Competency	Description
Analysing: Competencies related to the analysing and assessing of opportunities for new products, processes or markets.	1	Market orientation	The entrepreneur can be aware of the developments in the equine industry. On the occasion of this awareness the entrepreneur discovers opportunities and threats for this enterprise.
	2	Strategic thinking	The entrepreneur is able to think and act according to a well considered long term plan. The having of a vision and mission.
	3	Reflecting	The entrepreneur is able to evaluate the performance of the enterprise and the choices that have been made.
	4	Registration	The entrepreneur is able to administer important processes and data for the enterprise. For example the financial administration and the occupancy of the enterprise.
	5	Organising	The entrepreneur is able to guide the activities and processes within the enterprise to the good ways. There is sought after the most efficient way.
Initiating: Competencies related to the realisation of opportunities.	6	Proactive	The entrepreneur is able to actively search to and to implement new opportunities.
	7	Self-consciousness	The entrepreneur can be aware of and has faith in his own ability. He can be aware of his strong and weak points.
Networking: Competencies related to the formation and maintenance of (new) contacts.	8	Communicating	The entrepreneur is able to maintain good contacts with employees, customers, suppliers and others. Hereby he is willing to give and take. The entrepreneur is able to estimate others and is able to adjust to others.
	9	Persuasiveness	The entrepreneur is able to win others for a certain opinion or behaviour, by using the proper arguments and method.
	10	Learning thinking	The entrepreneur is able to be open to remarks and suggestions of colleagues, experts or students, in order to seem credible and integer to others.

Table 4: Entrepreneurial competencies

In order to be able to show a statistically proved competency profile, it is of importance that it is tested if the competencies are developed in the right way. This was done by the Principal Components Analysis or factor analysis. The outcomes can be found in annex 5.

On the occasion of the testing, for the general part the following model was developed:

Competency domain		Competency	Description
Analysing: Competencies related to the analysing and assessing of opportunities for new products, processes or markets.	1	Overview	The entrepreneur is able to have a helicopter view on what is happening in his enterprise.
	2	Market orientation	The entrepreneur can be aware of the developments in the equine industry. On the occasion of this awareness the entrepreneur discovers opportunities and threats for this enterprise.
Initiating: Competencies related to the realisation of opportunities.	3	Leadership	The entrepreneur is able to get his enterprise in the right balance, by directing.
	4	Management	The entrepreneur is able to get and keep the management in his enterprise at the right level.
	5	Motivation	The entrepreneur is able to perform the activities belonging to the enterprise with full devotion and joy.
	6	Innovation	The entrepreneur is able to develop and exploit new ideas. The entrepreneur is aware of the possible consequences which are related to taking risks.
Networking: Competencies related to the formation and maintenance of (new) contacts.	7	Emotional intelligence	The entrepreneur is able to apply his communicative abilities in the right way in his enterprise.

Table 5: Adjusted entrepreneurial competencies

To the above shown competencies indicators are coupled. This makes it possible whether the entrepreneur is competent or not. These indicators can be found in annex 6.

6.5 What competencies does a breeding stable owner need and what do they look like?

Next to the competencies of the ‘general’ part, there was a need for an ‘enterprise specific’ part. On the occasion of the conversations with the different experts and the literature, an ‘equine specific’ part was developed for the breeding stable owner. The indicators belonging to this part can be found in annex 3.

Competency domain		Competency	Description
Breeding: Competencies related to the breeding of horses.	8	Selecting	The entrepreneur is able to select the right mares and stallions for the breeding.
	9	Advising	The entrepreneur is able to advise the mare owners with regards to the stallion selection and the breeding process.
	10	Reproduction	The entrepreneur is able put his vision on the reproduction of the horse into practice.
	11	Consulting	The entrepreneur is able to keep close contact with the veterinarian or other experts.
Caring for horses: Competencies related to the care of the horses.	12	Caring for horses	The entrepreneur is able to offer the horses on the enterprise the care they need.

Table 6: Equine specific competencies breeding stable owner

For this ‘equine specific’ part it was not possible to test the model statistically. Therefore the ‘equine specific’ part is not adjusted.

6.6 What competencies does a trading stable owner need and what do they look like?

Next to the competencies of the ‘general’ part, there was a need for an ‘enterprise specific’ part. On the occasion of the conversations with the different experts and the literature, an ‘equine specific’ part was developed for the trading stable owner. The indicators belonging to this part can be found in annex 3.

Competency domain		Competency	Description
Trading: Competencies related to the trading of horses.	13	Negotiating	The entrepreneur is able to negotiate by the buying and selling of horses.
	14	Transport	The entrepreneur is able to organize decent transport for the transportation of horses.
	15	Matching	The entrepreneur is able to match the right horse to the right customer and vice versa.
Training: Competencies related to the training of horses.	16	Training	The entrepreneur is able to break and train horses.
Caring for horses: Competencies related to the care of the horses.	17	Caring for horses	The entrepreneur is able to offer the horses on the enterprise the care they need.

Table 7: Equine specific competencies trading stable owner

For this ‘equine specific’ part it was not possible to test the model statistically. Therefore the ‘equine specific’ part is not adjusted.

6.7 What competencies does a riding school owner need and what do they look like?

Next to the competencies of the ‘general’ part, there was a need for an ‘enterprise specific’ part. On the occasion of the conversations with the different experts and the literature, an ‘equine specific’ part was developed for the riding school owner. The indicators belonging to this part can be found in annex 3.

Competency domain		Competency	Description
Instruction: Competencies related to the offering of instruction.	18	Stimulation	The entrepreneur is able to stimulate the sportive development of the riders.
	19	Informing	The entrepreneur is able to inform the riders about relevant topics as safety, sports equipment, caring for horses, rules and regulations.
	20	Training situation	The entrepreneur is able to create an optimal training situation for the riders.
Safety: Competencies related to the safety of human and animal.	21	Safety	The entrepreneur is able to maintain and improve the safety on the enterprise.
Caring for horses: Competencies related to the care of the horses.	22	Caring for horses	The entrepreneur is able to offer the horses on the enterprise the care they need.

