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Editorial

April 2012 Edition

I am happy to welcome you to our first edition of the International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in 2012. We have put together a range of interesting articles that are highly relevant to your research and practice.

Let me introduce you to the authors of this edition and their contributions.

In the Research part of the Reviewed Section you will first find A Strategic Approach to Coaching in Organisations: A Case Study from Paul Stephen Turner who explores the potential of a line manager driven coaching programme and leadership coaching culture to improve employee commitment and performance.

Michael Read and his colleagues look in their paper Helping Create Service 'Experts': The Opportunity for an Athletic Approach to Coaching in Service Organisations at 13 practices that are used by athletic and organizational coaches and the extent to which these practices can be applied in organizations.

The way outcomes of coaching programmes are currently measured is different from one organization to the other. This makes the comparison of the effectiveness of coaching programmes difficult. Yaron Prywes suggests in his paper Cognitive, Behavioral, and Affective Learning Outcomes of a Coaching Program a framework to facilitate coaching evaluation.

Bob Garvey used the opportunity of an evaluation study of the Halifax Bank of Scotland's Executive Mentoring Programme to offer insights into the societal and social impact of mentoring, which he interprets in his paper Mentoring for Leadership Development: A Case Study of Executive Mentoring during the Banking Crisis.

As this journal is for researchers and practitioners, we have included three articles in this edition that explore Professional Skills in the Professional Section.

Katherine Long makes a start with The 'S' Factor: Exploring the spiritual Dimension to our Work as Coaches. She looks particularly at the spiritual roots and shoots of coaching and argues for the need for more spiritually informed approaches in coaching practice.

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Brian and Lou Raye Nichol reflect in their article The Siren Call of the Powerful Question on the assumption that powerful questions are at the core of good coaching. They argue that rather than residing at the core, effective questions arise from other foundational work, and derive their power from a holistic approach.

Mike Taylor addresses Running a Successful Coaching and Mentoring Business, Legally Speaking. He points out the significant commercial risks for coaches, mentors and their clients when working without a good contractual basis. He introduces the legal agreement that the EMCC UK has developed.

Best practices are significant to further our understanding on how to run effective mentoring and coaching interventions. In this edition we are providing you with three Cases of Practice that will give you food for thought for you own practice.

Carol Whitaker and Michelle Lucas reflect in Collaboration in Practice with Co-Facilitated Group Coaching Supervision: What could you learn from hearing our story? on their developmental journey to developing a unique style of group coaching supervision.

Carol Whitaker together with her colleague Kerstin Potter got the opportunity to help young Lebanese entrepreneurs to move their business forward through mentoring. They describe their experiences in the article Distance Mentoring: a Case Study from the Middle East.

Ken Wallis looks at another mentoring programme in his article Mentoring in Australian Local Government. He discusses three critical elements of mentoring programmes: the organisational culture, in which cultural development occurs, the communication environment and the value placed on learning and development.

In our final section, Book Reviews, we present to you six new books. First, Jane Fowler looks at Coaching & Mentoring at Work: Developing Effective Practice (2nd edition), (2012) from Julia Connor & Mary Pokora. Jane Lewis then introduces you to Best practice in Performance Coaching. A Handbook for Leaders, Coaches, HR Professionals and Organizations (2011) written by Carol Wilson. Peter Hawkin's book Creating a Coaching Culture: Developing a Coaching Strategy for Your Organization (2012) is reviewed by Michael L. Kreindler and Coaching & Mentoring Supervision: Theory and Practice (2011) from Tatiana Bachkirova, Peter Jackson and David

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Clutterbuck is reviewed by Penny Johnson. The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating effective Learning Relationships (2nd edition), (2012) from Lois S. Zachary is presented by Nancy Papathanasiou and Hilarie Owen's book The complete Guide to Mentoring. How to Design, Implement and Evaluate effective Mentoring Programmes (2011) is described by Stacy McCracken.

Together with the Editorial Board I wish you a good reading.

And if you want to see your own paper or article published in this journal, please send them to me. You find some guidelines at the end of this journal.

Ines O'Donovan
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Reviewed Section. Research

A Strategic Approach to Coaching in Organisations: A Case Study

Paul Steven Turner, Birmingham City University, UK

Abstract

This article discusses a research project, which investigated the potential for a leadership coaching culture to improve employee commitment and performance. The research was primarily based on data obtained from a UK financial organisation with supporting data from other sources such as employees of other organisations participating in leadership coaching programmes and independent coaching professionals. The research objectives were to consider the value of coaching as an effective means of enhancing employee commitment and performance whilst identifying key factors to building a management coaching capability that enhances organisational coaching effectiveness.

Key words

leadership, coaching, commitment, performance

Research Background/Objectives

This article is based on a single case study research project, which investigated ways a leadership coaching culture can impact on organisational effectiveness. The research was primarily based on data obtained from a UK financial organisation with supporting data from other sources such as employees of organisations participating in leadership coaching programmes and independent coaching professionals. The central research objective was to consider the value of coaching as an effective means of enhancing employee commitment and performance whilst identifying key factors to building a management coaching capability that enhanced organisational coaching effectiveness.

Research Context

As organisations have found themselves looking to do more with less so coaching has moved centre stage as one response to the challenge of getting the most out of an organisation's most valuable resource, their employees. Coaching is seen in some commercial quarters as a way of releasing individual potential to effect changes in the workplace through empowering and motivating employees. The potential of coaching in the workplace to improve employee performance has therefore generated increasing interest in recent years, not just in terms of behavioural change but for other reasons such as employee performance development. The interest generated by coaching has far outstripped the interest in mentoring in recent years, for example, as evidenced by much higher number of searches for 'coaching' compared to 'mentoring' via the search engine Google since 2003 (Google Trends, 2012). Coaching in organisations has also increased in popularity over recent years and now attracts a broad spectrum of people in commerce, business and academic circles. Many interested parties seek to explore the strategic application of coaching in macro as well as micro terms, thus linking to organisational culture and leadership style and by the nature of the changes required to respond to changing social and economic conditions.

Organisational coaching could be viewed as a corporate strategy designed to maximise the potential of a workforce. This stance could be seen to be part of the search for a successful management formula for business success, which has led to management theory being part of a major academic industry. Re-engineering, total quality, downsizing, management by walking around; centralisation and decentralisation have all been fashionable as change trailblazers in academic and corporate circles before slipping into mid-life obscurity (Micklethwaite and Wooldridge, 1996). An example is books, which identify best principles adopted by successful companies with a theme of excellence. Even by the time some of these books are read in large numbers, many of the companies begin to lose their winning-edge as profits begin to slide. Some would argue that many approaches developed by certain business gurus are insubstantial as these rely very little, if at all, on robust evidence-based research. Organisational coaching, as a relatively recent arrival, is still arguably in its ascendancy. How long the progressive curve lasts, will depend on the quality of the evidence-based research available to sustain the increasing corporate spend on coaching strategies and related management development.

The kernel of the research quest was to better understand the nature of coaching within an organisation so as to identify and explore any characteristics necessary for coaching to achieve a favourable impact on organisational culture and performance.

Between 1937 and the 1960s literature on workplace coaching mainly involved descriptive reports of managers coaching employees and from this point more rigorous work started to emerge. The first peer-reviewed paper was published in 1937 (Gorby,

1937) and there was very little research (93 papers) until 2000 onwards when the level of peer reviewed and doctoral research increased with 425 papers or PhD dissertations published up to May 2009. PhD research accounted for 61 of these papers. Evidence based studies are therefore increasing at a substantial rate (Grant, 2009). This situation has created a growing requirement for evaluation of coaching interventions within a workplace environment to support existing research (Blessing White, 2009). The contextual nature of the research project relates to organisational coaching as a corporate strategy designed to maximise the potential of the workforce. The theoretical base of coaching is linked to other personal development interventions and comparative research has helped to define coaching both specifically and contextually (Walker, 2004).

Coaching, in the modern sense of the word, is often perceived to occupy a position within the participative area of the leadership behaviour spectrum (Whitmore, 1999; Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2005). The development of coaching coincided with one view that organisations benefit from a parallel leadership strategy, comprising of transactional behaviour to structure and control, which is often seen as managing; and transformational behaviour to motivate and influence, which is often discussed in terms of leading (Kotter, 1990; Bass and Avolio, 1994). A balanced leadership approach, including behaviour that adapts to situations (Blanchard, Carlos and Randolph, 1996) places emphasis on interpersonal relationship and social skills, and a manager's emotional capacity (Goleman, 1998). An imbalance between materialistic (transactional) and social (transformational) factors can impact negatively on organisational change programmes (Beer and Nohria, 2000). Organisations often struggle to simultaneously balance the two approaches. Organisations and managers wishing to move from a predominantly authoritarian 'command and control' management approach to a participative management style to reflect the changing environment and socio-demographic changes, have sought to utilise coaching as a means to increase employee performance and productivity (Downey, 2003).

The emergence of organisational coaching (Hamlin, Ellinger and Beattie 2008) perhaps reflects this trend. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) surveys over recent years have identified coaching and mentoring becoming increasingly popular in the UK and moving to be second to in-house development programmes in terms of the most effective learning and talent development programmes in 2010. Evaluation of coaching was identified as on the increase with 36% of organisations evaluating yet only 44% of these evaluation approaches related to business measures (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2010).

Research Methodology and Key Constraints

Due to the complexity of the research environment and subject it was determined that there was no optimum single methodology for collecting the research data. The 9Factors™ Employee Commitment Survey Methodology, a registered trade mark of Hemsley Fraser (Cartwright, 1999; Hemsley Fraser Group Ltd, 2000) was used as a large scale survey within a mixed methodological approach.

The 9Factors™ Employee Commitment Survey supported by a series of questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and discussion groups to ascertain individual observations; was considered to provide the most favourable method. A multiple methodological approach utilising data gathered from survey questionnaires, interviews and discussion groups was designed to reflect the organisational nature of the research, the views of the participants and to facilitate learning which may be transferable to similar organisational contexts. This research was undertaken over a seven year period, to enable contextualisation of the research activity within a realistic corporate planning cycle. The research time span resulted in the researcher's stance undergoing two stages of evolution and perspective; from employee/researcher with an 'insider' understanding; to an 'ex-insider/outsider' perspective, the researcher having left the organisation before the research was completed. Many participants also contributed to the research from both perspectives since their career paths followed similar trajectories.

The researcher's position in the organisation created challenges particularly around influence, reciprocity, mutuality and informed consent; and these were acknowledged and responded to via the research design e.g. non-observational approaches. The identification of quantitative and qualitative data enabled the development of both positivist and interpretive aspects. An empirical, ethnographic and systematic approach was developed to test and compare ideas and establish valid knowledge on which to better understand the nature and impact of coaching in the case study organisation.

Research Findings

Data gathered from the 9Factors™ Employee Commitment Survey together with survey questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and discussion groups provided the data base on which the research findings were developed.

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In sections a-j the author presents the research results followed by interpretations;

a) ***The key benefits to individual employees from coaching strongly relate to those factors that are considered to drive employee engagement*** including motivation and commitment (Melcrum, 2005). These benefits included improvements in; motivation and commitment in role, work relationships, higher levels of competence, increased satisfaction with job, trust and integrity, training support, the identification of solutions to problems and personal confidence.

b) ***Coaching has the potential to positively impact on employee commitment.*** There were strong indicators that the majority of the benefits derived from coaching had a positive impact on employee commitment through improved morale, motivation and satisfaction. The measure of employee commitment within the research model was the 9Factors™ Employee Commitment Survey Methodology. The research methodology involved a total participant pool ranging between 700 and 904 employees (the total workforce) over the period of the survey programme with an average completion rate of 81%, a high response rate compared to 9Factors™ Employee Commitment surveys in other organisations. The survey ratings over a five year period had remained much the same fluctuating between 3.32 and 3.38 until 2006 when it increased to 3.65 (see figure1).

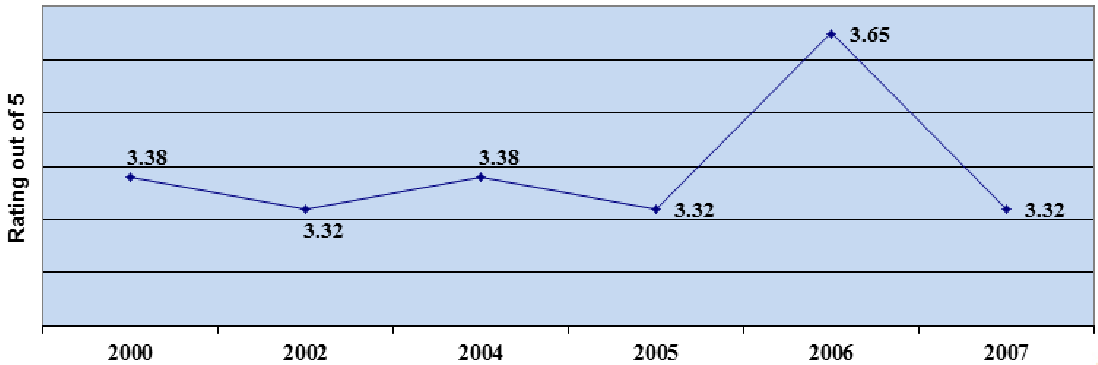

Figure 1. 9Factors™ Employee Commitment Survey 2000-2007 (Source: Turner, 2011).

This increase is statistically significant and can be considered in a correlative context of the coaching programme, which ran from 2003/2004 (via 'pilot' coaching pools) to 2005/2006 (full organisational wide roll-out), that is, an increase in coaching activity was accompanied by an increase in employee commitment. There was, however, no causal linkage identified, by which to show that the coaching programme had a direct

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impact on employee commitment levels. To further investigate the correlative linkage between the benefits of the coaching activity and employee commitment, a more detailed study of a pool of 46 managers was undertaken at pre and post coaching programme stages. This showed that the 9Factors™ Employee Commitment Survey rating relating to those employees who were coached by managers in the participant pool, increased following the coaching programme by 5.7% in 2004 (compared to a 2.9% increase in overall organisational ratings), 7% in 2005 (compared to a 2.9% decrease in overall organisational ratings) and 9.1% in 2006 (compared to a 12.1% increase in overall organisational ratings). The combined ratings for these managers during 2004 and 2005 inclusive showed an increase of 6.35% at a time when the overall 9Factors™ Employee Commitment Survey ratings remained the same. The pool of managers who had achieved coaching accreditation through regular coaching activity showed an increase of 9.1% in their 9Factors™ Employee Commitment Survey ratings during 2006, this was lower than the increase of 12.1% for the overall rating.

This result was possibly a sign that many other managers had by this time undergone coaching skills training and this was impacting positively on overall employee commitment levels, thus enabling the ratings of these managers to catch up with those of the early advocates of coaching. The 9Factors™ Employee Commitment Survey ratings of the accredited coaches pool fell in 2007 when compared to 2006 ratings, by 10.5%, however the overall ratings of all managers fell by 12.1% (see figure 2).

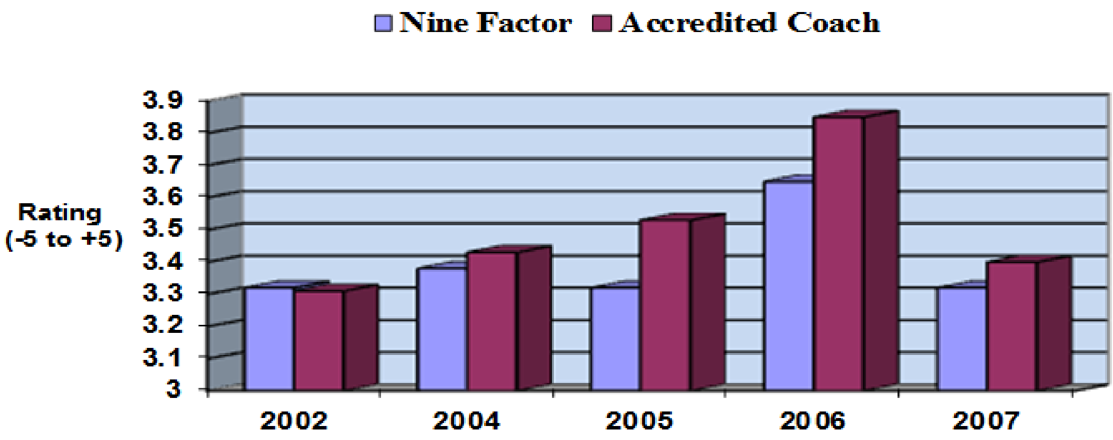

Figure 2. 9Factors™ Employee Commitment Survey ratings 2002-2007 comparative data – accredited coaches to manager population (Source; Turner, 2011).

c) ***Management coaching behaviour is strongly impacted by organisational strategies including ongoing support structures and processes.*** The incidence of above average increases in employee commitment, as measured by the 9Factors™ Employee Commitment Survey Methodology, relating to those managers who underwent the coaching accreditation framework was considered. A survey was undertaken to assess the employees' perceptions of the level of commitment to the desired coaching behaviours displayed by their managers during coaching sessions. The survey showed a high level of manager commitment to coaching behaviours averaging 4 (out of 5) during the period of the coaching programme, that is from 2003 to 2006. The same survey undertaken in October, 2007, 12 months after many of the supportive strategies within the coaching programme ended, showed employees' perceptions of positive coaching behaviours falling away to an average of 3 (out of 5), a 25% reduction. Whilst this varied on an individual basis, the fall in the average rating would indicate that to maintain a level of impact and benefit on an ongoing basis requires strong supportive strategies, such as a continuous framework of accreditation, designed to encourage effective coaching on a regular basis in addition to the delivery of coaching skills. Where this happened within the case study there was a strong indication that this resulted in increasing employee commitment levels. These findings would indicate that to achieve sustained management change towards coaching behaviours there is a need for a holistic ongoing developmental approach incorporating other supportive strategies apart from coaching skills training. Examples of ongoing supportive strategies within the research case study were quality accreditation processes, follow-up training and a reward initiative which ensured that only managers who had achieved the coaching accreditation level were eligible for the highest level of performance bonus.

d) The role of a manager as a coach may benefit from a balanced approach between directive and non-directive behaviours so as to blend managerial inputs with coaching inputs and achieve an optimum leadership coaching style. The key attributes of a successful coach as a manager may vary dependent upon the perceptions of the individual coachee, the personality, role and skill sets of the coach and the contextual situation of the coaching relationship. However there is evidence from the research to suggest a commonality of view on specific attributes of listening, empathy, supportiveness, trustworthiness and questioning/probing skills. From a coachee's perspective there was an emphasis on relationship building skills and from a managers' perspective there was an increased emphasis on performance focus and direction. This was possibly driven by the contextual nature of the coaching, that is the

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line manager in the workplace and the emphasis on sorting problems rather than enabling solutions. The need for managers to balance directive and non-directive behaviours is argued to be necessary to achieve an optimum leadership coaching style. This was addressed within this research through the development of a coaching tool for managers in the workplace, the 3D Performance Coaching model, a summarised version of the 9R Performance Framework, a model developed within the context of this research. The 3D Performance Coaching model was designed to reflect the nature of a managers' role and therefore to be of practical assistance when managing performance (see figure 3).

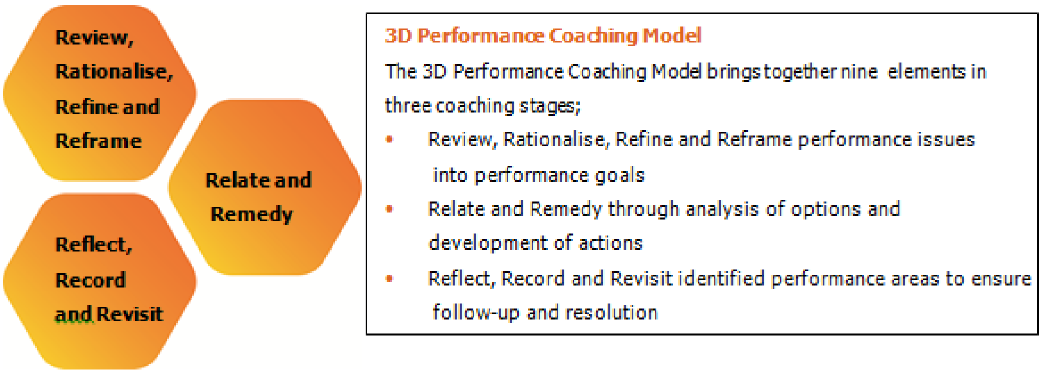

Figure 3. 3D Performance Coaching Model (Source: Turner, 2011)

e) ***The primary competency of an effective line manager coach is relationship building ability.*** Whilst the key features of a positive and productive coaching relationship appear to vary dependent upon the coaching participants and their coaching relationship, there is a strong emphasis on the value of a relationship displaying supportiveness, openness, trust and mutual respect. From a coachee's perspective the research study identified the primary feature of a successful coaching relationship as a supportive, open relationship, followed by a high level of trust, a good understanding, empathy, mutual respect and the availability of coaching in line with the needs of the coachee. These desired relationship characteristics were not achieved in all cases and the findings suggest this impacted upon the effectiveness of the coaching relationship. The barriers to the development of the desired relationship included the managers being unable to devote the necessary time to coaching activity. The research would indicate that those managers, who achieved an appropriate balance between a directive and nondirective stance in their coaching approach and allocated time for coaching activity, achieved better value from their line reports through a performance focused, yet relationship driven coaching style. The research would indicate that those responsible for training managers in coaching techniques should also consider interventions, which build awareness, emotional intelligence and relationship building skills (see figure 4)

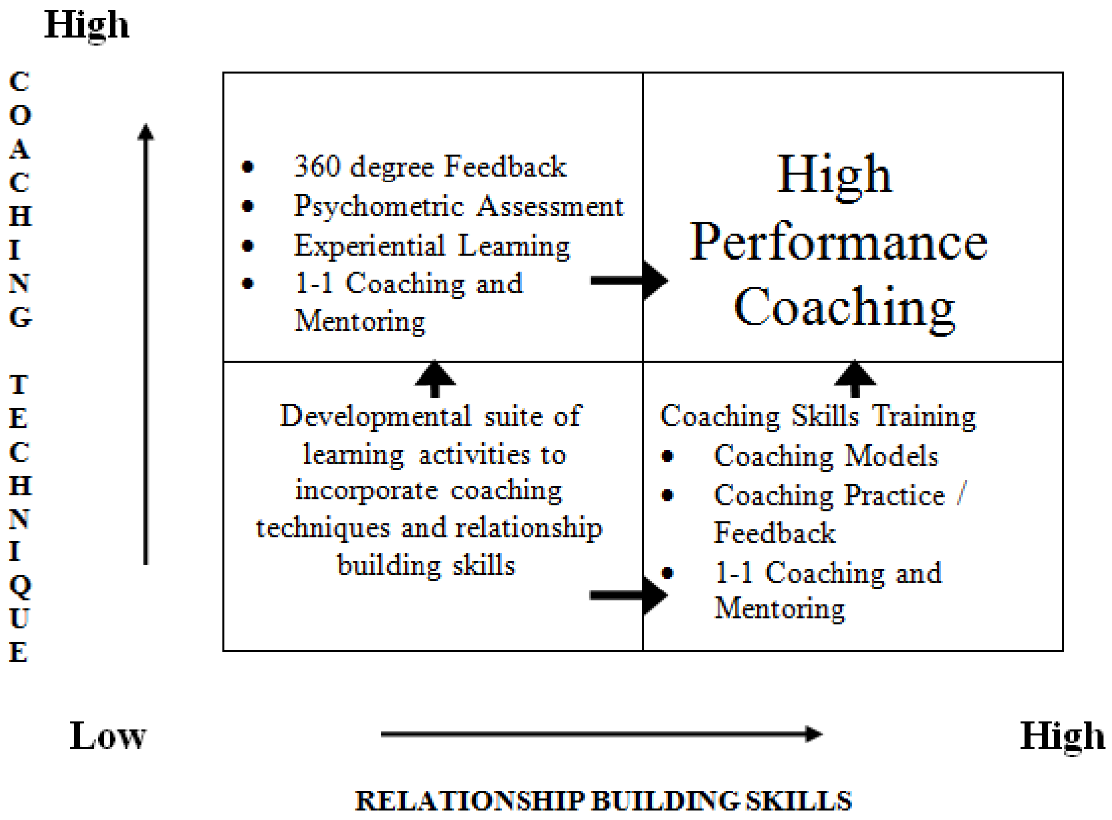

Figure 4. Coaching technique -v- relationship building skills (Source: Turner, 2011)

f) A performance focused relationship driven coaching style can directly and significantly impact favourably on the bottom line, through increased sales, improved customer service and improved productivity; as well as achieving other less tangible benefits. Based on a pool of 72 managers and 259 employee reports within the case study organisation, quantitative benefits were identified using performance coaching models and techniques. These benefits were achieved through increases in sales, improvements in customer service and savings in cost amounting to £4,287,060 per annum, to which a confidence rating of 80% was applied reducing the amount to £3,429,648. To this can be added a saving in management time through a qualified reduction of referrals from employees to managers of £415,100 per annum; making a total estimated return of £3,844,748 over a one year period. If costs of £130,000 are taken from this then the net return on investment equates to £3,714,748. Other non-tangible benefits perceived by coaches and coachees to have been achieved from the coaching programme related to skills, knowledge, behaviours, personal confidence, ideas generation, effectiveness, improved working relationship/atmosphere, career development, self-awareness and motivation, which could arguably have had an indirect impact on performance through increased employee commitment. However, in view of the difficulty in equating such improvements to a monetary equivalent, this was not attempted in such cases and instead these type of benefits have been categorised as benefits in a general yet important and significant sense, which can be considered in tandem with the quantitative results derived from those coaching interventions relating to sales, customer service and productivity improvements. Whilst the research has not attempted to relate these benefits to a tangible value, there is evidence to suggest that such benefits impacted positively upon the morale and motivation of the coachees.

g) Managers are unlikely to coach their staff on a regular basis unless their organisation has in place a structured management process for coaching approaches and sessions, even then some managers will seek to avoid coaching their staff. Within the case study of an organisation committed to a coaching ethos with agreed processes and structures to try to ensure coaching took place, there were still 20% of participant employees who indicated that they received no coaching from their managers, relating to performance, career or role. Further, nearly 47% did not receive as much coaching as they felt they needed with an average of 1.2 hours coaching per employee per month taking place. 61% of coaching activity was driven by the organisation's performance system and the coaching programme's processes. Only 3% of the coaching interventions were driven by a manager's proactive approach to an employee's development compared to 36% of coaching interventions driven by an employee's request for coaching support. This would indicate that there was a greater desire for coaching from employees than was delivered by the managers. Factors for this mismatch included time constraints, a lack of managerial commitment to coach and a lack of support from the manager's boss.

h) A majority of employees participating in the research case study believed that coaching improved both their performance and job satisfaction, sometimes to a significant extent, by achieving more of their potential**.** Over 8 in 10 (81%) of participant employees who received coaching believed that it had improved their performance; nearly 4 in 10 (38%) of participant employees believed this to be the case in a significant way and over 6 in 10 (61%) employees who received coaching believed that it had improved their job satisfaction. The reasons for the views that coaching had impacted favourably on their performance were primarily fourfold: their manager providing inspiration through motivational coaching behaviours; the development of trust within the relationship; the provision of feedback and input on their performance and acknowledgement and recognition of their value and worth.

i) The key challenges to the success of an organisational coaching programme often relate to the development of other factors apart from coaching skills; including 'hard' factors such as a communication strategy and 'soft' factors such as the attitude and emotional awareness of the management team. These factors should be considered in advance of the coaching activity and included in any related project plans. The research findings showed strong indications that there are critical factors to the development of a coaching culture, which need to be managed and developed to ensure a successful launch and maintenance of a coaching programme, namely: employee communication strategies; resources and priorities (e.g. time, cost, importance); management elements (e.g. skills, behaviour, attitudes and ability including emotional intelligence); employee awareness and buy-in; integration into and alignment with other employee learning and development processes; reward initiatives and a supportive environment.

j) Organisations that wish to introduce and maintain a performance coaching management style within a developing leadership coaching culture will benefit from adopting a flexible yet coordinated strategic approach, considering organisational factors apart from the development of skills, through the progression of a coaching programme and related supportive elements. These strategic elements involve the values that drive organisational behaviour; the mantra and predominant behavioural characteristics of the organisation's leadership model and the organisational environment. It is argued that these three strategic elements help to create the unique organisational culture which will both surround and impact upon the coaching activity. However the behaviours and benefits, including employee commitment, accruing from the organisational coaching strategy were not sustained once the focus changed and emphasis reduced – indeed the fall-off was significant.

