evidence-based coaching

Volume 1
Theory, research and practice from the behavioural sciences

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This book presents key presentations from the First Evidence-Based Coaching Conference, which took place in July 2003 at the University of Sydney, Australia. The aim of the conference was to provide an academically grounded forum that would foster the development of a broad, evidence-based knowledge foundation and facilitate an intelligent, open and informed dialogue between coaches.

The term ‘evidenced-based coaching’ was coined by staff of the Coaching Psychology Unit of the University of Sydney to describe executive, personal and life coaching that goes beyond adaptations of the popular self-help or personal development genre, is purposefully grounded in the behavioural and social sciences and is unequivocally based on up-to-date scientific knowledge.

The need for the conference was very clear to us. As coaching practitioners and academics, we had observed that there was little empirical research evaluating the effectiveness of coaching, and there had been few attempts to develop theoretical models of coaching. Furthermore, much of the coaching and coach training being offered around the world was and still is grounded in idiosyncratic propriety systems, and these systems tend not to be linked into the broader knowledge base. In short, the practice of coaching had moved far ahead of the existing knowledge base.

The last 10 years have seen a rapid increase in interest in life coaching and in executive and workplace coaching. In the workplace, coaching is beginning to move from being the latest management fad to a mainstream component of organisation development and talent management. This growing popularity of coaching as a method of human and organisational change carries with it enormous opportunities and challenges for those who deliver coaching services and coach training.

The principle challenge for coaching is one of professionalisation. Coaching has moved from its small cottage industry–like beginnings to something now more akin to a service industry. Continued consumer demand, increased consumer sophistication and the nature of the work itself are creating pressure for coaching to move from an industry to a profession. In a service industry, competition, branding and proprietary products and models are the order of the day. A profession, on the other hand, is marked by shared bodies of knowledge, commonly accepted stan-
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dards of training and competency, and the collegial testing of new theories, models, techniques and claims of efficacy via research.

If coaching is to continue to move toward a professional footing, we believe that the three most important challenges are:

1. to articulate coherent and shared theoretical bases for what it is we do when we coach
2. to articulate, in practical terms, the competencies and skills required of coaches
3. to continue to develop a scientifically informed evidence-base for the efficacy of our theories and techniques.

As a parallel to these three challenges, we have divided the contributions to this book into three parts. The first provides an overview of the field and what is meant by evidence-based practice and scientific research. In part 2 we have included those contributions that deal with the development of theory and its practical application. In part 3 we have collected the papers which report on empirical and qualitative studies.

The two chapters of part 1 provide an excellent overview of coaching today and articulate in more detail means of meeting these challenges. Anthony Grant (chapter 1) places coaching in context and articulates well what is meant by evidence-based practice (at least as we use the terms at the Coaching Psychology Unit), while Dianne Stober and Carla Parry (chapter 2) discuss the importance and challenges of conducting and disseminating scientifically valid research.

The notion of articulating coherent theory deserves some attention. It tends to raise polarised notions of practical “coal face” knowledge versus academic “ivory tower” theory. We strongly affirm that coaching is about creating practical behaviour change in human systems. At the same time, practical coaching models are technologies built (either implicitly or explicitly) on theories about what it means to be human, how change takes place and how human systems work. Kurt Lewin was right when he said that there is “nothing more practical than a good theory” (Lewin, 1951, p. 169).

Unfortunately, good theories are frustratingly hard to come by. A good theory is one that both accurately describes the world (or that part of it which is of interest) and is able to guide action and predict outcomes. Creating good theory is a dialectical process. It involves repeated processes of construction and testing followed by more construction and more testing. Though a slow process, it does help us to build more accurate and useful foundations to our practice and a clearer understanding of the limitations of our models.

At present, there are a multitude of relatively untested proprietary coaching models in the marketplace. These models are often rigorously guarded as commercially valuable property. Unfortunately, there is often little understanding of, or attention paid to, the coherence and limitations of the underpinning theories. The lack of critical evaluation and testing means that
claims are made about what can be achieved via coaching using particular models, which, while often in good faith, are ultimately supported by little more than anecdotal evidence, personal conviction or blind optimism.

Fortunately, the situation is not as bleak as this might suggest. Coaching is a multidisciplinary undertaking and there is a broad body of knowledge available from the behavioural sciences, education and economics. There is a growing recognition of the need for coaching-specific theoretical and empirical research and for scientifically grounded education. Research is underway, and the publication of coaching-specific research has begun.

Part 2 of this book is devoted to the development of coaching theory and practice. Drawing on their coaching experience, the coaching literature and the wealth of knowledge developed in wider behavioural sciences and management, the authors here present models and techniques specifically adapted to a range of coaching contexts. In chapter 3, Michael Cavanagh looks at practical implications of mental health issues in coaching and discusses the challenges of personality in executive coaching, adapting Cloninger’s theory of personality to the coaching context. Travis Kemp examines the value of the exploration of a client’s developmental history in coaching (chapter 4) and presents a model for developing client insight (chapter 5).

Lindsay Oades and colleagues (chapter 6) critically reflect on the adequacy of cognitive behavioural frameworks for coaching, and present an alternative model based on Deci and Ryan’s self-determination theory. The role of emotional intelligence in enhancing self-regulation and goal-attainment is considered by Susan David (chapter 7). Peter Webb (chapter 8) looks at some of the implications of chaos theory for managers in organisations and what this means for the coaches who coach them. In chapter 9, Elizabeth Allworth explores the uses and limitations of scientifically validated tests in informing the executive coaching process. Ray Elliot argues that leadership coaching requires not only high-level facilitation skills, but the ability to introduce evidence-based expert knowledge into the coaching process (chapter 10).

While the continuing development of theory is a critical part of the process of professionalisation, it is the practical test of theory which gives it life and force. The results of empirical testing are a vital source of information for coaches’ initial training and continuing professional development. This is true whether one is talking about the research into the efficacy of whole coaching programs, or research that is focused on specific techniques or aspects of theories.

In part 3 the results of practical testing of coaching models and techniques are presented. In the area of life coaching, Suzy Green and colleagues (chapter 11) present the results of a waitlist-controlled group-based coaching program and Spence and Grant (chapter 12) present initial results of the first randomised control trial of life coaching to compare individual versus group-based coaching. Campbell and Gardner report on the
outcome of a pilot study of life-coaching students in their final year of high school (chapter 13). In the organisational setting, Ladyshewky and Varey (chapter 14) look at the efficacy of peer coaching, while Chapman and Arnold examine the ability of coaching to improve emotional intelligence among housing officers in the United Kingdom.

In the final chapter, John Franklin looks at one aspect of the coaching engagement — the change-readiness of clients. His initial explorations suggest a number of factors which can inform coaches’ understandings of their clients’ readiness for change.

The challenges of professionalisation for any industry are not simple. The diversity of backgrounds and work settings for coaches makes the movement toward professionalisation even more complex. Nevertheless, engagement in this process is essential. Understanding the efficacy and limitations of different theories, models and techniques of coaching will enable us to better serve the needs of our clients, and better prepare coaches, in the future. Having an evidence-base is no small boon in the marketing of coaching to our clients. But perhaps more importantly, a sound evidence-base is invaluable for our continuing sense of professional identity and confidence.

The future for coaching is exciting. Just how the industry will develop is yet to be seen, and will emerge over time as the result of continuing discussion among those who work in the industry and with the market we serve. This dialogue is taking place in wide range of forums, from conferences to private conversations. The First Evidence-Based Coaching Conference was our attempt to contribute to that dialogue by bringing together a range of people engaged in seeking answers to the three challenges of theory, technical practice and evidence.

Michael Cavanagh
Anthony Grant

Reference
Thanks
Organising and running a conference is no small task, and one into which we walked with a level of confidence carried only by the ignorant. In the beginning we conceived the conference as a small affair with perhaps six speakers and 60 participants. The amount of interest in both presenting and attendance caught us by surprise. Fortunately, we were saved from our folly by two outstanding individuals — Anne-Marie Heine and Simone Sietsma. Together with a small but dedicated band of volunteers, Anne-Marie and Simone dealt with the thousands of details associated with organising venues and equipment for 24 presentations and events, and catering for more than 300 people, all without a discernable hitch. To you, our sincere thanks.

For their enabling support and encouragement, our thanks are also due to the then Dean of the Science Faculty, Professor Beryl Hesketh, and the Head of the School of Psychology, Professor Ian Curthoys. Their encouragement and graciousness were enormously valued. Finally, for their editorial assistance, patience and helpfulness we would like to thank Kate Indigo and the staff of Australian Academic Press.

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Part 1

Coaching: Overview and Challenge
What is Evidence-Based Executive, Workplace and Life Coaching?

Anthony M. Grant

What is evidence-based coaching? Executive, workplace and life coaching have received much coverage in the popular media. Sometimes it seems as if every man and his dog offers a coach training and “credentialling” program. Not surprisingly, there have been concerns that coaching is no more than a passing fad (Tobias, 1996), the latest in a long line of over-hyped and unrealistic self-development products (Wyld, 2001). Such views may in time prove to be justified.

At present, individuals with a wide range of occupational backgrounds are working as coaches. These backgrounds include business consultancy; management; teaching; workplace training, learning and development; and clinical, counselling, organisational and sports psychology. Each of these areas has its own knowledge-base which comprises both theoretical frameworks and practice. To date there appears to be little communication between these different occupational groups and their foundational bodies of knowledge, and there is a tendency for each group to claim ownership of coaching. However, it is clear that no one occupational group or body of knowledge dominates the field of coaching (Garman, Whiston, & Zlatoper, 2000).

Professional coaching can be considered an emerging cross-disciplinary occupation, its primary purpose being to enhance wellbeing, improve performance and facilitate individual and organisational change. If coaching is to overcome the potential stigma of “faddism”, then it needs to rest on a solid foundation. This foundation should be one of shared empirically validated knowledge, rigorous peer-reviewed publishing, a common language, and clear and explicit links to the wider knowledge base. In short, coaching needs to be evidence-based.
This chapter presents a tripartite metatypology of coaching approaches, and distinguishes between executive, workplace and life coaching. The issue of faddism in coaching is addressed, and following a brief review of the peer-reviewed coaching literature, the contribution of four different knowledge domains (behavioural science, business, adult education and philosophy) to the establishment of evidence-based coaching is outlined.

What is Coaching?
The contemporary use of the term coaching has moved well beyond the traditional references to sports or educational coaching. Some of the variety of issues it has been extended to include overcoming attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD; Ratey, 2002) and premature ejaculation (Maurer, Solamon, & Troxel, 1998); improving sales performance (Rich, 1998); peer learning (Engelen & Bergen, 2002); cognitive training in schizophrenia (Twamley, Jeste, & Bellack, 2003); improving orgasms (Goodstone, 2003); career coaching (Scandura, 1992); stress management (Busch & Steinmetz, 2002); life coaching (Grant, 2003a) and executive coaching (Kilburg, 1996).

Definitions of coaching vary considerably. Emphasising an instructional approach, Parsloe (1995, p. 18) proposes that coaching is “directly concerned with the immediate improvement of performance and development of skills by a form of tutoring or instruction”. In contrast, Whitmore (1992, p. 8) proposes that “coaching is unlocking a person’s potential to maximise their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them”.

The theme of facilitation rather than instruction is echoed by Hudson (1999, p. 6) who proposes that “a coach is a person who facilitates experiential learning that results in future-oriented abilities … [a coach] refers to a person who is a trusted role model, adviser, wise person, friend, mensch, steward or guide …”

Despite the difference in emphasis in common definitions and the wide range of applications, the core constructs of professional coaching include a helping, collaborative and egalitarian rather than authoritarian relationship between coach and client; a focus on finding solutions in preference to analysing problems; the assumption that clients are from a population without significant levels of psychopathology or emotional distress; an emphasis on collaborative goal-setting; and the recognition that although the coach needs expertise in facilitating learning through coaching, the coach does not necessarily need a high degree of personal experience in the client’s chosen area of learning. Of course, many coaches have considerable training and expertise in, and understanding of, specific personal and organisational issues, and they bring this knowledge to the coaching relationship.

There are various approaches to the use of expert knowledge in coaching. Expert knowledge in coaching can be understood as highly specialised or technical knowledge held by the coach, in an area where the
What is Evidence-Based Executive, Workplace and Life Coaching?

The notion of the coach as expert advice-giver is somewhat controversial, and there is some difference of opinion as to the appropriate role of expert knowledge in coaching. A nondirectional ask-not-tell approach may be best characterised by the work of John Whitmore (1992), which emphasises facilitation of client self-discovery. The directional, tell-rather-than-ask, approach may be characterised by the robust approach of Marshal Goldsmith (2000), which emphasises direct feedback and advice-giving.

However, these are not categorically different approaches to coaching. Rather, these two approaches lie on a continuum. The issue is not which is right and which wrong, but rather which best helps the client reach their goals, and which is the most apt at particular points in any specific coaching conversation. In essence, this issue is about striking the right balance between process facilitation and content or information delivery, and this balance varies at different points in the overall coaching engagement and within individual coaching sessions. The skilful and experienced coach knows when to move across the ask–tell dimension, and knows when to promote self-discovery and when to give expert-based authoritative or specialised information.

Clearly, in addition to the expert knowledge that a coach holds about the psychology of coaching, it is important for coaches to have a good understanding of the clients’ issues and context. Furthermore, it would be unprofessional and unethical not to impart important expert information in a timely and appropriate fashion. However, a coach with highly developed applied coaching skills can deliver excellent outcomes purely through facilitating a process rather than delivering expert knowledge.

It has been my observation, in teaching coaching theory and skills to a wide range of individuals, that some consultants making the transition to coaching tend to place greater value on the role of the expert advice-giver. In contrast, many therapists and counsellors making the transition often place greater emphasis on the process, and the ‘asking’ aspect, of coaching. These, of course, are generalisations. But what is happening here?

It may well be that coaches tend to rely more on the ‘telling’ mode of expert advice-giving than facilitating the process of client self-discovery when the coach’s applied coaching skills are challenged by the situation, or where their coaching skills are not very well developed. In a sense, this is understandable, as we all need something to fall back on when the coaching process may not be going as well as we’d like, and slipping into the expert telling mode is one way to get the coaching conversation back on track. Not least, coaches may slip into telling mode for unconscious reassurance that they are bringing value to the conversation. However, an over-reliance on expert advice-giving reduces opportunities for the coachee to develop self-directed learning skills — and it is through the development of
these and through a personalised learning experience that the potential for long-term change is created.

In short, rather than being a means of delivering expert advice through directive telling, the coaching process should be systematic and goal-directed; and to facilitate the maintenance of sustained change it should foster the continuing self-directed learning and personal growth of the coachee (Grant, 2003). Broadly speaking, coaching can be understood as a generic methodology used to improve the skills and performance of, and enhance the development of, individuals. It is a systemised process by which individuals are helped to explore issues, set goals, develop action plans and then act, monitor and evaluate their performance in order to better reach their goals, and the coach's role is to facilitate and guide the coachee through this process.

**A Tripartite Meta-Typology of Coaching**

A useful metatypology of coaching applications and one which is used at the Coaching Psychology Unit at the University of Sydney draws on the work of Witherspoon and White (1996) and delineates three key categories of coaching — skills coaching, performance coaching and developmental coaching.

**Skills coaching** focuses on developing a specific skill set. This kind of coaching might be a fairly short intervention — perhaps one or two sessions. Coaching for skills often requires the coach to focus on specific behaviours, and the coaching sessions may be highly detailed. The coach may model the required skills, and coaching sessions usually encompass a rehearsal and feedback process. It could involve, for example, improving communications skills, sales skills or rehearsing for presentations or negotiations.

**Performance coaching** is about improving performance over a specific period of time. In the workplace this could be between 1 month and 2 years. The coaching is focused on the way the client sets goals, overcomes obstacles and evaluates and monitors their performance as they work towards their goals. A typical approach is the CIGAR model — to outline the Current situation, detail the Ideal outcome, analyse how to Get from the current situation to the ideal outcome, and formulate an Action plan and a Review process. This kind of coaching tends to be more strategic than skills coaching, and in the workplace may follow a performance review.

**Developmental coaching** also takes a broader strategic approach, often dealing with more intimate questions of personal and professional development. This kind of coaching may focus on enhancing emotional competencies, or working more effectively with team members. Developmental coaching is rather like “therapy for people who do not need therapy” and often involves the creation of a personal reflective space where the client can explore issues and options and formulate action plans in a confidential, supportive environment.
Of course, these typologies are not discrete. For example, a coaching intervention which focused on enhancing the presentation skills of a shy or introverted client would have a substantial developmental element, and a developmental coaching program aimed at enhancing emotional intelligence or leadership competencies might well include some skills coaching. Nevertheless, coaching sessions and indeed whole coaching engagements tend to fall into one of these three categories.

**Executive, Workplace and Life Coaching**

*Executive coaching* encompasses a range of services, including enhancing strategic planning and presentation skills, anger and stress management, executive management team-building and leadership development. Executive coaching has been defined as a “helping relationship formed between a client who has managerial authority and responsibility in an organisation and a consultant who uses a wide variety of behavioural techniques and methods to assist the client to achieve a mutually identified set of goals …” (Kilburg, 2000, p. 142). Executive coaching is primarily developmental coaching (Dyer, 2002; Hall, Otazo, & Hollenbeck, 1999) with skills and performance components interwoven (Hutton & Angus, 2003; Peterson, 1996).

*Workplace coaching* can be understood as coaching that takes place in workplace settings with nonexecutive employees. It is on-the-job coaching by line managers and supervisors with the aim of improving productivity and developing individual workers’ skills and their understanding of job requirements. Mostly, it involves impromptu or “corridor coaching” rather than formal sit-down coaching sessions (Stoltz & Major, 1995), but it also includes team-building (Brooke & Ham, 2003), sales coaching (Rich, 1998) and communication skills (Barber, 2001). Workplace coaching for nonexecutives has attracted less attention in the popular media than executive or life coaching; it focuses primarily on performance or skills enhancement and transfer of training issues rather than personal or professional development (Flint, 2003; Miller, 2003).

*Life coaching* is predominantly about more personal issues and tends not to be conducted in the workplace. In general, life coaching takes a holistic approach in which the client spends time examining and evaluating their life, and then systematically making life-enhancing changes with the support of a coach (Grant & Greene, 2001). Key issues often focus on work/life balance, managing finances and developing new career directions. To date, the concept of life coaching has attracted a wide range of practitioners, from those solidly grounded in established cognitive and behavioural psychology (Neenan & Dryden, 2002) through to those using more esoteric approaches (Linn, 2003; Lohff, 2004). Some sections of the life-coaching popular press have made sensational claims about its ability to create the perfect life for clients, which have rightly attracted criticism.
and cautionary comments (Naughton, 2002). However, it is important to distinguish between clearly outlandish claims made for commercial reasons, and the potential of evidence-based life coaching to create real and positive change (Grant, 2003b).

**Is Coaching a Fad?**

Executive, workplace and life coaching have all received significant media coverage. Are they fads? A fad is a short-lived fashion or whim. The first mention of workplace coaching in the peer-reviewed behavioural science press was in 1937 (Gorby, 1937). However, there is still little academic peer-reviewed coach-specific literature on executive, workplace or life coaching.

Most of the peer-reviewed papers on coaching appear in the behavioural sciences databases. A search conducted in December 2003 of the peer-reviewed behavioural science literature as represented in PsycINFO and Dissertation Abstracts International (DAI) identified a total of 131 coaching-specific papers published since 1937 (Figure 1).

Between 1937 and 1994, only 50 papers or PhD dissertations were cited. Between 1995 and 1999 there were 29 papers, between 2000 and November 2003 there were 52 citations, and between 1935 and November 2003 there were a total of 33 PhDs. Of these 128 citations, 76 were articles which discussed coaching, theories of coaching or application of techniques, and 55 were empirical studies. The majority of empirical investigations were uncontrolled group or case studies.

Although 131 peer-reviewed citations since 1937 may not seem insignificant, and there is clearly an increasing trend for coaching-specific publications, compare this number to the 620+ papers published on the transtheoretical model of change (DiClemente & Prochaska, 1982) since 1982. Thus, much work needs to be done.

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**Figure 1**
Total number of coach-specific peer-reviewed papers since 1935.
What is Evidence-Based Coaching?

An evidence-based approach to coaching can make the difference between the often overhyped coaching that tends to be adapted from personal development and motivational programs and professional coaching that draws on solid theory and research. Yet, if there is so little peer-reviewed coach-specific literature, how can we have evidence-based coaching?

Adapted from medical contexts, the term “evidence-based” means more than simply producing evidence that a specific intervention is effective, or being able to demonstrate return on investment. It refers to the intelligent and conscientious use of the best current knowledge in making decisions about how to deliver coaching to clients, and in designing and teaching coach-training programs (Sackett, Haynes, Guyatt, & Tugwell, 1996). Best current knowledge is up-to-date information from relevant, valid research, theory and practice. Because the existing academic coach-specific literature is limited, best current knowledge can be drawn from the established literature in related fields.

Four Key Knowledge Domains Underpinning Evidence-Based Coaching

There are four key areas of best current knowledge directly related to the research and practice of executive, workplace and life coaching. These are (a) the behavioural sciences; (b) business and economic science; (c) adult education, including workplace learning and development; and (d) philosophy.

The vast body of philosophical knowledge is an important foundation for evidence-based coaching. Philosophy is at the heart of many coaching issues, such as the nature of good corporate governance, business ethics, questions of self-identity and personal values. Many contemporary coaching texts include discussions of the philosophical foundations of their specific approach (e.g., Hudson, 1999; Whitmore, 1992), as well as addressing issues of ethics and personal values (e.g., Flaherty, 1999). In addition, coaches need to have well-developed critical thinking skills, the ability to analyse and reason from first principles, and the ability to construct arguments and hold robust and well-reasoned discussions.

The knowledge domains of adult education, and workplace learning and development are also critical. The theory and practice of adult learning is relevant to coaching as the majority of coaching clients are adults (Starr, 2003). Further, issues of development over the life span (Kroth & Boverie, 2000), career transition, personal development in the workplace (Karakowsky & McBey, 1999; Kovan & Dirkx, 2003), training and workplace learning (Patton & Pratt, 2002) and individual differences in learning style are commonplace in coaching (Zeus & Skiffington, 2000). Thus, coaches need to be able to draw on such established knowledge to inform their coaching practice.
Regarding the areas of business and economic science, a lot of coaching takes place in business settings, with both executives and nonexecutive clients (Zeus & Skiffington, 2000). Much of the non-peer-reviewed literature on coaching is published in the trade and professional management press. Coaches who work in business settings need to have a grounding in business and economics in order to best understand and meet their clients’ needs (Brotman, Liberi, & Wasylshyn, 1998), and organisations increasingly require coaching to be explicitly linked to business imperatives (Saporito, 1996). The business and economics literature offers many contributions to both business and non-business-related coaching. For example, the descriptive models of business organisational change presented by Greiner (1998) and Kotter (1990) may be useful in a range of human-change programs.