Table 8: Equine specific competencies riding school owner

For this ‘equine specific’ part it was not possible to test the model statistically. Therefore the ‘equine specific’ part is not adjusted.

6.8 What competencies does a livery yard owner need and what do they look like?

Next to the competencies of the 'general' part, there was a need for an 'enterprise specific' part. On the occasion of the conversations with the different experts and the literature, an 'equine specific' part was developed for the livery yard owner. The indicators belonging to this part can be found in annex 3.

Competency domain		Competency	Description
Environment: Competencies related to the environment of the livery yard.	23	Informing	The entrepreneur is able to inform the horse owners about relevant topics as safety, sports equipment, caring for horses, rules and regulations.
	24	Culture	The entrepreneur is able to create a pleasant culture for employees as well as horse owners.
Safety: Competencies related to the safety of human and animal.	25	Safety	The entrepreneur is able to maintain and improve the safety on the enterprise.
Caring for horses: Competencies related to the care of the horses.	26	Caring	The entrepreneur is able to create an optimal environment where the horse owners are able to take care of their horses.
	27	Caring for horses	The entrepreneur is able to offer the horses on the enterprise the care they need.

Table 9: Equine specific competencies livery yard owner

For this 'equine specific' part it was not possible to test the model statistically. Therefore the 'equine specific' part is not adjusted.

6.9 Are the current equine entrepreneurs competent?

The table with the competency scores can be found in annex 7. An entrepreneur is assumed competent, when he scores a minimum of 75% of the maximum score.

6.9.1 General part

Figure 9 shows the scores of the average equine entrepreneur per competency of the general part. The yellow lines in the figure show the limit of being competent. When the average is beneath this line, the entrepreneurs are not assumed competent. However, the scores were rounded.

The figure shows that the entrepreneurs are competent for 'Leadership', 'Management', 'Motivation' and 'Emotional intelligence'. The entrepreneurs are not competent for the competencies 'Overview', 'Market orientation' and 'Innovation'.

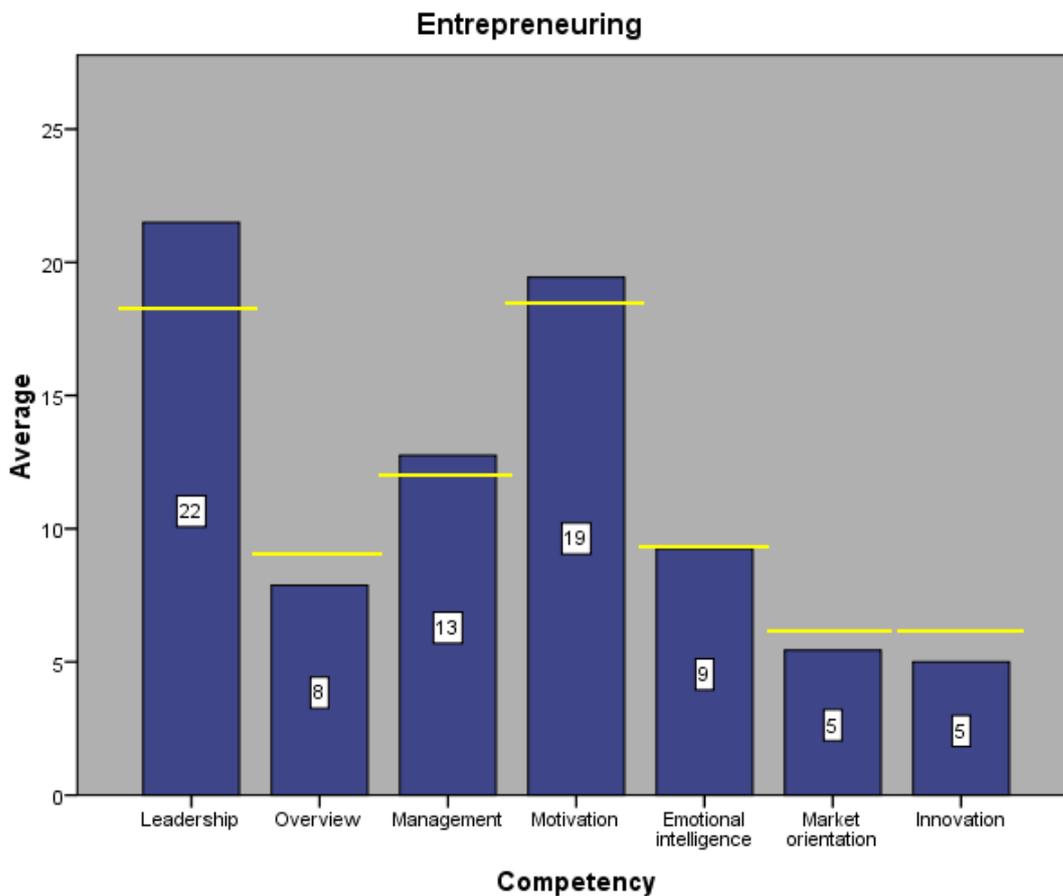


Figure 9: Average competency scores per entrepreneurial competency

In order to be able to test whether there is a difference in being competent in entrepreuning, between the entrepreneurs of the different types of enterprises, the scores of the entrepreneurial competencies were taken together. Figure 10 shows the result. It shows the score of an average entrepreneur, of the different types of enterprises, in the field of entrepreuning.

For the general part the entrepreneur should score 78 point or higher. The figure shows that the entrepreneurs of the breeding stables and trading stables are the most competent in entrepreuning. In contrast the entrepreneurs of the livery yards are not competent in entrepreuning.