Research Limitations

The development of the research methodology also incorporated a review of the known and potential constraints. This review resulted in certain research enquiries being constrained both from limiting and delimiting perspectives. When limitations were identified actions were developed to ameliorate the negative impact of such factors or note such impact so that the findings were considered against their contextual relevance. Similarly delimitations were considered either at the outset or ongoing as the research progressed together with the steps and measures adopted in response to these challenges. The methodological framework set out to adopt a critical rationale achieving learning through comparing and contrasting (Yin, 1984) to consider whether learning could arguably be applied to other organisations that adopted similar approaches. The singular nature of the case study provided challenges to the scope of the research. The societal changes that occurred over the seven year research period were to an extent unknown at the outset and difficult to gauge on an ongoing basis.

The case study research provided evidenced measurement from both a qualitative and quantitative position yet it is acknowledged that there are limitations to this evidence due to the scope of the research, in that the qualitative 'soft' skill gains were not financially measured whilst the quantitative gains of sales, productivity and service improvements were. Also, there were areas of contradiction in perspectives between different parties, for example, the difference between actual time coached (outside of the formal accreditation process) from a managers' viewpoint and their reports' viewpoint; with the managerial group generally stating that they conducted more coaching than the figure provided by their employee reports. Another difference in perspective involved the secondary data gathered externally which showed that value of coaching rated by professional coaches was higher than the value as judged by managers who received coaching. It should be noted though that the secondary data was used only as background information rather than in a robust research sense. However, in most areas a general consensus was gained, for example, the qualities, attributes and skills of an effective coach. Notwithstanding these findings and other findings, whether qualitative or quantitative, the potential limitations of the research relating to subjectivity, bias and cultural norms are acknowledged due to the social construction of the case study and the many and varied perspectives of the participants involved. However, the research framework used a multi perspective approach, which was aligned to enable cross-checking, comparison and contrast to strengthen the reliability and validity of the data.

Conclusions

The research study indicated that employee commitment and performance will benefit from an organisational coaching programme underpinned by a network of factors focused on supporting coaching activity. These factors relate to a culture built on common shared values, high performance, trust, openness, support, mutual respect and inclusiveness; leadership that role models the coaching culture through all levels of a management team that is skilled in coaching technique and relationship management; a learning environment that provides an appropriate setting for coaching activity, and HR processes that develop, monitor, and reward coaching behaviours. Based on this learning the author defines organisational coaching as a 'multi-level leadership strategy supported by systematic, results-focused performance management, aligned HR processes and relationship driven leadership coaching behaviours designed to achieve an engaged, committed workforce and a high performance culture'.

This approach is, for the purposes of the research, termed an ambietic approach to coaching (Turner, 2011), which in a general sense is developed from a consideration of the ambience by which is meant the environment, surroundings and atmosphere. These factors, which envelop the coaching activity include the aura or unique aspects of an organisation, the physical surroundings and the atmosphere including the emotions of the workforce that impact upon workplace activity as well as coaching relationships, whether externally expressed or internally suppressed and which are often as, or more, important than the coaching itself. The approach primarily recognises the need for unstructured free-flowing coaching activity within a framework of flexible control processes. Such an approach has been developed on the basis of a coaching philosophy of ambieticism. In the author's view, ambietic coaching is some feature of a situation of human behaviour that arises through the result of a coaching intervention, which alone would appear to have caused the resultant reaction yet would in reality have had no direct impact unless influenced by the combination of several other environmental elements. These elements being the supportive organisational factors either preceding or following the coaching intervention, which relate to human motivational perceptions.

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The search for ways, in which employee engagement can be cultivated, is considered as of strategic importance in terms of the UK economy (MacLeod and Clarke, 2009). Employee commitment and performance may be viewed as being intrinsically linked to employee engagement whether in terms of employer practices, job performance or business results (Vance, 2006). This research offers strong indications that effective leadership coaching is a key predictor of employee commitment with the potential to maximise the benefits of an organisation's performance management system and drive improvements in both employee performance and commitment through the development of appropriate skills, knowledge and behaviours (see figure 5).

Leadership Coaching Attributes

- Role modelling
- Relationship driven
- Emotional intelligence
- Building trust
- Performance focused
- Personal enrichment
- Management capability

- Organisational culture is a facilitator of leadership coaching behaviour
- Leadership coaching behaviour drives improved employee performance and is a predictor of employee commitment
- Employee commitment is a predictor of employee performance
- Employee performance sustains and develops the organisational culture

Figure 5. Relationships between organisational culture, leadership coaching, employee commitment and employee performance (Source: Turner, 2011)

This research indicates that higher organisational performance through leadership coaching is best served by the application of a holistic, systematic and leadership driven ambietic coaching approach, which embraces the organisational elements surrounding and impacting upon a coaching activity and which is aligned to the development and utilisation of employee potential. Additionally there would appear to be a requirement for a critical mass, in relation to the emotional capability and self-awareness of the management team. This is necessary to enable managers to build relationships with direct reports through trust and mutual respect and bring those personal attributes that are supportive of a coaching relationship including listening, empathy, supportiveness, trustworthiness and questioning/probing skills to the fore when utilising a performance focused coaching approach. Significantly, the research indicates that once there is a change in focus in terms of the importance of those factors that drive employee commitment, then employee commitment levels will fall off very soon afterwards and cannot therefore be 'stockpiled' for a period of time, like many other more tangible assets.

The longitudinal nature of the study combined with the 'insider/outsider' research stance highlighted new insights into evidence-based learning providing an enhanced understanding of leadership in an organisational coaching context, which evidenced that workplace coaching has the potential to increase statistically significantly both employee commitment and individual performance. The importance and use of emotional intelligence, role modelling and relationship based abilities within the management team was established to be critical to the success of the coaching activities. In doing so the research challenged the skills driven competency paradigm (often utilised singularly in organisations with the aim of achieving immediate behavioural change) and argued that an ambietic, holistic approach encompassing several organisational driven interventions focused on leadership development, employee engagement, HR alignment, evaluation and continuous improvement is needed to achieve a sustainable coaching culture and the related performance benefits. The mix of qualitative and quantitative methodologies offered advantages in that there was potential to achieve a balanced set of findings, by which to measure the success or otherwise of coaching interventions and acknowledged the relative lack of evidence based case study research in this area. From an organisational aspect the research framework acknowledged, through its longitudinal approach, there is little evidence to suggest that a short term answer to achieving culture change through a leadership coaching strategy is possible and arguably this holds true to any other approach given most situational positions.

Next Steps

The research offers a base, on which to take forward further research possibly via a multiple organisational case study utilising similar methodologies including survey formats. There is also potential to further explore the impact of feedback mechanisms such as 360 degree feedback and psychometric assessments within a line manager coaching programme particularly in respect of the enhancement of relationship building skills. The research addressed coaching from a broad leadership and management perspective and this could be developed to consider specific applications relating to knowledge workers, talent management or performance issues. The ongoing debate on the importance of employee engagement could be enhanced by further investigation of linkages between organisational coaching and employee morale, satisfaction and commitment.

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Helping Create Service 'Experts': The Opportunity for an Athletic Approach to Coaching in Service Organisations

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Abstract

Recent research on expertise in organisational contexts strongly indicates that coaching, mindset, and deliberate practice have a greater impact on achieving high levels of proficiency than innate talents. We examine the opportunity for service firms to adopt an athletic based approach to coaching, ensuring employees serving customers become service 'experts' and consistently deliver excellence. Highlighting 13 main coaching practice categories that exist in athletic and organisational coaching, we found that athletic coaching seems to use a wider range of coaching techniques. This investigation paves a way for service organisations to understand how they can best incorporate well-established athletic coaching practices into their businesses.

Keywords

organisational coaching, athletic approach, service excellence

Introduction

Work on the role of coaching, practice, and mindset, particularly by Ericsson and Dweck (Dweck & Elliott, 1983; Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Romer, 1993; Ericsson, 2006; Dweck, 2006; Ericsson, Prietula & Cokely, 2007; Ericsson & Ward, 2007), has recently caught the attention of many high-profile business thinkers (Gladwell, 2008; Coyle, 2009; Syed, 2010). This research, and its popularising, has started to shift thinking toward the conclusion that high levels of performance has less to do with innate talent –an idea that we are often raised to believe by parents and teachers – and more with obtaining expertise through effort and mindsets. This shifting of beliefs is critical “because the notion that genius is born, not made, is deeply ingrained” (Ericsson, Prietula, & Cokely, 2007, p. 118).

Ericsson, Prietula, & Cokely, (2007) summarise expertise as being mostly explained by a combination of: time, deliberate practice, and coaching, where the coach guides the deliberate practice. The coach enables the coachee to focus on his practice and provides the coachee with critical and timely feedback. This allows coaches to engage in quality training exercises by selecting the right practice activities, the ones that stretch the coachee beyond their current level of abilities. Self-serving bias (Miller & Ross, 1975), a strong tendency to perceive ourselves and our strengths favourably, suggests that it is unlikely we will be unbiased in our assessment of the gaps in our capabilities. Taking this view, coaching becomes an essential element of employee self-development toward domain expertise.

An adjacent stream of research, which has surprisingly not yet seen overlap with the research on expertise, has been undertaken on fixed and growth mindsets (Dweck, 2006). Dweck has shown that people have a tendency to have either one mindset or the other. People with a growth mindset tend to set learning goals, in which individuals seek to increase their competence, to understand or master something new. In contrast, those with fixed mindsets[1] tend to have performance goals, where they seek to gain favourable judgments of their competence or avoid negative assessments (Nicholls & Dweck, 1979; Dweck & Elliott, 1983). Clearly, from a coaching perspective, both the coach and the coachee need to have a growth mindset for coaching programs to succeed. Entering into the coaching partnership without such a mindset destines any coaching activity for failure and a waste of company resources.

Significantly, Heslin, Vandewalle, and Latham (2006) analysed the importance of implicit person theories (IPTs) and coaching. They state that “results suggest that variance in the extent and helpfulness of managers’ coaching is explained by their IPTs” (p. 896).They discovered that persons holding a fixed mindset are more likely to believe that human attributes are innate and unalterable, making them less inclined to invest in helping others to develop and improve. Conversely, individuals who hold the growth mindset believe that personal attributes can be developed. They are more likely to make such investments in others. Importantly, they also discovered that those with a

[1] Prior to coining the term *fixed* and *growth* mindsets Dweck used the term implicit person theories (IPTs) to explain these differing perspectives

fixed mindset could be persuaded to adopt a more growth mindset to increase the quality and quantity of their coaching.

In many ways this perception of expertise through effort and a growth mindset is closely aligned to Theory Y and intrinsic motivation. The principles of Theory Y represent a self-fulfilling managerial philosophy that employees can enjoy working and gain satisfaction from work. Employees will self-regulate if committed to the organisation and also seek and accept responsibility. Theory Y is described as, “A process primarily of creating opportunities, releasing potential, removing obstacles, encouraging growth, providing guidance” (McGregor, 1957, p.183).Theory Y was the origin of a new perspective on employees – a managerial attitude which “relies heavily on self-control and self-direction” on the part of employees. These descriptions of Theory Y appear to mirror the current aspirations of coaching in organisations. In accordance with McGregor’s view of self-fulfilling managerial philosophies, Goldsmith (2003) suggests coaches can create positive self-fulfilling prophecies for coachee performance.

As a result, for coaching to be effective, Dubrin (1995) believes a coach must have a growth mindset and trust in the process and the ability of the employee to learn and develop through coaching. A manager-coach must really believe in the employee’s potential (Fournies, 2000). These statements match the message that management must have confidence in the abilities of the employees. McGregor suggests that, “only the management that has confidence in human capacities and is itself directed toward organisational objectives rather than toward the preservation of personal power can grasp the implications of this emerging theory. Such management will find and apply successfully other innovative ideas as we move slowly toward the full implementation of a theory like Y” (McGregor, 1957).

As stated at the outset of this paper, the objective of this work is to explore the opportunities that an athletic approach to coaching can offer service businesses. In this respect we are suggesting that service organisations, and in particular their frontline leaders, adopt a growth mindset, one where managers hire people for the potential they have, and not only for the talent they felt the employee demonstrated in the hiring process. This is a significant shift in thinking but one that can create the most fundamental of changes in how service firms engage their front-line employees to deliver service excellence.

We also believe this research, which links athletic coaches and organisational coaching, is important for three other reasons. First, as Greenberg and Baron (2008) state, athletic coaches and organisational coaches share many commonalities of practice, including: analyzing performance, creating a supportive climate for development, and offering encouragement. Second, sports are a central part of our lives – many of us are first exposed to the notion of a coach through sports and athletics. Historically, the coach's role has been connected with sport as early as 1868, with an association to rowing (Stec, 2009). Third, this long, rich history of coaching in sport has led to research findings, which suggest organisations have not fully utilised athletic-based high-performance coaching practices and that business can learn immensely from these activities (Read, 2011).

Furthermore, we believe the more specific focus of this paper, opportunities that athletic coaching can present to service businesses (e.g. banking, hospitality and consulting), is a compelling context for two more significant reasons. First, employees in the service context frequently have to perform in 'real time' in front of the audience (the customer), which is akin to what an athlete does, and coaching can help them perform more effectively. Secondly, service-specific academic research has not adequately looked into coaching. As an example The Journal of Service Research, which publishes the highest quality service research, has never published any papers on coaching. In contrast, handling customer complaints after service failure has been the subject of over 20 papers in this journal. While recovering from service failure is a critical subject, coaching would seem as critical and certainly more ubiquitous.

The balance of the paper breaks down into the following: we first look at the literature that has linked the athletic approach to coaching in the business and service business context. Second, we introduce thirteen coaching practices that are thought to be common in athletic and organisational coaching. Through the results of expert interviews and open-ended surveys, we can highlight which of these practices are prevalent in both types of coaching. Finally, we discuss the results by focussing on which practices service businesses should seriously consider adopting to increase employee performance and yield better organisational outcomes.

Athletic Inspired Approach to Coaching within Service Organisations

Though athletic coaching analogies are widespread within organisational coaching literature, omission of key athletic coaching practices in organisational coaching is likely to impact employee performance and slow down development. Peltier (2001) suggests that a good deal of the athletic coaching literature aimed at business is based on clichés and simple motivational strategies. Ievleva and Terry (2008) report that even when sport coaches get involved in business, they tend to give motivational speeches to organisational audiences, rather than offering ongoing coaching or consulting. Consequently, the full application of athletic coaching practices to organisational coaching is potentially an area of huge performance gains for businesses.

In the context of service organisations, there is no evidence to suggest that these types of businesses are doing a better job of executing high-performance coaching practices. There is some evidence that service firms such as American Express, which uses individual coaches to develop employees for future success (Greenberg & Baron, 2008), are using coaching critically. Also, in the financial services context, both Commonwealth Bank of Australia and Royal Bank of Canada have been successful in using a professional sports coaching approach to coaching (Cohen Brown, 2011). Similarly, the Canadian-based JOEY Restaurant Group began a coaching initiative with the strategic selection of the most senior leaders in their organisation, so they could be coached and trained as internal coaches while running their restaurant regions. With hundreds of hours invested into coaching (Busse & Hemmingsen, 2010), in the last 30 months they experienced more than 30 percent revenue growth, reduced turnover, and made the Top 100 employers in Canada list for the first time (ICF, 2011). In addition, MacMillan (2011) reports that some library systems have started to utilize peer coaching to develop their employees.

While there are some examples of service businesses applying effective coaching practices, they are few and far between. Similarly, as noted earlier, service research on this topic is surprisingly non-existent. In this respect we believe understanding how service businesses can learn from high-performance athletic coaching practices holds much promise for service managers and researchers alike. Further, there is much to be gained from distinct disciplines learning from each other. Brewer and Hunter (1989) remind us that applying theories from other disciplines may “provoke new questions, provide useful insights, and suggest new ways of looking at a phenomenon”. In the next part of the paper we draw on 13 coaching practice categories, and discuss which among them offer the most immediate opportunity for service businesses to adopt.

Data Collection and Analysis

As part of data collection for this research, the first author obtained materials from both athletic and organisational coach certification courses to help create a list of essential

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coaching practices. To investigate what organisational coaches are trained to do, two introductory-level coach training manuals were analysed. One course was taught by International Coaching Federation (ICF) certified coaches while the other course was given by a Coach Training Institute (CTI) certified coach. For sport, the first two levels of the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) were analyzed. This Canadian coaching certification program has trained over one million Canadians. The NCCP started giving certifications in 1974 and was one of the world's first national coaching certification programs (Crocker, 2011). In addition, several coach evaluation instruments, available with NCCP training, were analysed.

To construct a list of coaching practices, content analysis was undertaken. In the initial stage of content analysis, detailed notes were made of the coach training reference material. Line-by-line the content from the documents was condensed. The second stage of content analysis occurred using NVivo qualitative analysis software (Version 8, QSR International), where focussed coding was then performed on the notes created in the initial phase of analysis. This stage of coding resulted in 13 main coaching practice categories. To be considered as a category, at least five coded units of text were needed.

To determine whether athletic or organisational coaches utilised these practices similarly, the first author completed an online survey and conducted expert interviews with both types of coaches. In total, 37 organisational coaches completed lengthy, open-ended surveys, yielding a response rate of 13.3%. For the athletic coaches, 46 coaches completed the survey, yielding a response rate of 17.2%. Regarding the expert interviews, 17 athletic coaches participated, giving a response rate of 48.6% while 16 organisational coaches participated, giving a response rate of 33.3%.

Results

Data was combined for analysis, so the results of the survey and expert interviews could be aggregated and analysed. Several items on the survey and interview could be scored or coded quantitatively. Descriptive statistics were given on the response frequencies to the surveys and interviews. Data were arranged into categories and the results were used to compare organisational and athletic coaches. Contingency tables in a 2 by N matrix were arranged for coach type and the categories within each variable. An alpha level of less than .05 was chosen to indicate a significant difference between coach types. Mean comparisons tests were run on the data. Table 1 shows the 13 coaching practice categories, a brief description, and whether the practice was equally utilized.

Table 1
The 13 Main Coaching Practice Categories

Coaching Category	Description of Practice Category	Usage by Coach Type
Bioenergetics	Coaches should know the nutritional needs of the coachee and provide information on nutrition and hydration.	Athletic
Coaching Effectiveness	Coaching creates better outcomes for the coachee such as increased focus, motivation, better relationships and collaborations. Attempts are made to measure these outcomes.	Both Athletic and Organisational
Demonstration	Coaches demonstrate their knowledge by acting out or simulating the desired skill. Leading by example and demonstration is as a good way for the coachee to model behaviour after the coach.	Athletic
Confidentiality	Coaches maintain strict confidentiality during coaching and the delivery of feedback.	Organisational
Subject-matter Expertise	The coach has the ability and knowledge of the domain being coached to analyze individual technical weaknesses and prescribe practices to correct these areas of weakness.	Athletic
Feedback	Coach gives honest, specific, and positive feedback, which recognizes the coachee characteristics that led to a better outcome for the coachee.	Both Athletic and Organisational
Goal-setting	Coaches help coaches set effective goals and plan of action to achieve these desired goals.	Both Athletic and Organisational
Handling Injury	The coach is concerned about coachee health and safety.	Athletic
Mental Training	The coach helps the coachee to prepare mentally and encourages the use of mental training tools to enhance learning and performance.	Athletic
Peripheral Resources	Coach helps the coachee by facilitating stakeholder cooperation, required resources, and coordination with other professionals.	Both Athletic and Organisational

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Coaching Category	Description of Practice Category	Usage by Coach Type
Philosophy	A coaching philosophy represents a well-developed, pre-determined set of guidelines a coach follows throughout a coaching program.	Both Athletic and Organisational
Physical Training	The application of exercise physiology is an important part of coaching. Coaches are advised to have knowledge of coachee physical training so as to optimize it.	Athletic
Practices	Practice may also be essential to coachee performance. In sport, planned practice is thought to be an important aspect of elite coaching. Consistent and prolonged practice is one strategy to improve coachee expertise	Athletic

Discussion

Overall, organisational coaches in the sample did not utilize athletic coaching practices which dealt with *demonstration, subject-matter expertise, practice, physical and mental training, bioenergetics and injury management*, while businesses tend to practice confidentially more than athletic coaches – which is logical given the sensitive nature of topic being coached. Overall this emphasizes the possible expansion of athletic coaching practices into organisational coaching. In particular, it would seem that the practices that have the best opportunity for immediate implementation into service businesses are *mental training, demonstration,* and *practice time* (subject-matter expertise, physical training, bioenergetics, and injury management also offer opportunities for organisations, but perhaps less immediate than the three we have highlighted).

In regards to mental training, psychological arousal management skills in the sport psychology tradition, such as self-talk and refocusing, and physiological skills such as progressive relaxation and meditation, offer incredible opportunities for service business. For front line positions, management of an employee's mental state can make a huge difference to the employee and the customer. Griffith (2007) feels that "most successful coaches are psychologists of no small ability". The coach can dedicate time and resources to mental skills training, which may enable the coachees to perform under pressure, overcome obstacles and persist, narrow their focus of attention and immersion in activity, and better manage energy in all areas of life

(McNeil, 2010). Clearly these are all skills from which service employees could benefit. Critically, mental training can enable employees to continually maintain their growth mindset, which is so important to continual career growth (Dweck, 2006). To ensure employees are focused on skill development, coaches must get coachees to remind themselves periodically that expertise comes from deliberate practice and is not an innate skill. Visualisation of career goals and self-talk in tough situations can remind employees that they *can* reach their goals and stop the fixed mindset from dominating.

In respect to demonstration and in accordance with social learning theory, athletic coaches usually demonstrate their knowledge by acting out or simulating the desired skill (modelling); organisational coaches do this much less frequently. This is significant as leading by example and demonstration is recommended by Dick (2002) as a good way for the coachee to model behaviour after the coach. In doing so, the coach could demonstrate effective behaviour directly to the coachee. Bandura (2000) suggests that instructive modeling as the first step may aid in building self-efficacy. In the service context, a team leader can demonstrate the skill they would like an employee to deploy, which would again seem to be an area of much promise. A call-centre team leader displaying how to handle a frustrated customer or retail store managers demonstrating how an employee can build rapport with a customer in a face-to-face context are two examples of how a coach can guide the employee in the right behaviours, as well as provide credibility to the leader who displays this skill.

Finally, practice will also be essential to service employee performance. As noted at the outset of the paper, deliberate practice plays a critical role in becoming an expert.

> The perspective of deliberate practice attributes the rarity of excellence to the scarcity of optimal training environments and to the years required to develop the complex mediating mechanisms that support expertise...until most individuals recognize that sustained training and effort is a prerequisite for reaching expert levels of performance, they will continue to misattribute lesser achievement to the lack of natural gifts, and will thus fail to reach their own potential (Ericsson, 2006).

Consistent and prolonged practice is a key strategy to improve individual expertise (Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2000). Katz and Koenig suggest that managers should find out what sport coaches do in practice and attempt to emulate these strategies in the workplace – such as practicing in a familiar, low-risk, and low-arousal context. As a major part of learning, Katz and Koenig feel that experimentation and failure are essential: “Practice is an opportunity for experimentation and innovation, when a team can develop and test new plays, making mistakes along the way” (2001). In self-efficacy theory, Bandura (2000) alludes to practice as ‘guided skill perfection’ in simulated situations or role rehearsal. The use of practice is also advocated by Belcourt et al. (2000) as it positively influences employee retention of training.