However, the behavioural sciences are possibly the key body of knowledge for coaching. This is because coaching is essentially about implementing and maintaining human and organisational change — one of the core foci of the behavioural sciences. Of course, within the broader body of knowledge that comprises behavioural science, there are several areas that are of relevance to coaching: sports psychology, educational psychology, counselling and clinical psychology, health psychology and organisational psychology, and each of these domains has a significant knowledge-base that coaches can draw on and adapt for use with coaching populations.

**The Contribution of the Behavioural Sciences to Evidence-Based Coaching**

Counsellors, therapists and organisational psychologists and others whose background and training is in the behavioural sciences had been practising as coaches for many years before the term “coach” became commonplace in the early 1990s. For example, Filippi (1968), a psychodynamic practitioner, referred to coaching as a therapy for those who did not need to seek help but who would benefit from a structured, facilitated approach to solving life problems. In addition, there has been a longstanding relationship between the psychology of sport and the development of human potential in the workplace (e.g., Neilsen, 1978).

Behavioural science will be fundamental to the development of evidence-based coaching, not least because the research skills of its practitioners are essential to evaluate the effectiveness of coaching methodologies in helping coachees reach their goals. Indeed, there is a considerable literature within the field on goals, goalsetting and motivation, with PsycINFO citing over 2500 papers dating from 1950 (Horwitz, 1950). Further, there is a vast literature of clinical and counselling interventions, and a rich history of theoretical perspectives which inform them — psychodynamic, cognitive and behavioural, systemic, and the brief, solution-focused approaches, among others.
The majority of the clinical and counselling literature has, by definition, focused on psychopathology and human weaknesses. A useful contribution to evidence-based coaching would centre on evaluations and adaptations of existing clinical and counselling approaches to use on nonclinical populations within a coaching methodology. Although the behavioural sciences in general investigate many nonpathological aspects of human functioning, it is only since 2000 that an applied framework for an explicitly positive psychology has been formulated (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). This emerging genre focuses on human strengths and the measurement of constructs such as hope, wellbeing, optimism and future-mindedness. It can also usefully inform an evidence-based coaching.

A lot of coaching is aimed at improving inter- and intrapersonal skills and capabilities (Sperry, 1997). Such aspects of what is commonly termed emotional intelligence (EI) have received attention in the behavioural sciences, but most research into EI has been in relation to measuring and assessing it rather than exploring its potential enhancement (Ciarrochi, Forgas, & Mayer, 2001). Coaching may prove to be an ideal methodology for enhancing EI, and this should be one focus of future research. Clearly, coaching has the potential to be a useful platform for an applied positive psychology and the investigation of the psychological mechanisms involved in purposeful change in normal, nonclinical populations.

**Implications for Training Coaches**

The issues discussed in this chapter have implications for coach-training programs. At present the majority of these are based on individual idiosyncratic proprietary systems, and have little linkage to the broader established knowledge bases. This kind of training will be a major barrier to the professionalism of coaching.

At present, coaching is far from meeting the criteria of a true profession. Although definitions vary, core criteria of a profession include significant barriers to entry; a shared common body of knowledge rather than proprietary systems; formal qualifications at university level; regulatory bodies with the power to admit, discipline and meaningfully sanction members; an enforceable code of ethics; and some form of state-sanctioned licensing or regulation (Bullock, Stallybrass, & Trombley, 1988; Williams, 1995).

As a shared body of commonly held knowledge (rather than a reliance on propriety systems) is vital, coach training programs should explicitly address the theoretical and empirical foundations of coaching; provide training in sound research methodologies, basic statistical and data-analysis skills; and foster informed critical-thinking skills in student coaches. Such a curriculum would draw on established bodies of knowledge and form the basis of evidence-based coaching.
Conclusion

The challenge for coaching practitioners will be to tap into the material previously developed in the behavioural sciences, and to use that knowledge as a foundation for evidence-based executive, workplace and life coaching. It is clear that the parts that make up the whole practice of executive, workplace and life coaching are not new — what is, is in the whole, the package and its application. Coaching is a methodology whose time has come.

Coaching is about helping people to create change so that they can realise their potential. Ironically, coaching itself is now at a point where it must change in order to realise its own potential. Evidence-based approaches are essential if we are to make that potential manifest.

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Current Challenges and Future Directions in Coaching Research

Dianne R. Stober and Carla Parry

Challenges in Coaching Research

Coaching can be viewed as a process of bringing about human change and growth that has some features in common with the practices of psychology, consulting and other fields such as mentoring and training. However, coaching has not yet distinguished itself as a distinct, coherent field with identifiable boundaries, although it is possible to cite differences between coaching and other traditions — for example, one may distinguish coaching from consulting by the emphasis of coaching on the client-as-expert rather than the consultant-as-expert. The challenge lies in establishing what makes coaching unique.

The first step in distinguishing coaching from other fields is arriving at a satisfactory definition for it. Some current definitions include “a coach is a person who facilitates experiential learning that results in future-oriented abilities” (Hudson, 1999, p. 6), “coaching is unlocking a person’s potential to maximize their own performance” (Whitmore, 1992, p. 8), “[coaching] is a profession that works with individual clients to help them achieve results and sustain life-changing behavior in their lives and careers” (Whitworth, Kimsey-House, & Sandahl, 1998, p. xi), and “coaches aid clients in creating visions and goals for ALL aspects of their lives and creating multiple strategies to support achieving those goals” (Williams & Davis, 2002, p. xv). These definitions share the elements of collaboration and facilitation of growth in both the internal experience and external behaviour of the client. Thus we suggest the following unifying definition of coaching:
Coaching is a collaborative process of facilitating a client's ability to self-direct learning and growth, as evidenced by sustained changes in self-understanding, self-concept and behaviour.

The next step in distinguishing coaching from related fields is identifying what the important independent and dependent variables of interest are that can demonstrate the impact of coaching. Then we must seek to uncover the mechanisms by which these operate, along with the mediators and moderators that influence them. By answering questions about how coaching works and what constructs are relevant (e.g., self-concept, self-efficacy, goal-achievement, life- or job-satisfaction, client and coach types), we can begin to develop testable theories of coaching.

Other fields have encountered similar challenges in the process of professionalisation. For example, Freud revolutionised medicine and the emerging field of psychology with his theory of psychoanalysis. He developed theories of psychosexual development and of consciousness which were then used to explain clinical phenomena of his day, and developed treatment techniques from these theories. Similarly, behavioural therapy shifted the focus to behavioural principles and environmental influences in explaining and modifying people’s lives, which also represented a significant change in how psychological problems were viewed. Both psychoanalysis and behavioural therapy had to distinguish their new theories from what had come before. Both began developing their theory and techniques with case studies and other rudimentary evaluation methods (Freud, 1959; Watson & Rayner, 1920).

While there is room for debate, the argument has been made that psychoanalysis lost ground to the cognitive and behavioural approaches by failing to strengthen its research methods. Critics of psychoanalysis argue that not only has it not been well researched, but because its concepts are imprecise it is very difficult to test them. Cognitive and behavioural therapies, in contrast, have continued to generate new methods, models and applications as they have been extended and ever more widely studied.

The lesson for coaching is that theory and research are required for it to grow and develop as a robust, independent profession. When a vigorous cycle of research, theory and practice is developed, each part of the cycle and the field as a whole benefits.

**Practical Challenges in Conducting Research**

As coaching is an emerging field, coaching research faces a number of practical challenges. Presently, there are few international organisations that actively promote cross-disciplinary coaching-specific research. The International Coaching Federation began steps in this direction by conducting a research symposium in November 2003, developing a web-site repository of research resources and initiating a research discussion group. However, more action needs to be taken, for example, a peer-reviewed pro-
fessional or academic journal dedicated to coaching would create a specific forum for the dissemination of contributions to the body of professional knowledge, and help to develop a community of coaching researchers.

Another challenge to coaching research is funding. Traditional sources of funding to the social sciences have not seen coaching as a priority. The lack of empirical and theoretical knowledge about coaching has contributed in part to a perception of low relevance. Lean economic times also make funding bodies less likely to commit to relatively new fields.

These issues are common challenges for developing fields which are at the intersection of disciplines. Neuroscience and psychology/public policy are examples of other relatively new fields in psychology which took some time to become established.

**Challenges in Research Dialogue**

A chasm presently divides the worlds of academic research and coaching institutes and practice, with little dialogue between those involved. However, many leaders in the profession recognise the need for research which informs practice, and methods which are testable.

Individuals and organisations involved in practice and training have used the popularity of coaching services as a measure of their effectiveness. Individual coaches often rely upon client testimony, client retention rates and requests for services to gauge their effectiveness. While these may be helpful in estimating business effectiveness, they are not adequate evaluations of the methods of coaching. Training institutes have been primarily concerned with practice, not research or theory.

In academia, the established social sciences have recently seen an upsurge in numbers of publications related to coaching, although the total is still small. What research there is has focused primarily on executive coaching, with less attention paid to the rapidly growing phenomenon of life coaching. Further, the majority of articles published in the peer-reviewed literature remain practice-based, with just a sprinkling of conceptual and empirical works. These practice-based articles are generally atheoretical, with a few notable exceptions (Delgado, 1999; Kiel, Rimmer, Williams, & Doyle, 1996; Kilburg, 1996; Laske, 1999; Richard, 1999). There has also been a lack of dialogue between the various disciplines involved in coaching regarding definitions of coaching, theoretical frameworks and areas for research.

Coaches and coaching researchers come from a range of disciplines (including psychology, mentoring, leadership development, organisational development and business management) and individuals have tended to stay within their domains. This can lead to a compartmentalisation of research and to “turf wars” about where coaching “belongs”. A great challenge, which is also a great opportunity, lies in collaboration to synthesise knowledge and theory from across relevant disciplines.
Establishing a Framework for Coaching Research

Defining Coaching
Dialogue across disciplines and between practitioners and researchers is needed to develop a standard definition of coaching and its specialist areas, such as executive and life coaching. When there is agreement about what actually constitutes coaching, developing methodologies which are standardised and testable will follow.

Studies toward defining coaching might include descriptions of procedures actually used by coaches, language and word analyses of coaching sessions (further studies might include comparisons of the language used in coaching and other growth and development interventions), and analyses of coach and client perceptions of coaching.

Developing Appropriate Measurements for Coaching Research

There is a need for developing measures which are appropriate for coaching research. While the social sciences offer many concepts that are useful for coaching, and often have validated measures (e.g., quality of life), few measures have been developed specifically for coaching. In evaluating coaching, for example, researchers might want to measure improvement to mental health. However, most of the measures of mental health were developed for clinical populations and may introduce a ceiling effect. Coaching
researchers will need to carefully evaluate and probably modify the existing measures they use, in addition to developing new ones specific to coaching.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Coaching
Evaluating the effectiveness of coaching is of the utmost importance. Both group studies and controlled outcome studies are sorely needed. According to Kazdin (1980), one of the first questions of any intervention is whether it is more effective than no intervention. Further research questions might be, “Do clients experience increased self-efficacy?”, “Do clients identify and evidence new positive behaviors?” and “Do clients show increased ability to attain self-chosen goals?” It is important that evaluations of effectiveness be tied to measurable outcomes (e.g., goal-attainment) in addition to self-report measures (e.g., life satisfaction, quality of life). Outcome measures which use information from others (i.e., peers, partners, supervisors) would also be beneficial. Cross-sectional studies could provide a starting point for resolving problems of theory, and then longitudinal designs can investigate the long-term effects of coaching. Eventually, research could be refined to questions such as “Does coaching have an effect above and beyond providing attention and feedback?”. More group studies could compare coaching to other forms of intervention, such as traditional psychotherapy, peer support, and self-help programs. As the body of research knowledge expands, comparison of the various types of coaching, and matching methods to particular clients and client situations will become important. In all of these types of studies, large enough samples with control groups, random assignment and standardised methods are vital for quantitative studies, while solid qualitative design components can help “put the story” to the numbers. Some of the other chapters in this book address these issues.

Developing Theories of the Coaching Process
Assuming the effectiveness of coaching, the development of theory is also of great importance. Research into how coaching effects change will be crucial to refine techniques. What constructs (e.g., self-efficacy, readiness for change, metacognition) make it work? Theory from a variety of disciplines are likely to be of use, including those of human change; systems and organisation; and of the self, behavior and learning.

The relationship, or alliance, between coach and client also needs a theory base. What are the necessary ingredients for a successful alliance which advances the client’s growth? Studies which examine the synergy reported by coaches and clients when coaching is working well will be a boon to refining practice.

Investigating the relationship between the client and the situations they are embedded in (environmental factors) will also help the practice of coaching. For example, what organisational structures influence the ability of the executive coaching client to implement coaching goals? For individual clients, what role does social support play in helping or hindering
coaching? Studies which tackle these questions will undoubtedly help coaches to design effective coaching interventions.

Investigating the Characteristics of Clients and Coaches
Further research into the characteristics of clients and coaches is also needed. What are the characteristics of clients for whom successful or unsuccessful coaching outcomes can be predicted? Evaluating such variables as the motivation of the client, personality characteristics (e.g., openness to experience, defensiveness, introversion/extraversion), readiness for change and environmental or demographic factors will allow further tailoring of coaching models based on research evidence. Similarly, research investigating the characteristics of effective coaches, such as training background, individual style, experience and so on will also be important for training and practice.

Towards Evidence-Based Coaching
As a body of knowledge is developed on the topics outlined above, and undoubtedly many others, the techniques of coaching can be refined by what has been demonstrated to be effective, enhancing the legitimacy of coaching.

Summary
As the popularity of coaching as an avenue of growth and change for individuals and organisations has expanded, the need for the development of theory and rigorous research has become more pressing. There are a number of challenges to be overcome in developing a body of knowledge about coaching. The foremost is arriving at a formal definition. By establishing clear boundaries for coaching, the territory is also established for developing theory. Practical challenges in research include developing a community of researchers focused on coaching, developing forums for the dissemination and publication of coaching research, and gaining sources of funding. Two further challenges are to bridge the current gap between those in practice and research, and integrating relevant thought from across relevant disciplines.

Research areas include developing appropriate measures, evaluating the effectiveness of coaching, developing theories of the coaching process and identifying the characteristics of effective coaching, and of clients and coaches. The professionalism of coaching will be advanced by these and other matters being addressed by a community of researchers, and coaching techniques can be refined based on evidence generated by research and theory.

References


Part 2

Integrating Theory and Practice in Coaching
Mental-Health Issues and Challenging Clients in Executive Coaching

Michael Cavanagh

Coaching is emerging as one of the major forms of personal and professional development used by executives. Organisations and individuals use coaching to develop skills, enhance performance, develop leadership and personal functioning, and to remediate unhelpful patterns of behaviour. As such, coaching and therapy share some ground and some techniques. It is often said that one of the key differences between coaching and therapy is that coaching deals with nonclinical populations, whereas therapy is designed to address the needs of people suffering from diagnosable clinical disorders such as depression and anxiety. While this is an important distinction and one that coaches need to take seriously, the task of determining the boundaries between psychopathology and the normal range of human functioning can be difficult. When is a person simply sad, and when are they depressed? When is the worry an executive feels over delivering a key presentation just the normal butterflies associated with public speaking, and when is it a symptom of a more pervasive case of social phobia? These are complex questions for coaches, particularly those untrained in psychology and the behavioural sciences. Nevertheless they are important issues, because coaches are inevitably faced with the problem of significant mental-health problems in some clients.

A considerable body of research tells us that over 20% of the general population will suffer from some diagnosable mental-health problem at some point in their life, and that 10% to 15% of the population suffer from some form of personality disorder (Svrakic et al., 2002). Who are these people? It is easy to think of them as “other” — the unfortunates who inhabit the mental-health facilities of our society, or people from other socioeconomic classes, occupations, or areas. But the truth is that they are not “other”. They inhabit our workplaces, our suburbs, our social circles.
and our families. For example, with respect to socioeconomic status, Timonen et al. (2001) found that psychiatric disorders were more severe among suicide victims of higher socioeconomic status. Further, in one US study 11% of lawyers in Carolina were found to have seriously considered suicide at least once a month (Dolan, 1995). In general, professionals and managers have higher rates of stress, anxiety and depression than skilled, semiskilled and unskilled individuals (Eaton, Anthony, Mandel, & Garrison, 1990; Moss, 1991).

Although coaching is oriented to nonclinical populations, it should not be surprising that some might turn to coaching to overcome significant mental-health problems. Acknowledging to one’s friends and colleagues “I am seeing a coach” may appear more desirable than admitting “I am seeing a therapist”. Indeed this tendency to seek help for psychological distress in coaching appears to have been borne out by the only two studies so far conducted to investigate the efficacy of life coaching. Both screened applicants for mental-health problems using the Hopkins Brief Symptom Inventory (Derogatis & Melisaratos, 1983). In the first study 52% of the respondents reported symptoms found in only the most distressed 2% of the population (Green, Oades, & Grant, 2004, p. ??). In the second study, Spence and Grant (2004) found 26% of their respondents similarly reported symptoms of significant mental distress (p. ??).

It might be argued that coaching is a benign intervention. Its solution-focused approach preferences the client’s choice of goal and action plan, thereby maximising client control and minimising any damage that could occur from a failure on the part of the coach to recognise mental-health problems. However, it is simply not the case that coaching is always a benign activity. This has been pointed out by a number of authors. For example:

I believe that in an alarming number of situations, executive coaches who lack rigorous psychological training do more harm than good. By dint of their backgrounds, and biases, they downplay or simply ignore deep-seated psychological problems they don’t understand. Even more concerning, when an executive’s problems stem from undetected or ignored psychological difficulties, coaching can actually make a bad situation worse. In my view, the solution most often lies in addressing unconscious conflict when the symptoms plaguing an executive are stubborn or severe (Berglas, 2002, p. 87).

One example of where coaching may cause harm is the case of depressed clients. Coaching involves goal-setting, often using stretch goals. However, depressed clients face significant difficulties in initiating and maintaining goal-directed behaviour. The coach can unknowingly encourage them to set goals beyond their current capability — indeed, such clients may seek to set such goals unprompted, hoping this will help them overcome their lack of energy and motivation. Failure to achieve these goals can further entrench a sense of despair and hopelessness, and these clients can leave coaching significantly worse off. If their depression and hopelessness is severe enough, failure in coaching could even be life-threatening.
When a coach does not have sufficient knowledge about mental-health issues, they are unlikely to notice the subtle signs of mental disorder in their clients. It can be difficult even for coaches with mental-health training, as clients often attempt to disguise their distress. The clinically depressed client may put on a public display of enthusiasm and happiness, and the anxious person may feign indifference or downplay their worries. Nevertheless, as identified in the code of conduct of the International Coaching Federation (and similar to other professional codes of conduct), two central ethical imperatives in coaching are for coaches to know the limits of their abilities and services, and to always act in the best interest of their clients. These require coaches to ensure that they make informed judgements about the nature of the emotional and mental issues their clients are grappling with, and about their ability to help them with these.

Professional education and ongoing supervision of coaching practice can be enormously helpful in ensuring coaches adequately assess the limits of their abilities with regard to the issues their clients bring to them. I am suggesting here that a standard, basic coach training should include training to recognise the presence of mental disorder, and an understanding of the appropriate evidence-based treatment options for these problems. In saying this, I am not suggesting that coaches should be fully fledged mental-illness diagnosticians, nor am I suggesting that coaches should attempt to treat mental illness. Rather, I am suggesting that coaches should be familiar with the key features of the most common mental disorders they are likely to meet among their clients, and be well informed about the referral options available.

Categorical Approaches to Mental Illness

Awareness of categorical approaches to diagnosis of mental-health problems can be particularly helpful for coaches in the process of determining whether the client would be better served by a qualified therapist. One commonly used categorical diagnostic system is that used by the fourth edition text revision of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* of the American Psychiatric Association (DSM-IV-TR). This describes the common features and presentation of mental disorders, and gives clear diagnostic criteria associated with each. It is useful for coaches to become familiar with the features of the more common mood and anxiety disorders seen in coaching. These include depression, dysthymia, bipolar disorder, social phobia, general anxiety disorder, panic disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder. This chapter will not outline the features of these disorders; there is a large body of literature to which the reader is referred. A multitude of treatment-outcome studies have shown that there are good quality evidence-based treatment programs available for these conditions. Coaches should familiarise themselves with the types of treatments available for these disorders along with their efficacy. In particular, cognitive-behaviour therapy (both with and without pharmacological therapies) has been shown to be beneficial for depressive and anxiety disorders.
Dimensional Assessments: Assessing Suitability for Coaching

Aside from a familiarity with the general criteria for identifying common mental disorders, it is important that coaches have a process for deciding when the difficulties faced by their client warrant specialist intervention. There are no easy, sure-fire solutions; informed judgement and experience, along with an honest appraisal of one’s own skills and abilities are necessary. However, the following five questions can be helpful in eliciting the information to make this decision.

*How long has the client been experiencing this distress or dysfunction?* If there is a persistent pattern of distress or dysfunction over a long period of time, then consider referral to a mental-health specialist.

*How extreme are the behaviours or responses of the client?* If the client’s behaviours and responses (emotional, cognitive or physiological) appear to fall outside the range expected of an average person, it may indicate the presence of psychopathology. For example, this may include the client who becomes depressed or needs to take stress leave following relatively minor negative performance feedback. Another example would be the client who finds they cannot speak up at meetings, or has to endure great anxiety to do so.

*How pervasive are the distresses and patterns of dysfunctional behaviour?* Is the problem limited to a certain situation or aspect of the person’s life, or does it seem to be operating in many areas and many times? For example, is the person’s anxiety only around public speaking at important occasions, or does any situation in which they might be evaluated provoke anxiety?

*How defensive is the person?* Does the person actively seek to avoid addressing the unhelpful behaviours? Do they deny the problems in the face of significant evidence? Do they become overly aggressive, defensive or passive when appropriately challenged by the coach? Such responses may indicate that the client’s problem may be deep-seated.

*How resistant to change are the dysfunctional patterns of behaviour, thinking or emotions?* Do the negative or unhelpful patterns persist despite the client’s apparent willingness to address them? Is homework regularly not done, or done poorly? These things may indicate that the person is having great difficulty in addressing the unhelpful patterns of behaviour.