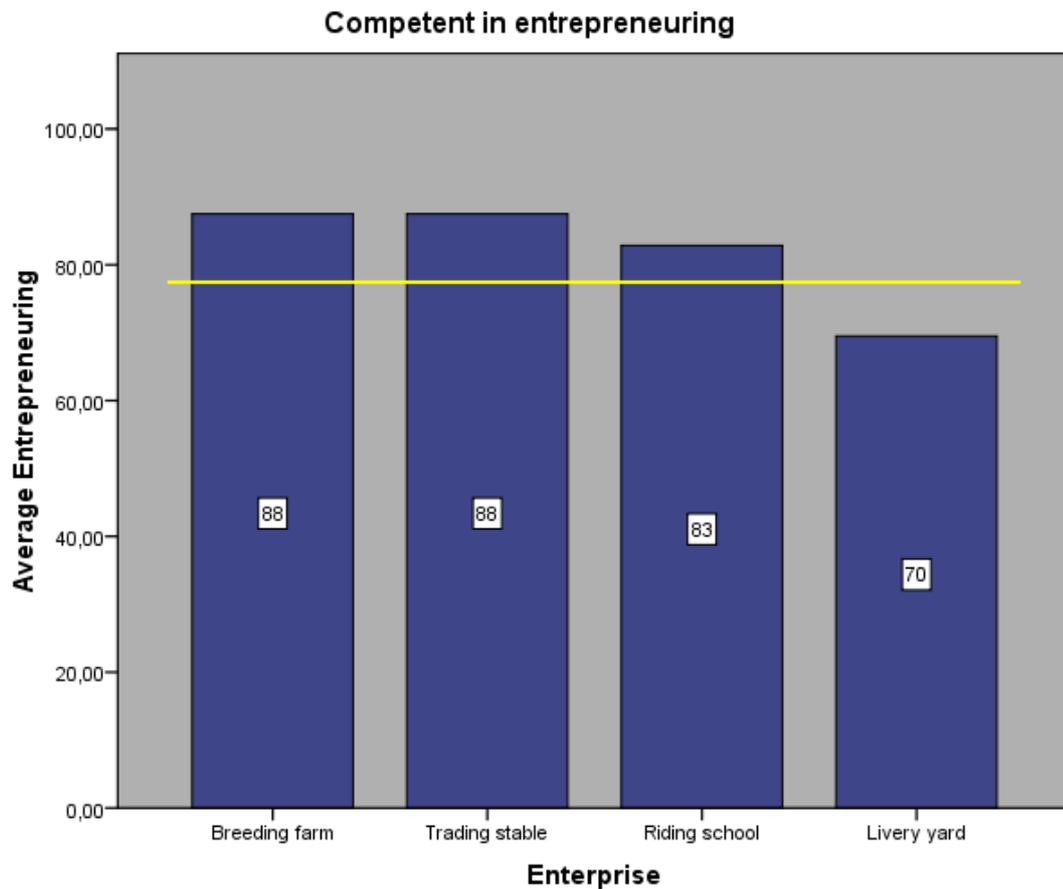


Figure 10: Average competency scores on entrepreuning per type of enterprise

6.9.2 Equine specific parts

Figure 11 shows the scores of the average breeding stable owner in the enterprise specific field. The yellow line in the figure shows the limit of being competent. When the average is beneath this line, the entrepreneurs are not assumed competent. However, the scores were rounded.

The figure shows that the entrepreneurs are competent for 'Reproduction', and 'Caring for horses'. The entrepreneurs are not competent for the competencies 'Selecting', 'Advising', and 'Consulting'.

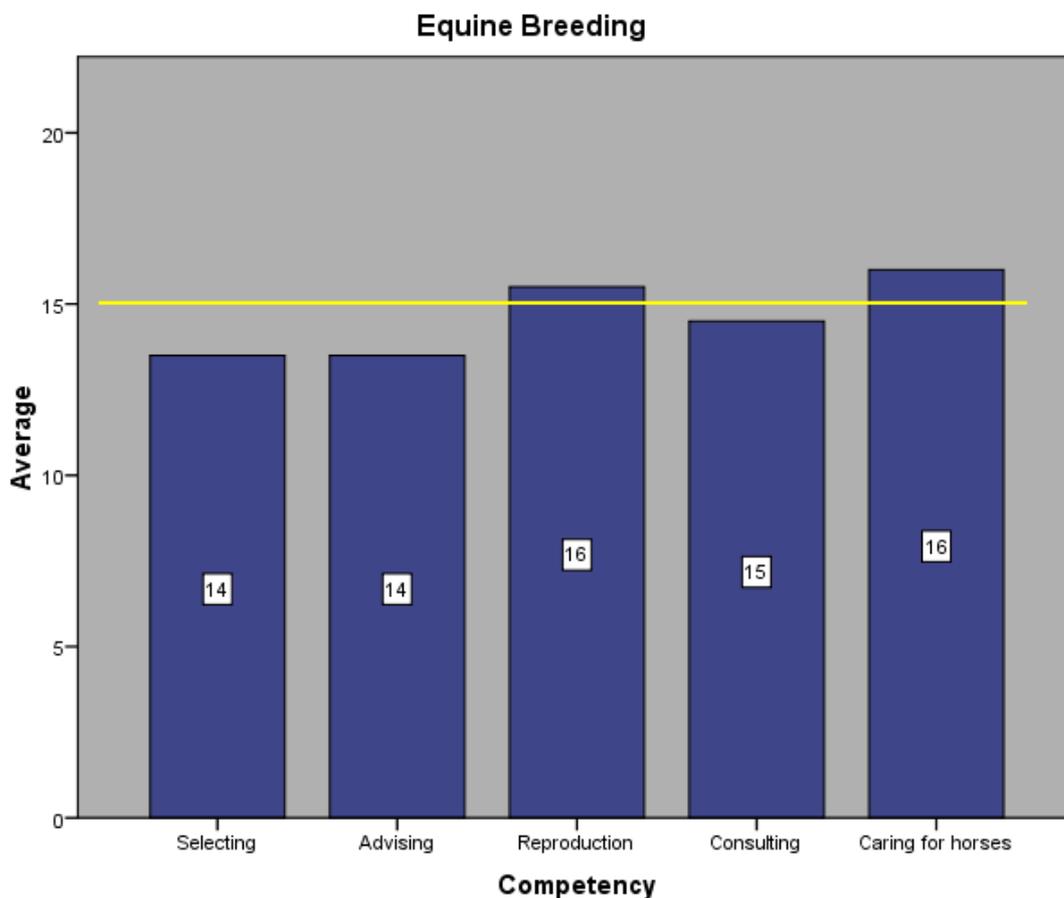


Figure 11: Average competency scores per equine specific competency breeding stable