No athlete would consider ‘performing’ without practice time, even an amateur athlete, yet businesses rarely allow their employees hands-on practice, role-plays, or simulations. This practice time could well be the difference between delivering good service and excellent service.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to examine the opportunity for service firms to adopt an athletic-based coaching approach to employee skill development, to ensure employees serving customers become service ‘experts’ who consistently deliver excellence. Research in the service field has mainly ignored the role of coaching, so we felt it was a worthwhile endeavour to see how athletic coaching practices can help us understand where service researchers and managers need to go next.

The research on expertise strongly indicates that great coaching, time to practice deliberately, and mindsets (growth over fixed) are critical. In the service context, expertise means delivering service excellence one interaction, one customer at a time. This is mastery. To achieve this mastery, research findings suggest that mental training, practice time, and demonstration of skills are three broad coaching areas that service researchers and managers should more closely examine.

Athletic coaching has such a rich history. It would be a missed opportunity for service businesses not to learn from the best practices this discipline has developed. We believe that adopting high-performance coaching practices from athletics will simultaneously build employee engagement (through development of their key skills, intrinsic motivation, a greater sense of self-efficacy and, through time with their leaders, a greater sense of self-importance) and customer engagement (through the delivery of service excellence through more proficient and confident employees). The adoption of an athletic approach to coaching could immensely help service firms achieve greater levels of service excellence. We hope this paper inspires further work in this area and helps by providing a foundation for future research.

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Cognitive, Behavioral, and Affective Learning Outcomes of a Coaching Program

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Abstract

The following paper evaluates the cognitive, behavioral, and affective learning outcomes of a coaching program in an international law firm. The C-B-A framework is an application of Kraiger, Ford, & Salas' (1993) seminal evaluation work on learning outcomes and provides a holistic framework to organizing learning outcomes from coaching. This particular coaching program yielded statistically significant pre-post differences on affective variables such as job satisfaction and perceived organizational support. Posttest means and qualitative data also demonstrated coaching's impact on cognitive variables such as self-awareness, and behavioral variables such as relationship skills. Results, limitations, and implications for future coaching evaluation research are discussed.

Keywords

coaching outcomes, evaluation, Kirkpatrick, Kraiger

Coaching is an enormously popular intervention that lacks rigorous outcome research. There are at least 19,000 coaching practitioners worldwide (International Coach Federation, 2012) operating in an industry with an estimated global market value between one and two billion US dollars (Orenstein, 2006). Despite this, coaching research is in its infancy with less than 250 coaching outcome studies published since 1980. This lack of evidence has called the value of coaching into question and some have argued that there currently is no basis for coaching to be considered a viable intervention. One of the barriers to studying the efficacy of coaching is that there is no agreed upon approach or framework to evaluate coaching "outcomes." Studies that do exist evaluate outcomes differently making comparisons, as well as the accumulation and synthesis of knowledge, more challenging. This paper suggests an organizing framework for the evaluation of coaching programs and it models its use by examining the impact of a coaching program in a large law firm.

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Assessment Framework for Coaching Outcomes

An organizing framework that is used in assessment should clearly relate to purpose of coaching and allow for multiple outcomes to be easily examined. Performance coaching helps coachees maximize their own performance (Whitmore, 1992) by developing related skills and facilitating performance enhancing behavior change (Passmore, 2007). Goals for coaching also include enhancing the experience of work; this may involve (1) deepening self-awareness (Kombarakaran, Yang, Baker, and Fernandes, 2008), (2) improving job satisfaction and motivation (Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001), (3) increasing feelings of support by the organization (Evers, Brouwers & Tomic, 2006), and (4) improving the well-being and self-regard of the coachee (Passmore, 2007). As a coaching research review noted (Greif, 2007, p. 241):

> A fundamental difficulty of coaching outcome research is the extreme heterogeneity of issues, problems and goals, which can be picked out as themes in different coaching interventions. Therefore, it is difficult to identify outcome measures which are applicable to the whole range of coaching interventions.

Rather than attempt to identify universal measures, a more pragmatic approach is to fit the multiple goals of coaching into a well-known framework: the Cognitive-Behavioral-Affective model of learning outcomes (Kraiger, Ford, & Salas, 1993).

Cognitive-Behavioral-Affective Model of Learning Outcomes

Kraiger et al.'s Cognitive-Behavioral-Affective model is supported by a wide variety of psychological domains and was introduced partly to addresses the shortcomings of Kirkpatrick's (1994) popular training evaluation framework. Kirkpatrick's pyramid model, displayed in Figure 1, is arguably the most-widely utilized framework in training evaluation due to its practical ease of understanding. Kirkpatrick identifies four levels of evaluation that progress from minimal to comprehensive: (1) positive reactions to training (e.g., "I'm happy with the instructor"), (2) achievement of learning objectives (e.g. "I learned effective communication techniques"), (3) transfer of learning into behavior change (e.g., "I use these communication techniques with customers"), and (4) explicit identification of results (e.g., "My Return-On-Investment was 500%"). Despite the utility of this approach, Kirkpatrick's framework has an important weakness that Kraiger et al.'s training evaluation model addresses. Unlike Kirkpatrick's model, Kraiger et al.'s framework highlights the "multidimensional" nature of learning by explicitly identifying learning outcomes as cognitive, skill-based, and affective.

These three categories represent a more sophisticated understanding of learning as a construct, which is particularly important in coaching since learning in this arena is often nuanced, customized, and, at times transformational. Refraining from oversimplifying learning measures is critical to advance the science and practice of coaching evaluation because coaching, as noted previously, has multiple possible outcomes that may be evaluated depending on the client's and researcher's needs. Figure 1 compares the two models, their respective terms, and identifies this study's particular C-B-A variables. Please note that this study's particular C-B-A variables are listed in italics.

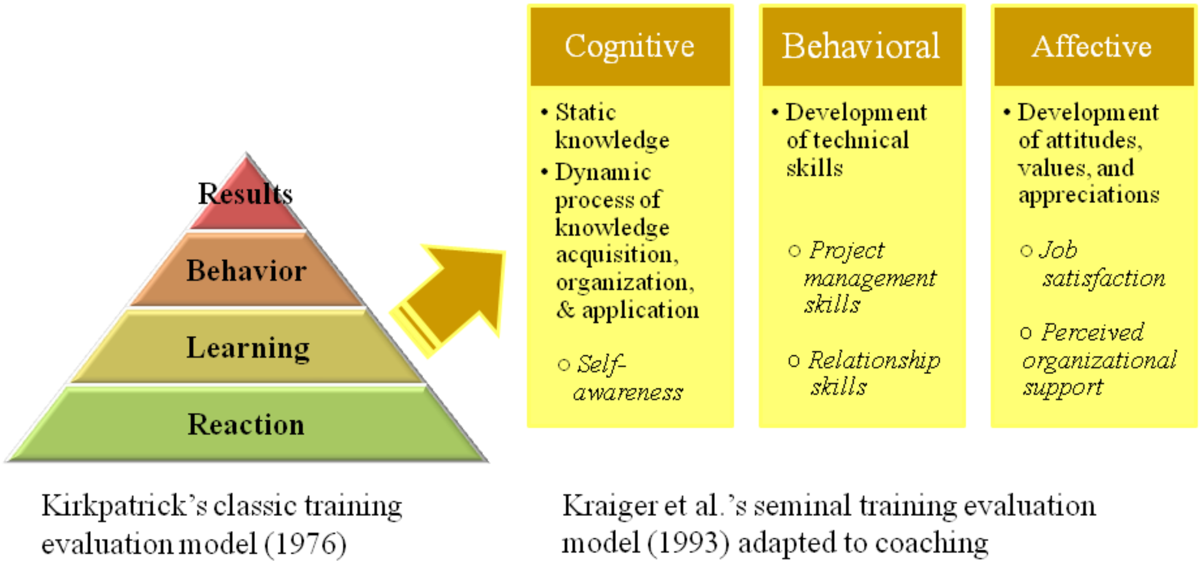

Figure 1. A comparison of two important training evaluation models

Kraiger et al.'s model elaborates on Kirkpatrick's "Level 2 Learning" construct. Notice Kirkpatrick's reaction measures are replicated under Kraiger et al.'s Affective category, and that Kraiger et al.'s model lacks an explicit focus on results or behavioral transfer. A further point of clarification: Kirkpatrick's "Level 3 Behavior" refers to the transfer of learning into new behaviors at work, while Kraiger's Behavioral category refers to the learning of behavioral skills, irrespective of their utilization. One can after all learn a skill and not use it. Taken together, the models support the established notion that learning is a precondition of behavior change.

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The Three Domains and Their Hypothesized Relationship to Coaching

Cognitive Domain

The cognitive domain of learning includes educational objectives dealing with the development of intellectual skills and understandings (Bloom, 1956). A cognitive perspective focuses not only on static states of coachee knowledge, but on the dynamic processes of knowledge acquisition, organization, and application (Kraiger et al., 1993). For example, research has demonstrated that coaching can help coachees acquire new modes of thinking (Evers et al., 2006), impact levels of self-reflection and insight (Grant, 2003), and increase self-awareness (Kombarakaran et al., 2008). In fact, “enhancing self-awareness” is considered by numerous coaching evaluation researchers as core to their definition and practice of coaching: “A new perspective develops by examining the underlying patterns of perception and behavior and utilizing that insight for change” (Kombarakaran et al., 2008, p. 79). Coaching programs often encourage participants to spend time reflecting on the assumption that this will lead to insight, and ultimately facilitate goal attainment and behavior change (Grant, 2003). Given the importance of self-awareness as a learned outcome of coaching, this study hypothesizes that:

Hypothesis 1: Coaching improves coachees’ self-awareness.

Behavioral Domain

Kraiger et al. (1993) identified skill-based, or behavioral, learning outcomes as concerning the development of technical or motor skills. Some evidence exists that coaching can help employees acquire skills. For example, a cross-sectional field study utilizing qualitative and quantitative methods found that coachees said they learned new skills that were important in their day to day managerial activities, such as project management skills (Gegner, 1997). While Gegner relied on a self-report questionnaire and follow-up interviews, additional evidence is presented by Orenstein (2006) who relied on a 360-type analysis. Orenstein’s pre-post examination of a coaching client’s behaviors by 20 raters found behaviors directly related to coaching objectives (e.g., communication) were most influenced by coaching, while behaviors not related to coaching objectives were not influenced (e.g., sense of humor). In other words, there is reason to believe that coaching can develop a coachee’s work related skills.
One of these important work-related skills, that is likely coachable, is relationship-building. Judge and Cowell (1997) found that help building trusting relationships and modifying interaction style rank high among skills frequently requested of coaches,

while Gegner's field study found positive effects of coaching on social interactions with others (1997). An empirical examination of a large coaching program in a global pharmaceutical company provides more evidence (Kombarakaran et. al, 2008). One of the explicit aims of this program was to strengthen ties between the 114 coachees and their various reporting relationships, including their supervisor. A post-test examination found positive changes in this relationship: Seventy nine percent of coachees agreed that they established a more productive relationship with better communication and feedback as a result of coaching. Therefore, building on previous research in the behavioral domain, this study hypothesizes that coaching improves both project management and relationship skills:

Hypothesis 2a: Coaching improves coachees' project management skills
Hypothesis 2b: Coaching improves coachees' relationship skills

Affective Domain

The affective domain includes learning objectives that focus on the development of attitudes, values, and appreciations (Bloom, 1956). It is possible that coaching may have an impact on attitudinal variables such as job satisfaction. This is because: a) coaching is an indication that the organization is willing to invest in an employee, and b) if coaching improves a coachee's skills, it should also improve the coachee's job performance and job satisfaction. While coaching research has yet to verify this mechanism, elements of this rationale are supported by previous research on perceived organizational support, or POS (Eisenberger, Hutchingson, & Sowa, 1986) – the degree to which an employee feels valued by his or her organization. A professional career survey of 514 lawyers found, after controlling for firm size and several demographics (such as gender, organizational tenure and job position), that POS affected associates' attitude towards the organization (Loi, Hang-yue, & Foley, 2006). Furthermore, a meta-analysis of seventy POS studies (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) indicated that beneficial treatment received by employees (e.g., supervisor support and organizational rewards) were associated with POS and that POS, in turn, was related to favorable outcomes to individuals (e.g., job satisfaction) and the organization (e.g., performance). Given the importance of such outcomes, this study hypothesizes that coaching will have a positive impact on both job satisfaction and perceived organizational support.

Hypothesis 3a: Coaching improves coachees' job satisfaction
Hypothesis 3b: Coaching improves coachees' perceived organizational support

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Method

Participants and Program

Fifty second-year lawyer associates in a large international law firm, headquartered in New York, participated in a voluntary coaching program. Eight coaching sessions were made available to coachees for over a course of 3 months with the vast majority attending all sessions (~90%). Coachees selected an external coach from four experienced professionals based on biographical (e.g., industry experience) and demographic data (e.g., gender, race) made available to them. The program was framed to coachees as a developmental, as opposed to remedial, opportunity with the confidentiality of coaching conversations emphasized. The anonymity and confidentiality of evaluation surveys were also emphasized to encourage candid responses.

Design

Quantitative and qualitative measures assessed the impact of coaching on coachees. A survey distributed to coachees approximately one week before and one week after the coaching sessions were completed with response rates of 52% (pretest) and 46% (posttest). Qualitative data were collected from both coachees and coaches post intervention in order to provide another vantage point with which to help validate potential conclusions. Coachees were asked 3 open-ended questions (e.g., "What were the programs key benefits? Please elaborate."), and coaches were asked 12 open-ended questions (e.g., "To what extent are you being effective? How do you know?"). Qualitative data were reviewed for evidence of support and refute of specific hypotheses.

Quantitative Measures

All survey items were co-created with HR personnel using the Empathic Organic Questionnaire methodology. This method, first applied to executive coaching by Orenstein (2006), is a joint process of inquiry that develops the content of instruments from the experience of organizational members in the system under study. In-depth interviews with key organizational members – in this case with Professional Development & Training personnel – identified significant areas for examination with corresponding items vetted for maximum relevance to the client organization. This study includes prettest-posttest measures as well as a number of posttest only items.

All quantitative items were measured on a 10-point Likert-type scale with a score of "10" indicating "strongly agree," a midpoint score of "5" indicating "neutral", and a score of "1" indicating "strongly disagree."

Self-awareness. Two post-test items measured self-awareness of coachees, with a scale Alpha of .80. For example, "Coaching program helped me gain a clearer understanding of my strengths."

Project Management Skills. Three items measured coachee's project management skills, with a scale Alpha of .61. For example, "I manage my projects effectively."

Relationship Skills. The following posttest item measured coaching's impact on relationship skills: "Coaching helped me develop my relationships at work."

Job Satisfaction. Adapting Westaby's (2006) measures, the following pretest-posttest items were used to investigate job satisfaction (Alpha .88):

"I would characterize my experience at the Firm as having

a. Job flexibility
b. Job security
c. Good Benefits
d. Enjoyable Work
e. Good Opportunities in the Future
f. Good Relationships with Partners
g. Good Relationships with Sr. Associates
h. Good Relationships with Peers"

Perceived organizational support (POS). Four pretest-posttest items measured POS (Alpha .88). For example, "I feel the Firm is invested in my professional development."

Results

Independent samples T-tests were used to evaluate pretest-posttest measures since matching subject responses across testing periods was not possible in this organizational context. The need to preserve the confidentiality of coachees superseded concerns about research design, which is a common challenge of conducting coaching research in applied settings (Ellam-Dyson & Palmer, 2008). See

Table 1 for data gathered, including descriptive statistics of posttest-only measures.

Table 1.
Quantitative Results of C-B-A Measures

Learning Outcome Category **Measures**	**Prettest Mean (*SD*)**	**Posttest Mean (*SD*)**	**Cronbach's Alpha**
Cognitive			
Self-awareness	-	8.1 (1.6)	.80
Behavioral			
Project Management skills	5.0 (1.6)	4.7 (1.1)	.61
Relationship skills	-	7.8 (1.9)	[a]
Affective			
Job satisfaction*****	6.9 (1.4)	7.9 (1.2)	.88
Perceived Organizational Support*****	6.1 (2.0)	7.3 (1.9)	.88

Note. Mean scores were assessed on a 10-point scale. *SD* stands for standard deviation.
[a] Conbach's Alpha not calculated since this was a single item measure
***** $p < .05$.

Cognitive Learning Results

The first hypothesis stated that coaching improves coachees' self-awareness. Posttest measures indicated that coachees and coaches perceive that coaching helped coachees gain a greater understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. A high mean of 8.1 with a relatively low standard deviation indicates that most coachees are in agreement. Numerous qualitative comments by coachees also support this conclusion, such as "It provided a good outlet to discuss my challenges, goals, strengths, and areas for improvement in my career path." Qualitative comments from coaches also support this notion, such as "Clients have expressed gaining both enhanced self-awareness and concrete action steps, which they have implemented to address specific goals and challenges."

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Behavioral Learning Results

The second hypotheses stated that coaching improves coachees' (a) project management skills and (b) relationship skills.

Project management skills. Pretest-posttest data suggested that coaching did not improve project management skills. A *t* statistic was not significant at the .05 level with 44 degrees of freedom: $t(44) = 0.9$, $p > .05$. However, qualitative data indicated that at least some coachees improved their project management skills. For example, "[Coaching] helped me break big tasks down, to look for small wins… and then celebrate getting some things knocked off." This is also supported by qualitative data from coaches, such as:

> *Some examples [of coached skill development] include: setting up a daily prioritized "to do" list, reducing procrastination by engaging a difficult project for five minutes, learning to address a client group more effectively, paraphrasing and active listening with a partner for clarification and validation, and getting better assignments from Partners [supervisors].*

A relatively low alpha of 0.61 suggests further refinement of the project management items may help account for this discrepancy between the quantitative and qualitative data.

Relationship skills. Posttest data suggested that coaching improved coachees' relationship skills in the workplace. A posttest mean of 7.8 with a standard of deviation of 1.9 implies that enhanced relationship skills were perceived by many coachees as a concrete deliverable. Qualitative data from coachees supported this conclusion. For example, "I also liked learning new strategies for developing professional relationships." Qualitative data from coaches provided further evidence: for example, "[Coachee] reported in each [coaching] meeting on the progress made in networking in the firm to form key alliances."

Affective Learning Results

The third hypotheses stated that coaching improves coachees' (a) job satisfaction and (b) perceived organizational support.

Job satisfaction. Pretest-posttest data suggested that coaching improved coachees' job satisfaction. There was a significant difference in job satisfaction pre-post: $t(45) = -2.4^*$

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p <.05. Qualitative data from coachees also supported this notion. For example, "[Coaching's] key benefit is having a safe, supportive, and intelligent person to discuss fears, hopes, etc. It helped me see how happy I am. Learn how to improve my performance by working more efficiently and communicating better, and chart out a plan for professional growth." Coaches' quotes concurred: "Client feedback that their daily work satisfaction, confidence, motivation, development, and value-added contributions have been increasing."

Perceived organizational support (POS). Prettest-posttest data suggested that coaching improved coachees' POS. There was a significant difference in POS pre-post: $t(45) = -2.0^{*}$ $p < .05$. Qualitative data from coachees supported this notion. For example, "[Coaching Program] shows the Firm's investment in us."

Discussion

Connecting Results to Literature

Cognitive Results. This study's finding that coaching enhanced the self-awareness of coachees is in line with previous research and theory on the purpose and impact of coaching (e.g., Evers et al., 2006, Kombarakaran et al., 2008). Self-awareness also appears to be fundamental to recent publications on cognitive behavioral executive coaching (Good, Yeganeh, & Yeganeh, 2010) and mindful experiential learning practices (Yeganeh & Kolb, 2009). Overall, therefore, it is anticipated that this cognitive variable will continue to appear in the ever-expanding body of coaching research.

Behavioral Results. This study's mixed support for the hypothesis that coaching improves coachee's project management skills may relate, as stated previously, to the low alpha coefficient yielded. The alpha score of 0.61 is below the 0.70 "acceptability" standard (George & Mallery, 2003). Another possible explanation relates to a recent empirical study on coaching and project management outcomes by Hagen (2010). Linear regression analysis on survey data collected from six organizations found the independent variable *coaching expertise* to account for most of the variance in project management outcomes. In other words, Hagen's study suggests that skilled project management requires the ability to coach direct reports, in addition to abilities to prioritize and manage one's time effectively.

This study's finding that coaching enhanced the relationship skills of coachees aligns with previous research findings (e.g., Gegner, 1997, Kombarakaran et al., 2008). It also aligns with a recent case study on four professionals, which found coaching to be an effective vehicle to develop coachees' relationship skills (Hurd, 2009). Overall, therefore, evidence continues to mount linking coaching and the development of "soft people skills."

Affective Results

This study's statistically significant finding that coaching enhances both a coachee's (1) job satisfaction and (2) perceived organizational support aligns with recent coaching publications. Specifically, this study provides empirical evidence to theoretical linkages between coaching and job satisfaction proposed by Britton (2008). This study's findings also align with a recent quasi-experimental study of 64 bank employees, which found coaching to positively affect job satisfaction (Kauffeld & Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2010). Finally, this study's findings relate to the two between-subject studies conducted by Grant and his colleagues linking coaching to workplace well-being (Grant & Green, 2010, Grant, Curtayne, & Burton, 2009). Taken as a whole, these studies suggest that coaching can indeed yield significant affective learning outcomes.

Limitations

Like most evaluations of coaching programs, no control group or random assignment was available for this study (Greif, 2007; Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001). Lack of funding, appreciation, and political capital/will for more thorough coaching research (Bennet, 2006) prevented more experimental control and thus this study is vulnerable to numerous internal and external threats to validity including history and maturation (Campbell & Stanley, 1966). For example, job satisfaction may have increased among all second-year associates in the Firm during the observation period, not only for those who experienced coaching. When control groups and random assignment are not possible, as in the present study, the use of both qualitative and quantitative data from multiple sources (e.g., coaches and coachees) increases confidence in results. Another limitation of this study is that only the perceptions of coachees and coaches were utilized. No objective measures, such as standardized testing or billable hours, were available to calculate learning or coaching's impact on job performance. While several reviews document the validity of self-ratings for psychological assessment (e.g., Shrauger & Osberg, 1981), self-report measures are subject to bias and should ideally coincide with other empirical verification to allow for convergent validity and discriminant validity (Campbell and Fiske, 1959). Furthermore, a number of measures in this study were limited to post-test only measures. While retrospective studies –

identified as having only one measurement time at the end of the coaching period – is common among coaching studies (Evers et al., 2006; Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001), they may suffer from hindsight bias. That is, respondents' memories may have influenced the entered data, resulting in actual facts and situations not being accurately reported. Utilizing a more robust design and measures, such as adding a longitudinal assessment 6 months after the coaching intervention or supplementing self-reports with 360 degree feedback data, would help eliminate related concerns.

Implications

This study demonstrated that coaching may directly impact all aspects of an employee's learning: cognitive, behavioral, and affective. Influencing the "head, heart, and hands" of an employee can have potentially profound implications for both the individual and the organization. For example, the present study revealed that coaching may raise an employee's perceived organizational support. The importance of securing high POS among professional workers is well documented (Loi et al., 2006), and given that law firms employ various strategies to induce commitment from their members (Loi et al., 2006; Wallace, 1995a), it appears that coaching may be a good option. Coaching could be particularly useful to this population given that promotion from associate to partner represents a significant income and career advancement for lawyers (Nelson, 1988; Wallace, 1995b; Wholey, 1985) and that internal labor markets commonly exist in law firms (Loi et al., 2006). In other words, future partners are often located "in-house" and investing in the career development of associates may reap long-term benefits. However, this possibility remains to be investigated. Of particular interest is whether or not an increase in POS translates into increased productivity or retention rates in an intense work environment like a law firm. Some coachees may gain self-awareness through the coaching process that they are not a good fit for the organization. Future research can examine if this potential decrease in motivation and increase in attrition is offset by a potential increase in productivity and satisfaction of coachees who are a good fit in the organization and remain.

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Mentoring for Leadership Development: A Case Study of Executive Mentoring during the Banking Crisis

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Abstract

Based on an evaluation study of HBOS (Halifax Bank of Scotland) Corporate Bank's Executive Mentoring Programme during the banking crisis, this paper provides a significant perspective into the societal and social impact of mentoring. It shows that complex social aspects influence mentoring relationships. It notes the need for a flexible operational model in organisations. Board members were mentors to aspiring executives selected from the 'Talent' programme. The research is interpretive and social constructionist and indicates that mentoring can be helpful in developing thinking, change and leadership.

Keywords

mentoring, leadership, management discourse, learning, change

Introduction

The article provides a significant perspective into the societal and social impact of mentoring. In particular, it raises the importance of the social aspects of mentoring and the need for a flexible operational model in organisations that supports employees in change.

HBOS formed from the merger of the Halifax and the Bank of Scotland in September 2001 to become a leading provider of financial services in the UK with a staff of approximately 70,000 people. In January 2009, Lloyds TSB acquired HBOS in a UK Government led initiative to become the largest banking group in the UK. The newly formed Lloyds Banking Group is now 43.4% UK Government owned.

The paper is based on a larger evaluation study of the Corporate Bank's Executive Mentoring Programme. This spanned the 'banking crisis' from May 2008 to July 2009. The Bank's Directors were mentors to aspiring executives selected from the 'high potential' Talent programme. The purpose of the scheme was to contribute to leadership development focussed on the HBOS competency framework, '*The Leadership Commitment*'.

The approach to the study is interpretive and social constructionist. It critically and rigorously reflects on the dominant management discourse of pragmatic positivism (Johnson & Duberley, 2000). It indicates that mentoring can be helpful in developing thinking, supporting change and leadership development. It also demonstrates that mentoring relationships are dynamic as the participants move away from the espoused purpose of the scheme to accommodate their needs during a period of dramatic change.

Literature Review

The following acts as a backdrop to the paper and the themes identified here are discussed later in relation to the findings.