Working with Challenging Personalities in Coaching

Using the broad principles outlined above can help coaches deal appropriately with clients who appear to be suffering from significant personal distress. But what about those clients who are not so much distressed themselves, as seeming to be a source of distress to those around them?
Such clients may be suffering from a personality disorder. These disorders differ significantly from the mood disorders in that they represent persistent and enduring dysfunctional patterns of experiencing and interacting with the world. People with personality disorders are hard to live and work with — and they themselves can often find life hard. The way they interpret events and interact with the world often causes both themselves and others significant practical and emotional problems.

As with the mood disorders, having an awareness of categorical approaches to personality disorders can help the coach to notice the presence of problematic personality issues. The diagnostic system used by DSM-IV-TR is perhaps the one most widely used for personality disorders. It is only possible here to give the reader a summary of the central features of the main personality disorders (see tables 1 and 2). For fuller descriptions the reader is referred to the large body of literature on these disorders.

Estimates of the prevalence of personality disorders suggest that between 10% and 15% of the population may meet criteria for a diagnosable personality disorder (Svrakic et al, 2002). The author is not aware of any studies that assess the prevalence of personality disorders among clients of coaching, either executive or life. Anecdotal evidence and personal experience suggest that the proportion of serious personality difficulties in executive coaching is probably greater than that in the general population, particularly if the coaches’ clientele includes people sent to coaching to overcome “problematic behaviours” (see, e.g., Hogan & Hogan, 2001; Sperry, 1997).

When faced with a client who displays enduring patterns of dysfunctional behaviour, the coach needs to assess whether their skills match the client’s need or whether the client should be referred to a qualified mental-health practitioner. For clients who show less severe disruption of functioning, the five key questions outlined above remain important for assessing their suitability for coaching.

Table 1

DSM-IV-TR General Criteria for Personality Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Personality disorders are enduring patterns of inner experience and behaviour that deviate markedly from the expectations of the individual's culture and are manifested in:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) cognition (i.e., ways of perceiving and interpreting self, other people and events)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) affectivity (i.e., the range, intensity, lability and appropriateness of emotional functioning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) interpersonal functioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) impulse control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. The enduring pattern is inflexible and pervasive across a broad range of personal and social situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. The enduring pattern leads to clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. The pattern is stable and of long duration and its onset can be traced back at least to adolescence or early adulthood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. The enduring pattern is not better accounted for as manifestation or consequence of another mental disorder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. The enduring pattern is not due to the direct physiological effects of substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication) or a general medical condition (e.g., head trauma).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Not all “problematic personality features” indicate frank personality disorders, nor do they immediately indicate unsuitability for coaching. By a dimensional approach to personality, the expression of personality runs along a continuum from “disordered” to a “healthy expression of personality style” (see Figure 1 and Table 3). Challenging clients are those whose style and behaviours cause them difficulties, but who are not so inflexible or severely dysfunctional as to be considered personality-disordered. Such clients can usually benefit from either therapy or psychologically sophisticated coaching, or both.

Each of the personality types in Table 3 has a healthy and dysfunctional expression. While all the personality types are represented in coaching, experience suggests the most common challenging executive clients fall along the Narcissistic–self-confident, Histrionic–dramatic, Borderline–passionate and Antisocial–daring continua. Let us use the Narcissistic–self-confident continuum as an example. At the dysfunctional or disordered end of the spectrum, narcissistic executives can be charismatic, motivating and highly successful.

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Table 2: Core Features of DSM-IV-TR Personality Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality disorder</th>
<th>Core behavioural indicator</th>
<th>Prevalence</th>
<th>Treatment amenability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paranoid PD</td>
<td>a pattern of distrust and suspiciousness such that others’ motives are interpreted as malevolent and a restricted range of emotional expression</td>
<td>0.5 – 2.5%</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schizoid PD</td>
<td>a pattern of detachment from social relationships and a restricted range of emotional expression</td>
<td>&lt; 1%</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schizotypal PD</td>
<td>a pattern of acute discomfort in close relationships, cognitive or perceptual distortions, eccentric behaviour</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antisocial PD</td>
<td>a pattern of disregard for and violation of the rights of others</td>
<td>male — 3%</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline PD</td>
<td>a pattern of instability in interpersonal relationships, self image, and affects marked by idealisation and devaluing and marked impulsivity</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Histrionic PD</td>
<td>a pattern of excessive emotionality and attention-seeking</td>
<td>2–3%</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narcissistic PD</td>
<td>a pattern of grandiosity, sense of entitlement or self-centredness, need for admiration and lack of empathy for others</td>
<td>&lt; 1% (but high incidence traits)</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obsessive-compulsive PD</td>
<td>a pattern of preoccupation with orderliness, perfectionism and control</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent PD</td>
<td>a pattern of submission and clinging behaviour related to an excessive need to be taken care of</td>
<td>no reliable data</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidant PD</td>
<td>a pattern of social inhibition, feelings of inadequacy and hypersensitivity to negative evaluation</td>
<td>male — 3%</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unclassified personality disorders</td>
<td>female — 1%</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: † Descriptions adapted from DSM-IV-TR. Estimates of prevalence and treatment amenability taken from Sperry (1995).
They draw people to themselves with their confidence, excitement and grand visions. At the same time, however, they are often dismissive of others, arrogant, even contemptuous. They excel at promoting themselves, their projects and successes, but often fail to recognise the contributions of others. They may downplay or even misappropriate others’ contributions. They are apt to rationalise failures and seek to blame others or the environment for poor performance. As team leaders they often do not foster independence and creativity; rather, they can develop dependency and acquiescence in their teams. It is not unusual for their direct reports to feel undervalued, used and

Table 3
DSM-IV-TR Personality Disorders and Corresponding Healthy Personality Styles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DSM-IV-TR Personality disorder</th>
<th>Healthy personality style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paranoid PD</td>
<td>Vigilant*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schizoid PD</td>
<td>Self-sufficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schizotypal PD</td>
<td>Creative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antisocial PD</td>
<td>Daring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline PD</td>
<td>Passionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Histrionic PD</td>
<td>Dramatic*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narcissistic PD</td>
<td>Self-confident*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obsessive-compulsive PD</td>
<td>Conscientious*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent PD</td>
<td>Loyal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidant PD</td>
<td>Socially sensitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive-aggressive</td>
<td>Leisurely*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Descriptor of healthy personality styles taken from Sperry (1997).
resentful. Narcissistic executives typically find it very difficult to receive feedback when it suggests need for improvement. They also often find it difficult to engage in calm discussion when viewpoints different to their own are being expressed. In such situations, narcissists are apt to aggressively dismiss and devalue both the other person and their viewpoint or feedback. For this reason, they often do not get clear unambiguous feedback about their negative traits. This lack of corrective feedback feeds their overblown sense of their skill, intelligence and invulnerability.

At the healthy end of the spectrum, self-confident executives can also be charismatic, motivating and highly successful. Their vision, self-confidence, and strong sense of purpose contribute to their charisma. They are able to back their own judgement, while also being able to listen to the opinions of others, recognising and incorporating valuable suggestions. They are able to value themselves appropriately, while recognising and valuing those around them. As team leaders they are able to share the glory of success with the team, and act as advocates for their team. They recognise that success requires attention and effort be paid to the growth, satisfaction and development of the team members. They are able to promote themselves and their goals effectively and actively seek to do so. At the same time they are able to reflect on their performance and take appropriate responsibility. They expect others to respect them, and are able to be appropriately assertive when others fail to do so.

These descriptions are caricatures — neither exists in the real world. Individuals both express more than one personality dimension simultaneously, and occupy different places on those dimensions over time. Some days and in some situations we tend more toward the healthy end of the spectrum, and sometimes more toward the dysfunctional. Nevertheless, over time we do show preferred styles and repetitive patterns of interaction. These are our “comfort zones” and our habitual responses.

Considering executive’s personalities solely from a categorical perspective can lead to a very problem-focused and pessimistic frame of reference concerning the possibility of change. While it is generally true that personality features tend to be enduring, most people are able to regulate their behaviour and responses so that they usually operate in healthy, flexible and productive ways. Generally, we are capable of moving outside our comfort zones and modifying our habits when the situation demands.

A more useful and realistic approach is to understand the underlying factors or dimensions that make up personality, and how these may be harnessed to create more useful responses to the difficult situations our clients face. Such understanding is particularly important when working with clients who, while not personality-disordered, show problematic patterns of behaviour and responses to stressful situations. These executives can be challenging to coach; the coach requires a relatively sophisticated understanding of these clients’ needs, values and propensities.
Making Sense of Personality in Coaching: Cloninger's Psychobiological Model

Many factorial or dimensional models of personality have been proposed. For example, Eysenck’s three-factor theory and Costa and McCrae’s five-factor theory have been important in the study of personality for several decades (Eysenck, 1967; Costa & McCrae, 1990). Systems such as the Cattell’s 16 Personality Factors (Cattell, Eber, & Tatsuoka, 1970) and the Myers–Briggs Personality Type Indicators (Myers, 1962) have enjoyed popularity in organisational and community settings. Cloninger’s (1993) seven-factor model is a relatively new model of personality with promising application to coaching.

In this model, personality is made up of four temperament factors and three character factors (see Figure 2). The temperament factors are the heritable or biologically determined features of personality. They represent the person’s biases or predispositions in the way they are likely to interpret and respond to novelty, danger or punishment, and reward.

Character factors, on the other hand, are the result of learning. Three important aspects of this learning involve the extent to which a person identifies the self as (1) an autonomous, responsible, worthwhile individual (self-directedness), (2) an interdependent part of a human society made up of other valuable individuals (cooperativeness), or (3) part of a wider unified and valuable universe (self-transcendence).

![Figure 2](Cloninger's (1993) Psychobiological Model of Personality)
According to Cloninger, the character factors relate to acceptance of the individual self, acceptance of other people, and acceptance of nature in general. Individuals with mature personalities (i.e., effective adaptation and self-satisfaction) are self-reliant, cooperative, and possibly self-transcendent. In contrast, those with personality disorders have difficulty with self-acceptance, are intolerant and revengeful toward others, and may feel self-conscious and unfulfilled. This suggested the hypothesis that subtypes of personality disorder can be defined in terms of temperament variables, whereas the presence or absence of personality disorder may be defined in terms of the character dimensions of self-directedness, cooperativeness, and self-transcendence (Cloninger et al., 1993, pp. 980).

In other words, temperament determines the types of experiences and events that will most attract or repel the person, and the general type of responses they are predisposed to make (see Table 4). Character determines how functionally these preferences and needs are expressed (see also Table 4). Temperament indicates personality type while character determines its health, that is, where one falls along the disordered–healthy personality-style continuum.

Svrakic et al. (1993) found empirical evidence for Cloninger’s assertion that temperament factors are associated with personality styles. In a study of 136 psychiatric patients using scores on the Temperament Character Inventory (TCI) they found that character factors, (particularly self-directedness) predicted the presence of personality disorder, while the pattern of temperament factors predicted the type of personality disorder present. A range of studies using both clinical and nonclinical samples have supported Cloninger’s model (e.g., Brandstrom, Richter, & Nylander, 2003; Mulder, 1996; Parker et al., 2003; Peirson et al., 2000; and Casey & Joyce, 1999).

A later study (Svrakic et al., 2002) further identified the pattern of temperament factors associated with the different personality disorders (see Table 5).

One of the key features of dealing with problem personalities is that many of the levers normally used to encourage behaviour change are ineffective, or even counterproductive. For example, the narcissistic executive is apt to interpret silence from their team following a suggestion for action as a lack of competence or motivation rather than disagreement. The boss who encourages a passive-aggressive employee to collaboratively develop solutions to problems is likely to find the employee engaging in even greater withdrawal and negativity.

Having an understanding of Cloninger’s temperament and character factors can help the coach identify which needs and values are likely to motivate their client, and which are likely to be ineffective. For example, Cloninger’s model indicates that personalities that fall along the antisocial–daring dimension are high in novelty-seeking traits and low in harm-avoidance and reward-dependence traits. Such people are likely to find extravagance, novelty and excitement motivating, but will be relatively unmoved by the suffering of others, sanctions for breaching rules, or the
possibility that one might not be successful. Indeed, appeals that emphasise risk and bending the rules may be challenging to the daring executive and trigger impulsive action, rather than give reason for pause. At the same time, connecting adaptive behaviours with personal gain and achieving material goals can be used to motivate behaviours that are more cautious and respectful of others. Table 6 outlines the key needs and behavioural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4</th>
<th>Descriptors of Individuals with High and Low Scores on TCI Temperament and Character Subscales†</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Temperament factors</strong></td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harm-avoidance: fear of negative outcomes</td>
<td>Pessimistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fearful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fatigable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novelty-seeking: a need for stimulation and excitement</td>
<td>Curious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quick-tempered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Impulsive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extravagant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disorderly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Easily Bored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward-dependence: a need for interpersonal acknowledgement</td>
<td>Gregarious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perhaps needy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sentimental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open/Warm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appreciative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistence: a need for achievement and completion</td>
<td>Industrious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enthusiastic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perfectionistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Character factors</strong></th>
<th><strong>High</strong></th>
<th><strong>Low</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-directedness: the ability to accept oneself and to control, regulate and adapt behaviour in accordance with chosen goals and values</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>Blaming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Purposeful</td>
<td>Aimless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resourceful</td>
<td>Inept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-accepting</td>
<td>Van</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disciplined</td>
<td>Undisciplined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperativeness: the ability to identify, accept and work with other people</td>
<td>Tender-hearted</td>
<td>Intolerant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empathic</td>
<td>Intensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>Hostile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compassionate</td>
<td>Revengeful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principled</td>
<td>Opportunistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-transcendence: acceptance and identification with the wider world. Includes the ability to accept ambiguity.</td>
<td>Unselfconscious</td>
<td>Self-absorbed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intuitive</td>
<td>Contrived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acquisitive</td>
<td>Controlling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>Materialistic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: † Adapted from Svrakic et al (2002)
vulnerabilities, and a few examples of motivating and nonmotivating values for each of the personality dimensions.

“Betty” is an example of an executive who is “challenging”. A senior trader in a stockbroking firm, she presented at coaching as an extroverted, charming, witty and intelligent woman in her early 40s. She had been sent to coaching after being passed over for a more senior management position. Her performance at sales was outstanding and the reason given for coaching was that her people-management skills needed to be improved — specifically, she needed to improve her ability to develop her direct reports. She was very disappointed at being passed over for the promotion, and expressed some anger about it. She believed she was well-suited to the position and deserving of it, and was able to give numerous examples of her successes. She also expressed a suspicion that she was not given the job because the CEO might feel threatened by her. The impression was quickly gained that Betty liked to be in charge, and was not entirely comfortable with self-reflection.

Her 360° feedback suggested that her direct reports felt somewhat undervalued. During the initial session she referred to her team as “my team” and “they”, but did not refer to specific members by name. She tended to avoid discussing performance gaps in detail but did acknowledge a need to “pay more attention to developing the team”. When challenged by specific questions about the development strategies she employed with her team, she was able to point to a range of actions including encouraging members to go to conferences and set goals for their own development. When asked questions which highlighted gaps (such as, “Have you discussed each person’s plan with them?”), she became somewhat prickly, and rationalised these failures rather than focusing on learning. She did, however, express a real willingness to engage with coaching in order to change.

Engaging Betty in the task of developing her direct reports was unlikely to be achieved by making direct appeals to her empathy for them or to her

Table 5
Pattern of Temperament Traits Expected of Different Personality Subtypes†

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disorder</th>
<th>Harm-avoidance</th>
<th>Novelty-seeking</th>
<th>Reward-dependence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passive-aggressive</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Histrionic</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antisocial</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidant</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narcissistic</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schizoid</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obsessive-compulsive*</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: † Adapted from Svrakic et al. (2002)
* When associated with high persistence.
Table 6
Key Reinforcers, Motivators and Derailers for Executives With DSM-IV-TR Personality Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DSM-IV-TR Personality disorder</th>
<th>Key need or reinforcer (key temperament pattern)</th>
<th>Examples of appeals likely to motivate behaviour change</th>
<th>Examples of appeals unlikely to motivate behaviour change</th>
<th>Derailers’ (key character flaw)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narcissistic–self-confident</td>
<td>Need for personal admiration</td>
<td>Enhancement of public profile, opportunities for praise, potential to distinguish oneself.</td>
<td>Empathy for others; appeals to acknowledge deficiencies/failure, promotion of others’ rights.</td>
<td>Arrogance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Histrionic–dramatic</td>
<td>Need for social recognition or prestige</td>
<td>Empathic appeals; opportunities for public performance.</td>
<td>Appeals to order, predictability and uniformity.</td>
<td>Melodrama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline–passionate</td>
<td>Need for a secure relationship</td>
<td>Ideals such as loyalty, commitment, spontaneity. Appeals to idealised self.</td>
<td>Appeals to self-promotion, compromise, or self-sacrifice where disliked parties are perceived to benefit.</td>
<td>Volatility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidant–socially sensitive</td>
<td>Need to avoid negative evaluation</td>
<td>Appeals which address acceptance and security needs.</td>
<td>Opportunities for public performance; appeals emphasise challenge, winning, excitement and risk.</td>
<td>Excessive caution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paranoid–vigilant</td>
<td>Need to be assured</td>
<td>Appeals to measured vigilance.</td>
<td>Appeals that emphasise trust, openness and nonvigilance.</td>
<td>Habitus distrust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schizoid–self-sufficient</td>
<td>Need for self-sufficiency and independence</td>
<td>Opportunity to work on solitary projects; development of self-sufficiency skills.</td>
<td>Social disapproval, empathy for others, opportunity to interact with others.</td>
<td>Aloofness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antisocial–daring</td>
<td>Need for power, need to be “the winner”</td>
<td>Appeals that emphasise personal gain, challenge, winning, excitement and risk.</td>
<td>Appeals to empathy, social conformity, compromise and self-sacrifice.</td>
<td>Mischievousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schizotypal–creative</td>
<td>Need for novelty</td>
<td>Appeals that emphasise spontaneity, newness and creativity.</td>
<td>Appeals to order, predictability and uniformity.</td>
<td>Eccentricity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obsessive–compulsive–conscientious</td>
<td>Need for control</td>
<td>Appeals that emphasise efficiency, conformity, order, predictability and uniformity.</td>
<td>Appeals that emphasise need for flexibility, novelty or difference; social disapproval.</td>
<td>Perfectionism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent–loyal</td>
<td>Need for affection and approval</td>
<td>Appeals that emphasise belonging, social cohesion and security, and social disapproval.</td>
<td>Appeals that emphasise challenge, winning, excitement and risk.</td>
<td>Eagerness to please</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive–aggressive–leisurely</td>
<td>Need to resist control by others</td>
<td>Appeals that emphasise winning interpersonally, reduction in overnight, increased leisure or potential for negative consequences.</td>
<td>Appeals that emphasise compromise, self-reflection, opportunity for self-directed behaviour, accountability.</td>
<td>Passive resistance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Derailers taken from Dotlich and Cairo (2003).*
sense of the moral rightness of this task. Similarly, challenging Betty with her failure to effectively develop her team, exhorting her to become more aligned with company policy, or even presenting this as an opportunity to increase her skills in, and knowledge of, staff development were unlikely to be effective ways of engaging Betty with these managerial responsibilities.

Rather, engagement for Betty came about when the coach acknowledged the real attempts she had made to develop her people, affirmed her stated commitment to this task, and asked her what she would need to change in order for this commitment to be perceived clearly by all the important stakeholders. This included identifying what she would need to change in order for her direct reports to experience a greater sense of her commitment to their development. By externalising the problem in this way, and addressing her need for social recognition and an enhanced public profile, Betty was able to disengage from the defence of her correctness and engage with the task of developing her team (including developing the empathy to understand their needs). In this context, Betty was eventually able to identify patterns of behaviour which undermined both team cohesion and her own reputation and credibility as a manager.

For those whose personality persuasion differs from Betty’s, (e.g., “passionate” or “conscientious” executives), such obvious appeals to self-interest would be likely to be ineffective. Indeed, they would probably appear shallow and somewhat offensive. Berglas (2002) has called such utilitarian appeals “Machiavellian” (p. 88). However, according to Cloninger’s theory, individuals come to a more self-directed, cooperative, self-transcendent character via the insights gained from life experience. In bringing about positive change, albeit for less than perfectly altruistic reasons, it is possible that clients will come to experience themselves, others and the world in a new way, and thereby come to value these adaptive behaviours in themselves.

Conclusion

There is clearly much research needed to understand the prevalence of psychopathology in the clients of executive coaching and its impact on the process of coaching them. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that coaches will be faced with clients suffering from significant mental-health problems, both mood and anxiety disorders, and personality disorders. Coaches are not mental-health clinicians; however, professional practice does require informed attitudes about mental-health issues and therapies. Having sufficient knowledge to be able to identify clients for whom therapy is the appropriate option, and the skill to refer them to an appropriate qualified therapist should be core coaching competencies.

For those clients who do not need therapy, but whose pattern of behaviour and personality make them challenging to coach, a psychologically sophisticated understanding of personality, and the common ways it is
expressed in organisational and work settings, can be enormously useful. A basic goal of developmental coaching for challenging executives is to help them shift their behaviours by increments toward the healthy end of the spectrum for their personality type. By understanding our clients' needs, motivational preferences and values we can help them develop more useful and adaptive patterns of external behaviour and, hopefully, more integrated, satisfying and mature inner experience.

References


While a clear conceptual and theoretical relationship between the fields of coaching, counselling and psychotherapy is evident, much debate within the coaching literature, and indeed from within its broader fields of practice, has centred on differentiating coaching from therapeutic interventions. This has been based predominantly on clientele functionality and developmental focus. It has been argued that, unlike those clients seeking counselling or psychotherapy, coaching clients present as predominantly functional and appropriately adjusted individuals seeking to enhance their performance in a specific aspect of their lives. This differs markedly from those counselling clients seeking to repair a specifically diagnosed cognitive or behavioural dysfunction. It is further argued that a core precept of the coaching process is its focus on the client’s present and future experiences as opposed to that of the counselling and psychotherapy process which predominately concerns itself with past experiences and their contribution to their presenting problem.

However, although making this distinction serves a number of professional, commercial and practical purposes, it fails to acknowledge the widespread applicability and utilisation of therapeutic models of understanding and intervention within the positivist, developmental coaching context. In addition, the premise also fails to acknowledge the contribution that therapeutic paradigms make to understanding the substantial influence of the client’s previously established cognitive-behavioural and experiential learning constructs, formed through their lifetime of learning and experience. Given the assumption that past behaviour is often a strong indicator
of potential future behaviour, it may arguably appear conceptually and practically flawed to approach the developmental process within the coaching relationship without firstly exploring the client’s development experiences and perceptions to date. This can be expected to maximise the effectiveness of both the coaching intervention itself and the client’s developmental outcomes.