Figure 12 shows the scores of the average trading stable owner in the enterprise specific field. The yellow line in the figure shows the limit of being competent. When the average is beneath this line, the entrepreneurs are not assumed competent. However, the scores were rounded.

The figure shows that the entrepreneurs are competent for 'Negotiating', 'Transport', 'Matching' and 'Caring for horses'. The entrepreneurs are not competent for the competency 'Training'.

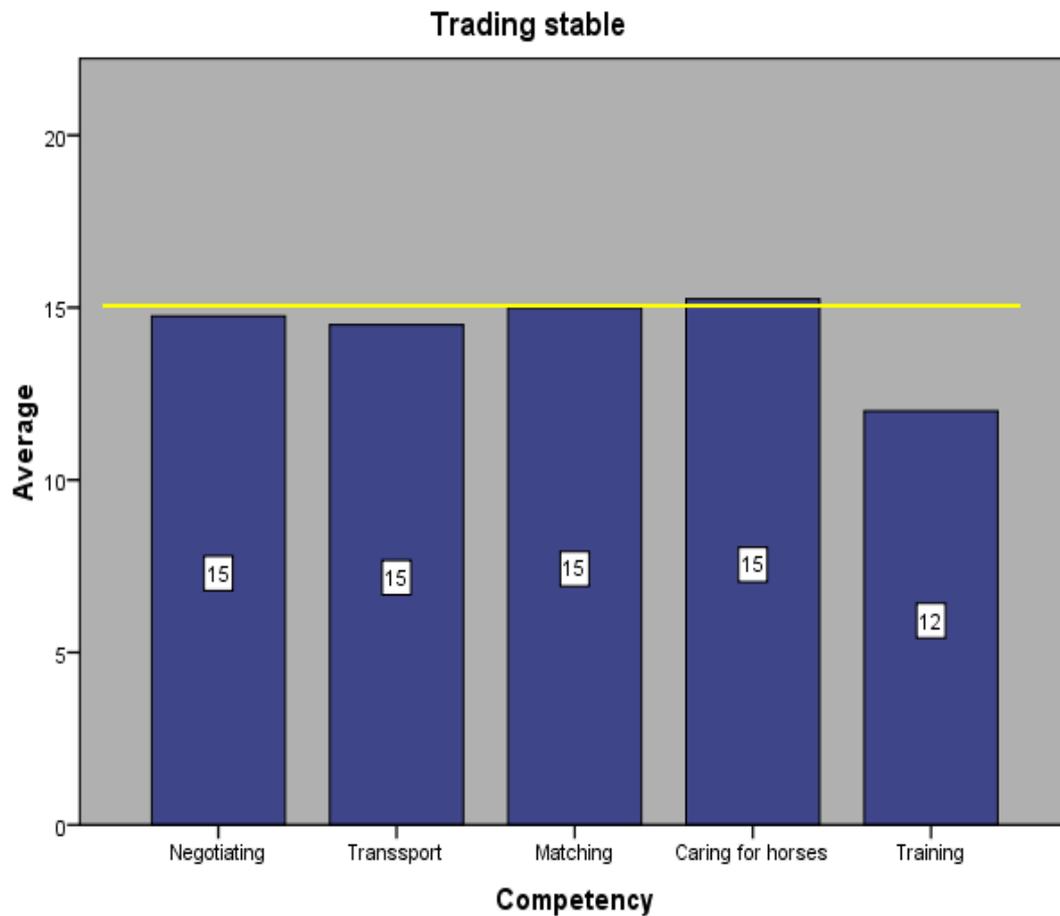


Figure 12: Average competency score per equine specific competency trading stable

Figure 13 shows the scores of the average trading stable owner in the enterprise specific field. The yellow line in the figure shows the limit of being competent. When the average is beneath this line, the entrepreneurs are not assumed competent. However, the scores were rounded

The figure shows that the entrepreneurs are competent for 'Stimulation', 'Informing', 'Safety', and 'Caring for horses'. The entrepreneurs are not competent for the competency 'Training situation'.