Mentoring Definitions

Three conceptual issues underpin mentoring. Levinson et al., (1978) and Mullen, (1994), link the motivation to mentor to Erikson's (1978) '*generativity*' concept - the desire to influence the next generation. Garvey et al., (2009) associate mentoring with learning and Bruner, (1990) and Lave & Wenger, (1991) argue that learning happens through social interaction. Kram, (1983) shows that mentoring performs a '*psychosocial*' function - the mentee is integrated in a society and develops psychological wellbeing.

Therefore, mentoring is a dyadic and dialogic relationship with a vital 'psychosocial' function. Consequently, it may either reinforce 'desirable' behaviours or support behaviour change. It may also do the same within a social system (Clawson, 1996) or be neutral (Alred & Garvey, 2000).

Mentoring may also be understood in relation to its professed purpose. Kram, (1985); Sosik & Godshalk, (2005) suggest that the professed purpose of a mentoring scheme determines its operation and meaning to all stakeholders. Healey & Welchert (1990) and Haggard et al. (2011) suggest that mentoring relationships are dynamic. Johnson et al. (1999) suggest that the quality of the relationships and the social environment influence the dynamic, which adds a potential for conflict between the organisational and the participants' purpose. Others, (Blake-Beard, 2001) suggest that in formal schemes the purpose is 'set' but it emerges in informal arrangements. Colley (2003) suggests that if the host organisation or funders specify the purpose, there is always potential for social engineering and manipulation. Chadwick-Coule & Garvey (2009) noted that participants established goals and expectations within their mentoring relationships with little reference to the purpose of the scheme and that these often changed as the relationships progressed.

Additionally, Clutterbuck (2004) suggests that there are two main purposes for mentoring, the US ‘career sponsorship’ model and the European ‘developmental’ model. American research (Ragins & Cotton, 1999 & Allen, et al. 2004) shows that sponsorship mentoring brings many benefits for mentee, mentor and their host organisation. However, these authors also indicate the potential for relationships to become abusive or breakdown if expectations are not fulfilled or if mentors assert their power positions inappropriately. Clutterbuck (2004) and Rix & Gold (2000) show that developmental schemes offer similar benefits to the sponsorship model with fewer negative effects.

The next section briefly explores the literature that surrounds the social influences in this study.

The Social Context

There are four main contextual influences on this study. First, the banking crisis, second the dominant discourse of management, third, the scheme design features and fourth, relationship dynamics within the mentoring pairs.

The Banking Crisis

Grey (2009) suggests that prior to the banking crisis there was a social epidemic in which business leaders and politicians venerated bankers as great innovators. Grey (2009) argues that the collapse of the banking system was due to the social phenomenon of ‘fast capitalism’. Here, taking high risks to drive short-term high profit for high individual rewards dominated the agenda.

With hindsight, it is clear that HBOS Corporate executives participated in ‘fast capitalism’. The Financial Services Authority reported on Friday 9th March 2012 (Amos, 2012) that HBOS was guilty of “very serious misconduct”. It continues, the Corporate Bank “pursued an aggressive growth strategy that focused on high-risk, sub-investment-grade lending.”HBOS collapsed and following its acquisition, the press attack on bankers erupted and executives resigned or were downgraded (see, Rohrer, 2008; Chapman, 2009).

Management Discourse

Johnson & Duberley (2000) suggest that positivism dominates the management discourse. This discourse professes that 'good practice' in management is about cause and effect decisions, taking action, establishing objectives, individualism and measurement. It is a 'technical' discourse that translates into organisational policies as the 'rational, pragmatic manager' (Garvey & Williamson, 2002) attempts to control the system. Barnett (1994) expresses the risk of this discourse as 'Society is more rational, but it is a rationality of a limited kind' and '*genuinely interactive and collaborative forms of reasoning*' are in danger of being driven out by a technical discourse. Mentoring is arguably a 'genuinely interactive and collaborative form of reasoning' but the rational pragmatic context may create relationships that lack the emotional support and trust that are so necessary (Levinson, 1978 and van Emmerick, 2008) for good quality learning to take place in intimate dialogic settings.

The *rational pragmatic discourse* emphasises pre-specification of 'learning outcomes' for learning and development activities. This often results in the development of competency frameworks (Ecclestone, 1997 & Grugulis, 2000). In leadership development, this approach offers the possibility of accountability, measurement and quality control to determine value for money and achievement. However, this approach cannot be adequate to guide learners if they are to be capable of flexibility, innovation, creativity and improvisation (Barnett, 1994 and Buckingham, 2001) - the widely agreed (Sosik & Megerian, 1999 & Bolden & Gosling, 2006) qualities required of the leaders of the future.

Participants in the HBOS programme expected to develop in relation to the competency framework. However, the Bank felt the credit crunch acutely and this in turn placed considerable pressures on the participants in the mentoring scheme. Garvey et al. (2009) suggest that *'…..when professionals are highly anxious ………..under strong resource pressure, then the delivery of competencies can degrade.'*

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Scheme Design

Bennetts (1995 & 1996), Geiger-DuMond & Boyle, (1995) observe that there are many benefits to informal or naturally developing mentoring relationships. Ragins & Cotton (1999) show that there are improved benefits for mentees within informal arrangements over those with either no mentor or formal mentors and Moberg & Velasquez (2004) argue that formal mentoring is problematic because of the inherent inequality between mentor and mentee. However, Megginson et al. (2005) suggest that the scheme's design can minimise problems and maximise benefits if it employs:

- Training for both parties
- Cross-functional pairings
- Regular review
- Voluntarism
- 'Graceful exit' where either participant can conclude the relationship and Riddell (2005) recommends a 'light touch' approach to scheme management.

Relationship Dynamics

'Confidentiality' influences the mentoring relationship dynamics. Clutterbuck & Megginson (1999) point out that confidentiality is fundamental to success but Simmel (1950) suggests that observing strict confidentiality can create dependency. Sosik & Godshalk (2005) and Merrick & Stokes (2008) view dependency as unhealthy and ethically problematic. However, Carden (1990) reframes dependency as 'mutually beneficial' and Simmel (1950) suggests that the certainty that any dyadic relationship may end can either bring the pair closer together or reduce trust. He also states that dyads falter if expectations are not met, parties meet too often or they discuss the same topics repeatedly. However, Neilson & Eisenbach (2003) found that regular feedback within the relationship was a significant contributor to sustainability and successful outcomes. Garvey (1995) noted that the mentoring relationships had better outcomes when the mentee led both the agenda and the management of the relationship. This study highlighted that a common conversation topic was the '*mentor's work related issues*'. It concluded that where the purpose of mentoring is leadership development this was potentially positive. The study also noted that in times of great change, when interpersonal relationships can weaken (Toffler, 1970), mentoring could provide stability.

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Philosophical position

The *rational pragmatic* discourse underpins much contemporary mentoring research (Garvey et al. 2009). Concepts of 'objectivity', 'generalisability', 'validity' and 'reliability' drives this school of research and, in turn, modern industrialisation. The resultant knowledge being *'characterized by a form of rationality that disengages the mind from the body and from the world'*. Whilst this logic has been responsible for much progress in industrial development, it is also responsible for *'social fragmentation'* and *'environmental destruction'* (Apffel-Marglin & Marglin, 1996).

An alternative is the 'subjectivist' paradigm. This offers a 'dialogic' interpretation of human affairs and is arguably more appropriate for studying the 'psychosocial' (Kram, 1983) dynamics of mentoring. This approach looks to extract 'meanings' (Bruner, 1990) holistically by examining the discourses within specific contexts. Therefore, this paper describes the participants' views at a moment in time, as live and legitimate experience. Gill & Johnson (2002) argue that any theory that arises from this approach to research is more likely to be helpful to practitioners in 'creating meaning' rather than in finding a 'solution' or 'right answer'. Consequently, it offers a catalyst for discussion to assist others to make sense of their experiences. This case study paints a 'rich description' (Geertz, 1971) of mentoring within a unique social setting.

The overall evaluation aimed to assess the impact of the mentoring scheme on its participants. Pawson & Tilley (1997) and Connell & Kubisch (1998) indicate that the theory that underpins a programme should be the basis for evaluative data collection and analysis. In this case, this was a *'theory of change'* approach. Organisational mentoring activity rarely develops in a predictable manner (O'Brien, 1997) so the data here were collected over time with early data ('expectations') being compared with later ('lived experience') to illustrate change. The layers of data are integrated and support or develop emerging themes.

Method

There were 13 mentoring pairs with two Directors having two relationships each, therefore, eleven mentors, and thirteen mentees.

There were five 'layers' to data collection:

1. Observation of initial training
2. A structured, closed questionnaire to capture the expectations of the participants before the programme start
3. Another similar questionnaire after a year to capture the participants' lived experience
4. Follow-up semi-structured and transcribed telephone interviews after 1 year
5. Semi-structured and transcribed interview with the commissioning manager at the start

The responses were as follows:

Table 1.
Data collection response rates

	All	Mentees	Mentors	Commissioning Manager
Layer 1	✓			
Layer 2	15	9	6	
Layer 3	15 + 3 incomplete	9 + 2 incomplete	6 + 1 incomplete	
Layer 4	8	4	4	
Layer 5				✓

NB: The number of the sources of data are provided in brackets in the relevant places.

This paper draws mainly on layers 2, 3 and 4 but some are drawn from 1 and 5.

Findings. Social Context

The banking crisis

One mentor stated (4), *"the circumstances made it difficult… I became an anchor to whom* (my mentee) *could relate. We moved from simple career talk to deep discussions about survival and opportunity in change. I found this helpful as well."* Another said *"…the mentoring provided a vehicle for supportive conversations….."*

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A mentee said there was a *"need for a stable base which was provided by my mentor despite his own insecurity".* Another said, *"… it was a very difficult time for me and I found the mentoring was a great emotional help."*

From the questionnaire (3), two mentors and their mentees exercised the *'graceful exit'* due to the crisis. Three mentoring relationships continued beyond the allotted year (5).

Management Discourse

Table 2 compares percentage agreement of the expected benefits for mentees as expressed by mentors and mentees with the 'lived experience' after 1 year of mentoring. For example, 90% of mentors expected their mentees to 'take action' as a result of their mentoring but only 40% reported that they did. Seventy percent of mentees expected to 'take action' but 50% actually did.

Table 2

Expectations and lived experience (2&3)

	Mentees Take Action	Mentees Achieve Goals	Both Gain	Achieve Open Dialogue	Develop Leadership Ability	Satisfaction at seeing mentee develop	Improve Confidence of mentee	Discuss Competency Framework	Improved ability to deal with Change
Before mentoring programme									
Mentors	90%	60%	60%	50%	60%	80%	35%	66%	
Mentees	70%	60%	40%	60%	75%	85%	33%	55%	22%
After mentoring programme									
Mentors	40%	20%	80%	80%	20%	75%	70%	20%	
Mentees	50%	10%	60%	90%	60%	80%	66%	20%	40%

In the layer 2 questionnaire, the expected objectives in rank order were:

Mentees, to:

- Develop self knowledge, learning and development
- Gain promotion and achieve performance objectives
- Establish a good relationship with mentor

Mentors, to:

- Work with mentee to enable him/her to get what s/he wants
- Help mentee achieve objectives

All mentors (2) were motivated to *'put something back into the organisation'* and were '*happy to share their experience'*.

One mentee gained a promotion during this period (5).

The layer 3 questionnaire showed a change in the mentees' objectives to:

- 'Sounding out' my mentor about my career options
- Developing political skills to cope and position myself within the new organisation

There was a change for both parties converging to:

- Exploring ways to understand and survive the tough climate
- Developing arguments for use elsewhere
- Considering day to day management issues, motivating the team in the crisis and making decisions

Layer 4 data explained this as: "*a reassessment of time and cost"; "changing business priorities"; "the need to develop greater political skills."*

Scheme Design Features

The scheme's purpose (1 & 5) was to support leadership development in relation to the *Leadership Commitment*. The scheme features are in Table 3.

Table 3

Scheme Design Features

Voluntary	Light Management	Establish Ground Rules	Graceful Exit	Training for both	Cross Functional
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

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Comments on the design (2, 3, 4) include "*The cross functional arrangements are good and have less difficulty attached.", "The scheme feels different to other Bank initiatives.."* Another mentee, not wanting a *'graceful exit'* said, *"If you get an opportunity for a one to one with a Board Member, you are not going to turn it down!"*

The pairs met approximately monthly for 1.5 hours (5). One mentor said in relation to the crisis (3), "*….the …time commitment given to the mentoring relationship …was impacted to some extent."*

From layer 5, scheme management was '*light touch',* i.e. offering open access to support, proactive phone calls to ask, *"How is it going?"* and encouragement to return the questionnaires. The scheme was not subject to standard performance measures.

Relationship Dynamics

Table 4 (1, 2 & 3) shows some key elements of the relationship. For example, mentors and mentees expected 'trust' to be easily established and, in the main, this was also their 'lived experience'. The training emphasised the need for a groundrules review every third meeting.

Table 4

Relationship

	Establish Groundrules	**Review Groundrules**	**Mentee Managed**	**Mentor Managed**	**Shared Management**	**Confidenti al**	**Trust easy or very easy**	**Establish Objectives Very easy or easy**
Before mentoring programme								
Mentors	80%	80%	50%	0%	50%	100%	100%	45%
Mentees	85%	85%	45%	0%	55%	100%	88%	65%
After mentoring programme								
Mentors	100%	0%	80%	20%	0%	100%	90%	80%
Mentees	100%	0%	25%		75%	100%	80%	85%

Two mentees in interview (4) commented *"The mentoring programme is a good opportunity…." - "I can say that I was genuinely thrilled to have been invited to take part..."*

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All participants would engage in mentoring again given the opportunity (3).

Chart 1 (2 & 3) shows before and after expectations on roles and activities and highlights the increase in the use of the 'helping' activities of:

- Coaching
- Counselling
- Mentor as a confidant

Interestingly, mentors believed that they 'listened' and acted as a 'sounding board' but for mentees, this fell short of expectations.

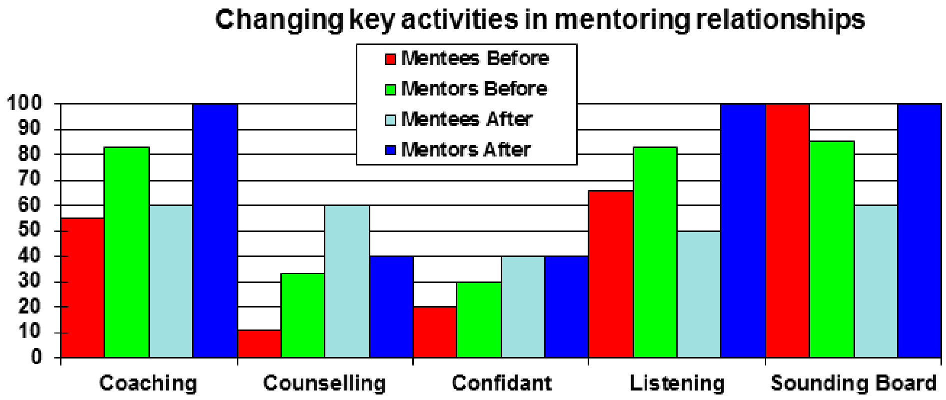

Chart 1. Role and Activities

Layer 4 data suggests that supportive conversations within an insecure environment were the norm. Mentee: "*The conversations were more like a debate and this was useful in developing important insights into the changing style of leadership during the difficulties."*

From layers 2, 3 and 4, the content of discussions included ways of working with colleagues who did not like the change from a 'facilitative' to 'directive' leadership style and day-to-day management and survival.

Mentees (3) (40%) said they discussed the *'Mentor's work related problems'.* Layer 4 data supports this - *"It was good to hear the mentor's issues. He was not 'off-loading' but I was gaining insight into how he dealt with similar issues."*

Discussion. The Social Context

The Crisis

There is clear evidence of emotional disturbance, pressure on time and changing relationships attributable to the crisis. It also prompted a shift in leadership style from facilitative to directive - a common response to complexity (Garvey & Alred, 2001) but Garvey & Alred (2001) also suggest that mentoring can help people to 'tolerate' complexity. This seems to be the case here. There is evidence to suggest that the participants adjusted within the mentoring relationships contrary to their standard discourse. The mentoring seemed to deliver this in a curious twist of Kram's (1983) *'psychosocial'* function. Mentoring was not supporting the existing culture but it seemed to help both parties adjust to each other in the crisis suggesting that an '*interactive and collaborative form of reasoning'* (Barnett, 1994) was developing within the micro context of their relationships. Hints at a new relationship dynamic emerging are found in the move towards mutually beneficial relationships with converging objectives, the changing content and nature of their conversations and the shifting roles and activities. These issues are discussed further in other following sections.

Management Discourse

Within the *rational pragmatic* discourse, the crisis may have led the senior participants to abandon their mentoring relationships. They did not! Some findings suggest compliance with the dominant discourse of *rational pragmatism*. For example, the expectation that objectives would be easily established, *'Taking action'* as an intention and *achieving goals* are standard management assumptions. Further, the change in leadership style from 'facilitative' to 'directive' as they attempted to gain *rational* control of an out of control situation. There is a hint that the mentoring role created a relational discourse. Mentors thought that *'both would gain'* and that satisfaction would come from *'seeing someone else develop'*. Taken with the mentors' motivations, there is evidence of the human driver of 'generativity' (Erikson, 1978) influencing behaviour. However, there could be an alternative explanation. The mentors may have sought to maintain control, seek influence or exercise power over others. While, in the light of the evidence this may be unlikely, it remains possible.

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Other evidence of the rational pragmatic discourse can be found in the explanations given for the shift in objectives - "*a reassessment of time and cost"; "changing business priorities".* The emotional challenges seemed to be coped with by - *'Considering day to day management issues..'* suggesting they employed technical discussion to help cope with the complexity of emotional situations (see Garvey & Alred, 2001).

Scheme Design

The design features (Table 2) of *'light touch'*, *'voluntarism'*, *'graceful exit'*, *'cross functional'* and *'groundrules'* were not standard practice in HBOS and may have contributed to a 'sense of difference' among the participants.

Riddell's (2005) concept of *'light touch'* scheme management is an interesting feature in the context of a *rational pragmatic* environment. Arguably, the commissioning manager could only have a *'light touch'* approach given the seniority of the participants. However, participants welcomed the 'sense of difference' in the scheme. This, combined with the lack of standard performance measures, may have created a sense of liberation for the participants so that they could genuinely pursue their own course for mutual benefit. This provides further support to Sosik & Godshalk (2005), and Poulsen's (2006) view that the participating pair should establish the agenda. Colley (2003) recognised the importance of this within a scheme whereas Kram (1985) suggests that an overall pre-specified purpose is important. However, Kram (1983); Beech & Brockbank, (1999) and Clutterbuck (2004) argue that mentoring takes people beyond the immediately obvious. Alred & Garvey (2000) suggest that mentoring can go beyond competencies and skills '*to promote balanced growth.'*

Further, the participants experienced *'mission drift'* as they moved away from the pre-specified purpose of the scheme. In the HBOS context *'mission drift'* was seen as failure but in this instance, it was accepted. Despite *'mission drift'* the participants discussed leadership issues but the *Leadership Commitment* degraded (Table 1) as suggested by Garvey et al., (2009:191). Perhaps it was no longer relevant for dealing with the crisis as the participants moved into unchartered waters. However, it is clear that a project can be successful within its own *'relational'* dynamic rather than *'technical'* terms*.* This does raise questions about the rigid pursuit of goals so commonly found in organisations and suggests that pre-specification for leadership development may be unnecessary.

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The mentees participating in the Talent programme volunteered and the mentors were invited to participate. Thus, the scheme was semi-voluntary. The *'graceful exit'* was emphasised in the training as a 'soft exit'. The crisis forced two pairs into this. The power issues attached to *'graceful exit'* while present, did not materialise nor did the issue of inequality argued by Moberg & Velasquez (2004). This may be due to the scheme features or the influence of the crisis on the behaviours of the participants. It could equally be both. This discussed further in the next section.

All the above moves leadership development supported by mentoring away from the *rational pragmatic* towards a more holistic and situationally grounded learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). There is a glimpse of this potential in this case study as the participants created their own agendas and those that gained the most adjusted the content of discussion and the roles they adopted.

Clutterbuck's (2004) distinction between the US and the UK models of mentoring is relevant here. This scheme was part of a 'Talent' programme where mentees were motivated to gain promotion. It is therefore possible that a combination of the circumstances and the design features of the scheme created a hybrid between the US sponsorship and the UK developmental model. As the participants shared their experiences within cross-functional relationships, power distinctions, while still present, were somewhat reduced and developmental opportunities of an unexpected but beneficial nature were created. The 'hybrid' nature, with the scheme design features may have helped to minimise potential problems and maximise the benefits. Both parties valued the cross functional arrangement but neither party reviewed the groundrules. This is a curious finding and one that is open to speculation as to its significance. Contrary to Neilson & Eisenbach's (2003), the relationships did not appear to be affected adversely. This may have been due to the dynamics of the social context influencing their behaviours and their move towards mutuality as discussed above. It may be that the participants were satisfied with their progress or that the scheme did not survive long enough for review to become necessary.

The Relationship Dynamics

A 'Talent' programme, by its very nature, is about differentiating people but it is not clear how this affected the participants except in the comment about the *'graceful exit'* presented earlier in the Findings section. Here, the mentee comments that he would not even consider invoking the *'graceful exit'* because a 'one to one' with a Director is an opportunity you would not turn down. Here is a hint at a possible elitist dynamic and an undertone of 'power' at play. Of course, the mentees may, as one suggested have been *'thrilled'* to take part. This could equally mean they may have been overawed or that there was a concern about how a mentor in a position of power would react. However, there are no comments in the data to suggest that the power dynamics made the mentoring relationships dysfunctional.

The crisis seemed to force a change in the power dynamic. The relationships became mutual and reciprocal, the topics of conversation shifted as they developed *'political skills'*, coping strategies and an understanding of ways to support other colleagues who were also challenged. It is also important to note that a number of the mentors faced a reduction in their status and authority and this may have further reduced the power distinctions.

Did 'dependency' develop? Perhaps, but more likely the relationships became *'mutually beneficial'* (Carden, 1990). Interestingly, the mentees believed that they were not listened to as much as they would have liked and the mentors thought they listened. Mentees reported that a topic of discussion was the *'Mentor's work related* problems*'* but this was not viewed as a problem which supports the idea that the mentee was gaining insights into leadership and both developed mutual benefit from the interaction (Garvey, 1995). With mentees saying that the conversations were *"more like a debate….."* and both parties saying that their relationships offered stability through change there is a further case for the mentoring becoming an '*interactive and collaborative form of reasoning'* (Barnett, 1994) here. Confidentiality was established but it did not seem to create dependency. In this case, the threat of the relationships ending abruptly did seem to bring pairs closer together without loss of trust (Simmel, 1950).

The literature review highlights Simmel's (1950) warnings about the potential for the dyad to falter if initial expectations are not met. Here, expectations were not met; rather, they changed (Chadwick-Coule & Garvey, 2009). Partly due to the crisis and partly due to the way the relationships were constructed. This did not lead to the relationships closing down and if taken with Johnson's (1999) contextual influences, lends support to the idea that mentoring relationships are dynamic (Healey & Welchert, 1990; Haggard et al., 2011) and indeed complex (Garvey & Alred, 2001) and difficult to study with cause and effect methodologies.

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In terms of the frequency of mentoring sessions, there is no evidence to suggest that these were too frequent, thus avoiding Simmel's (1950) potential for breakdown. There is some evidence to suggest that for some, they were too infrequent.

The encouragement given in the initial training for the mentee to manage the relationship and the finding that, from the mentees perspective, it was shared, also suggests that mutuality developed. However, mentors thought that the mentees managed the relationship and none thought it was shared. This is clearly a perceptual difference and may be explained by the status of the mentor relative to the mentee. Alternatively, this may be a sign of the mentees were becoming confident and independent.

All these elements may have contributed to relationships being successful within their own terms.

It is clear that coaching, counselling and mentoring activity all took place in varying degrees (Chart 1). However, the wide-ranging nonclementure in current usage for coaching, mentoring and counselling makes definition difficult and while it is inevitably varied how the participants named these activities, what they meant is clear. Both parties were 'helping' and 'supporting'. However, mentors believed they 'listened' and the mentees' indicate they felt engaged in two-way supportive discussions with the mentor as a *'sounding board'* but were not listened to as much as they had hoped. Perhaps the increased mutuality in the relationships contributed to this but equally, with coaches and mentors sharing the same skills and processes (Willis, 2005) and the same historical antecedents (Garvey et al., 2009), all the activities identified here involve 'listening'. Perhaps, they chose individually how they named the activity. More research is needed on the meaning of helping relationships.

Conclusions

It is important to be aware that the banking crisis dominated these peoples' lives. Not only had their personal wealth been hit as the value of their personal shares fell but also many were, as Layer 2, 3 and 4 data indicates, fighting for their survival within the Bank. Despite this, the Scheme could be viewed as successful, not against the original intention but in terms of the relational, emotional and mutual learning support it offered in the context of environmental turbulence. However, the study also suggests that mentoring activity in general, as indicated in early literature (Levinson, 1978) offers much potential as a support for individuals making transitions. The findings within this paper also suggest that the elements of design within a mentoring programme may have contributed to the positive, if but unexpected, outcomes and given the extreme circumstances these people found themselves in, these elements, when operationalized, are clearly robust enough for the most extreme crisis as well as more normal circumstances.

In general, the mentor has a role to help the learner grasp the wider significance of what is happening in 'real time'. In this context, this became mutual and they shifted towards a situational (Lave & Wenger, 1991) approach to leadership development to serve the needs of their mentoring relationship and the individuals. This suggests that the concept of 'emergence' facilitated by *'genuinely interactive and collaborative forms of reasoning'* (Barnett (1994) offers the potential for learners to learn dynamically in relation to the prevailing context and thus develop abilities beyond the limited descriptions of a competence framework. This seems like an important conclusion for Learning and Development practitioners in a wide range of businesses internationally.

What is also clear is that the mentoring relationships adapted to the wider context rather than the other way around. This does not suggest that mentoring is neutral but that it may be more beneficial for the participants than the organisation.