This chapter explores the notion of an integrated developmental coaching framework which draws on clients’ past experience and learning to inform their understanding of their present situation and to plan, implement and monitor future development strategies. Further, it outlines the unique contribution that both the body of knowledge within the field of psychology makes to this approach and highlights the unique skill-set of professional psychologists that enables them to facilitate transformational client change within the coaching context. The application of the framework is illustrated and evaluated through a case-study method and key learning points are discussed.

Context

Much debate continues within the coaching industry as to the theoretically related but practically distinct fields of coaching, therapy and counselling. Several authors, including Grant (2002), and Thach and Heinselman (1999), have sought to clearly distinguish coaching from counselling and psychotherapy by drawing attention to the level of client adjustment, functionality and developmental focus explicit in the coaching intervention, in contrast to the problem or dysfunction-centred, corrective intervention of the therapeutic intervention. This distinction has been highly praised by a number of the emerging industry-based coaching associations, such as the International Coach Federation:

Coaching concentrates primarily on the present and future. Coaching does not focus on the past or on the past’s impact on the present (International Coach Federation, 2003).

However, while this distinction has been widely promulgated, few authors have challenged its validity or critiqued either the utility of this conceptualisation or the theoretical rationalisation of the supposition. Those who have, including Kilburg (2000) and Berglas (2002), speak strongly of the inextricable and often delicately balanced interaction between the practices of coaching and counselling and the numerous similarities and commonalities between the two modalities. Indeed, some authors such as Brunner (1998) explore these similarities further by promoting the practice of “psychoanalytic coaching”.

Writers in the related fields of counselling and psychotherapy have, for some time, identified the importance of future and developmentally-focused interventions by counsellors in the correction of behavioural “dysfunction” (Bordin, 1955). Indeed, Heppner, Kivlighan and Wampold (1992)
described the role of a counsellor as being to “help people with a wide variety of personal, educational, and career-related problems” (p. 3), while Ivey and Simek-Downing (1980) defined counselling as an “intensive process concerned with assisting normal people to achieve their goals or function more effectively” (p. 13).

As a highly influential writer in the field of counselling, Corey (1991) presented a progressive view of the structure and nature of counselling which has served to redefine the focus of the counselling process: “My philosophy of counselling does not include the assumption that therapy is exclusively for the ‘sick’ and is aimed at ‘curing’ psychological ‘ailments’ … Counselling, then, is viewed as a vehicle for helping “normal” people get more from life” (p. 4). The clients (as opposed to patients) are therefore seen as predominantly “healthy people who see counselling as a self-exploratory and personal-growth experience” (p. 4).

Authors had identified early in the literature that a key aspect of the counselling process was the relationship formed between counsellor and client. Brammer and Shostrom (1952), for example, described counselling in terms of a “reciprocal” relationship between client and practitioner, as opposed to the then dominant clinician-patient model.

As understanding of this client-counsellor relationship developed further, authors, including Lambert and Cattani-Thompson (1996), concluded that “the best predictors (and possibly causes) of success outside of client variables are counsellor-client relationship factors” (p. 606).

This view has been echoed in the developing coaching literature as explorations of the coach-client relationship have emerged (Eggers & Clark, 2000; Hall, Otazo, & Hollenbeck, 1999).

Arguably, the lines drawn to date between the practice of counselling and coaching interventions may not be as obviously delineated as some may purport. Hence, to ignore the relativity of factors such as past learning (whether deemed functional or dysfunctional) to a client’s current situation appears contradictory to the espoused learning and development outcomes of the coaching relationship. To date, this has been presented as a tenet of therapeutic interventions (Corey, 1991), but not of coaching interventions. To elaborate, if a person’s present behaviour can be seen as a function and consequence of their learning from past experiences, then conceptually this learning should be taken into account when designing future learning experiences within the coaching relationship. This will ensure effective sequencing of developmental interventions to achieve progressive behavioural skill acquisition. Given the premise that coaching clients present to the coaching relationship seeking to learn new, more efficacious methods of thinking and behaving, behavioural theory would suggest that an understanding of past and present experiences and reinforcers of that thinking and behaviour are critical to a client’s successful development (Watson & Tharp, 2002). Consequently, it is through this apparent ambiguity that the profession of
psychology stands to make a significant contribution to the conceptual understanding and practice of coaching.

The Integrated Developmental Coaching Framework

While some transformational models of coaching to date have incorporated a number of elements common to the counselling relationship (e.g., Giglio, Diamante, & Urban, 1998), none have explicitly stated and incorporated a phase within the coaching process dedicated to exploring the client’s unique past experiences and learning. The case study outlined in this chapter therefore illuminates the application of a “past-focused” phase of development within the coaching relationship, traditionally reserved for the realms of counselling and therapy, and explores the contribution that this phase makes to achieving transformational client outcomes.

More importantly to the current context, the integrated developmental coaching framework recognises the unique psychological and theoretical grounding required to appropriately manage the depth and focus of client explorations into their past experiences, without this exercise straying into the realms of therapeutic intervention; this makes explicit the unique contribution that psychology can make to the practice of coaching.

The integrated developmental coaching framework identifies four key phases of introspective exploration within the coaching relationship that facilitate both the client’s, and subsequently, the coach’s understanding of the most effective developmental option required to maximise the client’s success.

Phase 1 — Exploring and Understanding the Past

In the first phase of the integrated developmental coaching framework, the coach seeks to develop the trusting and openly communicative relationship critical to achieving successful coaching outcomes for the client. During this initial coaching phase, a series of broad personal and relationship-based questions are explored and an appropriate level of self-disclosure offered, designed to establish a mutual respect and understanding between the parties in the coaching relationship. Much of this initial interaction may employ person-centred approaches (Rogers, 1951) and gather a number of critical elements of biodata including:

> Professional experiences (e.g., Describe your most significant professional achievement to date. What made this significant?)

> Personal experiences (e.g., What have been your most rewarding/difficult personal challenges in your life to date? What would you change or do differently if you had your time again?)

> Family structure and relationships (e.g., Describe your family structure and relationships as they exist now. Have they always been this way?)
Values and beliefs (e.g., What are your non-negotiable beliefs and values? When/where did you learn these? When have you challenged these in the past?)

Recreational interests (e.g., What interests you outside of family and work? What is it that these activities provide?)

Self-beliefs and perceptions (e.g., What is it that you like most/least about yourself? Why? How do you see yourself currently? Is this accurate with the way in which others see you?)

By exploring these past and personally-focused fields, traditionally reserved for the realms of counselling and therapy, we begin to build a rich picture of the client and their cognitive-behavioural construct. It is through this understanding that we can then move forward with the analysis of how these past experiences and learnings impact on the way the client is currently viewing their present situation and development opportunity.

Phase 2 — Capturing and Grounding the Present

During this second phase, the understanding and insight gained from the introspective and collaborative explorations conducted in phase 1 is applied to an analysis of the client’s current perspectives and development goals. At this point, the original challenges and goals communicated by the client may change in light of their newfound discoveries. Critical issues during this phase include:

Historic bias (e.g., How might your past experiences/learning be impacting on the way you are viewing the present situation?)

Old learning utility (e.g., Will continuing to behave in this as you have always done bring about your desired results? Has this behaviour worked for you in the past but is now obsolete?)

Perceived self-congruence (Is there parity between the way you see yourself currently, the way others see you, and who you understand yourself to be?)

Situational analysis (How might your past experiences be impacting on your current situation?)

Cognitive-behavioural adjustment (How do you need to be thinking and perceiving differently to achieve your goals? How has your past learning prevented that from happening to date?)

The exploration of the impact of past experience and behavioural patterns on the client’s current development challenges creates an opportunity for the purposeful planning of future-oriented skills and behaviours based on the sound foundation of understanding which the client has now developed. At the conclusion of this phase, the client may gain greater clarity around her espoused goals and objectives.
Phase 3 — Designing and Creating the Future

In phase 3, the utilisation of relevant client-change models and processes, such as those outlined by Prochaska and DiClemente (1982), Egan (2001), Kolb (1984) and Grant (2002), serve as the mechanism for change. These models, when applied immediately following a comprehensive exploration of the client’s collective past experiences, now assume a more potent and powerful framework. These methods gain their added developmental strength from the client’s clear personal awareness of the impact that their collective past experiences have had on their current situation and the potential impact that these may also have on their future development achievements.

Phase 4 — Learning and Maintaining the Change

Phase 4 represents the final phase in the experiential learning process (Kolb, 1984). It is during this phase that practice, feedback and correction facilitate progressive development of cognitive-behavioural skills in the client. Here the coach and client work closely together to achieve the client’s targeted outcomes and maintain a reflective awareness of past behavioural patterns and experiences that may present themselves as hurdles to future behavioural development. It is during this phase that recidivism is managed closely and strategies for maintaining change are designed and implemented.

When the four phases are implemented in sequence, a solid foundation of insight and understanding of the client’s “self” is established upon which future growth can be maximised.

This process can be illuminated through the case study outlined below. In this case, the client utilised a technique known as journaling as a tool for introspecting and exploring the development process. This technique has been used widely in experiential learning and counselling contexts with high levels of success (McKenna & Kiewa, 1996).

The Client Journal — An Insight Into the Development Process

Tim Forbes (pseudonym) was a senior-level executive reporting to the senior management group of a US-based Fortune 100 service company. He commenced the coaching relationship with a fuzzy vision (Locke & Latham, 1994) and progressed through each of the 4 phases of the integrated model, capturing his experiences as he progressed. Tim’s unedited reflections are captured below:

Start up. Early discussion revolved around trust and understanding of each other and the task in front of us as it related to executive coaching.

With limited time (my perspective), due to my understanding that I was missing something or needed more (or less) to continue my fast-moving career, I made a decision to trust my coach from the onset. This being said, I only trusted him as much as I could trust myself — so there was much work to do in that arena.
The coach explored the client's understanding of trust and his historical learning around the construct at this point. The conversation centred on early familial relationships and how these shaped the client’s views of his current workplace relations and related trust within them:

As we worked together, I found myself understanding and trusting who I was and am rather than how I thought others were perceiving me. As I began to understand me a little better, I began the process of honesty and trust and only then did we begin to make real progress.

Through facilitated exploration and introspective questioning, the client came to several realisations about his own self-limiting beliefs and behaviours and actively planned strategies to create new, more effective behaviours:

The mission: to achieve a balanced lifestyle. While I asked for a “more balanced lifestyle”, what I found towards the end of the process was that I was really seeking peace of mind, inner strength and to quieten the noise. I only realized this after our work together, because a balanced lifestyle will be measured only by my perception of balance at any given point in my life. What I have achieved to date is long periods of quiet when I can think clearly about my responses before behaving possibly inappropriately.

Through a process of validation and reframing, the client clarified his specific goals and objectives around the changes that he wanted to make and how he would pursue these changes:

Meetings were to be twice a month. These meetings predominately took place by phone due to distance (US to AUS). The regular intervals allowed time to complete tasks and actions to be reviewed at the next meeting. Whilst regular meetings give structure, “beware the unfamiliar” — as I found myself wavering from my commitment to these regular meetings. Not because I was busy or had lessened, but more that I was impacted with all these new thoughts and ideas that I had not entertained before. These additional thoughts on top of an already busy mind made for a very confusing and difficult time for me. (The phrase, “It'll get worse before it gets better” comes to mind.) This was a time when I needed to think and listen to my reasonable voice, to sift through the jumbled thoughts, and adopt those that would support the person I am/wanted to be/was/and will be in the future. Take time out to consider all aspects but do not lose touch as I did with my coach … the coach is the one person who can assist you through the turbulence (this fact was lost on me for about eight weeks but I eventually came around).

As the client-coach relationship developed, the client experienced phases of uncertainty and failing commitment, a symptom common within the behavioural change process (Watson & Tharp, 2002).

This daily journal began to take place early in the process but it was difficult to adopt the right behaviour necessary to complete each day. Discipline is the key to repetitive “good” behaviours. With discipline comes some hard work to ensure that the behaviour that I was trying to modify became part of my day-to-day life. This journal became an outlet for my emotional turbulence. It was an avenue for the good and the bad, the things that were at the heart of my frustrations that drove the behaviour that I so much wanted to change. A line, a paragraph or a page, the length was irrelevant. It was the exercise, the repetition, like draining a wound of an infection so that the real healing may begin to
occur. I’ve looked back at this journal with caution as I see the person I was, but now am proud of the person I have become.

The use of adult educational methods, metaphor and isomorphs were included throughout the developmental process. Metaphor has been utilised by behavioural, gestalt and family therapists previously (Bryant, Katz, Becvar, & Becvar, 1988) and both metaphors and isomorphs have been utilised within general and developmental counselling settings (Roberts, 1987; Atwood & Levine, 1991; Hendrix, 1992).

**Goal: What do you want the endgame to be?**

A balanced lifestyle … which in fact turned into “maintain my sanity, create inner strength and stop the noise in my head”.

**Personally (big picture): A happy and content person.**

**Professionally (big picture): A respected individual at all levels.**

**Reality: What’s happening?: My life seems to be one huge, fast, furious rocket ride to the top. The 74-piece band playing in my left ear and the 7,000,000 horse power engine screaming in my right ear. I can’t stop, someone will overtake me, I need to work harder, hit hard at those who are stupid, don’t suffer fools, and above all don’t trust anyone.**

Cognitive reframing and challenging of self-talk commonly used in Rational Emotive Therapy (Ellis, 1967) were utilised to facilitate the client’s perceptions and understandings of “self” within his professional environment.

What’s getting in the way or helping the situation?

Understanding what got me here in the first place. What are those strengths and how did I come by them? How can we get there? Slow down, turn the volume down, understand the past and embrace it. What am I going to do about that? And when? Taking a disciplined approach to the issues, topics, concerns, and hard discussions that I tend to put off. Get to them in a timely manner and get to the point quickly. Focus on my sphere of influence and say no sometimes to that that does not concern me.

Recall your main or primary goal — make it smart: purpose, values.

This week’s goal — make it smart.

Items to complete in order to reach your goal.

This section, whilst a good checkpoint, was something that I chose not to use, for I was exploring as much of me as I could at this stage and was not prepared to document my main or primary goal … “To achieve a balanced lifestyle”. This had now become superfluous to my real goal of understanding and being confident with myself so that I may be happy with me first for that, before I look to others.

Following this phase of clarifying and challenging prevailing beliefs, a review and reworking of the original stated objectives proposed by the client was conducted and modifications were made as necessary. This process followed the broad framework presented in Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning cycle.

(Reading *On Dialogue* by David Bohm.) This document led me to think about dialogue as a two-way event, at minimum. In the event that topics were not being addressed quickly enough, I would step in and direct. In the event that a
discussion needed to take place . . . well, that was just out of the question. This information helped me to think about the consequences of my approach versus listening and requesting further clarification to solicit thoughts and ideas. This led to my opinions being just that, and while I will have the final word, should there be conflict the larger group feel that their input has been taken into consideration. A collection of thoughts and ideas is always more powerful than the one, but the real value comes from capitalising on all those thoughts and taking the very best from each and binding it together for a solution. By the sheer fact that you have listened, understood and recognised others’ opinions, you begin to gain their trust and respect. This leads to faster, more qualitative results that in turn shorten the dialogue. Defence, one-upmanship, peer pressure and/or bullies soon find that their solutions and support-base is thin and that the cover of shadows that they live in can disappear as quickly as they make their own decision with dialogue. Dialogue leads to negotiation, and negotiation leads to group decisions that are usually supported by a larger number than one.

Several opportunities arose throughout the intervention that lent themselves to opportunities for broadening the client’s perspectives on their developmental challenges thorough reading and self-education. These were included on an ad-hoc basis when appropriate and resulted in a further deepening of the client’s unique subjective contextualising of his environment.

During the journey, I quickly realised that I was reacting badly in busy and stressful situations and that if I did not gain control of my mouth by engaging my brain I would soon get myself into trouble. The problem was exacerbated by the amount of noise in my head and it wasn’t until I could quieten the noise that I began to really control those emotional outbursts. This area was one of the true measures of our success; as I came to know and understand myself more, I knew that the person I hated most of all — the bully — was the person I had become and that needed to change. This small but effective process is a practical way of approaching a very emotional and deep-seated problem by hitting it head on. First be aware of the situation that has me upset. What caused the feeling; what was the trigger? What’s coming out of my mouth, or what am I sending in that abusive, vindictive email? What’s my background conversation? Think before speaking or sending that email. Now with time to think, is that the best approach? Do you need to rethink the approach? Now I have the chance to answer correctly, quietly, confidently and gain the respect that is important to me.

Either I believed in myself or I did not . . . and I did!!! Through more discussion about what I was beneath the tough young executive came a person who cared about himself and genuinely cared about others. The selfishness began to subside and the real person . . . just as tough, but with conviction, started to seep through. Towards the end of the process (not that there is ever really an end), I reviewed the program, with very favourable results. A true success. I had learnt to care about me more than caring about what others thought of me. And thus I began to care about my family and friends more and more and now contact them all regularly, whereas before I did not. This went further — into the workplace, where I have become more patient as I listen to those around me.

The journey, for want of a better description, was filled with emotion and fear. Fear of those beliefs I have . . . that they may be only surface-deep and that I might be found out. To understand my behaviour and what drives it is only the beginning, as it’s what I do with those strengths and weaknesses that determines who I am and how I will be remembered. I have the courage to lead, lead myself and others; and the key for me, at this time, for the next short while is discipline!
The discipline to listen to my reasonable voice, trust myself, give myself the time and care and then take that entire package and represent myself. This is but the first step in my journey but I am already seeing the returns both from a personal and professional perspective. The learning never stops and the art of learning is to listen. Now that the noise has subsided I see more, hear more, feel more and do more that I ever thought possible … and this is just the beginning.

The client concluded the intervention with a summary of successes and future challenges and captured his sense of self-efficacy in relation to these challenges. The client was able to capture key learnings and the effect that these had had on his cognitive-behavioural patterns. Feedback from peers and associates was also informally gained through the client's purposeful conversations with others, which reinforced for him his successful progress and achievements to date.

**Conclusion**

By utilising a structured and managed approach to exploring clients' past learning and experiences, as is widely used in counselling and therapeutic settings, a richness of understanding and insight can develop within a solution-focused, positivist coaching relationship. With this insight comes the foundation for building future behaviours through precise and targeted development opportunities and interventions that maximise the effective outcomes from the coaching intervention. Unlike the predominant contemporary approach from within the coaching industry that avoids and discounts the value of guided reflection on a client's past to achieve successful behavioural change and growth, the field of psychology — in particular, counselling and psychotherapy — provides an abundance of theoretical evidence affirming its value. Initial qualitative explorations of the positivist application of these techniques within coaching environments are promising. A unique understanding and set of professionally-founded skills place coaching psychologists in a unique position to facilitate transformational cognitive and behavioural change within their clients by applying these techniques — which further constitutes the profession’s unique contribution to the practice of coaching.

**References**


The Proactive Behaviour Framework: A Reflective Process for Exploring Thinking, Behaviour and Personal Insight

Travis J. Kemp

An extensive discourse which explores the purpose, objectives and reported outcomes of coaching has emerged within the literature of the coaching profession and related fields. Less attention has been afforded, however, to the development and application of robust, structured and standardised methods and models that achieve introspective and developmental outcomes for coaching clients when used in the coaching process. In particular, there appears to be an immediate need for the continued exploration of both the specific developmental and personal-growth opportunities that arise for clients in coaching and the formulation of effective solutions, particularly to those issues that prevent clients from moving forward and achieving their ultimate goals through coaching. This chapter introduces the Proactive Behaviour Framework (PBF) as a tool to facilitate clients’ introspective exploration and development of insight, and their formulation of effective behavioural responses to the unique or problematic situations that they face. Given the number of situations that coachees may confront, it is likely that many will impede developmental progress. The ability of the client to explore these situations and devise workable solutions to them is critical. This discussion outlines the structure and application of the PBF and identifies several critical issues relevant to coaching practitioners applying the framework within their practice in order to achieve developmental breakthroughs for their clients.
Current Challenges

Several authors have observed that one vital competency of effective coaches is their ability to broaden their clients’ perspectives on situations that they find challenging to deal with, thereby helping them to see these situations, and their possible behavioural responses to them, differently (Ellinger & Bostrom, 1999; Giglio, Diamante, & Urban, 1998; Kilburg, 1996). This ability is especially pertinent given the proposition of King and Eaton (1999) that one of the fundamental aims of the coaching relationship itself is to support coachees to “break free of self-imposed limits” and “experiment with new approaches” (p. 146). Often these impasses are the result of rigid or staid thinking in relation to either self-perceptions or perceptions of the problem being faced. The key to achieving a developmental solution to these dilemmas is exploring, creating and using systematically structured cognitive-behavioural processes and tools that are effective, repeatable and measurable and facilitate the development of the coachee. The client should emerge from coaching with a series of cognitive-behavioural solutions to their immediate challenges that can be applied in other situations. Most importantly, these cognitive-behavioural solutions may often be practised and refined by the client within the coaching intervention to a stage of mastery or automation. This will enable the coachee to skillfully and insightfully apply their learning to a range of situations that they face in the future.

However, on some occasions, coachees may find themselves at an impasse in their behavioural development that prevents them from progressing towards their desired level of mastery of the behavioural skills. While several models have been constructed that address the broader process of change within the coaching relationship, for example, Egan’s (2001) skilledd-helper model, Prochaska & DiClemente’s (1982) model of change and Grant’s (2002) transtheoretical model of coaching, few authors have grappled with a conceptual framework from applied cognitive-behavioural science for facilitating the movement of a coachee beyond a developmental impasse. This chapter introduces a practical tool to guide coachees through a process of cognitive-behavioural analysis while providing them with an introspective analytical framework for examining past, present and future behavioural responses to real-world situations. The framework is constructed within the context of the existentialist notion of personal responsibility (Sartre, 1971) and provides a way for coaches to engage in a form of structured critical introspection as it relates to their idiosyncratic thinking and behaviour. Further, the framework enables the planning of strategies to achieve the developmental goals and objectives of coachees. Critical to the successful application of the model are both the internal dialogue that emerges for coachees as they actively engage with the model and the explorative dialogue between coachee and coach that results.
Defining “Response-ability” as a Cognitive-Behavioural Framework

Popular understanding of responsibility is as the process of making a mature or appropriate decision when confronted with a situation or behavioural choice. Hence, responsibility can be defined as behaviour that reflects self-sufficiency, including the skill to make balanced decisions and the ability to demonstrate sound judgement, in various situations or environments (Kemp & Piltz, 1995). Virtues such as compassion, cooperation, honesty and self-discipline are also associated with the term (Stiehl, 1993). While this definition is convenient in its simplicity, we often find ourselves operating in diverse roles and environments — physical, social, spiritual, professional and personal — which affect our behavioural decisions. We are continually responding to this multitude of stimuli, consciously or subconsciously. To use a concrete example, we often monitor the weather in order to respond to it with an appropriate behaviour, for example, carrying an umbrella if it rains — a behavioural response that would appear logical and appropriate to most. Of course, some may choose to venture into the rain unprotected, and get their clothes wet. Regardless of the behavioural choice, we have responded to the stimuli and so, by definition, have exercised our responsibility within the context of the presenting situation. Hence, all individuals are inherently responsible regardless of their behaviour, and therefore demonstrate responsibility. However, it is not until the value judgements associated with this behaviour emerge that contention and conflict are observed. Behaviour then becomes broadly “appropriate” or “inappropriate”, depending upon the perspective from which one judges the situation and behaviour arising from it.