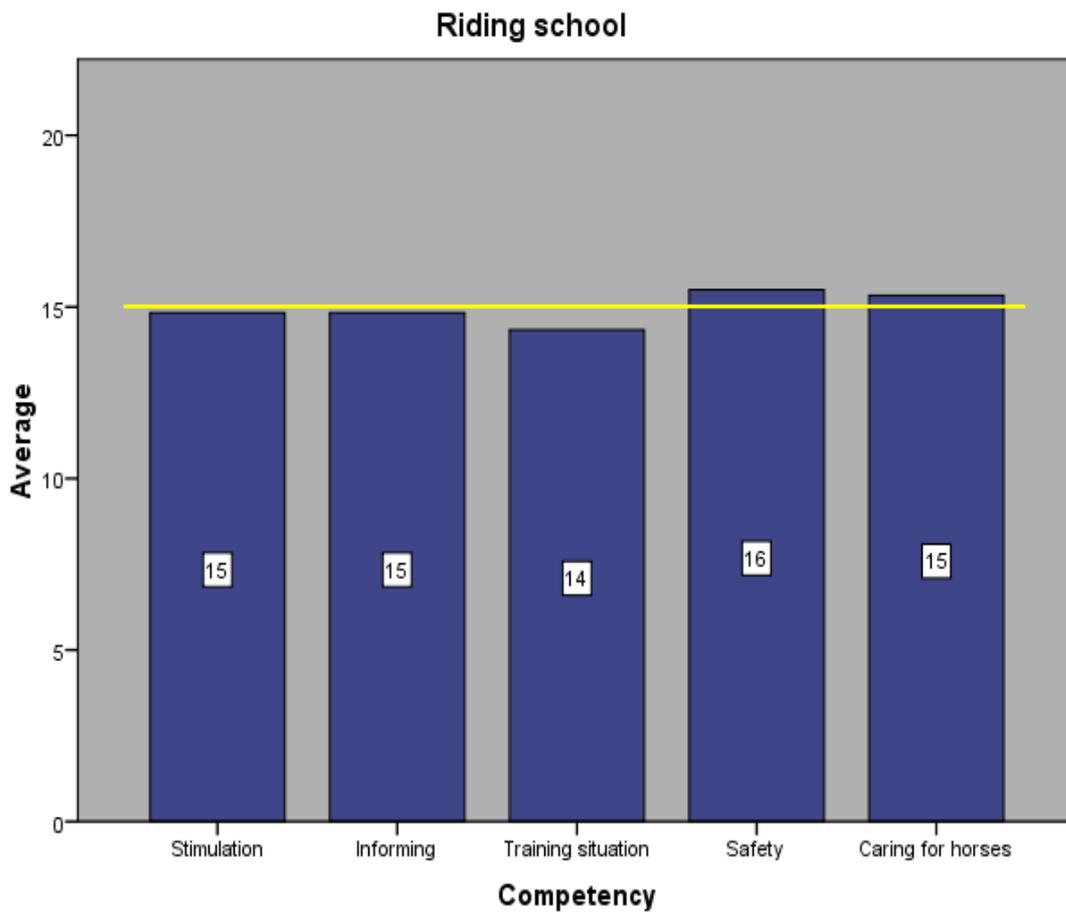


Figure 13: Average competency score per equine specific competency riding school

Figure 14 shows the scores of the average trading stable owner in the enterprise specific field. The yellow line in the figure shows the limit of being competent. When the average is beneath this line, the entrepreneurs are not assumed competent. However, the scores were rounded

The figure shows that the entrepreneurs are competent for 'Caring for horses'. The entrepreneurs are not competent for the competencies 'Informing', 'Culture', 'Caring' and 'Safety'.

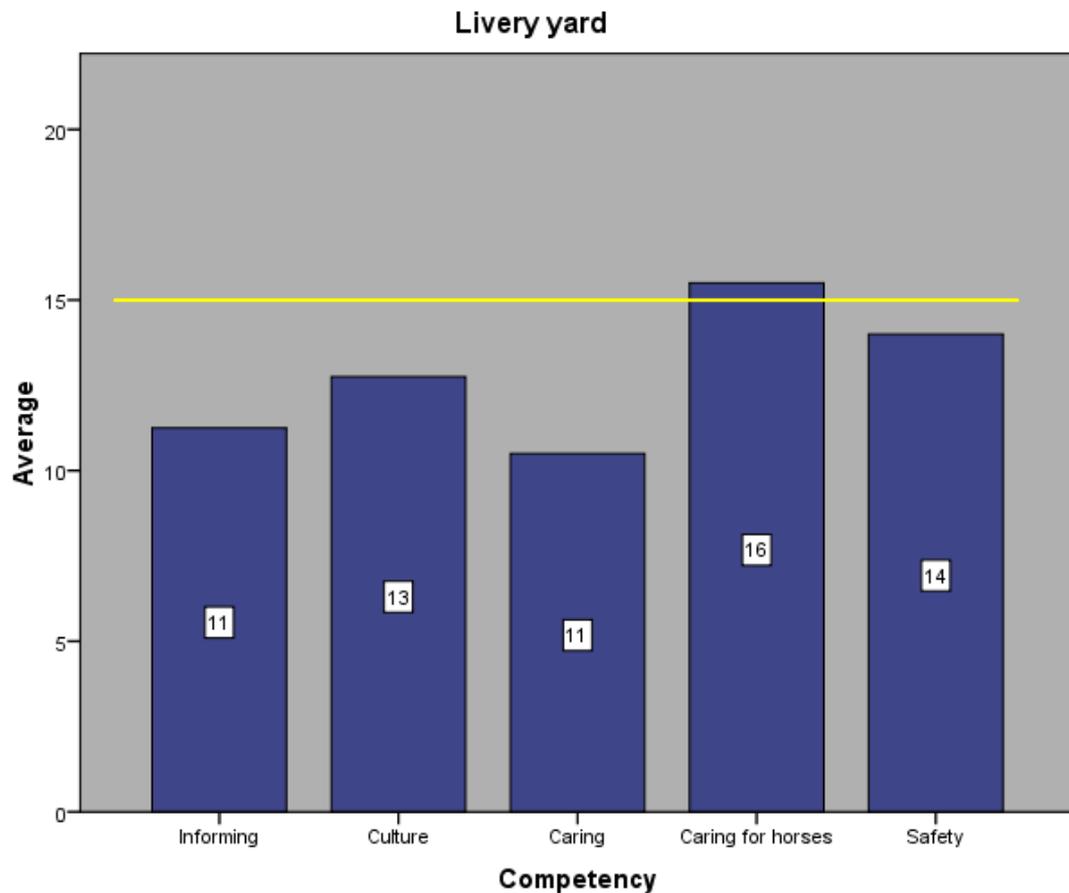


Figure 14: Average competency scores per equine specific competency livery yard

7. Discussion

This chapter contains a consideration of the performed research. Within this chapter the design of the research will be followed. First the research method will be discussed, followed by the results to the research questions.