Mentoring research needs more work of a social constructivist nature!

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The 'S' Factor: Exploring the Spiritual Dimension to our Work as Coaches

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Abstract

This article explores spiritual roots and shoots of coaching, and argues for the need for more spiritually informed approaches in coaching practice. It looks at common experiences in coaches' own developmental journeys, and suggests how these experiences may provide keys to serving our clients in deeper and potentially more meaningful ways. The article will be of interest to practitioners exploring spiritual dimensions to their work, and is also relevant to supervisors and providers of coaching or mentoring development programmes, inviting them to consider more spiritually aware ways of supporting coach and mentor development.

Key words

spiritual, presence, servant leadership

Introduction

This article explores a growing awareness and appreciation of a spiritual dimension in the coaching and mentoring profession, and its relevance to our clients and the systems they are a part of.

For the purpose of this discussion, we will not enter a lengthy discussion to define the terms 'spiritual' or 'spirituality', nor attempt to explore differences between 'spirit' and 'soul'. I invite you as the reader to bring your own interpretations and definitions, but also offer my own ideas about how we might approach this vast subject.

A working description, which I offer is:

Spirituality is a function of our being human, which, when we are alive to it, supports the fuller development, connection and integration of all of who we are (mind, emotion, body, soul….) – 'the universe within', and our fuller connection, engagement and integration to all of what is (humankind, environment, planet, cosmos…..) – 'the universe without', and that connecting to our spiritual selves only truly happens in the moment.

The description below (Fluker, 2008) adds a stronger emphasis on purpose and Buberian 'I –Thou'-ness:

> Spirituality refers to a way or ways of seeking or being in relationship with the other who is believed to be worthy of reverence and highest devotion. In this definition, I am concerned with the other as inclusive of both individuality and community. The other is not impersonal, but intimately related to who I am and who I become. The other has a face – and the face of the other is the foundation of ethics and the origin of civil society. Beyond our private quests for meaning and authenticity, we are connected to others. Indeed, in order to be fully human and ethical, we must 'face the other'.

In order to explore shared meaning with regards spirituality, I also propose a framework or set of lenses to support ways of dialoguing and applying spiritual concepts in an accessible way. I have found it helpful to identify key principles or *components*, which underlie a wide range of different expressions. Drawing from Bohm's concept of implicate and explicate order (1980), I wondered if it would be possible to put forward a typology of spiritual principles, which nest within each other. Using the analogy of refraction of light through a prism, it seems to me that the abstract concept we call spirituality is like white light. When we shine it through a prism (the prism of our consciousness, the prism of our experience) we experience a rainbow of coloured light.

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What I offer as a simple typology is:

White light

One-ness

connectedness of everything, universality, consciousness

Blue	Yellow	Red
Presence	**Love**	**Meaning**
• Stillness, mindfulness, being • Acceptance, emergence, observer effect • Kairos vs chronos experience of time • Presence and wholeness in relationship	• Empathy, humility, compassion, unconditional positive regard • Respect, value, forgiveness • Stewardship • Right relationship and community	• Values, integrity, quality • Purpose, choice • Legacy and contribution • Meaningful relationship

Signs of the times

A quick scan across the current landscape of our profession reveals the emergence of a number of relatively recent areas of interest such as mindfulness, meditation, quantum physics, heart-based living, somatic, transpersonal and existential approaches to name a few. These areas frequently support more embodied approaches to coaching, and offer new avenues for working with the client. They point to a growing desire to move beyond the purely cognitive and concrete, and embrace practices which have more of a spiritual dimension.

At the same time, there is a growing conscience regarding the role and purpose that coaching has played and could play in shaping society, the economy and perhaps even world events. It can be a challenging space to work in, given the realities of making a living and satisfying the client's expectations for tangible outputs and return on investment. Coaching can be viewed on a spectrum, where on one end its primary function is to maintain or strengthen the status quo, and on the other, to challenge it (Jarvis and Macinnes, 2008). Coaches seeking to 'be the change' can find themselves sitting in an uneasy space between those two, manifested as the tension between serving agendas concerned with outputs that reinforce unsustainable and potentially unhealthy organisational norms, and holding true to their own beliefs and values about change, meaning and purpose.

Sometimes in order to live in line with our values and beliefs, we and our clients need to make tough choices, choices, which are based on something that goes deeper than financial security and fitting in with the establishment. The unrelenting pace of change, and the toll of fear, stress and uncertainty, which has been endemic in the years leading up to and following the global economic crisis (with its own backdrop of political and climatic change) has created both a spiritual vacuum and a spiritual openness. There is an opportunity for coaches to engage clients in exploring the values they seek to live by, and support them in understanding how to derive a sense of meaning, contribution and purpose in the face of tottering economic and social systems. This theme is echoed in recent publications (Casserley and Megginson, 2009; Blakey and Day, 2009), which have encouraged coaches to think about what their role might be in addressing such challenges.

Back in 2004, Sir John Whitmore, a long-term advocate for spiritual approaches addressed the Foundation of Workplace Spirituality, reflecting on his own experiences of working in more spiritual ways with corporate clients, and communicating a real sense of urgency for coaches to step up to the mark:

> I find time and time again when I've been working, what I have felt has sort of been sort of on the edge, that afterwards I could have gone further. So what I want to do really here is to encourage those of you particularly who interact with this community that desperately needs to change, to go for it; to take spirituality in there, to do it. Because I don't know how business is going to clean up its act unless it gets spiritual values in business.

Since then we have witnessed in a very heightened way the destructive power of organisations whose sphere of influence far exceed their sphere of concern, and whose leaders appear to have no moral compass to guide them. Perhaps it really is time for coaches to consider how their own spiritual growth serves the world's needs, and engage in this journey with passion and courage.

How we get there – clues in our own journeys?

Clearly there are challenges in adopting a spiritual perspective in coaching. Conventional coaching wisdom argues that the client's agenda is paramount, and that

EMCC European Mentoring & Coaching Council

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the coach should be careful not to impose their values and beliefs, but I feel this misses the point. Bringing a spiritual perspective to practice does not necessarily imply use of a specific set of tools, approaches or agenda. It is more about the quality and awareness which we bring into the coaching space regardless of the approaches we hold to in our practice.

‘The success of intervention is not only what leaders do and how they do it, but their “interior condition”, the inner place from which they operate or the source from which all their actions originate.’ Kalungu-Banda (2009)

In considering what ‘interior conditions’ we bring to bear in our work, it is worth reflecting on an interesting phenomenon, which seems to have gone under our professional radar. I have observed through delivering coach development programmes and acting as a coach supervisor for a number of years that many coaches experience points in their development and practice, which they would describe as having a spiritual quality or dimension, which has added value to their client’s experience of coaching. In the absence of published research in this area, I would offer my own thoughts as to why coaches experience a spiritual dimension to their professional development.

1. Working with principles, which support values, meaning, and a heightened sense of humanity

A turning point in coach development is the transition beyond an over-dependence on tools and techniques, or adherence to fixed views of right and wrong (Bachkirova and Cox, 2007) and the learning to trust in themselves and their clients. At this point coaches begin to discover their own authentic approach and presence, which tend to be shaped more by principles and values rather than by rules. Principles and values are concerned with overarching truths, and in coaching or mentoring contexts tend to be drawn from an understanding of the conditions for human development and flourishing, such as meaning and purpose. Interestingly, many whose life’s work underpins commonly held coaching principles have personally embraced spiritual perspectives, which shine through their work, for example Carl Rogers, Martin Seligman, Tim Gallwey, as have many of coaching’s architects and influencers.

2. Opportunity to connect more deeply to own sense of life purpose

Individuals find that coaching offers them the opportunity to fulfil a vocation which supports their own sense of life purpose and enables them to contribute in ways which were not previously accessible to them. Coupled with a growing sense of ease and authenticity in their practice, this can lead to a deeper experience of wholeness and oneness. This is reinforced in a virtuous circle when they support clients to uncover and fulfil more of their own life's purpose.

3. Serving the bigger whole

Coaches and mentors also reach points in their development when they become aware of their impact in the bigger scheme of things, and find that their role developing into that of a servant leader. The Centre for Servant Leadership (Spears, 2005) identifies ten key characteristics of the servant leader, many of which arguably overlap with qualities of a mature coach: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualisation, foresight, stewardship, commitment to growth of people, and building community. Servant leadership implies a holistic and comprehensive view, and coaches and mentors entering a servant leadership stage of their development will be engaged with a sense of purpose, which goes beyond their own personal quests for identity and meaning.

4. The opportunity and permission which coaching allows the coach to engage in lengthy stretches of presence and mindfulness.

There are few contexts in life in which we are required to really listen and hold the space for another. Developing presence and a mindful approach is almost a basic requirement in coaching, and arguably benefits the coach as much as the client. Many novice coaches are keenly aware of their tendency to interject or advise the client, and this self-doubt can be healthy. It enables the coach to question conditioning received through years of education and employment where success is equated to knowing the right answer or devising solutions. Whilst it's challenging initially to operate from a place of not knowing, once coaches experience that holding the space for their client is sometimes all they need to do, they may make shifts at a fundamental level within themselves, which often lead to other shifts and 'unconditionings'.

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5. Listening at deep levels

Developing deep listening skills (sometimes described as whole body listening) can be experienced as a state of transcendence or merging, which may be the vehicle for deeper truths and insights to emerge. Both coach and coachee may briefly enter a meditative or trance-like state and sense of being able to access wisdom which is experienced as within and sometimes beyond the self. This kind of peak experience might be described as a state of flow, but is not without its own hazards as it may prove an addictive state for the coach, or be used as a unique measure of the quality of the coaching itself.

6. Practicing unconditional positive regard, non-judgement towards the client

Person-centred principles exist within the foundations of coaching (Peltier, 2001), and the 'necessary and sufficient' conditions identified by Carl Rogers could be seen as having a spiritual dimension, which go beyond pure emotional intelligence, especially when one considers unconditional positive regard. When coaches develop their capacity for unconditional positive regard and a non-judgmental approach to clients, this may act as a catalyst to developing a more compassionate and heart-centred approach to work and life.

7. The privilege of seeing transformational change unfold

The 'Joy of Coaching', if a book with such a title was ever to grace a bookshelf, would no doubt include a chapter on transformational change, and the privilege to act as witness to the birth of something new, something which literally did not exist or was not manifest before. The self-generating capacity in humans, of 'life forward energy' (Weiser Cornell, 2005) hints at powerful cosmic forces of creation, renewal and healing, and participating in this level of change can be experienced as profound and potentially life-changing.

8. Experiencing moments of grace in the coaching relationship – where somehow God or the Universe come in to play

And finally, there are times when we acknowledge that something greater than ourselves is at work, when we experience moments of grace that exceed our expectations for what is possible, and where keys appear and doors open and we know that life will never be the same for our client. Somehow something really big has just happened, and it is time to be thankful for Whatever or Whoever helped that happen.

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Steps forward

So how do we individually, and as a profession develop more of a spiritual basis to our practice?

Perhaps one key to moving forward with spiritual approaches in coaching lies within *what we ourselves have experienced* in our own developmental journeys. This is part of what we bring into the room (Long, 2011), and which impacts the shared field with the client. When we experience shifts in our own spiritual development, especially in the context of our work, this paves the way for different levels of engagement with our clients. There are implications for how we develop ourselves spiritually, and nurture our ability to work from deep presence and compassion, whilst upholding field independence and the ability to ask fundamental 'why?' questions, two of twelve qualities of spiritual intelligence (Zohar, 2000, 2004). There are implications for our personal practices, development and self-care which go beyond conventional views on coach development, continuous professional development and supervision.

The sensitivities surrounding spirituality have made this area a challenging one for coaches to explore together. A desire to be seen as politically correct, the fear of causing offence or of being misunderstood, or simply coming across as irrational or out of touch with reality can create powerful barriers. In addition, we lack the language and experience to discuss spiritual themes across diverse perspectives, and there are few arenas in which we can do so.

Yet I believe it is vitally important that we do, and that our profession is poorer without them. My experience of running a number of events throughout 2011 shows that when we create safe and open environments, we gain ease in our own personal expression, a greater enthusiasm to learn from different perspectives, and renewed in our sense of personal purpose and contribution.

We need, however to move beyond the feel-good factor of spirituality, and dialogue with greater maturity and sense of purpose. Holding a spiritual perspective in our work shouldn't merely be part of personal branding, it needs to connect with where it's really needed and support both sustainable and transformational changes in ourselves, our clients and beyond. We need to build a better understanding of how to apply spiritual practices and perspectives and how we therefore manage expectations with clients about our way of working. We also need to develop an understanding of where the pitfalls are, and what ‘shadow’ elements to be watchful for, such as pride and the desire to control and exert power over others.

There are also implications for how we run coach development programmes, how we supervise, and how we evaluate coaches. Commonly, novice coaches are introduced to coaching via a fixed set of tools and processes which they learn to abandon at later stages in their development. Yet increasingly I encounter individuals who from the outset yearn for more emotionally and spiritually intelligent approaches, and who only later want to develop processes to contain their chosen approaches. Coach development programmes need to reflect the emotional and spiritual maturity of the individual by being more organic, person centred and self-directed.

Finally, spirituality encompasses sets of multi-faceted and interlinked principles, and each individual will have their preferred starting point. Yet it is vital that our spiritual expression is neither solely concerned with the personal experience and practice, nor solely concerned with purpose and agency in the world. Each of these two sides is diminished without the other. On the one hand, a purely individualistic spirituality becomes self-absorbed and irrelevant, whilst a purely service oriented spirituality can become dogmatic and sterile. Our journeys need eventually to encompass both practice *and* purpose elements. By doing so, we are able to increasingly bring a presence which is concerned with meeting the needs of the future whilst being compassionate and connected to ourselves and our clients.

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The Siren Call of the Powerful Question

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Abstract

The article reflects on the compelling attraction of powerful questions for coaches. The notion that questions are powerful in themselves and can be borrowed from lists of examples is a fallacy. Questions gain their power in the context of the coach's connection to the client's reality. They depend on foundational work that includes a process that gives structure and direction to questions, other coaching skills, particularly listening that give depth to questions and self-management that keeps the focus on the client's concerns. "Powerful" may indeed be less important than "effective" as a goal of questioning.

Keywords

coaching skills, powerful questions, training coaches, coaching technique, use of self

A student coach returned to class full of excitement after her first session with her mentor coach. "She asks such powerful questions!" she said. Other members leaned forward with great expectation, "What were they?" At first she could not remember, but after some thought came up with one or two – something like "Where do you see yourself taking your coaching?" The group leaned back, disappointed. The questions were quite ordinary; in fact they seemed weak.

These student coaches were not unusual in their eagerness to learn technique. Powerful questions are a siren call seducing coaches with the promise of great influence. Preoccupation with questions is a common phenomenon, particularly with coaches in early career. It is as if they could ask powerful questions, they would have arrived as a coach. Although the details of the International Coach Federation (ICF 2012) competency, "powerful questioning", are laid out in the context of the total process, its use of the term itself lends credence to the idea that the power of coaching resides in questions. This is reinforced in popular coaching literature where powerful questions have been characterized as the "single most important skill in coaching"

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(Stoltzfus, 2008) and "the essence of great coaching" (Grall, 2012). Three recent books (Stoltzfus, 2008, Reardon, 2010, Belf, 2011) are dedicated to coaching questions and include lists of examples. Stoltzfus (2008) lists over 1000. An internet search on "powerful questions coaching" returns several pages of documents providing lists for the coach. Whitworth et al. (1998) devote nine pages to powerful questions.

Here is a small sample:

What if that doesn't work?
What do you think is best?
What seems to confuse you?
How does that fit into your values?
What are your other options?
How do you want it to be?
What else?
If you had free choice in the matter what would you do?

Lists such as this may be useful to get trainee coaches started; but, they cannot provide questions that have a consistent, universal power. Any of those questions could become ineffective with overuse or misjudgment. There is, however, some basis for the preoccupation with questions. They can cut right through to the central issue. They can bring about a leap in awareness. They can provoke, challenge and energize the client. They can dispel confusion. These are all qualities that we want for our coaching. But how do we do it? What is it that makes a question powerful?

The Nature of Questions

Our starting point is to adopt a sociological perspective (Berger, 1963) and the assumption that the client's experience of the world is different to that of the coach. This has important implications for coaching. It gives meaning to such concepts as the client's independence and agency, active listening and empathizing, client motivation, and the individual's potential to construct his or her social reality. This way of thinking encourages a client-centered approach. We enter into their worlds with sensitivity so that we develop a better appreciation of the whole person. From this position we are more able to avoid imposing our ideas or developing plans and actions that are not grounded in the "who" of the client with all the attendant risk to motivation and the client's sense of autonomy.

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Within this context we understand that questions originate in the mind of the coach and are prone to carrying implicit assumptions or theories about the client's situation. Such theories may be shared by the client, or may be new to the client. For example, "What are your next steps?" is grounded in a planning model that is likely to be commonplace to both. "What is the fear that is stopping you?" may introduce a new framework – that impasses result from unconscious wishes counterbalanced by unconscious fears (Stock-Whitaker, 2001). With either question, we interject our own world view. This world is embedded in the question and, therefore, not readily available for inspection. Add to this the fact that questions are a powerful tool for directing a discussion. Skillful interviewers in television or radio clearly illustrate how questions can influence both **what** a person talks about and **how** the conversation proceeds. If we are not cognizant of the influence we wield with our questions, our world can take over.

Powerful Coaching not Powerful Questions

Questions are seductive. A large part of their appeal lies in the fact that they are a tangible activity. The coach is demonstrably "doing something" and presumably something of value, which can be rewarding to the coach not yet confident in the inherent power of coaching. This sense of an active contribution puts questions into the foreground, and powerful questions are the gold standard. However, the power does not reside in the question itself. It lies elsewhere.

That elsewhere is in the more intangible, background activities that on the surface may seem unrelated to the questions themselves. It rests within the relationship with the client and the unfolding understanding of the client's concerns. As coaches become more experienced, they realize that a more comprehensive approach is called for. This approach relies on the hard work of mastering a purposeful coaching process[1], developing all the skills of coaching, and managing their own reactivity (O'Neill, 2007). Our questions depend on these three elements for their relevance and effectiveness.

[1] We describe coaching as a contracted, strategic planning process that helps clients attain desired outcomes that align with their strengths, values and motivations. The model provides a framework of contracting, discovery, vision, goal-setting and planning, action and review to guide the coach (Nichol & Nichol, 2011).

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Coaching aims to help clients realize their ambitions in alignment with the essence of who they are. A purposeful process creates an environment for purposeful questions that facilitate this enterprise. It gives structure and direction without which the conversation becomes more like one between two friends – satisfying to be sure, but not necessarily enabling change. The process provides a framework in which the client establishes intentions, articulates desired outcomes, develops plans, and establishes a system of accountability. It forms a structure for questions that challenge the client to grow in awareness of possibilities, obstacles, desires and motivation.

Within this framework we use our coaching skills, of which questioning is one. The other skills, attending, listening, and empathetic understanding, fall into a hierarchical order that form the foundation for good questions (Figure 1). If we do not attend, if we are distracted by our own concerns, it is difficult for us to listen. If we do not listen, we cannot gain an empathetic understanding of the person. Without an empathetic understanding, we do not enter the client's world. Without this grounding, questions risk being more relevant to our world than the client's and our attention is more focused on ourselves and our performance.

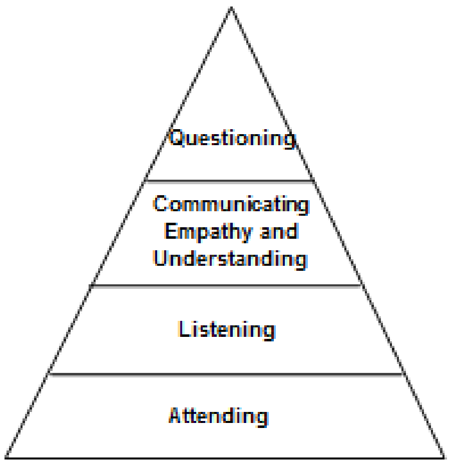

Figure 1. The Hierarchical Relationship of Coaching Skills

A different mind-set is called for. Questions are a manifestation of other work. It is not the question, but the listening that is powerful. Listening provides us with the content of our questioning. If our listening is shallow, or our attention on ourselves, our questions will reflect this. If, on the other hand we listen to all aspects of what the person is communicating – unconscious meaning, energy, assumptions, language, values – our questions are more likely to be based in the essence of the client's experience. It is from the power of our listening that our questions derive their force.

Having said that, it is difficult for a poorly crafted question to be powerful. Technique is not the key to the power of a question, but it can make for a good one. There is a body of knowledge on asking effective questions that are clear and concise and that move clients forward. Two of many resources are the Coach U training handbook (Coach U, 2005) and Nichol & Nichol (2011). Table 1 outlines a set of guidelines to help newer coaches sharpen their questioning skills,

Poor questions also arise from insecurity and reactivity. No matter what our level of experience, our needs, feelings, and impulses are always present and can undermine our best efforts. Clients often bring difficult problems or distressing experiences to coaching, which can raise our anxiety. If that anxiety is not contained, we may shift the conversation to a more comfortable place where we feel in control.

Our listening can get hijacked by an impulse to "help". Questions can be driven by our reactive desire to "fix" things. For instance, a client wants to work on negative self-talk and admits to deep feelings of inadequacy. Alarmed by these feelings, the coach directs the conversation instead toward ways to make the client feel better. Or, the client is at an impasse and can see no way forward. The coach, equally stumped, avoids the discomfort of "not knowing" with "What can be done about it?" Anxiety – especially the coach's – may be reduced, but the coach loses sight of the client's ultimate desires, and questions miss the mark.

All this requires self-management, perhaps the most difficult task we coaches face. When we manage ourselves effectively, we learn our patterns of reactivity (O'Neill, 2007), catch ourselves when we slip into a reactive state, and self-correct. We notice our gut reactions, our opinions and judgments and their impact on our coaching, and we make decisions about how to deal with them. This awareness increases the likelihood that questions are not misdirected by reactivity (Nichol & Nichol, 2011)

Ultimately, the task is to enter clients' worlds and hold conversations that align with their ambitions. These three elements – a purposeful process, powerful listening, and self-management – support our questions with structure, understanding and a minimum of confusion with our own needs and wishes. The power of coaching in this manner transcends the question themselves.

Indeed, powerful questions may be an inappropriate term for what we do as coaches. It summons up an image of a journalist trying to throw a politician off guard to discover the truth or of a macho coach in a combative corporate culture. But is most coaching like this? Rather than powerful, are not effective questions the goal? This change of perspective serves both our clients and ourselves. It leads us to appreciate that much good coaching happens without special drama. Profound insight is not a requirement. Inspiration comes in small doses as well as revelations. Indeed, if we seek to inspire rather than to understand, it is unlikely to happen. If we try to ask a powerful question, we probably won't.

Within this framework, we are no longer distracted by the sirens, but become the helmsmen, using the rudder and the sails to work in harmony with the force that drives coaching – the client. Our questions flow from our listening and the quality of our relationship. Sometimes they may cause the client to inspect assumptions, create a leap in awareness, dispel confusion and bring new energy. They may however, simply shift the perspective by a margin. The cumulative effect can be powerful.

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Table 1.
Some Guidelines for Effective Questions

Process:

- Set a clear agreement with clients about achievable goals for the session and check periodically that you are on track. This gives direction and purpose to your questions.
- Have clients identify desired outcomes (the vision) for their coaching projects before you ask about action steps. This brings relevance to questions.

Skills:

- Listen for and ask questions about the "who" (the person) as well as the "what" (the goals). It is the person who makes the difference in what the goals are and whether they are achieved.
- Be succinct and ask one question at a time. Stacking questions can dilute their impact and confuse clients. If you find yourself asking a string of questions, call a timeout to get yourself clear.
- Use open and closed questions with intent. Both have their place. Open questions encourage exploration, but they can carry assumptions – e.g. "What have you learned?" Closed questions carry fewer assumptions and clarify understanding. Avoid the common error of asking closed questions when your intent is to explore: "Do you have any thoughts about…?"
- Avoid "why". Such questions can lead to explanation rather than exploration, and may carry a persecutory tone. Translate the "why" into "what" and "how".
- If you have a suggestion to make, make it. Don't couch it as a question - "Have you thought about……?" This is indirect and leading.
- Ask questions that move the client forward. Questions like "What have you tried so far?" are often used to launch the conversation. By doing this you start at the tactical level, and you take clients into what they already know. How much stronger to ask a strategic question: "What do you want to achieve ultimately?" or to leave things open with "Where would you like to start?"

Self-Management

- Notice your gut reactions. What do you do when you feel anxious? Often the reaction is move to action steps to gain a sense of control and reduce anxiety. Strive to stay client- centered and strategic. Ask "What do you want?" rather than "What can you do about it?"
- Do you have a favorite question? Inspect it carefully. Much-used questions like "What have you tried so far?" may serve you more than the client. At the least they may not be spontaneous or appropriate. Focus on listening, and respond to what you hear.

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About the authors

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Running a Successful Coaching and Mentoring Business, Legally Speaking

Mike Taylor, The RBP Group, UK

Abstract

Significant commercial risks are incurred by Coaches, Mentors and their clients in the work they do. In an increasingly litigious world those risks could have a material impact on business success. Legal contracting was the final gap in setting standards and professionalising the Coaching and Mentoring industry and this article sets out EMCC UK's purpose built industry standard legal Agreement to close that gap. The article also explains how the Agreement makes legal discussions much easier for both parties' benefit from the outset of new client relationships.

Keywords

coaching agreement, mentoring agreement, EMCC

Let's start with a question for experienced Coaches, Mentors and their organisational clients:

"How many of us discuss the legal aspects, or the risks we run, when agreeing how we'll work together?"

The answer is very few. Yet both parties run significant commercial risks which could have a material impact on business success.

Legal contracting was the final gap in setting standards and professionalising the Coaching and Mentoring industry. EMCC UK's industry standard legal Agreement closes that gap and simplifies legal discussions for both parties' benefit at the outset of new relationships.