To develop a usable paradigm of responsibility, we can actually simplify further. The word can be seen as being constructed of two distinct parts, response and ability. We may then view responsibility as our fundamental human behavioural ability to respond to our environment and to the multitude of situations that it presents to us. For the coachee, these situations vary from business and career development to leadership and management challenges, all of which are situations requiring analysis and the formulation of an appropriate cognitive-behavioural response.

Responsibility can therefore be best explored through an illustrative model (see Figure 1). The dialogue which emerges when the coach presents and explores the model with the coachee provides the foundation for insight and the impetus to explore and construct alternative cognitive-behavioural strategies to apply to developmental challenges.

Situation or Event

What is the situation or event that you are faced with and must respond to?

The situation that confronts us is the stimulus. For example, this may be an emerging performance issue for a business manager in relation to a member of her staff.
Figure 1
The proactive behaviour framework (PBF).

Perception and Processing

*How are you seeing and interpreting this situation and how are you feeling about it? What do you plan to do about it?*

In many cases clients may fail to reflect consciously on their ability to choose a response to a situation. This realisation often becomes lost because of the large number of automatic responses that are made daily and the perception that the most frequently exhibited response is the only one possible. Using our previous example, a “disciplinary action” response to the poorly performing employee may appear the “right” and “only”
response for some managers; however, a multitude of alternative perceptions and response options are possible, some of which may result in a more highly valued outcome — a point which warrants further elaboration.

Critical to the coachee’s successful future-focused application of this tool is their conscious ownership of responsibility and cognisance of their ability to choose from a multitude of responses to any situation. Without this realisation, they may lapse into automatic and preconscious reactive (rather than proactive) responses to the presenting situation. Only when the coachee has employed a cognitively introspective and reflective process can they make a proactive choice of behaviour. Engaging in this cognitive cycle thus demonstrates acknowledgement of, and proactive exercising of, responsibility by the coachee.

**Behavioural Choice Opportunity**

*What do you think and how do you behave? What are the alternative possibilities?*

Responses to a situation can be grouped under two broad headings. The coachee may respond (often automatically) in a reactive or avoidant style, or in a proactive or action-based style that is often preceded by introspective reflection. It is important to note that individuals may respond in different ways at different times. Rarely do coachees respond proactively to all situations; likewise, few behave automatically and reactively in all situations. For most coachees, there is a mixture which often depends on a number of related environmental factors. The coach can help coachees to position themselves on the responsibility continuum by examining their predominant behaviour patterns.

**Reactive or Avoidant Cognition and Behaviour**

*It’s not my fault. There’s nothing I can do. It’s not my responsibility.*

These reactive responses reflect the coachee behaviours of blame, justification, denial, procrastination, avoidance and placing personal needs above the needs of the team. The cognitive results of this behaviour are often a progressively externalised locus of control; frustration and anger at the situation; feelings of disempowerment; incongruence between thought, feeling and behaviour; and a decrease in self-esteem and efficacy. Reactive behaviour often emerges in response to uncontrollable external factors; the individual fails to realise that they can maintain control — not over the situation per se, but over their response to it and hence, their thinking and behavioural choices. Reactive responses often come from the belief of coachee that their choice is controlled externally; that is, “I am not in control of this event or situation and therefore I cannot control my response to it”. This kind of response often emerges as a precontemplative autonomous behaviour because of limited understanding of the stimulus–behaviour response cycle.
Proactive or Action-Based Cognition and Behaviour

*Where can I add value here? What do I need to do differently? What have I learned from my mistakes?*

The construct of proactive personality derives from Bandura’s (1977) interactionist construct of self-efficacy and the proactive personality and has been shown to correlate highly with it (Kemp, 2001).

According to Crant (1995), proactivity describes the “extent to which [individuals] take action to influence their environments … [P]roactive personalities identify opportunities and act on them; they show initiative, take action, and persevere until they bring about meaningful change” (p. 532). In validating this construct, Crant (1995) reported sound-criterion validity of the Proactive Personality Scale when compared with the “Big Five” personality factors. Prior demonstrations of the internal validity of this instrument were also presented by Bateman and Crant (1993). They conducted three studies to examine the psychometric properties of the instrument. Moderate convergent validity was found for the “need for achievement” and “need for dominance”, with reliability alpha coefficients of between .87 and .89. The behaviours many coaches seek to engender in coachees match those captured within the construct. In particular, opportunities to explore the behaviours that make up this construct abound within the experiential practices inherent to coaching. Its conceptual and correlational relativity to Rotter’s (1966) construct of locus of control (Kemp, 2001) together with its discriminant validity (Crant, 1995) make the construct of proactive personality particularly interesting within the context of the coaching relationship.

Empowered clients who are able to acknowledge and accept their personal responsibility subsequently exhibit proactive, action-based responses. These behaviours include ownership of actions and their consequences, accountability, commitment to meeting agreements, an action-based orientation towards, and acceptance of, personal responsibility, and achieving collective outcomes above personal gains. The cognitive and emotional outcomes of these behaviours take the form of an internalised locus of control, motivation, empowerment, congruence and integrity between thoughts and actions, and elevated self-esteem and efficacy. Proactive choices are made through a reflective analysis of one’s behavioural options and the implementation of behaviour chosen as the most appropriate for achieving the desired outcome. Proactive behavioural responses enable the coachee to fully “own” their behavioural choice and actively reflect it.

In summary, proactive responses to a presenting situation are derived from understanding and acceptance of the relationship between the situation and the subsequent introspection and reflection that leads to a conscious choice of action. Coachees displaying proactive behaviours acknowledge that the situation is not in their direct control; however, their response to the situation remains their choice.
**Keys to Effective Application of the Model**

Several key factors need to be considered to ensure this tool is used successfully in negotiating an impasse in the coaching relationship. Critical to the effective development of trust within the coaching relationship is demonstration by the coach of the same empowering behaviours they encourage in their clients (Ellinger & Bostrom, 1999; Peterson, 1996). Considerable time must be spent by the coach in examining their own behavioural patterns within the paradigm of proactivity and responsibility. As with all helping relationships, the helper must understand “self” before venturing to help others (Egan, 2001).

In addition, applying the tool to examples of past behaviour allows the coachee to develop an understanding of the framework without having to contend with the potential emotions and frustrations of a current situation. The client’s self-analytical skills, and ability to apply this thinking model to new situations, are enhanced by adopting this approach.

The context in which the framework is presented may also affect the way in which it is received by coachees. The model is designed as a tool for facilitated introspective reflection and not as a diagnostic tool. Exploring the framework with a coachee requires unconditional positive regard for them, and not frustration and disrespect. To apply the framework in this emotional environment may seriously jeopardise the level of trust that should be sustained in the coaching relationship.

**Conclusion**

The PBF provides a working tool for coaches to challenge clients faced with a developmental impasse in the coaching process. The intuitive conceptualisation and usability of the model make it a valuable framework for developmental conversations and may form the foundations of later clarification and setting of goals. A qualitative exploration of the effects of applying this model within coaching interventions may deepen our understanding of it, and make a valuable contribution to broadening the theory and practice of coaching psychology in the future.

**References**


Integrating an Emotional Intelligence Framework Into Evidence-Based Coaching

Susan A. David

For coaching to continue to establish itself as a profession, coaches will need to learn what they can from the existing theory of, and research into, psychological development and change. They will also need to apply innovative, theoretically driven and empirically validated interventions. To this end, coaches may benefit from applying a framework of emotional intelligence as a heuristic tool within their practice. This framework encourages the coach and coachee to recognise, understand and assess the impact of emotions on coaching goals, and encourages a solution-oriented appreciation of how these emotions can be managed to bring about the outcomes desired.

First, this chapter will discuss recent conceptualisations of emotion and the importance of an appreciation of the role of emotions in interventions. It will then describe the Mayer–Salovey model of emotional intelligence. This model's four areas enable exploring emotions and strategising about them and is a useful heuristic framework to integrate into coaching (Caruso & Wolfe, 2002; David, 2003). The last section reviews literature that suggests that it is essential for the coach to progress through all four areas of the model to facilitate movement from self-reflection to insight, and to assist the pursuit of goals and change.

Emotions Are Important to the Change Process

In recent times there has been a renewed discourse on the functionality of emotions (Campos, Mumme, Kermoian, & Campos, 1994; Stanton & Franz, 1999). It has challenged the historical view of emotions as disorganising and irrational (Campos & Barrett, 1985; Mahoney, 1991) with the assertion that emotions and their expression serve a fundamentally useful purpose
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(Bretherton, Fritz, Zahn-Waxler, & Ridgeway, 1986; Campos, Campos, & Barrett, 1989; Greenberg & Safran, 1987). Emotions provide clues to ourselves and others about how we view present and past situations. They enable us to evaluate our needs, desires, goals and concerns, and to direct our efforts toward these (Greenberg & Paivio, 1997; Safran & Greenberg, 1991). Empirical evidence in a range of areas, including coping (Stanton & Franz, 1999; Stanton, Parsa, & Austenfeld, 2002), social behaviour (Forgas, 2001) and neuroanatomy (Bechara, Tranel, & Damasio, 2000; Damasio, 1998), supports Darwin’s (1872/1965) tenet that emotions have important adaptive value for the species.

Rather than treating emotions as a by- or end-product of interventions, a focus on the function of emotions and emotional information is increasingly being recognised as pivotal (Greenberg & Paivio, 1997; Greenberg & Safran, 1987; Linehan, 1993; Mahoney, 1991; Safran & Greenberg, 1991). Mahoney (1991) suggests that emotions are (1) vital to directing the individual’s attention, (2) pervasively and often tacitly involved in perception, learning and memory, (3) integrally related to cognitive development, and (4) important to a person’s sense of psychological change.

Emotions are central to self-regulation (Carver & Scheier, 1982, 1998) and change processes (Greenberg & Rhodes, 1991; Safran & Greenberg, 1991), and a number of authors are cognisant of their role in coaching (Grant, 2001; Zeus & Skiffington, 2001). Grant and Greene (2001), for example, highlight the reciprocal relationships between behaviour, emotions and thoughts, and the situation itself, in the pursuit of goals. However, in order to distinguish themselves from therapists, because of a lack of confidence in negotiating emotions within a goal- and solution-focused framework, or because of the historical mistrust of emotions referred to previously, coaches may treat emotions as peripheral or inconsequential. As they are critical to the individual’s experience (Mahoney, 1991), ignoring them may result in an oversimplification of the individual’s context and be a hindrance to change.

The Mayer–Salovey model of emotional intelligence (Mayer & Salovey, 1997) may be a useful guide in coaching (Caruso & Wolfe, 2001; David, 2003). This framework enables an exploration of the role of emotions in the coachee’s nominated goals or current issues. It also encourages movement from a self-reflective, potentially ruminative focus on emotional experience to an insight- and solution-oriented one (see Figure 1).

The Mayer–Salovey Model of Emotional Intelligence

In 1990, drawing on the rich and complex body of emotions literature, Mayer and Salovey introduced the psychological theory of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is a composite of four interrelated abilities: to perceive, use, understand and regulate emotions (Mayer, 2001a; Salovey, Mayer, & Caruso, 2002). It is commonly defined as the “ability to perceive accurately,
Integrating an Emotional Intelligence Framework Into Evidence-based Coaching

appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotions and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, p.10). (For a conceptual overview see Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000a; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002; Salovey et al., 2002; Salovey, Woolery, & Mayer, 2001.)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECOGNISE</th>
<th>Focus on recognising the emotions of the parties involved:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>“What was your emotional reaction?”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“How did you feel?”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“What do you think she felt?”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“How are you feeling now?”</td>
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<td>“What do you think you’ll be feeling when you present this</td>
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<td>tomorrow?”</td>
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<td>“What do you think they will be feeling?”</td>
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<th>USE</th>
<th>Focus on the influence of feelings on thoughts and behaviour:</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“How are your feelings influencing your thinking on this</td>
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<td>issue?”</td>
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<td>“Based on our discussion about the feelings involved here,</td>
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<td>how do you think they are affecting the team’s attitude?”</td>
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<td>“How would you describe your general style of thinking at</td>
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<td>the moment?”</td>
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<td>“Where on a scale of 1 to 10 would you say you are in terms</td>
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<td>of your openness to the suggestions they will present at</td>
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<td>the meeting?”</td>
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<th>UNDERSTAND</th>
<th>Focus on the causes and consequences of the emotion and how they are likely to progress:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Do you have any clues about why you are feeling like this?”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“What could have led to this change in feeling?”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“How would you like them to feel during the meeting? At the beginning? Middle? End?”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“What is the best way for you to be feeling when you present this proposal? Before?</td>
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<td>During? At the end?”</td>
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<th>MANAGE</th>
<th>Focus on action and solution-oriented management of emotion:</th>
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<td></td>
<td>“What things can you do to achieve this outcome?”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“How do you think you could change the situation?”</td>
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<td>“Given the importance of being relaxed, what things could</td>
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<td>you do to create a calm but focused mood before you go</td>
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<td>into the meeting?”</td>
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<td>“What strategies can you use to try to create a receptive</td>
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<td>and open atmosphere?”</td>
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Figure 1
Using the Mayer-Salovey model as a heuristic framework in coaching (based on Caruso & Wolfe, 2001, 2002.)
Consistent with the functional perspective of emotions (Mayer, 2001b; Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler, & Mayer, 1999), emotional intelligence involves adeptly processing emotionally laden information and using it to guide both cognitive activities (such as prioritising and problem-solving) and constructive behaviours (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Salovey et al., 2002). It is suggested that, contrary to the traditional view of emotions and thoughts as polar opposites, they are remarkably interdependent (Damasio, 1998; Forgas, 2001; Mahoney, 1991) and together result in more sophisticated information-processing (Mayer, 2001b).

Each of the four abilities or branches is viewed as integral to emotional intelligence (Mayer, 2001b). Perceiving Emotions concerns attending to and registering emotional messages in oneself and others (Mayer et al., 2002; Salovey et al., 2002). In coaching, exploring the feelings of the client and other involved parties encourages the client to attend to emotions and to consider alternative viewpoints.

Using Emotions to Facilitate Thought involves the integration of emotion with thought (Mayer, 2001a). For example, feelings experienced may be an important determinant of attitude (Zajonc, 1980), and the change in perspective that can arise with mood shifts (Mayer, 2001b; Salovey et al., 2002) can enable the appreciation of a range of responses and a more creative approach to problem-solving and goal-striving. Findings from memory studies, which show mood-congruent effects (Bless, 2001; Bower, 1981) suggest that a client’s propensity to recall only the unfavourable aspects of the situation may be influenced by a current negative mood.

Negative moods assist tasks that require detailed systematic processing, whereas positive moods assist those that involve creative problem-solving (Bless, 2001). With the Socratic method, coachees are often able to recognise the association between their negative feelings and a foreclosure on problem-solving or a critical response to the issue and those involved. They may comment on a recent moment of clarity about the matter or a helpful change of perspective that has come about from feeling positive or relaxed.

A working knowledge of the findings from studies on the interactions between feelings and memory, information-processing and creativity (Bless, 2001; Dalgleish & Power, 1999; Gohm & Clore, 2002) is useful for the coaching intervention. It enables coach and client to understand how the client’s and others’ moods are influencing perspectives, attitudes and reasoning; what effect these have on the approach that is being taken (e.g., critical and detailed vs. accepting); and how they affect the ability to effectively create solutions. These research findings can also help explain why the nominated development goals appear more desirable on some occasions than on others. In addition, for coaches who use a cognitive-behavioural approach, highlighting these relationships to the client can result in a powerful learning experience about the associations between emotions, thoughts and behaviours. In time, and as the coaching progresses through the framework to the Regulating Emotions branch, the awareness that
certain types of thinking are assisted by particular moods means that moods can be sought out or created to facilitate the task at hand.

The third branch, Understanding Emotions, is an appreciation of how different emotions are related, their causes and consequences, and how they progress over time (Mayer et al., 2002; Salovey et al., 2001; Salovey et al., 2002). Examples include an awareness that a difficulty between a client and one of his employees that is resulting in anger on both sides is likely to lead to a dispute if not resolved, or that a new proposal is more likely to be accepted at a meeting if the participants are experiencing feelings of acceptance and light-heartedness.

The fourth branch, Regulating Emotions, concerns the ability to use the knowledge gained from the first three branches (Mayer, 2001b) to regulate one’s own feelings and others’ (Mayer, 2001a). It is important to note that “regulating” emotions does not mean the suppression (Caruso, Mayer, & Salovey, 2002; Mayer et al., 2000a), minimisation (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000b) or control of emotions. Rather, it involves being open to both pleasant and unpleasant feelings (Mayer, 2001b) and translating these into constructive action (Greenberg & Paivio, 1997; Salovey, Hsee, & Mayer, 1993). In many cases, moderate levels of emotion management will be most advantageous (Salovey et al., 2002).

For example, a recently promoted manager who has been complaining about a team of employees is able to use information from the first three branches to recognise the team’s feelings of apprehension and her own concerns about failure and rejection (perceiving). She is able to appreciate how these have contributed to mutual avoidance of some key business issues and to her critical internal dialogue about the team’s behaviour (using). She acknowledges that the team has previously been cohesive, cooperative and open, but predicts that if the present situation continues she will become increasingly angry and defensive and that they are likely to become distrustful of her leadership skills (understanding). With this knowledge, the coaching turns to actively planning how she can manage both her own and the team’s emotions to enhance the likelihood of a good result (regulating).

Mayer et al. (2002) make a distinction between experiential (branches 1 and 2) and strategic emotional intelligence (branches 3 and 4). When applied to coaching, the first two branches are predominantly about the experience and exploration of emotions, whereas at branches 3 and 4 the coaching moves toward actively strategising with and about emotions. So at the understanding branch (3), the individual notes some of the possible feelings of the parties involved, what feelings they would like for themselves and others, and acknowledges that intervening may increase the likelihood of a good result. As coach and client move to the managing branch (4), they focus on active, tactical planning to achieve it.
The Importance of Progressing to the Regulating Emotions Branch of the Emotional Intelligence Framework

At its core, coaching facilitates the client’s regulation and direction of interpersonal and intrapersonal resources (Grant, 2001). It is through self-regulation that the individual is able to pursue lower-order targets that, in turn, increase their likelihood of achieving longer-term goals (King, 2001; Tice & Bratslavsky, 2000). Carver and Scheier (1982, 1998) suggest that the ability to reflect upon and evaluate one’s thoughts, behaviour and feelings; to develop insight into them; and to use this knowledge to further enhance performance are central to the self-regulatory change-cycle. The emotional-intelligence framework advances self-reflection about emotions to insightful, action-oriented management of them.

Research indicates that the self-reflection facilitated by this framework (i.e., attending to, recognising and expressing emotions) is potentially beneficial, and that a lack of attention to or overinhibition of emotions can be deleterious. A key feature of alexithymic individuals is a dispositional difficulty in identifying and describing subjective feelings (Apfel & Sifneos, 1979; Taylor, 2000). Empirical studies demonstrate that alexithymia is associated with a range of somatic illnesses and a limited capacity to discriminate among different emotional states, to think about and use emotions to cope with stressful situations, and to empathise (Parker, Taylor, & Bagby, 2001; Taylor, 2000; Taylor, 2001; Taylor & Bagby, 2000). In a study on written emotional disclosure, the difficulty-describing-feelings dimension of alexithymia was associated with lower positive mood, greater emotional inhibition, and less introspective content in written essays (Páez, Velasco, & González, 1999).

Interventions directed at both clinical and nonclinical populations that specifically encourage processing and expressing emotion have been demonstrated to have positive effects (Esterling, L’Abate, Murray, & Pennebaker, 1999; Stanton & Franz, 1999). For example, research on emotional disclosure through expressive writing, where individuals are instructed to write briefly and repeatedly over a few days about a personally significant topic (King, 2002) has produced robust evidence of improved longer-term psychological and physical wellbeing (Esterling et al., 1999; King, 2002; Niederhoffer & Pennebaker, 2002; Pennebaker, 1997. For a review see Smyth, 1998.) Although the focus of these studies has typically been on negative events of the past (Esterling et al., 1999), recent research has demonstrated the benefits of writing about anticipated events such as coping with a potentially stressful situation (Cameron & Nicholls, 1998).

In a study by King (2001), a group of individuals was randomly assigned to write for 20 minutes per day over four days about their “best possible self” (i.e., a personalised representation of their life in the future, imagining that everything had gone as well as it could have). Three other groups were allocated to write about a control topic, a life trauma, and a combination of
Integrating an Emotional Intelligence Framework Into Evidence-based Coaching

trauma (for the first two days) and best possible self (for the last two days), respectively. Controlling for prewriting mood, those in the best-possible-self group had more positive emotions immediately postwriting, and assessment three weeks later demonstrated that this group had significantly greater psychological wellbeing. In addition, despite there being no differences between the groups on measures of health before the intervention, at a five-month follow-up, the best-possible-self group and trauma-only group had significantly lower illness than the control and combination topic groups.

These results suggest that the reflection on, and expression of, emotions that is encouraged by this framework may help coaching clients to regulate their emotional experiences. Consistent with the proposal that coaching should be solution-focused (Grant, 2001), studies on writing interventions indicate that to derive benefits from emotional expression, the focus need not be on negative events. Rather, it can be aimed at positively reframing a difficult experience (King & Miner, 2000), anticipating coping responses (Cameron & Nicholls, 1998), and pursuing goals (King, 2001, 2002).

It is important to note that although those who are adept at assessing and expressing their emotions may be more skilful in negotiating their environment (Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler, & Mayer, 2000), excessive self-reflection on emotions and/or limited progression to clarity, insight and action may actually impede the attainment of goals. Swinkels and Giuliano (1995) found that individuals who report a tendency to extreme or hypervigilant mood-monitoring ruminate more, and have greater negative affect and more intense affective reactions. In contrast, those who have greater clarity about their mood states and are able to discriminate and label them experience more positive affect, higher self-esteem, and greater satisfaction with their social support. When individuals who are dysphoric ruminate on their moods, they are more likely to prolong periods of distress (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1998) and to be poor problem-solvers (Lyubomirsky, Tucker, Caldwell, & Berg, 1999).