7.1 Research method

The first phase of this research was the conducting of a literature study. This provided a large quantity of information which was of importance to this research. The literature study took more time than what was expected. However, because this phase was run thoroughly, a very clear view about the situation around this research arose.

The conversations with the organizations with a helicopter view on the equine industry are of great value for this research. Unfortunately not every organization was willing to cooperate in this research. The main reason was that they saw no point in this research. The expectation was that the 'feeling for the sector' of these organisations would be better than the conversations eventually showed. The different organisations have lots of different ideas regarding the structure of the industry and the mission and vision for the industry. In the context of the professionalization it is of importance that these organizations are pursuing the same goals. The 'Sectorraad Paarden' is doing a good job, to blow all the winds in the industry in the same direction. In the conversations it was clearly stated what is expected of the equine entrepreneur.

On the occasion of the conversations with the organizations with a helicopter view on the equine industry, combined with the vision on the equine industry and the conversations with Mr. Ir. T. Lans, it was possible to develop the competency profiles. The conversations with Mr. Ir. T. Lans were of a great importance for this research. Especially regarding the structure of a competency profile.

The competency profiles consisted of a general part with 10 competencies (40 indicators) and an enterprise specific part with 5 equine specific competencies (20 indicators). This size is chosen in order to keep the profile as tangible as possible. After the testing of the competency profiles the size was reduced to 7 competencies (26 indicators) in the general part and 5 competencies (20 indicators) in the enterprise specific part.

As well as behavioural indicators performance indicators are included in the profile, however limited. This is deliberately chosen, because performance indicators are more difficult to test on a large amount of entrepreneurs. Mostly the entrepreneurs are not willing to share these details. It can be of an extra value to include more performance indicators in the profiles, in order to create an additional check. This provides the possibility to check whether the being of not being competent of the entrepreneur is seen in the hard data.

With regards to the enterprise visits, most enterprises were located in the region Gelderland. The reason for this was time and costs savings. The interviews are of great value to this research. The interviews provided the possibility to get insight in the different perspectives on the equine industry. Next to this the interviews provided a good view on the thinking and acting of the entrepreneur. This provided an extra check with regards to the questionnaire. During the interviews notes were made which resulted in interview reports. There is the possibility that during the making of the notes some information is missed. Therefore it is recommendable to use a voice recorder.

The reactions of the entrepreneurs to the enterprise visits were very positive. Through these visits entrepreneurs are very much willing to cooperate in the research. The main reason they stated was that the researcher is showing sincere interest in them and their enterprise. Unfortunately it was not possible to visit more than 11 enterprises. The main reason was that visiting enterprises is very time consuming.

In the development of the questionnaire there was chosen for a 4 point Likert scale. This makes sure that the entrepreneur is not given the possibility to give a neutral answer. Hereby the giving of socially desirable answers is limited. Unfortunately the giving of socially desirable answers can not be fully excluded. Further it was decided to ask some random questions in a 'negative' form. This keeps the entrepreneur focussed during the completing of the questionnaire. However, this also makes the questionnaire more complicated to the entrepreneurs.

Because enterprises are often performing a combination of different activities, the questionnaire needed to be answered for the main activity of the enterprise.

The response on the online spread questionnaire was very low. A low response was expected, but it was even lower. Equine entrepreneurs stated that they often receive questionnaires of for example students. They don't have the time or don't feel the need to complete these questionnaires.

For both the surveys and the enterprise visits, it proved to be very difficult to find equine breeders who were willing to cooperate. This is due to the fact that these entrepreneurs are in the middle of the breeding season.

A high response on the questionnaire was necessary for the statistical testing of the competency profiles. This was however only possible for the general part of the competency profiles. Though the response was also for the general part very low. There is the possibility that the composition of the competency profiles will change, when these are tested within a larger population.

The research contained very complex statistics. It was therefore of a great importance that there was support of several experts in the field of statistics.

7.2 What is the current market situation in the equine industry and what are the expectations?

In the literature there is lots of information available with regards to the equine industry. However it is remarkable that quite a few researches are just using each others information. Therefore it turned out that recent information about the equine industry was not available. That is why the interviews with the organizations with a helicopter view on the equine industry and the different entrepreneurs have taken place.

The equine industry is of great importance to the Dutch economy. Within the industry there are approximately 16.000 until 17.000 enterprises with horses. The equine industry is a very marginal industry (Boersma, 2003). There are only a few companies who run profitable or even break-even (MinLNV, 2006). One of the entrepreneurs stated that working in the equine industry equals choosing voluntary poverty. Yearly the turnover of the industry is between the 1,4 and 1,8 billion Euros (Sluyter, F.; Fortgens, I., 2010). The sector is experiencing the consequences of the economical deterioration. Especially the trade and breeding are strongly reduced.

In the equine industry the professionalism is missing. A main reason is that the equine industry is characterized by refined hobbyism. The equine industry is an industry that is currently driven by too much emotion. Next to this the equine industry is lacking clear guidance. There is nobody who has the overall view. The expectation is that the Sectorraad Paarden will be taking on this role.

The expectation for the coming 5 years is that the equine industry will not grow very much. There are changes expected in the composition of the industry. For example many small enterprises will disappear and the remaining enterprises will shift their focus to quality. This means that the specialisation degree will rise.

From the ministry the plans with regards to welfare, identification and registration will fulfil an important role the coming 5 years (Fortgens, I.; Sluyter, F., 2010). Out of the equine industry there is the fear that these plans will be steered by people without know-how of the industry. However the entrepreneurs do see the importance of these plans.

7.3 What is entrepreneuring?

With regards to the subject entrepreneuring there are lots of definitions with their explanations available in literature. The amount of definitions is simply determined: this equals the amount of persons that have been busy doing research on entrepreneurship (Risseuw et al., 2003).