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Why does the market need an industry standard Agreement?

Some organisations and Coach/Mentors have fit for purpose contracts that work effectively for both parties, but these are few and far between. Common market practice today often lies at one of two extremes:

(i) no written contract;

(ii) long (> 25 pages) "Standard Supplier Agreements" mandated by Procurement departments.

If there is no written contract, an implied contract still exists: what has been agreed orally forms the basis of a contract. On first glance, that might seem acceptable but, in the absence of a written document, the details are subject to interpretation and ambiguity.

For example:

For the Coach/Mentor:

- What will be the payment terms, and the consequences of late payment?
- Who owns the "know how" which coaches/mentors bring
- *Critically*, what's the maximum I might have to pay if the client decided to sue me?

For the Organisational client:

- What is confidential information, and the consequence of a confidentiality breach?
- Who owns any written materials we pay for?
- How can we be assured that the Coach / Mentor has the skills, expertise and experience and is operating to best-in-class standards?

A long "Standard Supplier Agreement" can include terms and conditions which don't reflect the nature of the service being provided or sought. Procurement departments like similar contracts to keep their portfolio of Agreements standardised. But an agreement designed for IT services, for example, will be very different to an agreement for coaching/mentoring.

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Making legal matters much easier to discuss

Legal formalities today are unfamiliar for many coach/mentors. Discussions on them can feel uncomfortable as, in relationship building terms, they can imply a lack of trust at the outset of coaching/mentoring.

Perhaps surprisingly, legal matters also conjure the same feelings for many HR/L&D professionals who are inexperienced / untrained in commercial documentation. Even when Procurement departments are involved, they may be unfamiliar with Coaching/Mentoring.

Yet legal topics can and should be addressed simply up front, setting a strong foundation for mutual future success.

Having a market standard document makes that much easier to do. Complex legal points have already been negotiated by market practitioners and client representatives, leaving users free to personalise the document simply for their own use.

Who created the industry standard Agreement?

EMCC UK led the project together with The Institute of Consulting ("IC"). Legal advice and support was provided by European law firm Osborne Clarke; and the roles of Buyer and Service Provider were covered separately by experienced senior practitioners.

Much debate and challenge within the Project team recognised the nature of the Coaching/Mentoring service. All acknowledged that a balanced Agreement which works for buyer and seller was critical to the document's ultimate acceptance in the market.

A Market Test gathered the views of Coaches, clients and other interested parties, and adjustments were made accordingly. Market feedback also confirmed that this initiative is much appreciated by the industry. Several large private and public sector organisational clients are already using it.

The Agreement is available free to EMCC and IC members as a benefit of membership.

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The Agreement and how to use it

The standard Agreement is set out on the following pages. The Agreement, Frequently Asked Questions and a "How to Use" Note are provided on the EMCC website in the UK members section at
http://www.emccouncil.org/uk/en/membership/coaching_agreement.

In summary

The Agreement contains many clauses which are fairly standard legal terms and conditions, although both parties have the right to re-negotiate any clause they wish. The Coach/Mentor and client need to customise the document. The relevant sections have been highlighted by using square brackets [ ]. Wherever [square brackets] appear, the words should be replaced with agreed alternative words / figures.
Three versions of the standard Agreement have been produced, one for each of the different structures a Coach/ Mentor might be working under:

i) a Coaching Company
ii) an independent Coach/Mentor
iii) Coaches/Mentors working together in a formal partnership.

The Agreement shown as the appendix is that of a Coaching Company.

In Conclusion

Nothing like this exists in the market today. The market standard Agreement makes it easier for both parties to discuss legal / commercial issues at the outset of new relationships. And as this will reduce the often unspoken risks on key topics, it will provide solid foundations for commercial success and better business for all.

About the author

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Commercial Coaching Agreement

between **A Coaching Company**

and its **Organisational Customer**

This market standard document** was prepared
with legal advice and support from international law firm

and has been endorsed by

** Members of EMCC / IC will provide the Customer with the standard version of this Agreement on request.
Any amendment to that standard version should be noted and agreed between the parties.

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AGREEMENT FOR SERVICES

This Services Agreement (the "**Agreement**"), signed on [date], is made and entered into by and between the following "**Parties**":

(1) [ABC UK Limited] (the "Customer")
[Address]

(2) [Coaching Co Limited] (the "Coaching Company")
[Address]

The Parties agree as follows:

1. Term

This Agreement shall commence on [date] and continue for a period of twelve (12) months, unless terminated earlier in accordance with the terms of this Agreement.

2. Services

2.1 The Coaching Company shall provide for the Customer the services ("Services") specified in one or more Statements of Work signed by both Parties, each of which will be attached and form part of this Agreement.

2.2 The Coaching Company shall specify those personnel ("Coach") to provide the Services and the Customer shall specify the recipients ("Coachee") or the number of recipients of such services in the Statement of Work. The Coachee(s) will be employees of the Customer, unless otherwise agreed. The Customer shall appoint a sponsor to act as the central point of contact for the Customer.

2.3 The Coach does not require access to any of the Customer's computer systems to perform the Services.

2.4 The Coach will be an employee of the Coaching Company, unless agreed in writing by the Parties. The Coaching Company will request prior agreement from the Customer to use Associates ("Associates" means contractors used by the Coaching Company to perform the Services on its behalf), such agreement not to be unreasonably withheld.

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3. Time Schedule

3.1 The Coaching Company and Customer shall cooperate reasonably to enable the Coach to perform the Services according to the dates of performance and delivery ("Time Schedule") contained in the Statement of Work(s).

4. On-Site Terms

4.1 If the Coaching Company shall provide Services on the Customer's premises, it agrees to comply with all Customer policies (such as the on-site health and safety, environmental, diversity or security terms) as are brought to its attention prior to commencement of such Services.

5. Consideration

5.1 The Coaching Company will provide the Customer with an invoice each month for amounts due per the fee schedule contained in the Statement of Work ("Fees and Expenses"), subject to the successful completion of the relevant Deliverables in the Statement of Work;

5.2 All amounts shall be exclusive of Value Added Tax. The Customer shall pay the Value Added Tax on the amounts at the rate and in the manner prescribed by law from time to time;

5.3 Invoices shall include the amount of pre-approved and documented (by receipts): (1) travel expenses (2) living expenses and (3) related out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the Coach in the performance of the Services which are reasonably and necessarily incurred and shall separately state any delivery charges and taxes;

5.4 Both Parties recognise the potential impact on the Coaching Company's business of meetings cancelled or postponed at short notice. The Coach will maintain close dialogue with the Coachee, and offer flexibility when it comes to changes at short notice, accepting that urgent business issues do arise. However, where a scheduled meeting is cancelled or postponed by the Customer or the Coachee, cancellation/postponement fees will be payable as follows:

> [a] days notice – no charge; between [a] and [b] days notice – 50% of the applicable fee, as defined in the Statement of Work; < [b] days notice – 100% of the applicable fee.

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6. Payment Terms

6.1 Payment terms for undisputed charges shall be thirty (30) days from Customer's receipt of each invoice;

6.2 If any invoice for the Services is disputed in part or in whole by the Customer, the Customer will notify the Coaching Company within ten (10) working days of the Customer receiving such invoice, and the Parties will work in good faith to resolve the dispute in a reasonable and timely manner;

6.3 The Customer and the Coaching Company agree that any cost element(s) not disputed by the Customer shall be paid prior to the disputed element(s) being resolved;

6.4 Interest on late payments will accrue daily from the date the payment becomes late at 2% above the base rate of Nat West Bank or another Bank to be agreed in advance between the Parties. Interest will not be payable on any disputed invoice or disputed element(s) of the invoice.

7. Intellectual Property

7.1 The Coaching Company shall retain ownership of all intellectual property owned or used by the Coaching Company prior to the date of this Agreement. All reports, manuals and documentation, as specified in the Statement of Work, prepared specifically by the Coaching Company for the Customer while performing the Services shall belong to the Customer. The Coaching Company assigns irrevocably and unconditionally to the Customer all intellectual property rights in such reports, manuals and documentation with full title guarantee.

8. Confidential Information and Confidential Materials

8.1 Both parties shall keep confidential all confidential or secret information belonging to the other, ("Confidential Information") which means information, however it is conveyed, that relates to the business, trade secrets, know-how and personnel of the Customer and the Coaching Company, including intellectual property rights, together with all information derived from the above, and any other information clearly designated as being confidential or which ought reasonably to be considered to be confidential;

8.2 Both parties also agree that the content of the Coaching Sessions between the Coach and Coachee shall remain confidential between those two people. Neither the Coaching Company nor the Customer or other employees shall be entitled to that information unless all parties agree;

8.3 The provisions of Clause 8.1 and 8.2 shall not apply to the extent that any such Confidential information:

(a) Is or becomes public knowledge other than by breach of Clause 8.1; or

(b) Is in the possession of the recipient without restriction in relation to disclosure before the date of receipt from the disclosing party; or

(c) Is received from a third party who lawfully acquired it and who is under no obligation restricting its disclosure; or

(d) Must be disclosed pursuant to a statutory, legal or parliamentary obligation placed upon the party making the disclosure, including any requirements for disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

9. Limitation of Liability and Indemnity

9.1 Limitation of Liability

EXCEPT IN RESPECT OF LIABILITY WHICH CANNOT BE EXCLUDED OR LIMITED BY LAW, NEITHER PARTY SHALL BE LIABLE FOR ANY INDIRECT, SPECIAL, INCIDENTAL, OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES, OR FOR ANY LOSS OF REVENUE, PROFITS, USE, DATA, GOODWILL OR BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES, ARISING FROM THE PERFORMANCE OR NONPERFORMANCE OF THIS AGREEMENT. WITH RESPECT TO EACH STATEMENT OF WORK EXCEPT IN RELATION TO CLAUSES 8 AND 9.2, IN NO EVENT SHALL EITHER PARTY BE LIABLE TO THE OTHER FOR AGGREGATE DAMAGES IN EXCESS OF THE FEES PAYABLE TO THE COACHING COMPANY AS DESCRIBED IN SUCH STATEMENT OF WORK;

9.2 Intellectual Property Rights Indemnity

(a) The Coaching Company agrees to indemnify the Customer against any damages finally awarded against the Customer incurred by reason of the Services infringing third party intellectual property rights;

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(b) The Customer agrees to indemnify the Coaching Company against any damages finally awarded against the Coaching Company incurred by reason of any tools, materials or software provided by the Customer infringing any third party intellectual property rights;

(c) In relation to (a) and (b) above, the indemnified party must notify the other promptly of any alleged claim, permit the other to conduct or settle any such claim proceedings and/or to modify the infringing intellectual property and shall not make any statement that may be prejudicial to the defence or settlement of the claim.

10. Professional Standards

10.1 The Coaching Company will perform the services in accordance with this Agreement and all Statements of Work and any changes which are agreed upon in writing by the Coaching Company and the Customer;

10.2 The Coaching Company warrants that its Coaches have the necessary qualifications, ability and expertise to provide the Services and will ensure that the Coach performs the Services in a professional manner and, in particular:

(a) being a member of a recognised coaching / mentoring professional body (such as the European Mentoring and Coaching Council ("EMCC"));

(b) to professional standards as laid down by the professional body;

(c) in accordance with the professional body's Code of Ethics, Diversity Policy and Guidelines for Supervision; and

(d) complying with the professional body's Complaints and Disciplinary Process.

In the case of EMCC, the above may be viewed at www.emccouncil.org.

11. Termination

11.1 Either party may terminate this Agreement or a Statement of Work by giving the other party thirty (30) days written notice. The Coaching Company shall be entitled to submit an invoice for all elements of the

Services performed or which would have been performed prior to the expiry of the thirty (30) day notice period;

11.2 In the event of early termination of the Agreement, the Coaching Company and the Customer will during the notice period try to agree how best to complete, cancel or modify any unfinished Statements of Work, recognising the nature of the services being provided to the Coachee;

11.3 If either party breaches this Agreement and fails to cure such breach within ten (10) working days of receiving written notice of the breach from the non-breaching party, then the non-breaching party may, at its option, terminate this Agreement, or the relevant Statement of Work by providing written notice of termination to the breaching party, with immediate effect.

12.Force Majeure

12.1 Neither party shall be deemed to be in breach or default of this Agreement as the result of any delay or non-performance which is caused by an event which is outside its reasonable control, such as acts of God, riots, war or armed conflict, acts of terrorism, fire, flood, storm or earthquake, or disaster;

12.2 If either the Coaching Company or Customer reasonably considers a force majeure event to have occurred, which affects the delivery or receipt of some or all of the Services, the Party claiming such event shall immediately give the other Party written notice of the event, including details of the event, its potential effect on the Services, and any action(s) it proposes to take;

12.3 The Parties will work together reasonably to reduce the effect of a force majeure event. If that event continues for more than 30 days, either party may terminate any Services outstanding in accordance with Clause 11.1.

13.Independent Contractors; Compliance with Laws

13.1 Nothing in this Agreement shall make the Coaching Company and Customer partners, joint venturers, or otherwise associated in or with the business of the other. The Coaching Company is and shall always remain an independent contractor.

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14. No Solicitation and No Hire

14.2 The Coaching Company and Customer agree not to solicit (other than by general advertisement), or hire, any employee of the other on behalf of itself or another company during any project and for a period of one year after the termination of this Agreement.

15. Responsibility for Associates/Subcontractors

15.1 The Coaching Company is solely responsible and liable for the actions of all and any Coaches performing work pursuant to this Agreement for the supervision, daily direction and control, payment of salary (including the withholding of income taxes and social security) or fees and other related benefits of those personnel.

16. Insurance

16.1 The Coaching Company shall maintain, at its expense, Professional Indemnity insurance sufficient to cover all of its obligations under this Agreement in a minimum amount of £1,000,000 aggregate coverage per policy year;

16.2 The Coaching Company shall hold Employer's Liability and Public Liability Insurance in respect of its employees in accordance with any legal requirement for the time being in force.

17. Notices

17.1 All notices provided for in this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be sent to the parties, by either registered or certified mail or email, return receipt requested, at the addresses set out below):

If to Customer:	If to:
[ABC UK Ltd] [Address]	[Coaching Co] Limited [Address]

[email address] [email address]

18. Severability

If any provision of this Agreement is held invalid, illegal or unenforceable for any reason, such provision shall be severed and the remainder of the provisions of this Agreement shall continue in full force and effect as if this Agreement had been executed with the invalid provision eliminated.

19. Assignment

Neither party shall assign this Agreement, without the written agreement of the other party, such agreement not to be unreasonably withheld.

20. Entire Agreement

This Agreement (including each Statement of Work) sets out the entire agreement and understanding between the parties and supersedes all prior agreements, understandings or arrangements (whichever oral or written) relating to this Agreement.

21. Variation

Any changes to the terms of this Agreement are to be agreed in writing and signed by both parties.

22. Publicity

Neither party may make any public announcement in writing or otherwise concerning this Agreement without the prior written consent of the other, not to be unreasonably withheld.

23. Survival

The provisions of Clauses 6-9, 11-18, 20, and 22-24 shall survive the expiry of termination of this Agreement.

24. Governing Law and Forum

This Agreement shall be construed in accordance with and be governed by the laws of England.

[Coaching Co] Limited		**[ABC UK] Limited (Customer)**	
By:	______________________	By:	______________________
Name:	______________________	Name:	______________________
Title:	______________________	Title:	______________________
Date:	______________________	Date:	______________________

APPENDIX A STATEMENT OF WORK

This Statement of Work is in accordance with an Agreement to provide Services dated [date] between [ABC UK Limited] and [Coaching Co] Limited.

Name of Coach(es): (1)________________________(2)______________________

Name (or number) of Coachee(s): (1)____________________________________

(2)____________________________________

Name of Sponsor: (1)____________________________________

Description of Service to be provided:

Coaching to cover: (specific Objectives) and how the service is to be delivered (eg face-face, tel, e-mail)

____

____

Deliverables:

Set out the specifics of the Services to be delivered, and how the benefits will be measured

____

____

Time Schedule:

Session 1

Session 2 ____and so on

Fees and Expenses: (including Payment Schedule)

____

Other Relevant issues:

NB Any changes to this Statement of Work are to be agreed between the parties in writing.

[Coaching Co] Limited

By: __________________________

Name: __________________________

Title: __________________________

Date: __________________________

[ABC UK Limited] (Customer)

By: __________________________

Name: __________________________

Title: __________________________

Date: __________________________

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Professional Section. Cases of Practice

Collaboration in Practice with Co-Facilitated Group Coaching Supervision: What Could You Learn from Hearing Our Story?

Carol Whitaker and Michelle Lucas, Collaborative Coaching Supervision, UK

Abstract
This case study outlines how two coach supervisors collaborated to develop an approach to group supervision. It tracks their emergent and developmental journey and demonstrates how their learning evolved and how this helped them develop their unique style of coaching supervision. They believe their approach offers particular additional value to supervisees as they use the two supervisors to ensure that both the supervision content and the group processes are fully attended to.

Keywords
group supervision, coaching and mentoring supervision, collaboration, co-facilitation

If you were offered the opportunity to take part in a group supervision experience managed by two supervisors – what would you think? Would you expect it to be double the price? Would you suspect that neither felt confident to run the group independently? Would you be worried that the two supervisors would dominate the group? Or would you recognise the exponential complexity that arrives when you put two emergent systems together, group dynamics and coaching supervision, and be glad that two people were managing it?

What do we mean by Coaching Supervision ?

Let's start by considering what we are talking about here. The literature offers a number of definitions; (we choose some here emphasizing in italics the elements which feel particularly pertinent)

- ”the formal process of professional support, which ensures ***continuing development of the coach*** and effectiveness of his/her coaching practice ***through interactive reflection, interpretative evaluation and the sharing of experience***.“ (Bachkirova et al., 2005)
- ”The process by which a coach, with the help of a supervisor, ***can attend to understanding better both the client and their wider system and***

themselves a part of the client-coach system, and by doing so, transform their work and develop their craft." (Hawkins & Smith, 2006).

- "Supervision is a working alliance between two professionals, where coaches offer an account of their work, reflect on it, receive feedback and receive guidance if appropriate. The object of this alliance is to enable the coach to gain in ethical competency, confidence and creativity ***so as to give the best possible service to clients."*** (Carroll, 1996 adapted from Proctor)

A recognised benefit of Coaching Supervision is supporting the coach to develop their skills but "developmental" is only one of three functions that we aim to provide in our supervision. According to Proctor (1988) who calls the developmental function "formative", supervision also encompasses "restorative" (which is all about equipping the coach to be in "good shape" for their clients), as well as "normative" functions (which is where managing ethical dilemmas comes in).

If supervision is a collaborative venture you might wonder why it needs to be done by a trained coaching supervisor – won't a peer do? However, Coaching Supervision is more than just "coaching the coach". It takes a different set of skills, which actually puts the ultimate client as the focal point of the work – not the coach themselves. We work with the 7-eyed model developed by Hawkins & Smith (2006), which demonstrates the complexity of the systems at work in supervision. For those of you new to this model, take a look at the diagram which was adapted from Hawkins & Smith (2006).

From this you will see that we are concerned with more than what the coach did with their client, which is covered by "eye two". The diagram also highlights that coaching doesn't operate cleanly. "Eye one" (the client) and "eye four" (the coach) illustrates that when we enter the room, we come with all our history and experiences to date. Inevitably only a small amount of this will be truly known and shared between us, we will naturally make many assumptions about our client and they will be doing just the same about us.

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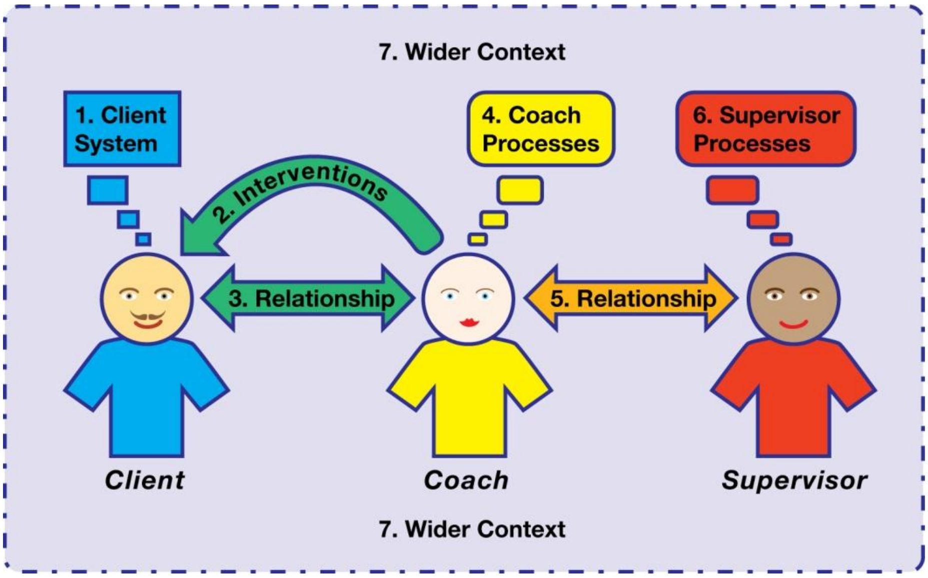

Figure 1. 7-eyed Model of Supervision (adapted from Hawkins & Smith, 2006)

As we begin to work together, our relationship will progress and this is represented in "eye three". Of course there are many factors that impact upon the success of the coaching relationship outside of the interpersonal dynamic between the two people. "Eye seven" reminds us about the wider context. For example this could be an authoritarian organisational culture shaping the client's view about responsibility.

The remaining two eyes are where supervision really starts to add value. "Eye six" reminds us that like the coach and the client, the supervisor doesn't come in "clean". Clearly the supervisor needs considerable experience to manage this to ensure it does not get in the way of the work. And yet, when we consider the "normative" role of a supervisor it highlights that we need to know how to bring our past and present experience to bear for the coach. Knowing where our "stuff" comes from and when we can use it in service of the ultimate client is one of most sensitive judgements a supervisor must make.

Perhaps the most fascinating eye, is "eye five", the parallel process, where by using our insight and our "here and now" experience, we tap into clues about what might have been going on in the coaching session. With so much going on at any one time, you can perhaps see why we believe it is a space that needs to be entered into carefully and which can benefit from professional facilitation.

What is different about individual and group supervision?

Coaches have a choice of different types of supervision. In our experience, one-to-one supervision with a professional and paid supervisor is the most common. However, in addition many coaches engage in unpaid peer one-to-one supervision. Group supervision, run by professional supervisors is less typical – with many only experiencing group supervision during training or through reflective practice support groups. The exception is internal coaches, because organisations tend to bring them together to be supervised, making both financial and knowledge management sense. It is our view that peer supervision is a valid ingredient of reflective practice, however, professionally facilitated supervision is the only way to safeguard against collusion in the peer relationship.

Individual and group supervision can complement each other; typically individual supervision breeds depth and group supervision breeds breadth. In addition, one constant finding amongst our groups is the sense of community that working with like-minded peers brings. A common reaction once a case has been aired is “it’s not just me then!”. As coaches we can sometime suffer a professional loneliness, no one is in the room when you work so how do we reassure ourselves of what we “should” or “shouldn’t” have done? Independent coaches and internal coaches who are geographically spread, therefore have to be active in finding support. We have witnessed that group supervision quickly creates a sense of belonging with our fellow coaches. This is definitely “restorative” in nature, but more than that it creates a sense of connection rarely found elsewhere.

One potential downside of group supervision is having a shorter amount of time to focus on each individual case and we were concerned about that initially. However, our participants tell us that they derive great value from listening and contributing to other coach’s work.

Finally, the key difference between individual and group supervision is the number of variables that have to be managed. On top of the complexity of the supervision process described above, there are group dynamics to consider as well. Handled well, surfacing group dynamics can add to the learning, handled poorly and you run the risk that the group is no longer a safe place in which to work.

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So what is our journey?

Here is our story, “warts and all”, because we know greater reflection will come in writing about it. We hope it will prompt you to reflect on how you are “learning by doing” and that it offers “pause for thought” about your own supervision experiences.

It would be elegant if we could claim that we fully understood the advantage of having two supervisors manage a group coaching supervision session before we embarked on our journey. The truth, in sympathy with many of our coaching experiences, was that we simply followed our hunch that two supervisors collaborating with a group in supervision would be a good thing to try and we have been learning about that hunch ever since.

Where did we start?

Our aim was to have a group of 8 -12 coaches come together on a bi-monthly basis to review their practice. The session was to be divided between a “case review” section and a broader continuing professional development (CPD) discussion. With two supervisors it would allow the supervisees to be split into two groups of up to 6 to provide a sense of intimacy for case reviews. We could then come together to maximise the sharing of knowledge for the CPD discussion as a whole group.

Problem or an opportunity?

Our first challenge was to grow the group to an optimal size so that we could guarantee it would run every two months and still allow people flexibility when faced with competing work commitments. In our first 6 months we established a group in Oxford and another in London and achieved a fairly steady attendance of 4 to 6 coaches. With lower numbers than we anticipated both of us were doing the case reviews with the whole group. With that “extra pair of hands” available – we wondered how best to make use of them.

Realising that we were leading by example …

Our first approach was simply to take turns in facilitating the case reviews – with the “spare” supervisor sitting within the circle and offering additional observations. Whilst each supervisor has been trained by the same organisation, we have different styles, due to our differing backgrounds and personalities. What we have in common is a real respect for each other’s ideas and an openness to explore them, in the moment, and in front of our supervisees. Unwittingly this seemed to lead to our first “Unique Selling

Point" (USP) – that of modelling collaboration in real time. This echoes the work of Lencioni (2002) who would suggest that leaders need to take the first risk, and that modelling vulnerability helps create a sense of trust in the team. The knock on impact for our groups, which are rarely static, was that they felt safe very quickly. Participants start to voice not just niceties to their peers but what is genuinely going on for them in the moment.