Similarly, research examining self-reflection and insight that included, but was not limited to, the emotional domain, found that self-reflection was associated with anxiety and stress, whereas insight was associated with cognitive flexibility and self-regulation, and less depression, anxiety, stress and alexithymia (Grant, 2001). Grant proposed that individuals who are experiencing difficulty in attaining goals are overly engaged in ruminative self-reflection rather than being focused on solutions and behaviour change. He demonstrated initial support for this hypothesis by finding that when individuals in a structured life-coaching program pursued goals that they had previously struggled to attain, levels of self-reflection decreased whereas insight increased.

Turning again to the writing research, a closer examination also indicates that it is not the disclosure of emotions per se that is beneficial (Smyth, 1998). In a computerised linguistic analysis of six writing samples from across a range of studies, Pennebaker and colleagues (Pennebaker &
Francis, 1996; Pennebaker, Mayne, & Francis, 1997) found that better physical-health outcomes were predicted by those who used more positive emotion words, a moderate number of negative words (those with very high and very low numbers of negative words had poorer health), and demonstrated increased causal and insightful thinking. These and other studies suggest that the mechanism underlying the benefits of emotional disclosure is the cognitive work that results from exploring emotionally salient events and the construction of a coherent and insightful understanding of them (King & Miner, 2000; Niederhoffer & Pennebaker, 2002).

These converging lines of research suggest that a focus on, and exploration of, a client’s emotional experience is necessary but not sufficient for the coaching intervention, and that progressing from exploration to insight and management is important. The emotional-intelligence framework presented here greatly facilitates this process. It takes cognisance of emotions as central to the client’s experience and demonstrates an appreciation of the interrelationships of these emotions to thoughts and associated behaviours. When all four aspects of the model are addressed, it provides a structured solution-oriented means of facilitating progress from self-reflection to insight and planning.

**Conclusion**

Coaching aims to facilitate the change that is necessary for clients to achieve their life- and performance-enhancement goals. Emotions are central to human experience and an appreciation of their role in the process of change is an essential component of comprehensive coaching interventions. The emotional-intelligence framework presented in this chapter is a useful tool that is compatible with evidence-based and theoretically driven coaching that is embedded in a positive, functional and solution-oriented paradigm.

**Endnote**

1. The Socratic method uses questions and summary statements to gain insight into the client’s beliefs and behaviours.

**References**


chapter seven

A Contemporary Coaching Theory to Integrate Work and Life in Changing Times

Lindsay G. Oades, Peter Caputi, Paula M. Robinson and Barry Partridge

In this chapter we argue that common approaches underpinning coaching, including cognitive-behavioural frameworks and the concept of work–life balance, are not well suited to form the conceptual basis of practice to assist people in a dynamic contemporary society. These mechanistic approaches originate from the industrial revolution and are based on the root metaphor of person as machine. With the changing labour market, the impact of information and communication technologies and the fragmentation of traditional meaning systems into a more cosmopolitan society, there is a need for coaching approaches that emphasise change and adaptation. Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), an organismic-dialectical metatheory for which there is significant empirical evidence, is presented as an appropriate alternative conceptual basis for a theoretically coherent and evidence-based coaching practice. Self-determination theory is based on the root metaphor of an organism adapting to a changing environment. Moreover, it is a theory of motivation, a construct of key importance to any form of coaching. A model of life-management consistent with this metatheoretical and theoretical position is described and its implications for practice will be discussed. Finally, work–life integration defined in terms of self-determination theory will be presented as a more desirable end than work–life balance.
The Impact of Social Change

The dawn of the industrial revolution marked a crucial shift in how work was defined, how people engaged in work and how society was influenced by changes in these activities (Jones, 1990). People were considered integral to the progress and success of an industry. In this sense they were considered to be economic units within the organisation. Within western society, labour is exchanged for wages or for material things that sustain us. However, from a Marxist perspective, work also defines who we are. People are shaped by their roles in the workplace and identified in the community by their occupation.

An effect of the industrial revolution was to change the structure of our society in two notable ways. First, the nature of occupations changed as a result of the industrial revolution. For instance, there are fewer people employed in the farming sector. This change, in turn, had an impact on communities and where those communities were located, for example, a move from rural to urban settings. Second, the industrial revolution resulted in the greater separation of work and family life. There is a greater tendency for us to “go to work”. Our place of employment is no longer the humble farm or the stable located within close proximity of the family home. In most cases, the workplace is now located away from the family home. Some individuals have occupations that take them regularly to other countries (for instance, airline pilots). Improved mechanisation and transport have made this possible.

More recent advances in technology, particularly information and communication technologies, have added to the changing nature of occupations and work life (Samantary, 2001). Many argue that we have moved from an industrial society to an information society (Garrick & Clegg, 2000). Computer technology has been influential in eliminating certain occupations, while creating others. Indeed, the English mathematician Charles Babbage (1791–1871), influential in the development of computer technology, argued that the introduction of computers would have an impact on the division of labour. The new computer age would free us of the drudgery of manual labour and create more leisure time for us to pursue our goals. Whether this has eventuated is debatable. What is clear is that changes in information and communication technology have changed the range of occupations and many argue the nature of work itself. What is also clear is that technological change has also presented the possibility of the reintegration of work and family life. Telecommuting and electronic cottages have become real options for people. With these options come the possibility of social reintegration (Deken, 1981; Toffler, 1980).

In addition to changes from an industrial society to an information society is an increase in migration and globalisation. Such migration and globalisation has led to an increase in pluralist and cosmopolitan societies, further enhanced by international media (Cuenca, 2002). With this increase,
individuals may experience a greater menu of options as to possible ways to live their lives. A full sociological analysis of this complex phenomenon is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, it is important to note the range of choices that people, particularly adolescents and young adults, may face in moulding their lives. While many people in the world continue to experience a limited range of choices, an increasing number of people question religion, work practice, nature of work and employment relations (Callus & Lansbury, 2002; Cascio, 1996), gender relations, family role and structure (Kennedy, 2001), the nature of knowledge and the geographical location where they may choose to live. With an increased array of possible lives, there is an increased need for human services that assist people with these often difficult and confusing life choices. The rise of coaching in contemporary society has occurred against this backdrop of complexity and ubiquitous change for both individuals and families.

The Rise of Coaching in Contemporary Society

Zeus and Skiffington (2002) track the history of coaching and state that it is related to, but different from, forms of consulting, therapy and mentoring. Interestingly, the back cover of Zeus and Skiffington’s (2002) book asserts that “recent studies show how life skills coaching, executive coaching and business coaching are all effective ways of achieving sustainable growth, change and development in an individual, group or organisation”. While there are many books on coaching (particularly, books on how to “do coaching”), there is, however, a paucity of controlled trials on the effectiveness of coaching (Birch, 2001; Bryce, 2002; Eaton & Johnson, 2001; Green, Oades, & Grant, 2004; Landsberg, 1996; Parkin, 2001; Wales, 2003; Whitmore, 1992; Zeus & Skiffington, 2002).

Moreover, despite the rise of interest in coaching in its multiple forms — executive, life, business or other — there still remains an absence of accepted definitions or conceptual clarity. One key issue is whether coaching is used as a verb or a noun. Moreover, many existing definitions of coaching propose what it is not, rather than what it is. For example, to say that coaching is not counselling is an inadequate definition. Consider the following list of options to describe “small c” coaching or “large C” Coaching:

- coaching as a metaphor
- coaching as a relationship
- coaching as a process
- Coaching as a brand
- Coaching as assisted self-regulation
- Coaching as a developing profession
- Coaching as an industry
- Coaching as a technique/skills set
- Coaching as applied positive psychology.
If coaching is to become a coherent coupling of theory, science and practice, it is important to ensure that the metatheoretical assumptions underpinning the conceptualisation, scientific claims and practice of coaching are sound. Moreover, these metatheoretical assumptions need to be relevant to the endeavour of coaching which, broadly stated, assists people in their life and work performance and wellbeing. For this reason, the approach needs to emphasise adaptiveness and change.

Examination of root metaphors upon which our very theories are based is useful and quite revealing about the behavioural sciences, which are likely to underpin much of what may become an evidence-based coaching practice.

The Root Metaphor of the Psyche as a Machine

Pepper’s (1973) proposes four root metaphors for the world: (1) formism, based on the root metaphor of similarity, or the identity of a single form in a range of particular examples; (2) mechanism, based on the root metaphor of material push and pull. This is similar to the notion of attraction and repulsion likened to a machine or an electromagnetic-gravitational field; (3) organicism, based on the root metaphor of a dynamic organic whole, as elaborated by Hegel and his followers; and (4) contextualism, based on the root metaphor of a transitory historical situation and its biological tensions as exhibited by Dewey and his followers (Caputi & Oades, 2001).

Behavioural, cognitive and cognitive-behavioural approaches have their origins in mechanistic root metaphors, viewing the world, and hence the psyche, in mechanistic, material push and pull terms. This view elicits the image of a coach tinkering with the cognitions of a client, pressing restart buttons, and the like. However, if the environment changes dramatically, the machine itself may be ill-suited. In our view, assisting clients to change and adapt over time in complex and diverse environments is a more important challenge for coach practitioners, coach researchers and theoreticians.

Machines of all types, including the best robots and computers, continue to find difficulties with small changes in environments, as illustrated by the frame problem within artificial intelligence circles. In closed systems and stable environments, mechanistic approaches may be adequate. However, in unstable environments and open systems such approaches are likely to be inadequate. Given the changing and complex context of contemporary life and work, the question arises as to whether it makes sense to base the emerging efforts of coaching science and practice on mechanistic root metaphors of person and world, such as traditional cognitive-behavioural approaches and the metaphor of work–life balance. In our view, the answer is clearly no. While assisting others to regulate their cognitions and behaviours is no doubt useful, the baggage of mechanistic metaphors is likely to be less so. Some alternatives are now offered.
The Root Metaphor of the Psyche as an Organism

Multiple theories, such as Chaos Theory, Complexity Theory, Constructivist Developmental Theory and Self-determination Theory have emerged to deal with the complexity and dynamism of phenomena. These theoretical approaches are consistent with organismic and contextualist worldviews.

Self-determination theory is a motivational theory based on the root metaphor of an organism (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000). The philosophical perspective of organicism and contextualism is closely related to pragmatism. It has a long history that covers the works of Plato, William James, Jean Piaget, John Dewey, and the humanist psychology movement that began in the 1960s. Sheldon, Williams and Joiner (2003) describe three key tenets of the organismic perspective underpinning self-determination theory:

1. Humans are active rather than reactive, proactive, selecting incentives for which to strive.
2. A natural integrative tendency exists within all living organisms, providing them with the potential to reach new levels of expression and functioning.
3. Life is generally dialectical, that is, an environmental challenge (thesis) is followed by an organismic response (antithesis), followed by a new order within the organism (synthesis).

According to self-determination theory, people seek out optimal challenges to master and integrate new experiences. They are engaged in a developmental process that is intrinsic to their nature and is characterised by the tendency toward a more elaborate and extensive organisation. The self develops through a dialectic between intrinsic needs and interaction with the environment.

Sheldon et al. (2003) describe five important features of self-determination theory. This theory (a) has a humanistic orientation supported by rigorous quantitative experimental research; (b) makes positive assumptions about human nature and propensities while explaining how negative outcomes may also occur; (c) assumes that people, in order to thrive, must meet three psychological needs — autonomy, competence and relatedness; (d) focuses on people’s struggle to feel greater self-ownership of motivated behaviour; and (e) explains how authorities and practitioners can best motivate subordinates and clients so that they internalise suggested behaviours and self-regulate them.

Self-determination theory incorporates the well-known motivational constructs of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation refers to the performance of an activity in order to maintain some separable outcome. On the other hand, intrinsic motivation refers to performing an activity for the inherent satisfaction of the activity itself. Ryan and Deci (2000) claim that, unlike some perspectives that view extrinsically motivated behaviour as always nonautonomous, self-determination theory proposes that extrinsic motivation can vary greatly in its relative autonomy. That is,
people can “take in” something that is external to them and ultimately experience it as their own. For example, a child can come to value the regulations (e.g., work habits) of her parents and experience them as her own.

**Internalisation** refers to a person “taking in” a value or regulation. To extend the organic metaphor, consider a person eating a Thai green curry. The curry is on the outside of the organism and it is then internalised. **Integration** refers to the further transformation of that regulation into one’s own so that, subsequently, it will emanate from their sense of self. To return to the green curry example, it is ultimately digested and metabolised to become part of the life-system of the organism. It has gone from being a green curry to being experienced as part of the person. In other words, it is integrated.

Self-determination theory elaborates the distinction of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation along the “perceived locus of causality” dimension. Sheldon and Elliot (1998) used perceived locus of causality to assert that not all personal goals are personal. The perceived locus of causality dimension is an expanded version of internal and external locus of control (DeCharms, 1968). The external aspect linked to extrinsic motivation is viewed in degrees of autonomy. Based on self-determination theory, Sheldon and Elliot (1998) describe four reasons people may have for striving towards personal goals.

1. External: striving because somebody else wants you to, or thinks you ought to, or because you’ll get something from somebody if you do.
2. Introjected: striving because you would feel ashamed, guilty or anxious if you did not pursue the goal. Rather than striving just because someone else thinks you ought to, you feel that you ought to strive for that goal.
3. Identified: striving because you really believe that it is an important goal to have. Although others may have taught this goal to you, you now endorse it freely and value it wholeheartedly.
4. Intrinsic: striving because of the fun, enjoyment and so on that the goal provides you. While there may be many good reasons to strive for the goal, the primary “reason” is simply your interest in the experience itself.

**The Work–Life Management Model**

We will now present a work–life management model, using the root metaphor of an organism in a changing environment, and the theoretical framework of self-determination theory (including the concepts of internalisation, integration, external, introjected, identified and intrinsic strivings).

The Work–Life Management Model is based on self-determination theory, emphasizing an autonomous self proactively managing its life. The model draws on insights from the self-management (Hughes & Scott, 1998; King, 2001; Lorig & Holman, 2003) and life-management literatures (Freund...
& Baltes, 2002; Smith, 1999). It simultaneously recognises intrapersonal, environmental and developmental issues; that is, a person exists in changing environments and they develop over time through interaction with these environments. These environments include workplace and home. The Work–Life Management Model, structured deliberately around the acronym MANAGER, is proposed as an organising framework for coaching practice. Each of the seven domains within the model are areas for consideration within coaching, and may include an array of techniques rather than a single technique.

The model is designed to be conceptually coherent, allowing practitioners to incorporate evidence-based techniques from the behavioural sciences. Moreover, unlike many individualistic approaches to coaching, the model emphasises the environment. It examines how work and home environments meet needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness for the individual. The seven domains of the Work–Life Management Model are as follows:

1. M = mindfulness
2. A = acceptance
3. N = nurturing needs
4. A = authenticity
5. G = goals, actions and time management
6. E = environmental opportunities and threats
7. R = responsibility.

The M of the MANAGER acronym is for mindfulness. Mindfulness refers to how individuals examine their own thinking, emotions and behaviour while it is occurring. Based on principles drawn from Vispassana or Mindfulness meditation (Feldman, 2001), this approach has recently become the central focus of several therapeutic techniques. Mindfulness is conceptually related to the intrapersonal component of emotional intelligence.

Brown and Ryan (2003) assert that mindfulness allows individuals to disengage from unhealthy thoughts and habits, hence fostering informed and self-endorsed behavioural regulation that is important to well-being enhancement. Self-determination theory posits that an open awareness (mindfulness) may be very important in facilitating the choice of behaviours that are consistent with one’s needs, values and interests (related to nurturing needs and authenticity of MANAGER). Hence, for coach practitioners working within the MANAGER framework, developing mindfulness skills is central. Mindfulness meditation (Feldman, 2001) is a key practice that will assist, but there are many other related techniques that may be used. Important to employers, mindfulness can occur in daily activity at work. It is not just a practice for retreat from daily hassles of contemporary society. For evidence-based coach practitioners, the recently developed Mindful Awareness Attention Scale (Brown & Ryan, 2003) provides a useful way of evaluating progress.
The first A of MANAGER corresponds to the ability of individuals to accept themselves and their situation. In the western world, there is a pervasive emphasis on changing, improving, and thinking that the situation could be better. While these endeavours are no doubt useful, a person who cannot gain a clear view of where they currently are may then find it difficult to change to a different situation. The argument is not that one must say they are an alcoholic or accept a diagnosis before they can recover. Rather, acceptance connotes that a clear view of reality is useful prior to the change process. Mindfulness relates to acceptance as being present to the current situation and environment. To extend the organismic metaphor of self-determination theory, one must know and accept their environment or they will not survive. Interestingly, two popular writers currently address these very issues. McGraw (1999) asks us “to get real”, while Johnson (1998) likens the change process to the experience of a mouse whose cheese has been moved. The more adaptive mouse is quicker to accept that change has occurred.

The N of MANAGER refers to nurturing needs. In terms of self-determination theory, there are three primary psychological needs: competency, autonomy and relatedness. Covey (1989) refers to the production/production capacity balance, and the notion of “sharpening the saw”. While these are mechanistic metaphors similar to “recharging the batteries”, organic metaphors capture the essence of this notion. An organism requires nutrients for survival and appropriate environments to thrive. The most commonsense notion, which is indeed an organic metaphor, is “fitness”. How fit are you? How well adapted are you to your physical, social and psychological environment? How well does your environment meet your psychological needs of competency, autonomy and relatedness? (Sheldon et al., 1996). There are numerous techniques that a coach practitioner may use to include this as part of a coaching process. One may ask how is this evidence based? The increasing empirical evidence of the relationship between need-satisfaction and psychological wellbeing is certainly an answer (Sheldon et al., 2003).

The second A of MANAGER corresponds to authenticity, emphasising the importance of being authentic to one’s personal values. There is an increasing empirical literature in this area (also being popularised by prominent psychologists within the positive psychology movement (see for example, Seligman, 2002). Spence, Oades and Caputi (2004) examine relationships between goal self-integration (authenticity), trait emotional intelligence and subjective wellbeing. Similarly, McGregor and Little (1998) provide evidence for a second dimension in understanding goals. These researchers argue that the emphasis of goal research has largely been on attainment, with neglect of the meaning that goals have to people. Popular goal-setting approaches include the well-known SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timeframed) goal used in coaching circles. This approach to goals pays scant attention to notions of meaning and
authenticity. A focus on authenticity moves the focus of the coach from the “how” of the goal to the “why” of the goal.

Waterman (1993) describes two conceptions of happiness: (a) personal expressiveness (eudaimonia), more popularly known as behaving in ways consistent with the “true self” (daimon); and (b) hedonic enjoyment, seeking of pleasure and avoidance of pain. The Authenticity of MANAGER refers more to the former. However, from an organic and evolutionary perspective, as most pleasure and pain occurs for an evolutionary reason, this approach does not neglect the latter.

While many coach practitioners are likely to examine core values, many coaching processes may neglect this as an organising framework. A coaching approach using MANAGER will place values as a central motif throughout the coaching process. From an employer’s perspective, the question becomes how do I enable my employees to be authentic and productive?

The G of MANAGER corresponds to the ubiquitous “goal” of human striving, closely linked to smaller actions and ways of managing time to achieve these actions. This is consistent with an organismic perspective: that humans are active, choosing incentives for which to strive. Hence, while acceptance has been underlined, accepting reality does not equate to being passive. The environment is dynamic; therefore an organism must also be to survive and thrive. Time management is important, as environmental opportunities that assist goal-attainment and need-satisfaction are often time-limited. Three decades of empirical evidence demonstrates that goal-setting increases attainment and commitment to tasks. Recently, there is evidence within the self-determination literature that only autonomous goals lead to wellbeing (Sheldon et al., 2003).

Coach practitioners are likely to be well-versed in goal-setting and time-management practices. However, how useful is the rational, linear and design-based mechanistic approach to personal goals when the environmental is highly unstable? The process of self-regulation and homeostasis is best exemplified by organisms rather than by machines. However, many of the coaching models used for self-regulation are ironically machine-based. The same question can be asked of organisations in their strategic planning processes (Johnson & Scholes, 2002). The challenge from organismic-based approaches and evolutionary metaphors is how adaptive are the goals or strategies being set? This question is different to: How realistic is the goal? In terms of self-determination theory, the question also becomes: Will this goal be consistent with your personal relative levels of needs in autonomy, competence and relatedness? How does the plan incorporate feedback from the environment; how does it become a non-linear process, rather than assuming that goal-striving is a linear process?

The E of MANAGER corresponds to environmental opportunities and threats. Consistent with self-determination, the environment may provide threats or opportunities to the structure and function of the organism.
Applying the dialectic, coaching may examine how an external challenge or threat will require a response by the person. This response effectively changes the person (organism), so that they become a more complex organism.

The well-known SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis incorporates external opportunities and threats for the organisation or business. Based on an organismic metaphor, the organisation is viewed within its environment. In the same way, a person and their goals/needs exist within an environment. Rather than using the mechanistic, rational and linear design process, a person will continually scan environments (including workplaces) for opportunities and threats to their needs and goals. The coach practitioner using MANAGER will assist the individual to develop these skills of scanning the environment for opportunities and threats. Some individuals are good at one or the other. For example, scanning for threats will increase the likelihood of survival, whereas scanning for opportunities will increase the likelihood of thriving.

An important related issue (an organic metaphor) is the notion of growth. To take a new opportunity requires resources. Consequently, it is important for coaches to assist the coachee to identify which opportunities to forgo, when to grow and when to remain stable.

The R of MANAGER corresponds to responsibility. It refers to how individuals take responsibility for themselves and others, how they recognise and embrace their ability to be self-determined. Butler-Bowdon’s (2001) review of self-help research underscores the motif of personal responsibility within the success literatures. For the coaching practitioner, there is no simple technique that is likely to achieve this within the person. Some clients may already have high levels of personal responsibility; others may wane in this area when under stress. Self-determination, self-governance or autonomy may be unfamiliar experiences for many. Hence, a coach practitioner using MANAGER will address these issues explicitly over time. Likewise for supervisors, team leaders and managers, there are numerous leadership models that address the issue of how much autonomy to give staff and in which situations. The same issue occurs within the coaching relationship — how much autonomy is the person willing and able to have, and how is this addressed within coaching?