In the context of this research entrepreneurship will be defined as follows: Entrepreneurship is a certain mentality and process associated with individuals, who possess a set of competencies (for example creativity, risk taking), in which these competencies are shown in distinctive entrepreneurial behaviour (bringing a business idea into a success), next to the daily management. In this context the entrepreneur is an individual who founds or leads an enterprise with the purpose of creating a financial healthy and market leading position. The entrepreneur is mainly characterized by innovative behaviour and the strategic management in business.

When the equine entrepreneurs are asked if they are an entrepreneur, almost everyone answers with a definite yes. However when the equine entrepreneurs are asked what is involved in entrepreneuring, one must think harder. As the most important aspect the creation of turnover is mentioned. If no satisfactory answer is taken with this answer the entrepreneurs are stating that know-how, progressive thinking, quality and perseverance are important aspects. The fact that the entrepreneurs first mentioned the turnover aspect, confirms that most of the enterprises have difficulties creating enough turnover.

7.4 What are competencies?

Also with regards to the subject competencies there are lots of definitions with their explanations available in literature. Around the concept competencies there is lots of ambiguity. However the concept is getting a more important role in the society, as well as in the equine industry.

The competencies what this research is about are competencies on a personal level. Competencies are contextual bounded knowledge, attitudes and skills that are indivisibly connected (Simons). It is not only about knowing how something works, but also about the ability to perform adequate actions in a specific context (Lans et. al., 2006). Competencies are constructed of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

To be able to develop the competency profiles for the equine entrepreneur, the three factor model is used (analysing, initiating, and networking) (Lans et. al.). Within the competency profiles indicators are coupled to the competencies, what creates the possibility to test whether an entrepreneur is competent or not.

7.5 What competencies does a breeding stable owner need and what do they look like?

Equine breeding includes the process of the beginning of a foal until the training of the young horse. The high quality control makes the Dutch horses very popular in foreign countries (Sectorraad, 2004). According to the entrepreneurs this is the result of a piece of stubbornness which characterises the Dutch equine breeders.

For the breeder the 'general' competencies related to entrepreneuring are of importance. The tests show that the breeders together with the traders are the most competent in entrepreneuring in the equine industry. Next to these competencies, the breeder needs to possess of 'enterprise specific' competencies. These competencies can be found in paragraph 6.4.

The necessary enterprise specific competencies for a breeder are developed on the occasion of the conversations with the organizations with a helicopter view on the equine industry and the different equine entrepreneurs. In order to determine whether these competencies contain the required knowledge, skills and attitudes, the profile needed to be tested.

As a consequence of the very low response of the equine breeding farms, it was not possible to test the enterprise specific part statistically. The low response is a consequence of the fact that the breeders are currently in the middle of the breeding season. Therefore they did not have the time to participate. Next to this the low response is a consequence of the fact that most equine entrepreneurs do not feel the need of participating in a research.

7.6 What competencies does a trading stable owner need and what do they look like?

The equine trading includes the process of the purchase of a horse until the sale of a horse. There is also some training involved. The Dutch equine trading is characterised by the trading with horses of high quality. This matches with the purposes of the Dutch equine breeding.

For the trader the 'general' competencies related to entrepreneuring are of importance. The tests show that the traders together with the breeders are the most competent in entrepreneuring in the equine industry. Next to these competencies, the trader needs to possess of 'enterprise specific' competencies. These competencies can be found in paragraph 6.5.

The necessary enterprise specific competencies for a trader are developed on the occasion of the conversations with the organizations with a helicopter view on the equine industry and the different equine entrepreneurs. In order to determine whether these competencies contain the required knowledge, skills and attitudes, the profile needed to be tested.

As a consequence of the very low response of the equine trading farms, it was not possible to test the enterprise specific part statistically. The low response is a consequence of the fact that most equine entrepreneurs do not feel the need of participating in a research.

7.7 What competencies does a riding school owner need and what do they look like?

The riding school includes the process of providing lessons to mainly recreational equestrians. In the Netherlands there are approximately 400.000 persons who practice equine sports on a recreational basis (ZKA Consultants and Planner, 2006). According to the entrepreneurs this amount is still growing. Riding schools are therefore having the least effects of the economic deterioration.

For the riding school owner the 'general' competencies related to entrepreneuring are of importance. The tests show that the riding school owner is competent in entrepreneuring in the equine industry. Next to these competencies, the trader needs to possess of 'enterprise specific' competencies. These competencies can be found in paragraph 6.6.

The necessary enterprise specific competencies for a trader are developed on the occasion of the conversations with the organizations with a helicopter view on the equine industry and the different equine entrepreneurs. In order to determine whether these competencies contain the required knowledge, skills and attitudes, the profile needed to be tested.

As a consequence of the very low response of the riding schools, it was not possible to test the enterprise specific part statistically. The low response is a consequence of the fact that most equine entrepreneurs do not feel the need of participating in a research.

7.8 What competencies does a livery yard owner need and what do they look like?

The offering of livery includes the process of the offering of facilities for human and horse. Livery yards are characterized by lots of 'proliferation'. This is mainly caused by agricultural enterprises that are shifting (a part of) their company to a livery yard. These companies often have the possibility to offer livery for a relatively low price, because they have access to more land for example.

For the livery yard owner the 'general' competencies related to entrepreneuring are of importance. The tests show that the livery yard owner is not competent in entrepreneuring in the equine industry. This is probably caused by the fact that most livery yard owners are offering livery for hobby. They do not have the ability to see their enterprise with a managerial view. Next to these competencies, the trader needs to possess of 'enterprise specific' competencies. These competencies can be found in paragraph 6.7.

The necessary enterprise specific competencies for a livery yard owner are developed on the occasion of the conversations with the organizations with a helicopter view on the equine industry and the different equine entrepreneurs. In order to determine whether these competencies contain the required knowledge, skills and attitudes, the profile needed to be tested.