Benefiting from reciprocal feedback…

Listening to the other supervisor facilitate the group when taking a "seat" as a supervisee (although we never worked on our own cases) gave us a fantastic opportunity to provide each other with developmental feedback. Sharing a train journey back from a session was an opportunity to do a reflective review whilst things were still fresh in our mind. Interestingly, there can be no denying the feedback from a colleague where we know their primary interest is the continued success of a joint venture. Sometimes we were defensive and needed more time to digest. However, our paths crossed frequently and so we found ourselves revisiting our thoughts and experiences until we could make sense of them. This is consistent with Pfeiffer and Jones (2009) comments about the opportunity for professional growth amongst co-facilitators.

Recognising the impact of two co-existing and complex systems…

We started to notice the group dynamics that were playing out in the room as we worked and yet also noticed that we sometimes struggled to bring them into the session. With a desire to continuously improve our skills we have subsequently attended a 2-day experiential course on group dynamics run by the Gestalt Centre. We learned much about working together and look forward to honing these skills still further in future.

Sharing responsibility for managing the group dynamics …

Later, when doing a demonstration for an existing CPD group – we paused the group after each case review to get feedback from the "audience". What was fascinating about this was how different the observations from people outside of the group were. This prompted a further option for working with a real supervision group. With larger numbers, placing some participants outside of the group could help increase their awareness of the group dynamics. This could be a helpful step in enabling them to consider what is occurring in the group dynamics when they are within the circle.

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Being on the outside and looking in …

More learning occurred as we prepared for a group session of 4 participants, when we came up with an alternative use of the 2nd supervisor. What if one of us sat outside of the circle and worked with Hawkins & Smith (2006) seven-eyed model and mapped all the contributions to the different eyes? We tried it, offering observations at the end regarding which of the 7 'eyes' had not been covered in the discussion. This was useful in two ways. First, it was much easier to track contributions when deliberately outside and "watching" the group. Secondly, there were occasions when the group was sucked into a particular perspective, possibly "group think" or a "parallel process". The supervisor outside the group was free to articulate an alternative perspective in a way that kept the sense of efficacy within the group intact.

What difference does it make having two supervisors?

As mentioned above, we model collaboration in real time. In being transparent with the group about what we are going to "try" today – it allows us to be seen to take the first risk. We think this sets the tone that our groups are not about staying in your comfort zone, rather it is about feeling safe enough to take a risk and to be open to what learning emerges.

That the two of us have different experiences and ideas really comes to life when supporting our groups on their coaching dilemmas. We see different issues and can share a variety of examples. Not only does this deepen the debate of what could be done, but it ensures we create a mindset where individual awareness is key and challenges any assumption that "supervisor knows best". For us this is a great illustration of how the "normative" function of supervision works when preferring a non-directive style.

And finally, when reviewing "how did we do" we find that each of us notices different things. The more we notice, the more we realise what there is to notice too! We believe that a Group Supervisor needs to have experience of managing groups as well as coaching supervision. So, if you are looking to ensure that both the whole of your case is explored and that the dynamics of the group you are working in positively support your learning – maybe that is a job, which is just a bit too big for one supervisor?

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So how can we summarise our own learning?

The key impact of working collaboratively has been the paradox of “support” and “edginess” that comes with working with a respected peer. As a result we have noticed the following:

- Working together has made us more courageous; we are more open to experiment in real time knowing that the other supervisor is keeping a “watchful eye” on the group’s well-being.
- There is a sense of wanting to do well “in front of” the other supervisor, which encourages us to consistently deliver our best work for our clients.
- In our joint reflective reviews we explore why we work the way we work, and where else in our practice this might “show up”. As a result feedback around our group supervision work has informed our wider coaching and supervision practice
- Recognising the complexity of managing group dynamics whilst also facilitating the supervision work led us to engage in further group dynamics training. This stretched our thinking and our awareness and has been invaluable in all we do
- We have developed a flexible mind-set and generated many new ideas for how we can work, creating a “product” that is hugely flexible. We now know how to cope with varying numbers, a range of participant experience and can welcome new and existing members, consistently creating a safe space for all to work.
- We have recognised that our ability to work together collaboratively without collusion rests on a respect for our differences and the fact that our core values are the same

How could our learning have wider application?

Much of our own learning in the coaching supervision context could also be applied to any other type of group work in the coaching and the training environment.

- The collaboration that is inherent in co-facilitation can create a positive environment for risk-taking and learning. We found it led to greater collaboration amongst participants too.
- Working with two facilitators brings more and different perspectives, increasing the richness of the experience available to the group
- When facilitators discuss group process in real time in front of the group, it helps ensure that the group’s needs and not the facilitator’s ”whim” are the primary focus.

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- Co-facilitation dilutes the inherent "role power" of the leader, identified by Proctor (2002). Further, by working in the "here and now" the facilitators can model an appropriate use of support and challenge.
- The different styles, pace and tone of voice of the facilitators helps maintain energy and interest in the group. It also allows each facilitator some "ebb and flow" in the intensity of their role with the group.
- Practically and logistically the administrative burden is shared. It helps in everything from generating potential participants through to dealing with latecomers when the session has started.
- When facilitators engage in reflection shortly after the event, there can be huge learning for the event itself and for both of their wider practice.

Our Closing Thoughts …

We hope our story has inspired you to consider what might be possible through collaboration. For us, we have not only delivered a great coaching supervision experience for our participants, it has stimulated our creativity and improved our wider practice. Above all, it has been great fun.

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Distance Mentoring: a case study from the Middle East.

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Abstract

This article describes how mentoring from a distance has helped two young Lebanese entrepreneurs move their businesses forward. In the two case studies we discuss the mentoring training we went through and how we, from a practical viewpoint, approached these mentoring assignments in terms of the time spent, the issues covered and the results obtained. As we are both business coaches, we discuss the often debated differences between coaching and mentoring in the practical context of these two case studies.

Keywords

distance mentoring, mentoring & coaching: similarities and differences, the Middle East

This is a story about the practical issues and results of two distance mentoring interventions carried out with Lebanese entrepreneurs from June 2010 to June 2011.

We, the authors, had met fleetingly at EMCC conferences, but accidentally found out days before leaving for Beirut that we had both signed up with the charitable organisation Mowgli (www.mowgli.org.uk) to carry out pro bono mentoring assignments. Each of us had decided to participate at very short notice and we only had a few days to prepare for the trip and kick-off meeting.

What was the background and reason that brought the two of us to volunteer as mentors?

Carol was born and brought up in the UK, and all her work experience has been for UK based companies, where she specialised in Human Resources. She has Board level experience both as an Executive and an Non-Executive Director (NED). Her last corporate role was as HR Director for the NEC in Birmingham, a conference and exhibition organiser. She has a postgraduate (PG) diploma in Coaching and Mentoring and a PG Certificate in Coaching Supervision from Oxford Brookes University. She started mentoring corporately when working with high potential executives, and has recently worked in Dubai for the World Trade Centre and Abu Dhabi for the Government. Carol was encouraged to take on this mentoring assignment by her husband, who had visited Lebanon when he worked for Oxfam in the 90's.

Kerstin was born in Sweden and currently lives in Switzerland. She coaches across Europe and the US. She is a scientist by training and has 25 years management experience in multinationals, SMEs and in various start-ups across Europe. Her last corporate role was as Director for Executive Development at Cass Business School in London, where she professionally became involved with people centred issues. She holds a coaching PG Certificate from HEC in Paris. She was keen to take on this mentoring opportunity in Lebanon firstly because she cares deeply about entrepreneurs and secondly because her British father-in-law told her how he accidentally found himself in Baalbek during the Second World War and how beautiful and peaceful it was. Ever since, she has wished to visit Lebanon.

Who were our mentees?

Carol's mentee was in her mid-thirties. She was part of the Christian community in Lebanon and had been educated in Beirut within the French system up to university level. She then decided to complete her education in the UK, where she acquired a Master's Degree at Reading University. After graduating, she worked in a Market Research organisation based in Beirut for five years. Three years ago she set up her own independent Market Research Agency and has clients in Europe and the Middle East.

Kerstin's mentee was in his early thirties. He was born and had his first schooling in Qatar and then spent his teens in New Zealand. His last corporate role was in a web based travel business based in Venice, Italy. He then moved to Beirut, where his family roots are, and where he is involved in setting up four different web based businesses.

How was the mentoring intervention organised?

The Mowgli charity had brought together a group of six mentors to be matched with six Lebanese mentees. Four mentors were from the UK, one from Lebanon and Kerstin from Switzerland. There were two men and four women and out of the six, three were certified coaches. One mentor had already been involved in a Mowgli mentoring program. What we all had in common was quite extensive business experience across a wide variety of sectors and industries

The mentors met at Beirut airport in and were then driven across the mountain range into the Bekaa Valley, which made clear to us the incredible contrasts in the country: leaving Beirut, with new glass clad high rise buildings next to older houses pockmarked with bullet holes from the civil war and the last Israeli war, and then coming into the lush Bekaa valley, where vegetables, fruit, flowers and vines are growing. The Bekaa Valley is also the stronghold of Hezbollah and their flags fly from every major building and every village. As soon as we left Beirut, we encountered military checkpoints every few kilometres, including in the valley itself.

4 Day Programme

For four days we stayed in a lodge in the centre of the valley, surrounded by gardens and fields. The first day centred on us mentors getting to know each other and raising self-awareness by carrying out various exercises on communication, building empathy, rapport and trust. The strength of the programme lay however in the fact that as soon as a concept had been introduced, it was immediately tried out in coaching / mentoring conversations in pairs, and supervised by the two Mowgli facilitators. In addition, these conversations were observed by the other mentors and were followed by a general discussion about what had happened during the interaction. This lead us very quickly to trust each other and getting to know each other very well, even to such an extent that when the mentees joined us on the second evening, they thought that we had all been working together for a very long time indeed and that we had been involved in previous mentoring assignments together.

During the second day we explored entrepreneurship and what it entails. We talked about the business culture and structures in Lebanon. Our Lebanese colleague was particularly helpful in describing the markets, the culture and the intricacies of doing business in the Middle East. We also discussed frameworks for mentoring conversations and explored what it means to be an entrepreneur, including the potential for feelings of loneliness and how interactions with the close family can become difficult.

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Meeting the mentees

At the end of day 2 we met the six mentees for the first time over dinner and started the process of getting to know each other. At this stage we did not know who we would be mentoring and day 3 was spent working with the mentees agreeing a framework for the mentoring, and sharing backgrounds and experiences. For each exercise we were paired up with a different mentee. Much of the mentoring was carried out walking in the lush gardens around the lodge as the mentees talked about their vision of their businesses and their personal hopes and fears. Walking beside them was a powerful metaphor for the mentoring relationship and we felt that we were accompanying them on their journey. The lack of direct eye contact also seemed to help all of us open up and really dig deep. Many mentees said that this was the first time they had talked out loud and openly about their ideas and dreams. For a significant part of the conversation we used the framework of the Hero's Journey (Campbell, 1993)which helped to understand how complex that journey was likely to be and that there was going to be barriers and setbacks, but also that the journey is about living your dream.

The basic concept throughout the introduction of mentors and mentees to each other was that of sharing and exchanging background, values and ideas. Every session was a dialogue where the mentee talked about her-/himself and the mentor about her-/himself.

Matching process

During that third day the facilitators observed all the pairs, studying their interactions and body language to help with the matching process. Although they had CVs and biographies for all, the chemistry between mentor and mentee was an important factor to ensure a good working partnership over the following 12 months. Both mentors and mentees were able confidentially to say if they thought there was anyone in the group that they would find it difficult to work with for whatever reason. The final matches were announced just before supper so that the matched pairs could sit next to each other and start building their partnerships. There was a fantastic buzz of conversation over dinner.

Day 4, the final day, we worked intensively with our allocated mentees on their business plans and a comprehensive SWOT analysis. We also discussed their personal needs at a deeper level and the challenges of mentoring at a distance. We contracted how we would work together over the following 12 months, especially the issue of confidentiality and respecting each other's time commitments. The mentees made a public declaration of their commitment to the partnership.

Contact pattern and main issues discussed.

Mowgli suggested a framework for interactions, and in their experience interactions usually are much closer at the beginning of the engagement (i.e. once a week) than later on. However, nothing was set in stone and we were very much left to discuss with our mentee what would work best for us.

Both our mentees started off the programme with frequent Skype calls of about an hour on a weekly basis, but this progressed to fortnightly and then monthly conversations after the first month or so. We were both lucky in that our mentees were able to travel to Europe from time to time and we had a couple of face-to-face meetings as well as Skype conversations.

The main issues that our two mentees discussed with us over the 12 months were remarkably similar: the need for time for reflection, developing their strategy, and work / life balance. We also discussed setting goals, prioritising and how to delegate. Delegating is a problem for most people and for entrepreneurs in particular. However, in this context the emphasis was on how to manage family and friends, who were also business partners or employees.

To help explore the multi-cultural as well as an inter-generational aspect to both our mentoring partnerships, we used a tool, the Cross-Cultural Kaleidoscope, developed by Plaister-Ten (2010). This tool provided a number of headings under which to consider and discuss cultural stories. These 'stories' fell into the categories of history/arts, economic, political, education, legal, religious/spiritual, community/family, geography/climate as manifested by cultural behaviour, habits and norms and was informed by cultural theory. After trying out this tool, we would not recommend introducing it until trust has been established, as it digs quite deep into people's backgrounds and beliefs.

What were the results?

At the 12 month point we reviewed the results from the partnerships. Again, there were many similarities in what our mentees achieved, but obviously there were differences in their trajectory. Carol's mentee had issues around more effective delegation, as she was using mostly freelancers and interns. Obtaining the right quality of work and managing her own time were major challenges. She did achieve some real steps forward: she found that she was able to build in some free time for relaxation and sport. She was also able to negotiate with her London based client to obtain a more global brief, permitting her to expand her business beyond the Middle East. In addition, she has gained several new clients in the area and, on a practical level, moved offices with enough room to expand and accommodate new employees in the future.

Kerstin's mentee has managed to consolidate several of his businesses, thus making them easier to manage, and he has found a new partner in Italy and a number of subcontractors in Indonesia. He also appears to increasingly value the power of empathy and is working hard at trying to understand how his colleagues look at the business and their work.

However, we believe that the biggest change that both of our mentees would say they have experienced is that they have grown in self-confidence. At the official end of the mentoring Kerstin's mentee said: "I now know that I can be an entrepreneur and I trust myself to be an entrepreneur."
In terms of tangible results, the six entrepreneurs between them created 19 new jobs. As there is no control group without mentors, it is of course impossible to make any judgement as to the impact of mentors on this major achievement.

Distance mentoring and the use of Skype

Working at a distance requires preparation and planning. We believe that it is important to agree how you are going to work together. We decided to use Skype without the video to save band width, and we sometime even felt that the visual image was distracting and we often used sound only by choice. You need to be able to develop your skills in listening, to understand intonations, to be able to tune in and really hear what is happening for your mentee. In our experience, one hour's discussion on Skype is ample. Any more gets tiring and doesn't seem to add anything to the interaction. We occasionally tried Skype-ing using mobile 'phones, but the technology is still not good enough…

Having an agenda before each session was important, even if it was just 24 hours beforehand, as this helped the mentee to focus and decide how they best could use the time available. At the beginning of each session we reviewed what had happened since the previous meeting.

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There is an important point about celebrating: your mentee is out there on their own and they are very often moving on to the next thing before having reflected on the learning from their last success, so a mentor can help with consolidating that learning and celebrating it. It also helps to build resilience, because things don't always go smoothly and you need to build up the areas that are going well. However, in maintaining that relationship and rapport, we need to remember that we should give our mentees the benefit of our challenge and we need to be quite robust at times.

If you are curious and really interested in their business, asking questions, trying to understand what is going on, what a different generation is trying to accomplish, then you maintain your interest and passion, without being judgemental.
As a mentor you have to be very careful not to have your own agenda and although you are asked for your expertise, not to give too much advice. However, there are situations when a factual answer (if you have it) is helpful and time saving.

The place of supervision

The majority of the mentors hadn't carried out any mentoring before and were unfamiliar with coaching methods. We had peer conference calls roughly every three months, just to check in: how is it going, are there any issues? We were told that if there were major issues, then we could have a confidential discussion with one of the Mowgli facilitators. However, an organisation like Mowgli, which is a charity, has limited funds and the mentors were expected to be fairly self-reliant.
We think that it is crucial that you are aware of where you can find support in any mentoring program that you are setting up or being part of. It can be a challenging journey.

The difference between coaching and mentoring

Having read de Haan's and colleagues' research paper (2011) on the attitudes and thoughts of coachees, we thought that it would be interesting to ask two of the same questions of the six mentees in the group. We initiated the use of a survey monkey questionnaire so that the mentees' answers were anonymous.
For the first question we picked: "Why are you embarking on coaching/mentoring?". They (De Haan et al., 2011) gave their coachees 5 possible answers to choose from,

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and we added the 6th to cover the particular context of mentoring:

1) I wanted to learn something new
2) I wanted to strengthen myself, become more resilient
3) I wanted to change my behaviour, my approach
4) I wanted to stop doing certain things
5) I wanted to reflect on my way of doing things
6) I needed help with particular business issues

The coachees top three answers were No 2) 3) and 5). Interestingly, these were exactly the same top three picked by the mentees. This surprised us, as we would have expected the mentees to choose more ‘down to earth’ reasons like 1) or 6).

The second question we picked was: “What was the attitude of your coach/mentor?” The possible responses were:

1) Directing, providing guidance / advice
2) Informing, providing information / knowledge
3) Challenging or increasing (self-)understanding, exploring preconceptions
4) Discovering, understanding by self-exploration
5) Supporting or building self-confidence and self-esteem
6) Releasing or exploring emotions causing internal barriers

The majority of coachees in the study of De Haan and colleagues (2011) picked No 5), whereas the majority of our mentees picked No 1). This demonstrated the value mentees put on advice, something that coachees are encouraged not to do. Our results have no statistical validity. However, we thought it an interesting exercise and did demonstrate the similarities and differences as perceived by coaches and mentees.

Conclusion

Personally, mentoring meant putting on a slightly different hat from our coaching hat, using the same skills but with a different focus. To us, a big difference between coaching and mentoring is that you feel that you become a part of their company – you have an investment in their dreams. It is also a much longer term relationship. We worked with our mentees for over 12 months and are both carrying on the relationship, although with longer intervals between the conversations. We also feel that you can allow a mentoring relationship to grow into friendship, which is generally not acceptable in coaching.

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Finally, we found that in mentoring there is very much a sense of 'give and take'. Both our mentees are wishing to help us in our businesses: Carol's mentee has helped her with market research issues, and Kerstin's mentee is keen to help her with the web based aspects of her company.

We both feel privileged to have had the opportunity to get to know two young people based in a very different region of the world to ours, and we have learned much from their enthusiasm and drive and have broadened our outlook and understanding of another culture.

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Mentoring in Australian Local Government

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Abstract

With its diversity of roles, services and professions local or municipal government in Australia provides a perfect setting for mentoring. This diversity is capitalised upon in establishing cross-functional mentor partnerships, each of which is unique and carefully nurtured. Three critical elements of mentor programs are discussed in detail - the organisational culture imperative in which cultural development will occur, the communication environment in which mentoring takes place and the value placed on learning and development. As mentor pairs work through identified development strategies the approach of the mentor is critical in enabling the mentee to think and behave autonomously.

Keywords

mentoring, local government, engagement, communication, learning and development

Delivery of facilitated mentor programs is increasing in Australia, with the growing realisation that the learning is deep, costs are minimised and benefits abound to participants and the organisation. Programs are now emerging in the public and private sectors, with the latter a little faster to have gained momentum. However during the past two decades, with the realisation that local government in particular is an ideal setting for mentoring and the emergent financial restraints of recent years, mentoring is flourishing.

Government in Australia has a three level structure, with Federal government extending across all eight states and territories, each of which has their own government and finally, at the municipal or local level are City Councils or Shires. With a diverse array of functions from child and aged care to waste management and library services, local government employees come from a wide variety of backgrounds, careers and expertise. This presents a superb opportunity for cross-functional and cross-organisational learning and sharing of knowledge in the form of mentoring. The prospect of having a customer service officer being mentored by a parks and gardens manager or a director of infrastructure services mentoring a recreation project officer presents an exciting learning scenario, in which the resultant learning and benefits continue to surprise and delight.

Coaching and Mentoring International (CMI) has facilitated mentor programs in organisations for over twenty years. During this time the fundamentals of mentoring have not changed dramatically. What has changed according to CMI's observations are:

1. The Australian organisational culture imperatives;
2. Communication practices and technologies, and
3. Learning and development attitudes.

All of these factors have enhanced the complexion and impact of mentoring within organisations.

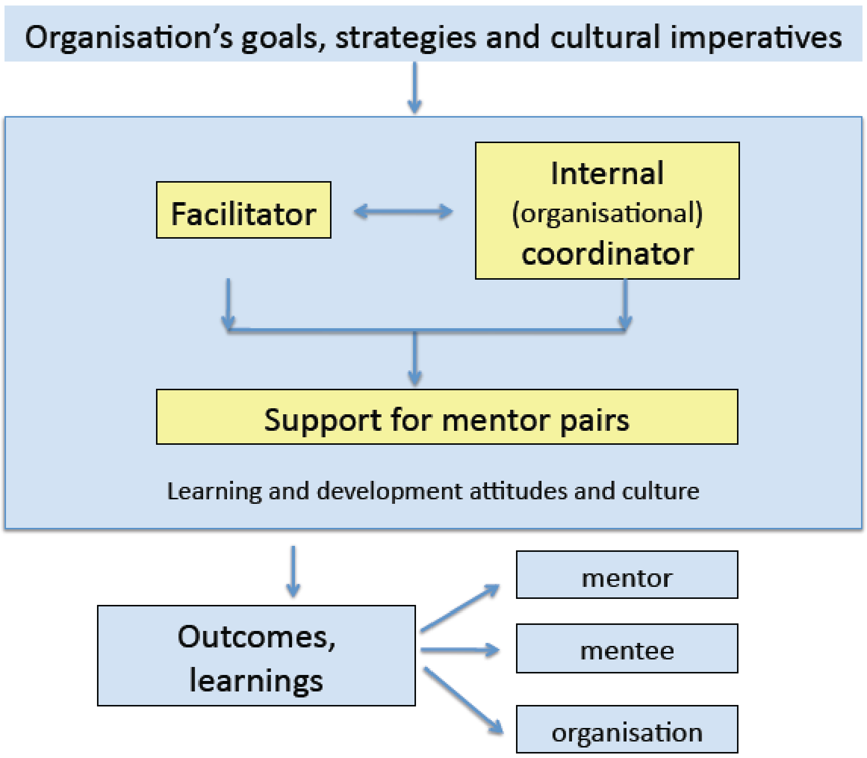

Figure 1. Facilitation of the mentor relationships

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In facilitating mentor programs in local government CMI's role has been varied, from providing advice and guidance to delivering the program from within the organisation. Regardless of how the facilitator role was conducted, it was very much seen as an enabling role, ensuring that mentor relationships were supported and contributed to personal and organisational growth. The role can be summarised by Figure 1. Facilitation of the mentor relationships.

In all programs facilitated, mentees expressed interest voluntarily in their participation in the program. Previous experience has indicated that should mentoring be recommended by a manager for 'remedial' purposes, it is less successful or a downright failure. In each program there were between twelve and twenty mentor pairs. Mentor pairings are generally made by internal learning and development consultants or mentors requested by mentees, knowing the 'pool' of potential mentors, from which they may select. Pairings are confirmed with all participants and mentees' managers, then the twelve to fourteen week program commences with an orientation or training session, followed by a mid-program review and conclusion. This program duration has been found to be optimal; short enough for required time commitment for participants and long enough to provide a stimulus for further contact beyond the program, should that occur.

This article profiles an example of mentor program delivery in both urban and rural local governments. The major difference between the two environments was the fact that the urban local government had enjoyed annual delivery of mentor programs over a period of twelve years. This meant that the organisation had become quite aware of the nature of mentoring, what it would involve and how it was to be delivered. For the rural local government, facilitated mentoring was a new concept, so it retained a sense of 'novelty'. In the rural local government, the mentor program was loosely linked to a broader leadership development program for the senior management team, many of whom were mentors.

The following article looks at the three developments in mentoring identified by CMI, in terms of how they affected the mentor program participants. Italicised quotes are verbatim comments from both mentors and mentees that expand on the discussion point and elaborate on the points highlighted. To underline the cross-functional nature of the pairings, the service area or profession of each of the partners is also noted in the examples provided. In this article these verbatim comments, as examples of real

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life experiences, can be seen to take the place of traditional references as underpinning literature.

Organisational culture imperatives

The ‘employment deal’ or employee value proposition (EVP) can be viewed as the statement of what the organisation gives and what the employee is expected to provide. How that is interpreted in local governments, with such a wide array of functions and employees, can be potentially fragmented and limiting to the full benefit of having a clear statement of the EVP. As local government organisations mature and understand their role more clearly in terms of providing community service and responsiveness, so too do the expectations put on employees through such statements as an EVP. This, linked with talent and performance management, business planning and succession planning add a more comprehensive view of business and service management. The degree to which a stated EVP is understood well in local government is quite varied. Many organisations have not yet realised the power of an EVP to strengthen employee engagement and subsequent increased discretionary effort. The role of experienced mentors in reinforcing an EVP is quite significant, through conversations with mentees.

Cross-functional mentoring has been observed by CMI to contribute significantly to reinforcing an organisation’s EVP in a way that is subtle, understated and implicit – the most effective ways in which an EVP can be communicated. As a mentee interacts and shares views and knowledge with their mentor from a different functional area of the organisation, the effects of positive and natural role modelling are highlighted. In organisations where stated values are alive and actually mean something, a discussion between mentor and mentee about what they mean, how the values are lived and ultimately impact upon customers (community members) can be valuable.

In the urban local government case study a need for increased levels of collaboration and innovation had been identified, following annual staff surveys. In mentor programs for the next two years, these cultural development imperatives played a significant role in mentor discussions. Many of the mentees indicated that it was refreshing to see how a more senior person from a different business area responded to these cultural focus areas. Mentees commented that they could see how a culture of increased collaboration and innovation was driven by their mentors, rather than just being words from the Chief Executive Officer. Resultant higher levels of engagement were expressed by the mentees as levels of cynicism decreased.