**Integrated Work and Life Self**

Work–life balance is a well-known concept in human resource and behavioural science circles (Amundson, 2001; Birch & Paul, 2003; Caproni, 1997; Hobson, Delunas, & Kesie, 2001; Perrons, 2003; Tausig & Fenwick, 2001). A simple Internet search using google.com in July 2003 revealed 146,000 hits for the words “work–life balance”. This result is more than four times the hits gained for the words “work–life integration” (Jones, 2003). This finding underscores how pervasive the concept of balance is in thinking about work and life. The balance concept suggests that a certain amount
and effort of work is appropriate and this should be balanced or in some way a “healthy” ratio to work. Stated more concretely, it is often asserted that people must make sure they have time for family and leisure, limit hours at the office and not bring work home. There are several important underlying assumptions. These assumptions are:

> Workplace and home life are physically separate.

> Work is primarily performed as an employee (Kiyosaki & Lechter, 1998).

> Life and work are separate.

In terms of self-determination theory, work–life integration posits that work and personal life are integrated to maximise basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness. Integration refers to the further transformation of that regulation into one's own so that, subsequently, it will emanate from one's sense of self. In this way, work feels like self. This is not to say that the vast majority of the workforce experiences work in this way. Rather, the concept of integration may ultimately be more useful than that of balance. The underlying assumptions of this approach are:

> The workplace and home life may be closely integrated physically or in terms of communication (e.g., working from home with flexible work hours).

> Work may be performed on a contract basis or as a business, rather than as an employee.

> Work and life are integrated to meet the psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness.

Consistent with self-determination theory, the concept of work–life integration is itself a synthesis, part of a dialectical process. That is, rather than balancing work and life, work–life integrates both perspectives at a higher order. This notion is similar to the example of left-wing versus right-wing political perspectives, which may be viewed as thesis and antithesis. A synthesis may be “the political spectrum” which incorporates both. While the authors do not wish to portray work–life balance initiatives as fruitless (Nord, Fox, Phoenix, & Viano, 2002; Perrons, 2003), work–life integration is likely to bring longer-term changes to a person's wellbeing.

We have argued that internalisation refers to people “taking in” a value or regulation. Integration is a further transformation of that regulation such that it will emanate from their sense of self. Hence, work–life integration can be defined even more specifically in terms of self-determination with reference to both internalisation and integration. An individual may internalise a work-related value or regulation. However, full work–life integration means that the regulation becomes one's own, an identified goal that emanates from self. That is not to say that ruthless employers should be excited by the potential to regulate the psyche of their employees. As self-determination theory and the Work–Life Management Model emphasise autonomy, this would be inconsistent with the approach. The aim of the
work–life integration is the nurturing of the psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness. If the dialectic of work and life are not meeting these needs, it follows that successful work–life integration has not been achieved. Unlike work–life balance in which work may provide a sense of competence, and home life a sense of autonomy and relatedness, work–life integration will mean that all needs are met as the perceived separateness of work and life diminishes.

**Conclusion**

Metatheories and root metaphors we choose for coaching research and practice are important. Self-determination theory provides an example of one metatheory that has utility due to its root metaphor consistent with adapting to changing environments. The MANAGER model and the construct of work–life integration, based on the theory and evidence of self-determination theory, are preliminary attempts to develop a fertile ground for a theoretically coherent and evidence-based coaching practice.

**References**


Inspirational Chaos: Executive Coaching and Tolerance of Complexity

Peter J. Webb

The End of Normal

The historical events of 9/11, the subsequent wars, and the coincidental collapse of corporations and economies have heightened the perception of complexity and uncertainty in the business environment. Executive managers face unprecedented challenges, solutions for which are often beyond the reach of current practice (Wood, 2000). That we live in turbulent times is an understatement. “There is no more normal”, declares business commentator Seth Godin (2002). “We need a different way of organising work”.

Adapting to such an environment requires a high degree of tolerance of complexity, according to Garvey and Alred (2001). They refer to the root meaning of the word tolerate (from the Latin tolerare tolerat — “endure”) meaning to “allow the existence or occurrence of without authoritative interference”. Tolerance as “enduring” or “sustaining” is by no means passive. It requires a perception of the constantly changing organisational landscape as a field of bounded instability through which optimal performance is an emergent property.

Learning and development has been a crucial tool in developing tolerance in executive managers, yet the traditional training model does not seem to have resulted in sustained behavioural change. Over the past 15 years, coaching models based on the principles of psychology and education have evolved to provide more flexible and tailored learning solutions (Peltier, 2001; Zeus & Skiffington, 2000).

Martin (2002, p. 10) points out that coaching may be in vogue now because the time is ripe for a different approach to leadership. Up until recently, concerns about performance were addressed from the perspective of behaviour modification, with control as the underlying assumption. Current models of coaching, in contrast, are based on reflection and insight.
Kilburg (2000) suggests that coaching, at the highest level, not only develops reflection and insight, but also facilitates the emergence of wisdom.

Is wisdom a necessary attribute for executive managers to successfully tolerate complexity and uncertainty? And if so, is executive coaching a valid intervention for promoting tolerance of complexity?

**The Inspiration of Chaos**

Management and organisation science literature has focused on the objective control of agents and the assumption that interactions can be described in linear terms (Levy, 2000). A contrasting view evolves from chaos and complexity theory (also known as dynamic systems theory). As Lissack and Gunz (1999) assert, "complexity theory challenges the traditional management assumptions by noting that human activity allows for the possibility of emergent behaviour".

Chaos and complexity theory offers a different way of viewing the field of management and leadership — a mental shift from the Newtonian cause–effect universe to a quantum field where uncertainty is the natural order (Stacey, 1996; Waldrop, 1992; Wheatley, 1992; Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1999). Rather than trying to hold back the dark forces of chaos, organisations need to maintain a state of nonequilibrium, a kind of exquisite awareness at the edge of catastrophic change. This is the phase transition between stability and instability, where creativity and innovation occur. Here, the links between cause and effect give way to spontaneous self-organisation, and a maximisation of flexibility and responsiveness.

Despite the fact that chaos and complexity theory arises from observations in mathematics, physics and the natural world (Coveney & Highfield, 1991; Gleick, 1987), there is ample evidence of applications to the social sciences, particularly as a dialectical influence (Ayers, 1997; Bütz, 1997; Gilgen, 2000; Loye & Eisler, 1987; Mac Cormac & Stamenov, 1996; Warren, Franklin, & Streeter, 1998), and an incorporation into psychoanalysis (Pestana, 2001; Scharff & Procci, 2002). For example, nonlinear modelling has been used to describe group problem-solving productivity over multiple time intervals (Guastello, 1998), team coordination in the performance of simple games (Guastello & Guastello, 1998), and the self-organisation of a therapeutic alliance in long-term psychotherapy sessions (Tschacher & Scheier, 1997).

In a similar vein, Lewis and Junyk (1997) show how easily chaos and complexity theory can be incorporated into the dynamics of social systems through their narrative on the development bifurcations of the self-organisation of personality, and the core attractors of psychological defensive behaviours.

Kilburg (2000) uses the Cusp Catastrophe Model developed by Guastello (1987) to simulate the behavioural dynamics of frustration, aggression and tension in team decision-making. He also uses terms such as “virtuous
attractors” and “vicious attractors” to describe either creative or regressive patterns of behaviour that individuals or groups use readily in corporate environments.

The terminology of chaos applied to social systems has an immediate appeal in helping to explain the real world of organisational behaviours. Both Wheatley (1992) and Stacey (1995, 1996) have been particularly influential in using the conceptual framework of chaos and complexity theory to understand the creative possibilities inherent in a dynamic, self-organising enterprise.

Levy (1994, 2000) summarises the applications and limitations of this framework in organisations:

1. Chaotic systems never reach a stable equilibrium. Organisations might reach some temporary, relatively stable pattern, but this is likely to be short-lived.
2. Large fluctuations can be generated internally by deterministic chaotic systems, and small perturbations to networks, even when in an ordered state, can sometimes have major effects (suggesting that executive managers might underestimate the potential for large changes in industry conditions or competitors’ behaviour).
3. Short-term forecasting is possible in a chaotic deterministic system, given a reasonable specification of conditions in one time period (e.g., sophisticated computer modelling of weather is useful for a few days).
4. Complexity theory suggests that organic networks poised on the edge of chaos might give rise to self-organisation and emergent order that enable firms to prosper in an era of rapid change.

An extension of this framework is “Chaordic Systems Thinking”, coined by Fitzgerald and Eijnatten (2002a, 2002b) as a new way of viewing dynamic complexity in organisations — separate to systems thinking — and incorporating the fundamental principles of chaos and complexity theory as applied to human enterprise. “A chaordic system is one in which nothing ever happens the same way twice, and yet everything happens in an orderly enough way to preclude complete and utter mess” (Fitzgerald & Eijnatten, 2002a, p. 406). The five properties of a chaordic system are:

1. Consciousness: The presence of both a personal consciousness and an organisational consciousness (suggesting that executive managers need an appreciation for the intangible “within” of a system in order to create sustainable organisations).
2. Connectivity: Everything is connected at some point, even though the connection may be infinitesimally small, and this connectivity is strengthened through interaction.
3. Indeterminacy: The non-linearity of cause and effect, suggesting that every event is the result of the accumulation of all prior events, not just one.
4. Emergence: The sudden appearance of higher-order qualities, which originate from the dynamic interaction of the system's components, although they are neither found in nor are directly deducible from them.

5. Dissipation: The capacity of a chaordic system in “far-from-equilibrium” conditions to fall apart structurally while simultaneously maintaining the integrity of its core identity (e.g., an organisation may dissipate intentionally, choosing to leap through a window of opportunity rather than risk the ultimate catastrophe of maximum fatal chaos).

As Perna and Masterpasqua (1997) point out, the framework of chaos and complexity theory is based on two fundamental assumptions: that apparently random and disordered behaviour may very often have meaning, and “that this meaning is acquired because of the vital role chaos plays in the self-organizing processes of human change and development” (Perna & Masterpasqua, 1997, p. 17).

So, how does this help executive managers in their tolerance of complexity and uncertainty? Utilising the chaos framework, Ball (2000) interviewed managers and found common themes emerging from those who could best carry out their managerial responsibilities under complex and uncertain conditions:

1. accepting complexity and uncertainty as the way of the world
2. establishing guiding principles for setting priorities and making decisions
3. making timely decisions
4. managing the information flow
5. nurturing and sustaining relationships
6. acknowledging and processing emotions
7. being a continuous learner.

These themes provide a useful working framework that may allow managers to “operate at the edge where long-term outcomes are unknowable” (Stacey, 1995, p. 488). In particular, the emergent quality of learning in a complex environment (Argyris, 1993; Barrett, 1999) provides an opportunity for managers to improve their tolerance of complexity.

**Wisdom as a Strategy for Tolerance of Complexity**

What is the best form of decision-making process in uncertainty? Researchers have generally found that vigilant decision-making processes are superior to hypervigilant decision-making processes under experimental conditions (Keinan, 1987; Baradell & Klein, 1993). Vigilant processes are the familiar sensible, logical and rational approach to problems characterised by: a systematic, organised information search; thorough consideration of all available alternatives; devotion of sufficient time to evaluate each alternative; and the re-examination and review of data before making a decision.
However, decisions are not always made in the controlled, unhurried and simple conditions of many experiments. In more naturalistic tasks, Johnston, Driskell, and Salas (1997) found that a hypervigilant strategy was significantly more effective than a vigilant strategy under both normal and high-stress conditions. The selective focus, filtering of information and accelerated processing of information characteristic of hypervigilant decision making may be a highly adaptive and effective response in the face of increased task demands.

In complex systems, the output of decision making is also a source of input to the system. This means that the emotional and personal elements of decision-making processes need to be carefully considered. Higgins (2000) proposes that when people experience a “good fit” between a personal goal and their own self-regulatory style they are more likely to value activities in pursuit of the goal, and to report feeling alert, energised and good about what they have done. “Feeling good” is a normative assessment, which forms the basis of a positive psychology where happiness and wellbeing are the desired outcomes. Happiness can be thought of as an outcome of life: “the overall appreciation of one’s life as a whole” (Veenhoven, 2003, p.128). This dimension takes a whole-of-life perspective on decision-making: How does a particular choice contribute to a meaningful life? Seligman (2003) suggests that it depends on what kind of life you wish to lead: A “pleasant life” is one that “successfully pursues the positive emotions about the present, past, and future”; the “good life” is “using your strengths and virtues to obtain abundant gratification in the main realms of life”, and; a “meaningful life” is “the use of your strengths and virtues in the service of something much bigger than you are” (Seligman, 2003, p. 127).

Making decisions “in the service of something much bigger than you are” is a fundamental characteristic of human wisdom and, it is suggested here, an essential characteristic of executive decision making in enterprises facing turbulent and uncertain times.

Various conceptualisations of wisdom have been proposed. Arlin (1990) defines the features of wisdom in terms of questions rather than answers. Wisdom involves an approach or attitude to phenomena which is characterised by six features:

1. the search for complementarity: discovery of overlap and agreement in what appear to be unrelated or contradictory phenomena
2. the detection of asymmetry: ability to notice relevant and often subtle features
3. openness to change: willingness to remain open to receive new information, and on the basis of that information to be willing to change one’s world-view
4. pushing the limits: formulation of problems in ways that will give direction and meaning to the choices made, rather than close conformity to an acknowledged standard of right or wrong
5. a taste for problems of fundamental importance: strong conviction about what matters most
6. preference for certain conceptual moves: such as “active experimentation”, or “discovery-oriented behaviour”.

Kitchener and Brenner (1990) discuss wisdom from the reflective judgement model of adult cognitive development, suggesting four aspects or conditions for wisdom:
1. the presence of unavoidably difficult, “thorny” problems inherent in the lives of adults
2. a comprehensive grasp of knowledge characterised by both breadth and depth
3. a recognition that knowledge is uncertain and that it is not possible for truth to be absolutely knowable at any given time
4. a willingness and exceptional ability to formulate sound, executable judgements in the face of this uncertainty.

Wisdom, according to Chandler and Holliday (1990), is a well-defined, multi-dimensional competency, the key elements of which are exceptional understanding, judgement and communication skills, and general competence. Wisdom arises in the face of difficult, real-life problems — often ones that involve pragmatic decisions under conditions of paradox and contradiction.

The notion of wisdom-as-knowledge is used by Sternberg (1990) to distinguish between intelligence, creativity and wisdom. His “balance theory of wisdom” emphasises the role of tacit knowledge, which he sees as a kind of action-oriented knowledge — a form of “knowing how” rather than “knowing that” — which is indirectly acquired and not domain-specific (Sternberg, 1998).

Baltes and Kunzmann (2003, p.131) define wisdom as “expert knowledge and judgment about important, difficult and uncertain questions associated with the meaning and conduct of life”. The work of Baltes and colleagues (Baltes, Glück, & Kunzmann, 2002) has resulted in the formation of the “Berlin wisdom paradigm”, which proceeds from the philosophical and cultural-anthropological concepts of wisdom to place these into the context of psychological theory and methods. Using standardised procedures to collect “think-aloud” responses, trained raters evaluate responses according to five criteria thought to define wisdom-related knowledge:
1. factual knowledge: includes topics such as human nature, lifelong development, interpersonal relations, social norms, and individual differences in development and outcomes
2. procedural knowledge: comprises strategies and heuristics for dealing with life problems (e.g., the structuring and weighing of life goals, ways to handle conflict, or alternative back-up strategies)
3. lifespan conceptualisation: refers to knowledge about the many different themes and contexts of human life, their interrelationships, and cultural variations

4. value relativism and tolerance: refers to the acknowledgement of individual and cultural differences in values, with an explicit interest in achieving a balance between individual and collective interests and a focus on human values

5. recognition and management of uncertainty: refers to knowledge about the limitations of information processing by humans and about the low predictability of occurrences and consequences in human life, but also about ways to deal with such uncertainties.

Wisdom has been found to have psychometric properties which overlap with measures of intelligence, personality and their interface, yet possess distinctly different characteristics (Staudinger, Lopez, & Baltes, 1997; Webster, 2003).

However, most adults are not wise. Only some people have access to and acquire knowledge about the conduct and meaning of life that comes close to wisdom, and age is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for wisdom. Baltes et al. (2002) found that wisdom-related knowledge increases sharply during adolescence and young adulthood, but, on average, remains relatively stable during middle adulthood and young old age. Peak performances seemed to be more likely in the 50–60 age group, and professional specialisation was found to be the strongest predictor.

According to Sternberg (1998), executive managers must be able to apply both tacit and technical knowledge, mediated by values, toward the goal of achieving a common good. This requires finding a balance among competing interpersonal, intrapersonal and extrapersonal interests, and the capacity to adapt to the existing environmental contexts, or finding a way of shaping them, or selecting new ones, over both the short and long terms.

These definitions suggest that the use of wisdom may be the most adaptive decision-processing tool in conditions of uncertainty, and that wisdom requires a certain tolerance of complex environments. Wisdom clearly suits the domain of difficult and “thorny” life decisions with no right answers faced by executive decision-makers in a post-apocalyptic world. However, this raises two important questions. Can wisdom be transferred? And does executive coaching enhance wisdom?

**Executive Coaching as a Tool for Wisdom**

Executive coaching is a solution-focused dialogue, which promotes the enhancement of work performance and, particularly, the self-directed learning and personal growth of the client (Greene & Grant, 2003).

Boyatzis (2001) defines self-directed learning as the learning agenda which arises out of a perceived gap between the ideal self and the current
reality. And Garvey & Alred (2001) refer to the development of reflective skills and metacognitions as essential to learning in complex environments.

Self-regulation is certainly a required condition for achieving goals (Carver & Scheier, 1998), but other processes such as self-monitoring (Peterson, 1996), appreciative inquiry (Hammond & Royal, 1998) and even mindfulness meditation (Benson, 1996) may be part of the practice of self-reflection in coaching.

The critical element of self-reflection in self-directed learning is not only a key aspect of action learning (Argyris, 1993; Schon, 1987), but also of wisdom. Evaluative reflection on one’s past and present life serves a host of valuable functions including identity formation and maintenance, self-understanding, problem-solving and adaptive coping (Webster, 2003).

Action learning and evaluative reflection are core components of executive coaching according to Kilburg’s (2000, p. 74) six-stage “circle of awareness” process. He defines three levels of reflection: learning in action (being self-aware of task), reflection on learning in action (being aware of the available ways or learning routines for approaching task) and reflection on reflection on learning in action (being aware of the multiple environmental complexities of the situation and able to revise available learning routines for the emergence of new forms of relationships).

These levels of reflection and learning loops can be applied to what Kilburg (2001) refers to as the path of progressive development: “The layering of experience, learning, and deliberate efforts to change the self through time in the context of social roles and occurring in the complexity of the inner biopsychological life space of the participants” (Kilburg, 2001, p. 257).

Does this imply that wisdom can be learnt? Sternberg (2001a) has outlined, and begun to implement, a curriculum for teaching wisdom in schools, teaching children not what to think, but rather how to think. There may be some overlap between wisdom, philosophy and creative thinking (Halpern, 2001; Kuhn & Udell, 2001; Perkins, 2001), but Sternberg’s curriculum seems eminently applicable to executive managers in the context of executive coaching:
1. Explore with students the notion that conventional abilities and achievements are not enough for a satisfying life.
2. Demonstrate how wisdom is critical for a satisfying life.
3. Teach students the usefulness of interdependence.
4. Role-model wisdom (because what you do is more important than what you say).
5. Have students read about wise judgements.
6. Help students to recognise their own interests, those of other people and those of institutions.
7. Help students learn to balance their own interests, those of other people, and those of institutions.
8. Show students that the means, and not just the end, matter.
9. Help students learn the roles of adaptation, shaping, and selection, and how to balance them.
10. Encourage students to form, critique and integrate their own values in their thinking.
11. Encourage students to think dialectically, recognising that both questions and their answers evolve over time, and that the answer to an important life question can differ at different times in one’s life.
12. Show students the importance of dialogical thinking, whereby they understand interests and ideas from multiple points of view.
13. Teach students to search for the common good — a good where everyone wins.
14. Encourage and reward wisdom.
15. Teach students to monitor events in their lives and their own thought processes about these events.
16. Help students understand the importance of inoculating oneself against the pressures of unbalanced self-interest and small-group interest.

Of particular relevance to executive coaching are the principles of dialogical thinking (encouraging the thinker, i.e., the client, to understand problems from multiple points of view), and dialectical thinking (developing an understanding in the client that both questions and their answers evolve over time and can differ at different life stages). Sternberg (2001a) also advocates the reflective articulation, critique and integration of the client’s values into their thinking; and an emphasis on critical, creative and practical thinking, particularly on trying to reach the common good.

Sternberg (2001a) alludes to the influence of a significant other in the teaching of wisdom through the importance of a role model, but he might just as well be referring to the role of a coach.

Similarly, Pascual-Leone (2000) recommends mentors and psychotherapists as suitable agents of the client’s external path to wisdom. And one of the findings of the Berlin wisdom paradigm is the contribution of wisdom-enhancing mentors to a development of higher levels of wisdom-related knowledge (Baltes et al., 2002; Baltes & Kunzmann, 2003).

Staudinger & Baltes (1996) demonstrated that social interaction plays a significant role in wisdom-related performance. Participants who discussed a wisdom-related problem with a significant other person before giving their individual responses produced a substantial increase in performance over those who were just given some time to think about the problem by themselves.

In another study, participants were instructed in the use of a cognitive strategy. They were asked to imagine travelling around the world on a cloud...
visiting other places and cultures and were asked to construct mental images of each place and culture. When subsequently presented with practice wisdom tasks they demonstrated significant increases in targeted wisdom criteria over those participants who had not been instructed in the “cloud journey” tool. The authors conclude that wisdom-related knowledge may be available in principle, but is not used as a guiding strategy until activated by mental representations or mental scripts (Staudinger & Baltes, 1996).

This suggests that executive managers could be similarly encouraged by coaching to broaden their epistemological framework and elicit mental representations of knowledge for dealing with wisdom-related problems.

Based on Sternberg’s (2001a, 2001b) wisdom curriculum and the Berlin wisdom paradigm (Baltes et al., 2002), it is possible to outline a set of coaching principles for enhancing tolerance of complexity and wisdom-based decision-making processes in executive managers:

1. Facilitate recognition and management of uncertainty.
2. Promote dialogical thinking.
3. Encourage dialectical thinking.
4. Stimulate the articulation, critique and integration of values into thinking.
5. Emphasise critical, creative and practical thinking in relation to the common good.
7. Activate mental representations of wisdom-related knowledge through guided imagination strategies.
8. Stimulate evaluative reflections.
9. Explain and integrate the concept of progressive development.