As a consequence of the very low response of the livery yards, it was not possible to test the enterprise specific part statistically. The low response is a consequence of the fact that most equine entrepreneurs do not feel the need of participating in a research.

7.9 Are the current equine entrepreneurs competent?

7.9.1 Entrepreneurship

What characterises the equine entrepreneurs is that they all are very motivated. This illustrates the emotion, which also characterises the entire industry very clearly. Next to this the equine entrepreneurs are competent in leadership, management and emotional intelligence. The equine entrepreneurs seem to be not competent in having overview, market orientation and innovations. Precisely these competencies are of great importance in being innovatory and distinctive. This confirms the assumption that the equine entrepreneur is mainly moving on the 'island' of his own company.

7.9.2 Equine specific

The research shows that breeders are competent in reproduction and the taking care for the horses. This is not a surprising outcome, because the reproduction and care for horses are the most important aspects that drive a breeding stable. However the breeders are not competent for selecting, advising and consulting. This indicates that the breeders can work on the field of dealing with customers. When they will optimize these competencies this can result in better sales of for example sperm and an increased customer satisfaction.

The research shows that the traders are competent in negotiating, transport, matching and taking care of the horses. This is not a surprising outcome, because these are the aspects that drive a trading stable. However it is remarkable that traders are not competent in the training of horses. This could be, because most of the horses only stay for a very short time on the company. Training is therefore mostly focussed on keeping the horse in condition. There is not strived to a higher level.

The research shows that the riding school owners are competent in stimulation, informing, safety and caring for horses. Remarkable is that the entrepreneurs think that safety is one of the most important aspects. The riding school owners are not competent in the trainings situation. The entrepreneurs often save money on the purchase of for example new jumping materials. This behaviour is probably caused by the fact that it is not easy to earn the necessary turnover with an equine farm.

The research shows that the livery yard owners are competent in the caring for horses. Very remarkable is that the livery yard owner is not competent for the other equine competencies. Livery yards often origin from agricultural enterprises. In these enterprises the know-how of the equine industry is missing. Especially in the field of dealing with customers much can be improved.

8. Conclusion

8.1 The equine industry

The equine industry is a very marginal industry (Biersma, 2003). There are only a few companies who run profitable or even break-even (MinLNV, 2006). The equine industry is characterized by refined hobbyism. Therefore the professionalism is missing in the industry. Next to this the equine industry is lacking clear guidance. There is nobody who has the overall view. The expectation is that the Sectorraad Paarden will be taking on this role.

In the Netherlands there is lots of emotion involved in the keeping of horses. This emotion is pushing the professionalism and managerial attitude of the entrepreneur to the background.

The coming 5 years the industry as a whole needs to be shifted to a higher level. This will be stimulated by for example the plans of the MinLNV with regards to welfare and identification and registration. However the industry should be careful that the plans and guidelines are not written by people with no know-how of the industry.

8.2 The competencies of the equine entrepreneur

Competencies in the field of entrepreneuring are very important to an equine entrepreneur. The current equine entrepreneur can not yet be referred to as a real entrepreneur. The entrepreneurs are characterized by a strong motivation and good leadership qualities. However the entrepreneurs are lacking market orientation, having overview and innovation. Many of the entrepreneurs are living on the 'island' of their own enterprise. Next to this there are often no records of what is happening inside the enterprise. This causes the entrepreneur losing the overview.

Competencies in the enterprise specific field are as important to the equine entrepreneur as competencies in the field of entrepreneuring. The current equine entrepreneur has know-how about the industry. One knows what is important to the horse. The equine entrepreneur can work on the field of customer relations. People with horses are people with an own opinion and own needs and wants. These people should be treated in a suitable way.

Remarkable is that the livery yard owners are the only equine entrepreneurs who are not competent in the field of entrepreneuring as well as in the enterprise specific field. A possible cause is that many livery yards origin from hobby 'getting out of hand'. Next to this there is quite a lot agricultural enterprises shifting to equine farming. In these enterprises the know-how of the equine industry is missing.

9. Recommendations

During this research some aspects are very important to the implementing. These aspects will be discussed in this chapter.

Because this research was carried out with a limited population, it is recommendable to test the competency profiles on a larger population. This population needs to consist of at least 150 participants. Based on these 150 participants a very valid model can be presented.

When the competency profiles are tested in a larger population, it is strongly recommended to visit all the participants. This research showed that the equine entrepreneurs do not feel the need to participate in a research or questionnaire when it is impersonal. However they are very positive about the researcher visiting their company. The main reason for this is that there is some space for interest in the enterprise. The disadvantage is that enterprise visits are very time consuming.

It is recommendable to make use of a voice recorder during enterprise visits. By using a voice recorder all the provided information will be available to the researcher later as well.

During this research the participating entrepreneurs indicated that know-how of the industry is very important for consultants. Having know-how of the industry will have a positive effect on the quality of the advice. Next to this it will take the consultant less time to form an advice.

It is of great importance that the equine industry will be shifted to a higher level. Alfa Accountants en Adviseurs can contribute in this by having good communication with the different organizations with a helicopter view on the industry and the entrepreneurs. It is important to listen very carefully where the sector want to go to.

For the equine entrepreneur it is important that he is aware of the strong and weak point of the enterprise. When they are aware of this, they can make use of the strong points and work on the weak point in order to get to a higher level of professionalism. It is very important that the entrepreneur keep it very clear where he wants to go with the enterprise.

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Entrepreneurial spirit or equine heart?

Rianne Mennink

Equine, Leisure & Sports

rienne_mennink@hotmail.com

Tel: 06-54348396

June, 2010

Alfa Accountants en Adviseurs

Agro Business Park 85-87

6708 PV Wageningen

Phone number: 0317-423865

www.alfa-accountants.nl