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> *It was reassuring to hear (my mentor) talk about what he had done in his department to increase levels of collaboration, and I saw real evidence of it when I attended meetings of his team. I now know that the CEO is making headway with her focus on collaboration and that it's not just another buzz word.* (mentee in an urban Council in the financial services area, mentored by a senior supervisor in asset management).

In all local government cases pairing of mentor partners has been conducted across functions, principally to remove potential confusion or negative impact created by performance management processes. By having a mentee paired with a more senior mentor outside his/her functional area, an environment of much greater safety is created, so that the mentee feels free to share their uncertainties or inadequacies. In all fourteen programs that have been delivered by CMI in local governments this has been one of the most significant positives highlighted by mentors, mentees and the organisations. In some cases the mentee has been able to share their ignorance about the organisation or more seriously, about what they should do having observed questionable practices or behaviour by their colleagues.

This naturally raises the issue of how the mentor relationship is addressed with the mentee's manager. In all case studies the consent and support of the mentee's manager was mandatory in establishing the pairings. The role of the facilitator is then to reinforce the importance of keeping the mentee's manager/supervisor aware of the program, what the mentee is doing, how the mentor is working and what the benefits are likely to be for the mentee's team. To avoid distrust or apprehension by the mentee's manager, the mentor's role in maintaining honest and open communication is critical, without breaching any confidentiality or overstepping agreed boundaries.

> *I knew that I had to keep (my manager) in the loop about what I was doing in the mentor program. He was agreeable but sceptical to my participation in the program, so I knew after the orientation session that I had to work hard to show him that I was learning from (my mentor) and that I would be doing a much better job after it was finished. (mentee in rural Council, in a project management role, mentored by an urban planning director)*

This of course raises the issue of boundaries in the relationship and the importance of the orientation sessions or briefing experienced by participants. Occasionally a mentor will hear of behaviour that should not be tolerated or could damage the reputation of a local government body that is already working hard to alter their community's negative or out-dated perceptions. The mentor pairs must know and agree exactly what is to occur, following the sharing of such information.

> *I just wasn't sure what I should do about having a colleague tell me that they were being bullied by their supervisor. I'd looked at our policy, but this example seemed to be in a 'grey' area. It was really helpful having (my mentor) talk me through the situation and what options I needed to consider.* (mentee in an urban Council, working in an aged care support role).

> *When (my mentee) told me what was going on we discussed the issue in great depth. I hadn't actually had to deal with a bullying incident before so it was good for me to explore the situation more thoroughly and we had one of the best conversations of the program. The situation was resolved satisfactorily and (my mentee) and I both grew from the experience.* (mentor in the situation above, a manager in the corporate support function).

The reciprocal learning gains of both mentor and mentee frequently surprise mentors new to their role in facilitated programs. While most senior professionals are aware that they are informal or natural mentors to a range of people in their lives, they often underestimate the capacity that they have to formally and overtly share the wisdom gained on their career and life journey. They also frequently underestimate the extent to which their mentor relationship enables them to learn from their less-experienced mentee. Mentors have explained the learning as 'like having a mirror held up in front of you, so that flaws or inconsistencies are not only obvious, but magnified'. Once a strong rapport has been established between mentor pairs, the likelihood of open discussion can emerge. It is in this open space that many mentors have learnt as much as their less experienced mentees. When complemented by assessment tools such as 360^{o} feedback and psychometric measurement, the benefits to senior employees are countless.

Organisational systems and practices, such as business planning and performance management, have regularly been discussed and put under the microscope. As mentees observe how their mentor performs tasks associated with these processes they frequently asked challenging questions for clarification, with the resultant pressure applied on the mentor to explain or justify 'why' they did things as they did. Mentors often stated that for them the greatest learning came from justifying why they chose to do what they did.

> *We talked a lot about performance management – how it was done in my department as well as what her (mentee's) experience had been. It turned out that it seemed as if two completely different systems were being used. It reinforced to me that it doesn't matter how good the system for managing staff members' performance is, it all comes down to the quality of the people involved and the amount of effort they put into the process.* (mentor in urban Council, a manager in waste management, mentoring a librarian)

Communication practices and technologies

With decreasing bureaucratic behavioural norms, greater value placed on open and honest conversations and increasing desires for shared information, both online and face-to-face, communication in local government is both richer and more effective. The quality of communication is fundamental to the development of a sound mentor relationship. Many mentor pairs reported that with focus on honesty and attention to the boundaries of the roles, the quality of communication developed rapidly, with the subsequent benefits of high quality learning and experience. With a key focus on communicating and engaging with the community, there is a parallel focus on inter-personal communication. As access to online communication and the use of social media for engaging with stake-holders grows, so too does the need to understand what makes for good communication. Training and assessment in concepts such as emotional intelligence was seen to add to the quality of communication in mentor partnerships.

> *We spent a lot of time talking about the importance of emotional intelligence in our communication and the role this plays in building openness and honesty. (My mentor) knew a lot more about EI than I did, so it was good learning for me. We both thought this helped us frame the boundaries of our relationship so that there were no surprises or disappointments. I know I'll be a lot more aware of EI when I move into a leadership role.* (mentee in a rural Council, in a community services role, mentored by a manager in a planning role).

Technological advancements in many organisations have changed the face of communication. Use of forums, shared online work spaces, blogs and intranet capacities have broadened the arena within which the mentor relationship can be nurtured. Australian local government is developing its capacity quickly in online practices and the use of social media.

The development of open and honest communication practices appears to be linked to the way the mentor can focus on understanding mentee's needs and his/her circumstances. In turn this contributes to the creation of a strong bond as the mentor guides the mentoring relationship in its early stages. The mentor can then work with the mentee to achieve increasing levels of autonomy through helping to create a shared purpose or direction based on a deeper understanding of the mentee's potential. It is this process that has been used to great effect in the local government case studies. The process can be summarised in the following Figure 2 below.

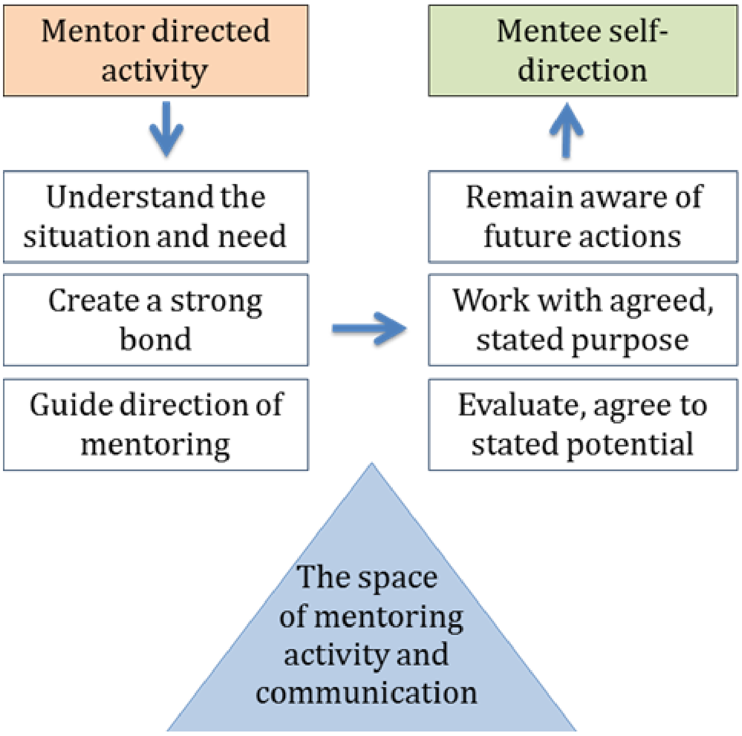

Figure 2. Mentoring activity and communication

> *The process of encouraging (my mentee) to become increasingly independent in his thinking has been exciting. I now believe I'm in a better position to apply this more often to my own staff members as a result of my mentoring role.* (mentor in an urban Council, director level in engineering type role, mentoring a recreation project officer).

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Emerging learning and development attitudes

An increasingly comprehensive view of learning and development by local government employees and managers is creating an environment in which learning by mentoring can be seen as a valid pursuit and one to encourage. With a broader focus on learning rather than training and a shift from organisational to personal responsibility for one's development, the attitude to learning is conducive to different forms of learning. While formal 'leadership development' training programs are still delivered, these are increasingly linked to facilitated mentor programs and on-the-job coaching.

This move from training to learning and the associated impact on workplace-based learning is reflected in the increasing number of local government roles tagged 'learning' as opposed to 'training'. Similarly Human Resources Departments are being reborn as People and Culture Departments. While this is not a phenomenon unique to local government, it sends a strong message to staff members and managers that the organisation values its people and their learning. Although there is no hard evidence to support it, there seems to be a strong correlation between having a focus on people and cultural development and the delivery of mentor or coaching programs.

> *We spent a long time talking about where I was going with my career. I realised that I wasn't taking enough control of my own learning, that I was waiting for more training to be provided for me, expecting my manager to guide me. (My mentor) used a lot of examples from her own career to show what I can do and how I need to plan for a career, rather than waiting for it to just unfold.* (mentee in an urban Council in a customer service role, mentored by a director of community services)

Observed benefits for organisations, mentors and mentees

The diversity of roles and functions in Australian local government creates a wonderful backdrop for facilitated mentoring to embed new directions and key strategies for organisational growth and development. Cultural development and continuous improvement are well and truly on the agenda of most Australian local governments, with a number of processes and frameworks being applied. The Australian Business Excellence Framework[3] is widely used, and its strong focus on people creates a sound platform for mentoring to enhance continuous improvement strategies.

[3] Business Excellence Framework,
http://www.saiglobal.com/Improve/ExcellenceModels/BusinessExcellenceFramework/

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As mentor programs in local governments conclude a constant refrain echoes.

> *"We did not expect to gain as much from our experience and completely underestimated the power of mentoring to broaden our understanding of local government, our specific service to the community and to add to our knowledge about ourselves."*

Conclusions

Career development, knowledge of governance, leadership, customer service, inter-personal skill development, people management skill development and the legislative environment are just some of the areas enhanced as mentor pairs conduct their program activities and discussions. This increase in mentees' knowledge and capability occurs against a backdrop of increased alignment of organisation development practices and enhanced employee engagement emerging from meaningful communication and practical cultural development. When attention is paid to careful planning and time invested in establishing the mentor pairs the benefits are endless. CMI will provide future articles on how planning and pairing for mentor programs has enhanced the likelihood of success and will describe some of the mentoring activities undertaken by the partners.

About the author

Ken Wallis, M Ed, B Ed, BA (Hons), has worked in learning and organisational development for over twenty years, following roles in tertiary and school education. Ken has facilitated mentor programs during this time in all sectors including the public sector, private sector and tertiary education. Ken's recent roles in local government have equipped him with a deep understanding of the how facilitated mentoring can contribute to an aligned organisation.
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Book Reviews

Coaching & Mentoring at Work: Developing Effective Practice (2nd edition), 2012

Authors: Julia Connor & Mary Pokora

Reviewed by Dr. Jane Fowler, West Virgina University, Australia

The second edition of “Coaching and Mentoring at Work: Developing Effective Practice”, by Mary Connor and Julia Pokora, had its ups and downs. Structured in four parts (with three chapters each) the book covers a wide range of coaching and mentoring models, concepts, tools, techniques, ideas, suggestions, questions for reflection, etc. Often I felt I was reading a to-do list rather than grasping the underlying principles of that ‘list’. In saying that, however, a strength of the book is the provision of interactive activities, examples, and reflective questions to assist with coaching and mentoring practice.

Who is this book for? The authors say it is for coaches and mentors AND ‘clients’. They mention “coaches and mentors who have had a background in psychological, psychotherapeutic, sociological, or constructivist perspectives” and I suggest the book is for readers with such a background. The terminology and concepts (e.g. relational coaching, transactional analysis, neuro-linguistic programming, positive energy, unfinished business, psychodynamics, positive psychology, strengths-based approach, and Roger’s concepts of genuiness, respect, and empathy, etc.) are indeed geared toward those who have been trained, or at least are well read, in that area. I think though that it should have been addressed upfront (dare I even say in the book title) for the ‘unaware’ reader that this is the target group.

The titles of Chapters 2 and 3 suggest that the first is for mentors and the second for clients, but both would benefit from engaging with both chapters and this should be made evident to the reader. Part 2 begins with a chapter on reflective practice and supervision, presenting issues and examples from mentoring relationships. However, the distinction between mentoring/coaching and supervision is not made clear – with the case examples provided equally indicative of either. A very well constructed Chapter 5 allows the reader to imagine themselves in the role of mentor via the use of a case study, with questions and issues to consider over a series of mentoring sessions. This chapter is equally matched by Chapter 8 that takes the reader as a hypothetical mentor through the first two sessions of a four-session relationship. The presentation of potential responses and the possible consequences of them brought mentoring to life. A variety of tools and techniques were presented well in Chapter 9, usefully backed-up with suggestions for further reading.

The necessary discussion about ethics and responsibilities, confidentiality, and boundaries was also done well, offering questions and prompts for consideration rather than answers to the potential situations. Further, the point that 'better to be aware and prepared' for such issues, even though in reality they are not commonplace, was well made.

Ten frequently asked questions are presented late in the book. I was surprised to see that three of those questions implied that mentoring relationships involve a financial transaction between mentor and client. This was not particularly implied throughout the book and somewhat changed the tone of the book for me. It did, however, provide some explanation as to why the title 'client' was given to mentees in the text.

Overall, "Coaching and Mentoring at Work: Developing Effective Practice" is for mentors and mentees who are prepared to take a very reflective approach to their mentoring relationship. The authors did a fine job of acknowledging that mentoring is about learning, support, and development!

Best practice in Performance Coaching. A Handbook for Leaders, Coaches, HR Professionals and Organizations, 2011

Author: Carol Wilson

Reviewed by Dr. Jane Lewis, UK

Carol Wilson is an experienced coach and trainer of coaches, with an amazing cv. She worked for Sir Richard Branson, set up and ran a record label, and subsequently went on to become a colleague of Sir John Whitmore. These two men have each contributed forwards to the book.

Carol's credibility and knowledge shine throughout the book: there is no doubt that we are in the hands of someone who really knows their subject. The result is a tour de force, with a whistlestop visit to just about every coaching tool you might ever have heard of. It is divided into two parts. Part 1 covers Fundamentals, and Part 2 is concerned with Advanced Coaching (including case studies from a range of experienced coaches).

The first six chapters cover the basics, making this an ideal handbook for student coaches, or people who want to understand more about what coaching is. They are well written and genuinely give good information. They cover both personal coaching and organisational coaching. The Appendices give further support for the newer coach, with long lists of useful coaching questions, sample coaching agreements, and worksheets for different types of session.

The seventh chapter is entitled 'How to Create A Coaching Culture In Organisations'. This is a huge topic, so it is surprising to find it in the fundamentals section. Much of it comprises lists of questions which follow the GROW model. For me this was the least successful chapter in the otherwise excellent Fundamentals section, because it tried to cover so much about a complex topic in a few pages.

The Coaching Tools Chapter in Part 2 is intended to summarise a range of tools, which coaches might use, and is wide in its scope. Wilson covers the more familiar models such as NLP (of which she is keenly critical) and Clean Language (which she has clearly studied in depth), MBTI and 360 feedback. She also covers models, which may be less familiar, such as Richard Barrett's Cultural Transformation Tools. As an introduction to the various models, this chapter works well.

The case studies cover a range of topics: many are taken from executive coaching programmes, and many are set in a global context. In the main these are straightforward accounts, as opposed to reflective pieces: it is up to the reader to make of them what she will. The main exception is the piece on coaching dilemmas, where we are guided to certain conclusions.

Taken as a whole, this is a useful resource, particularly for people new to coaching, or more experienced coaches wanting to move into corporate coaching who need a starting point for identifying appropriate tools and techniques.

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Book Reviews

Creating a Coaching Culture: Developing a Coaching Strategy for Your Organization, 2012

Author: Prof. Peter Hawkins

Reviewed by Prof. Michael L. Kreindler, Karmiel College, Karmiel, Israel

In this text the author addresses the growing need for the development of a corporate coaching strategy. With data from his practice and field research the author shows how facilitating the development of a corporate coaching culture can sustain coaching gains.

This text is the last part of a trilogy. The first book in the trilogy, ***Mentoring, Coaching and Organizational Consultancy: Supervision and Development*** (Hawkins and Smith, 2006) linked these three corporate activities, mentoring, coaching and organizational consultancy for change, arguing in favor of a concerted effort at managing and coordinating these activities. The book also pointed out the need for supervision and development for practicing coaches and the contribution supervision and development can make to the quality of coaching in the field. The second book in the trilogy was published by Hawkins in 2011 under the name ***Leadership Team Coaching***. The book argued that the coaching practice has changed in order to reflect a corporate shift away from high performing individual leaders to collective leadership and high-performing leadership teams thus requiring that coaches be prepared to work with corporate leadership teams as a whole. The trilogy was designed to map out the professional development internal and external organizational coaches need to engage with in order to meet the new professional challenges Prof. Hawkins predicts. According to the author coaching practice has shifted its focus from individual and team executive coaching to the strategic and commercial development of the whole organization.

This third book has three parts. The first part of the book charts the development of coaching practice and defines the challenges it now faces. The second part explores the steps an organization needs to take in order to establish a coaching culture that can sustain coaching gains and organizational change. Hawkins proposes seven steps in the creation of a coaching culture: (1) developing external coaching provision, (2) developing internal coaching capacity, (3) early adoption by organizational leadership, (4) developing a learning organization and team coaching skills, (5) embedding coaching in organizational HRM and other managerial processes, (6) coaching skills and values emerge as the dominant organizational management set of skills and values, and, (7) coaching becoming the way the organization does business with all its stakeholders. The evidence presented makes it clear that once a coaching culture is established, organizational outcomes are enhanced and the rate at which value is created by the organization shows rapid growth.

The third part of the book explores ways in which a coaching culture, once established throughout the organization, can continuously support coaching activities and improve their quality by providing coaching supervision and opportunities for continuous personal and professional development. The section concludes that in organizations where the opportunities for continuous personal and professional development and growth become more abundant the community of coaching practice will grow and become more dominant within the organization.

This is an eloquently written text that is recommended reading for coaches and mentors working in large organizations, for human resource managers and corporate management teams.

Coaching & Mentoring Supervision: Theory and Practice, 2011

Editors: Tatiana Bachkirova, Peter Jackson and David Clutterbuck

Reviewed by Dr. Penny Johnson, University of Sunderland, UK

In presenting a collection of ideas, established models and novel approaches, Coaching and Mentoring Supervision reflects diversity in thinking in a developing field. In the presentation of diversity lies an opportunity for broadening horizons by exploring alternative ways of delivering and using supervision.

The book comprises a four part structure, the first part of which explores different perspectives inviting reflection on complex supervisory processes. In Part 2 different theoretical perspectives in counseling and psychotherapy are applied to the practice of supervision with a view to employing an integrated approach to greatest effect.

Part 3 focuses on specific contexts and modes of supervision in challenging times. Contributing authors discuss the complexities of dealing with relationship dynamics between coach, client, supervisor and organization. Peer supervision, mentoring and the impact of social media are discussed. The diversity of approaches presented in this section gives a sense of a developing discipline dominated by innovation, experimentation and challenge.

The final part of the book focuses on case studies illustrating how models and perspectives have been applied in a variety of contexts.

Taken together, the issues and debates raised by the contributing authors make this essential reading for those interested in supervisory processes and improving coaching practice. This is thought-provoking work inviting reflection on how we can improve as coaches to better meet the needs of our clients.

The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships, 2nd Edition, 2012

Author: Lois S. Zachary

Reviewed by Nancy Papathanasiou, Greece

Reading this book with a beginner's mind, I realized that even if I had no experience as a mentor at all, this book would actually guide me through a mentoring relationship.

In the introductory chapter 1 the foundations are presented: mentoring through the lens of adult learning, as well as practical tips on what a mentor is supposed to do. The first part of the book consists of chapters 2 and 3 and is devoted to context. Chapter 2 deals with cross-cultural, intergenerational, gender, race and sexual identity differences, and chapter 3 with the different types of mentoring. Chapters 3 to 8 go through the different phases of mentoring, and the last chapter provides further resources and material.

The value of this book is not in proposing an innovative approach but in providing a sound getting-back-to-the-basics textbook, with extensive and diverse case studies. But what I really liked about the book was the exercises that cover almost all the theory. All 39 exercises can be used in each and any mentoring relationship as tools that will help the mentor to map down the progress and the setbacks, the learning opportunities and the challenges. The exercises can stand alone providing an elaborate checklist for every step of the process, as well as a personal inventory of competencies mastered and ones that need work. Even more importantly, the diversity awareness exercises in chapter 2 are a really useful reminder of the hidden variables that often affect mentoring and, when ignored, may impede learning.

All things considered, this is a book that appears to be more useful to novices, but can be transformed to an excellent tool for all mentors that wish that nothing slipped through the cracks.

The complete Guide to Mentoring. How to Design, Implement and Evaluate Effective Mentoring Programmes, 2011

Author: Hilarie Owen

Reviewed by Stacy McCracken, US

Hilarie Owen's "The Complete Guide to Mentoring – How to design, implement, and evaluate effective mentoring programmes" offers a practical approach for anyone looking to launch a mentoring program within an organization. Successful mentoring programs require organizational commitment, and Owen outlines not only the organizational requirements for a successful mentoring program but also the key requirements for successful mentors and mentees. Beginning with an overview of mentoring, she helps the reader understand the historical foundation of mentoring as well as the differences between mentoring and coaching. Owen creates a foundation on which to build the case for an organizational mentoring program. Owen correctly points out that not everyone in a position of power within an organization will make a good mentor. She dedicates a chapter to "Finding the right people", which focuses not only on mentors but mentees as well. She outlines the steps for training and the groundwork necessary for mentors to be prepared to provide positive experiences for mentees. Owen backs up this guide with well-researched insights. Complementing the chapters are case studies and examples that highlight what works and what doesn't. This feature transforms this book from one of theory and research to an application-oriented book for readers focused on creating mentoring systems. Whether you are looking for help developing an evaluation scheme or how to build a mentoring program for a small or medium sized business, this guide will help you. Owen's book is a great primer to understand how to assess organizational readiness, and build the key components for a successful mentoring system within an organization.

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Writing for the IJMC. Publication Guidelines

The International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching is a journal from and for Coaches, Mentors, Researchers, Human Resource Professionals and Training Institutes, published by the European Mentoring and Coaching Council.

The next edition of the journal will be published in Autumn 2012. It will consist of the following sections for which we are currently seeking papers:

The Review Section

Personal views - a personal statement about a topical issue in the fields of mentoring or coaching. It should be opinionated but informed. It may be controversial or speculative. (1,500-3,000 words)

Research - represent research projects of interest to those involved in theory, policy and practice in the mentoring and coaching fields. (3,000-5,000 words).

Debate - either responses to articles which have appeared in previous issues of the journal or designed to start a debate. (750-1,500 words).
All articles in this section are double blind peer reviewed and must follow standard academic conventions.

The Professional Section

Articles in this section address coaching or mentoring practice from the professional practitioner perspective.
Professional skills - descriptions and comments on new or experimental tools, techniques, models or practices, which will help individual practitioners to reflect on their own practice. (1500- 3000 words).

Cases of practice - case studies which raise issues of a general nature (1500 - 3000 words).

Focus - in-depth opinions and views on one theme or country. (1000 – 1500 words).
All papers in this section are editorially reviewed and must be clearly and coherently written.

Book Reviews

Articles in this section review content, style and merit of books published around the topics of mentoring and coaching. Addressing the strengths and weaknesses of the book, the articles reflect the personal opinion of the reviewer. (250 – 500 words).

Please contact the editor-in-chief before reviewing a book to make sure that the book has not been reviewed before and fits into the content of the journal.

E-Mail Address: EMCC.Editor.IJCM@emccouncil.org

Please have a look at 'Call for Papers' and 'Guidance for Authors' on the Journal website http://www.emccouncil.org/eu/en/e-journal for the most recent updates.

Writing for the IJMC. Publication Guidelines

General Guidelines

Articles should be original: if any material overlaps with material which the author has published or is submitting elsewhere, this should be made clear when the article is submitted.

Manuscripts should be sent by e-mail to the Editor-in-Chief, Ines O'Donovan:

EMCC.Editor.IJMC@emccouncil.org

When sending the manuscript, make sure to indicate section and category for which you want your paper to be considered.
Please write in a clear and straight-forward style - active tense as much as possible.
Please raise and discuss the implications for mentoring and coaching as much as possible.
Please use only non-discriminatory language.
Please summarise detailed statistical evidence.
Please use only relevant tables, charts and other graphics.

Please provide the following as part of your manuscript:

Cover page (1st page)

- Title
- Name of author(s) including affiliation/company, country
- Originality/value of your article for the readers (coaches, mentors, researchers, Human Resource professionals, training institutes). (30 - 50 words)
- About the author(s). (30 - 75 words). Please include your e-mail address if it is okay for you to be contacted by the readers.

Main document (from 2nd page)

- Title
- Abstract. (50 - 100 words).
- Keywords. (3 - 5).
- Body of your article
- References (bibliography)

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Additional Guidelines for Articles in the Reviewed Section

References should follow the adapted form of ***Harvard Style*** as described below. Additional information on the style can be found on the Internet.

All publications cited in the text should be listed following the text in the bibliography; similarly, all references listed must be mentioned in the text.

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For ***books***:
Megginson, D. & Clutterbuck, D., 2005. *Techniques for coaching and mentoring,* Amsterdam ; London, Elsevier Butterworth Heinemann.
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Clutterbuck, D., 2009. Coaching and mentoring in support of management development. *In:* ARMSTRONG, S. & FUKAMI, C. (eds.) *The sage handbook of management learning, education and development.* London: SAGE.
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