In this way, executive coaching offers more to the workplace than just a transfer-of-training tool (Olivero, Bane, & Kopelman, 1997), or a way to facilitate constructive-developmental thinking (Laske, 1999), or shift leadership style (Kampa-Kokesch, 2002). Executive coaching may best be considered as a pre-eminent learning framework for inspiring leaders to apply wisdom decision-making processes and tolerance of complexity through chaordic systems to achieve a common good.

References


The Application of Psychological Assessment to Executive Coaching

Elizabeth Allworth and Barbara Griffin

There is a need for those in the coaching field to be aware of the strengths and limitations of psychometric testing as a basis for development planning, and to be discerning in the way in which psychological tests are used. Using the Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) as a model for matching people with jobs or organisational environments, this chapter focuses on the range of psychometric tests that can help to clarify the coachee’s abilities, personality style, vocational interests, motivational needs and values as they relate to their current and future work contexts. General guidelines are provided to assist coaches in determining the best assessment methods for their specific needs with individual clients.

The Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA)

The Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) provides a way of thinking about the match between an individual and a job or organisation. The TWA describes people and work environments in terms of the demands that they impose on each other and what each can offer, or supply to, the other. As illustrated in Figure 1, the theory offers a number of predictions about the match between people and their jobs in terms of satisfactory job performance, job satisfaction and tenure.

Satisfactory Performance
Performance is defined as an outcome of a match between the organisation’s need for specific knowledge, skills and attributes (KSAs) and the individual’s capacity to supply these.
Job Satisfaction
Satisfaction is defined as an outcome of the match between the individual’s vocational interests, motivational needs and values (e.g., need for achievement, autonomy, status, financial reward, and recognition) and the extent to which the organisation is able to provide appropriate rewards and reinforcement.

Tenure
The TWA suggests that high levels of job satisfaction and high levels of job performance are associated with longer tenure. That is, dissatisfied employees tend to leave their jobs earlier than those who are satisfied, and those with unsatisfactory performance may not be encouraged by their employers to stay. However, individuals and organisations will tolerate a degree of mismatch: individuals may tolerate some of their needs not being met by their employer, while employers will tolerate lower levels of performance.

More recent updates of the model suggest other outcomes from person-job/organisation fit, including organisational commitment, satisfaction with change, withdrawal behaviours and mental wellbeing (Hesketh & Allworth, 2003; Griffin & Hesketh, in press). There is a process of work adjustment by which the individual and the organisation strive towards improved congruency. For example, individuals may adjust by negotiating tasks to better suit their skills and interests, engaging in professional development, altering their expectations, or negotiating for the rewards they seek (e.g., money, professional development or feedback). Organisations, on the other hand, strive for adjustment by providing training to underperforming employees or redesigning their jobs to better suit their capabilities and needs.

When applying the TWA to executive coaching, it is necessary to decide upon the assessment tools that can be used to measure relevant aspects of the individual, the job or organisation, and the indicators of fit (satisfactory performance, job satisfaction and tenure). In this paper, the emphasis is on the assessment of the “person” side of the model, that is, the assessment of the individual’s KSAs and of their vocational interests, motivational needs, and values. Before proceeding, however, we take a brief look at the organisational side of the TWA model, particularly the requirements that organisations and jobs make on the KSAs of the individual, otherwise considered as the performance domain.

The Performance Domain
The performance domain is central to any discussion of psychometric testing in the organisational context. While early researchers considered performance to be a unitary or global construct (measured as overall performance), the last decade has seen a growing interest in differentiating the
The Application of Psychological Assessment to Executive Coaching

One of the early attempts in this regard was that of Campbell (1990) who identified eight dimensions of performance, including job-specific task performance, nonjob-specific task performance, demonstration of effort, written and oral communication, maintenance of personal discipline, supervision/leadership, and management/administration. Borman and Motowidlo (1993) subsequently narrowed the performance domain down to two dimensions: task performance (the core technical activities of the job) and contextual performance (helpful, constructive and cooperative behaviours that management values). To account for the changing nature of today’s work environment, Allworth and Hesketh (1999) expanded Borman and Motowidlo’s model to include adaptive performance (the requirement to adjust to changing job and organisational demands). More recently, Pulakos, Arad, Donovan, and Plamondon (2000) developed an eight-factor taxonomy of adaptive performance and Griffin and Hesketh (2003) provide partial support for their three-factor model including proactive, reactive and tolerant behaviours.

While measurement of performance has represented an ongoing challenge for researchers and practitioners (see Taylor, 2003), it is essential that users of psychometric tests have a strong understanding of the performance domain. Without this understanding, psychometric tests are interpreted in a vacuum with reference to the individual but not the environment in which performance occurs.

Figure 1
they work and live. The capacity of psychometric tests to predict performance depends significantly on the extent to which the results of the testing can be conceptually related to aspects of the performance domain or the requirements of the job (as represented in the left-hand side of the TWA model in Figure 1).

We turn now to the discussion of the tools that are relevant to assessing the individual’s KSAs. This is followed by a discussion of the assessment of the individual’s vocational interests, and motivational needs and values.

Assessment of the Individual’s KSAs

Here the assessment focuses on what the individual does well and the KSAs they bring to their role. The individual’s capacity to supply these is typically assessed through cognitive ability tests and personality measures. Skills audits and multirater feedback questionnaires can also provide useful information about behaviour and performance.

Cognitive Ability Tests

Cognitive ability tests assess intellectual functioning, such as numerical, verbal and conceptual problem-solving abilities. There is consistently strong evidence for the validity of cognitive ability tests as predictors of job performance (Hunter & Hunter, 1984; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). Although it appears that general cognitive ability is a better predictor of performance in higher-level, more complex roles (such as those held by executives and senior managers) than in lower-level, more routine roles (Ackerman, 1992; Hunter & Hunter, 1984), cognitive ability is nevertheless predictive across all jobs and settings. Cognitive ability is considered to be such a reliable predictor of job performance that it is often used as the benchmark against which other selection assessment tools are compared.

In the context of executive coaching, cognitive ability testing offers the potential to determine the extent to which an individual’s performance on the job is related to their learning, problem-solving and decision-making capabilities. For example, the underlying cause of underperformance or lack of confidence in a coachee may be difficulties they are experiencing in managing the more complex conceptual problem-solving, decision-making and strategic planning aspects of a senior management position. Alternatively, cognitive ability testing can provide an indication of the potential of an individual to progress to a senior management role and to quickly acquire the specific knowledge and skills they will need in order to perform effectively. Examples of the kinds of cognitive ability tests that may be used in executive assessment are provided in Table 1. (Please note that these are examples only. There is no intention on the part of the authors to promote these tests over a wide range of other measures that are used in selection and development.)
Personality Testing

Personality tests provide an indication of an individual’s personal attributes, such as interpersonal confidence, sociability, empathy, drive, energy, emotional stability, conscientiousness, task focus and other leadership, organisational and team-related attributes. Although conscientiousness and emotional stability seem to predict performance across most jobs (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Barrick, Mount & Judge, 2001), most other personality attributes predict performance only if they are required on the job (Robertson & Kinder, 1993; Hough & Schneider, 1996). For example, the ability to persuade and influence is more likely to predict performance in sales and management than in clerical or accounting roles where attention to detail and a preference for working with data may be more important.

There are three kinds of personality measures that may be used in executive coaching: multidimensional measures of personality, those based on the Five Factor model, and measures of personality type.

Multidimensional measures of personality. These assess a wide range of personality attributes that are relevant to occupational settings. Some have been developed using samples of the general population, for example, the 16PF (Cattell, Cattell & Cattell, 1994) and the California Psychological Inventory (CPI) (Gough, 1987). Others, such as the Occupational Personality Questionnaire (Saville & Holdsworth, 1995) and the Global Personality Questionnaire (Schmit, Kihm & Robie, 2000) have been developed using occupational samples, for example, managers, professionals and salespeople. The results of the assessment are interpreted against the requirements of the person’s current or prospective role as determined through a job analysis.

The Five Factor model of personality. This model suggests that all personality attributes can be boiled down to five core, broadband attributes, commonly referred to as the “Big Five” (Goldberg, 1992; Norman, 1963). These are conscientiousness (dependability, organisation, perseverance, diligence); extroversion (sociability, talkativeness, assertiveness); agreeableness (friendliness, cooperation, altruism, tolerance); neuroticism (tendency towards being anxious, depressed, emotional, insecure) and openness to experience (intellect, imagination, creativity, curiosity). In the early 1990s, some very valuable research emerged showing the generalisable validity of conscientiousness across most jobs and work settings (Barrick & Mount, 1991). More recently, Barrick, Mount and Judge (2001) provide further metaanalytic support for the generalisable validity of conscientiousness and, to a slightly lesser extent, neuroticism. Barrick et al., (2001) also provide evidence that the other Big Five factors predict performance in roles where they are required, although the relationships are not as strong. For example, extroversion is important for management, agreeableness is valuable for teamwork and openness to experience predicts performance in training.
Measures of type. These provide a categorisation of the individual into a personality typology that defines a specific set of behavioural tendencies, reflecting differences in attitudes and orientation. Some measures of type, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI; Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer, 1998), examine decision-making and planning styles while others, such as the Team Management Index (TMI; Margerison & McCann, 1997) focus on preferred team activities. Measures of type are popular tools for career development as they are often easy to administer, and produce reports that are more readily interpreted than those produced by the multi-dimensional personality questionnaires. They are also available to a broader market than psychologists.

Although measures of type are popular and widely used for development purposes, they do have some limitations. For example, Boyle (1995) argues that the forced-choice response format that is used in these kinds of measures unduly limits the level of statistical analysis that is expected by those who seek high standards in test construction. Furthermore, the presence of discrete personality types is not supported empirically. Rather, personality attributes tend to lie on a continuum that is normatively related to a particular population, such as the general population or senior managers.
Other Measures

Other methods by which to assess an individual’s KSAs include the skills audit and the multirater feedback survey:

**Skills audits.** Skills audits are typically customised for the industry and level of role so as to reflect the skills that are required on the job. The development of a skills audit requires a task, behavioural or competency framework that can guide the generation of items or questions. O*Net (Occupational Information Network; www.doleta.gov.programs/onet/database.htm) provides a highly useful, valuable and comprehensive framework for this purpose. Derived from the US Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT; United States Department of Labor, 1977), O*Net identifies, defines and describes the comprehensive elements of job performance. It contains hundreds of information units on job requirements, worker attributes, and the content and context of work.

**Multirater feedback.** Multirater feedback is anonymous performance feedback from multiple sources such as self, manager, peers, and direct reports. Introduced originally as a way of overcoming rater bias associated with supervisor ratings, multirater feedback surveys measure an individual against job-related competencies and behaviours.

There are a range of off-the-shelf generic management or leadership 360-degree questionnaires that are applicable to managers and executives, including the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ; McDonald, Silverhorne, Whetten, & Andrews, 2000); The Linking Skills Index (LSI; Margerison & McCann, 1992); and Benchmarks (The Center for Creative Leadership; Lombardo, Usher, & McCauley, 1998). The benefit of these kinds of off-the-shelf measures is that the performance of the individual being rated can be compared with that of others in the same industry or same level of an organisation. Alternatively, many organisations elect to design their own questionnaires to directly measure the competencies and behaviours that are relevant to the position. The benefit of customised multirater feedback questionnaires is that they assess competencies and behaviours that are directly relevant to the individual’s role.

With respect to the strengths and limitations of multirater feedback in executive coaching, issues of rating or measurement bias, quality of program design, including transparency of the process, use of the survey results (development planning versus remuneration decisions) and the implementation of follow-up programs need to be considered. Multirater feedback programs can be very valuable in executive coaching by raising the individual’s awareness of their strengths and areas for development, and motivating behavioural change and performance improvements (Brett & Atwater, 2001; Johnson & Fersit, 1999). They can, however, result in decreased performance, particularly when focused on personal characteristics rather than on task performance (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). It is also not always easy to clearly differentiate aspects of the performance domain.
While problems of rater error can be minimised through training of raters and good questionnaire design, it is not always possible to know if differences between raters are true differences or the result of rater bias (Taylor, 2003).

Assessment of the Individual’s Vocational Interests, Motivational Needs and Values

The focus here is on the assessment of the individual’s vocational interests, motivational needs and values. Based on the TWA model, a good match between the individual’s interests, needs and values will result in high job satisfaction.

Vocational Interests

The assessment of vocational interests can be useful in the coaching context by providing insights into the fields of employment (e.g., the trades, business, the arts, and welfare) and the range of occupations (e.g., lawyer, psychologist, farmer, and electrician) that are attractive to the individual. Career interest assessments ask people what they enjoy doing, not only at work, but also in other domains of their lives, such as school, university and leisure. Some examples of the kinds of tools that are used in this area are provided in Table 1.

Generally speaking, vocational interest theories categorise careers into those that involve working with people (e.g., sales, management, customer service, welfare, and education); those that involve working with data (e.g., clerical roles, sciences, and accounting); and those that involve working with things (e.g., the trades, and horticulture). One of the most influential models of career interests is that of Holland (1997) who proposed six occupational types: realistic (manual trades), investigative (sciences), artistic (music and art), social (health, education and welfare), enterprising (business, management) and conventional (clerical, accounting). Each occupational type is associated with a set of corresponding personality factors, for example, artists tend to be creative, imaginative and independent.

Although the selection research indicates that values, needs and vocational interest assessments are not necessarily good predictors of job performance (Hunter & Hunter, 1984; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998), these are useful tools to assist individuals in the process of job or occupational change to explore alternative career options. Hansen (1994) reports numerous studies that have shown 60–75% accuracy in predicting occupational choice. With respect to the relationship between occupational interest and satisfaction, the research reported by Hansen (1994) suggests that the pattern is not absolutely clear and that there may be some mediating and moderating variables such as occupational level and gender. Also, some occupational types seem to require greater synergy with their environment than others. For example, investigative types are more satisfied when they
are in investigative roles but artistic types are as happy in nonartistic roles as they are in artistic roles.

**Motivational Needs and Values**

The assessment of motivational needs and values is possibly the least-defined aspect of the assessment, particularly in view of the multitude of motivational theories upon which motivational assessment tools are based. For example, the needs theories (such as Maslow, Herzberg and McClelland00 argue that individuals have internal states or needs that direct behaviour, while cognitive theories (e.g., Equity Theory; Vroom’s Valence–Instrumentality–Expectancy Theory) focus on thoughts, beliefs and values which impact on people’s decisions and motivation to perform. An excellent overview of the motivational theories can be found in Landy (1989).

Most questionnaires and tools that assess motivational needs and values focus on issues such as sources of motivation (e.g., being in a dynamic work environment, need for security or achievement); how the person likes to be rewarded (e.g., money, status or advancement); the kind of management style the person prefers (e.g., directive versus participative); and how the person likes to work (e.g., in a structured, planned, methodical manner vs. in a spontaneous, flexible, reactive manner). The TWA suggests that people can modify their needs and values in accordance with the rewards available in the organisation or, alternatively, will alter their environment or negotiate for the rewards they need. Level of satisfaction will depend on a correspondence between the individual’s needs and the extent to which these are rewarded. Theorists such as Herzberg (see Landy, 1989), however, highlight differential relationships between needs and job satisfaction. For example, while internal motivators such as autonomy or responsibility contribute to satisfaction, external motivators such as money and status do not improve job satisfaction; they simply avoid dissatisfaction.

**Benefits and Limitations of Psychometric Testing in Executive Coaching**

Having discussed the range of psychometric tests available, we turn now to briefly examine the benefits and limitations of using such tests in the context of coaching. Firstly, test results provide data not easily obtained by other methods of assessment. Such data offers coaches a relatively objective analysis of the client’s profile. Furthermore, instruments with established reliability and validity increase confidence in the information used to assist the planning of coaching programs. An additional advantage of obtaining information from psychometric testing is that the individual’s results can be benchmarked against an appropriate comparison group. Finally, profiling a client across a wide range of personal attributes affords increased self-awareness for the individual.
The use of behavioural assessment (including multirater feedback surveys), while generally less rigorous in terms of reliability, enables the coach to establish a baseline performance level at the initial planning stage of a coaching intervention and then monitor and review progress throughout its duration.

Despite these advantages, the potential test user should understand the limitations of psychometric testing. This is particularly important in light of the great diversity of tests now available, and increasingly so, through the Internet. First, there is restricted access to some tests, with certain requirements for professional accreditation. However, more recently, test publishers who focus on assessment for workplace settings have been providing training and subsequent accreditation for nonpsychologists. Second is the issue of cost. Although the use of tests can be costly, this might be offset when one considers the hidden costs of low productivity, errors, training and turnover that result when there is a lack of match or fit between a worker and their work environment (Tziner & Meir, 1997). Testing can also be a relatively lengthy process. Finally, and in light of the increasing diversity that characterises today’s workplace, test users need to be aware of the possibility of cultural bias inherent in tests.

Unfortunately, the quality of available tests varies — there are good tests and not-so-good tests. In order to make sensible choices about specific tests, the user must understand some basic principles of psychometric assessment and know how to access current research that critically evaluates such tests (Murphy & Davidshofer, 1998). The two “testing traps” we highlight are first, that a test that looks good may not necessarily be good, and second, that a good test used inappropriately is no longer a good test.

Assessing the Psychometric Properties of Tests

How does a coach maintain objectivity in the face of persuasive advertising and look beyond the immediate face appeal of a particular test? We suggest five questions to consider when judging the potential usefulness of a test.

First, is the test based on sound scientific theory? The research and development that went into creating the instrument should be documented, as should the credentials of the test developer. Second, does the test measure relevant job competencies? Whether the underlying constructs that the test is assessing are relevant to the knowledge, skills and abilities required by the job is an important issue for test use that is legally defensible. Third, does the test manual provide an adequate and appropriate normative sample with which to compare the client? Fourth, is the reliability of the test satisfactory? Reliability refers to how dependably or consistently a test measures a construct. Murphy and Davidshofer (1998) present a discussion of the different types of reliability, such as test–retest (the stability of results over time) and internal consistency (the extent that the test items are related). They suggest that reliability values over .80 are good, while those less than .70 have limited applicability.
Finally, has the test demonstrated good validity? Aspects of validity include the extent that a test measures what it says it measures, the extent to which the items are representative of the relevant behaviours or knowledge, and the extent to which performance on the test predicts performance on the job. Validity coefficients greater than .35 are considered very beneficial; those from .20 to .35 are likely to be useful; while those less than .11 are unlikely to be useful (Murphy & Davidshofer, 1998).

The Appropriate Use of Tests

Turning to the appropriate use of tests, adequate training that includes information on psychometric principles, the use of norm tables and interpretation of results will help ensure that the test-user maintains a professional standard. In addition, ongoing learning is important to keep abreast of current research and its practical implications. Before administering a test, the coach will need to assess factors such as language competence, disability, and anxiety, that may impact on the performance of a client. Issues surrounding measurement bias and fairness in testing also need to be taken into consideration. Further, tests should be administered in a standardised fashion. The provision of feedback is implicit in good test use, allowing the individual to play an active part in the process, and adhering to principles such as avoiding value-laden descriptives or jargon assists in making it a more positive experience for the coachee. Finally, maintaining appropriate levels of confidentiality has important ethical and legal implications. For example, the test-user must be aware of the issues surrounding privacy legislation, clarification of who the client is, the future use of test results, and the security of test materials.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to describe and illustrate the use of psychometric tests in executive assessment, and to alert test-users to the kinds of psychometric, ethical and practice issues that need to be considered when psychometric tests are used for this purpose. Most importantly, the chapter highlights the need to have a good understanding of not only the abilities, interests, needs and values of the individual, but also the environment in which they work, including job tasks, required competencies and other environmental influences. On the basis of this understanding, the appropriate tests can be selected. There is a burgeoning market of psychometric tests that can have an important impact on, and value in, executive coaching. We urge users of psychometric tests to be discerning in the choices they make. Used professionally and ethically, good tests can enlighten, encourage and support executives in their career planning and provide a rigorous, structured method of determining strengths and potential areas for development.
References


The Parameters of Specialist Professional Leadership Coaching

Ray H. Elliott

Grant (2003b) has drawn attention to the paucity of literature about evidence-based coaching. He defines this as involving “the conscientious use of best current knowledge in making decisions about how to deliver coaching to coaching clients” (p. C3, slide 18). The application of valid and relevant research about coaching practice is important for the future of this high-growth industry. However, it seems at present that much of the coaching industry is based more on marketing and impression management than demonstrated professional competence.

The percentage of coaches and academics practising as leadership coaches, or aspiring to, is high. Informal polling at forums of the Australian Psychological Society’s Coaching Psychology Interest Group and International Coaching Federation (Australia) indicate that well over one third of respondents report themselves, actually or aspirationally, to be coaching managers and executives for leadership development. Yet this area of practice is little researched. The interest in it is not surprising given some of the status and glamour associated with it. Empirical research suggests that leadership may account for over one third of all group and organisational behaviour and culture and that it is likely to drive the shaping of organisational culture (e.g., Bass, 1998; Sarros & Elliot, 2001; Sarros, Gray, & Densten, 2001). The question therefore arises: what special knowledge, skills, experience and qualities should characterise professional leadership coaching for leadership development in group and organisational settings?

This chapter is devoted to discussion of this important question. It is observed that the existing coaching literature has so far largely failed to acknowledge and use the extensive research literature on assessing leadership and developing leaders who perform optimally. Moreover, it is suggested that the core assumptions and methodologies of some popular
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generalist coaching models, which are intended for use in management
development and individual and organisational performance enhancement,
reduce the likelihood of such coaching accessing this extensive leadership
development research base.

This chapter takes the position that leadership coaching is a specialist
form of professional coaching. It is argued that there is important knowl-
dge about effective leadership, its definition and measurement, and indeed
about leadership development, skills and performance which needs to be
acquired by professional leadership coaches. This comes from the fields of
applied psychology and the behavioural sciences, and specifically from
research on leadership in groups and organisations. The gap between the
emergent evidence-based coaching literature and the extensive evidence-
based leadership assessment and development research literature needs to
be closed.

Towards this end, seven propositions are put forward here. Collectively
they are an attempt to define leadership coaching as a specialist form of
professional coaching (Elliott, 2003a).

**Proposition 1**

**Leadership Coaching Requires the Application of Relevant Knowledge Frameworks**

Leadership coaching usually takes place within the context of complex
group and organisational dynamics. It is invariably a necessary aspect of
executive, management and business coaching as these types of coaching
are defined, for example, by Skifftington and Zeus (2000). Knowledge
frameworks that can help to define the parameters of specialist leadership
coaching include (from psychology) those of personality and personal func-
tioning, group and organisational behaviour, as well as established, empir-
ically supported leadership and management theory.

As leaders work in group contexts, professional leadership coaches
need to be conversant with evidence-based group characteristics (e.g.,
design inputs and contextual variables, resource and process variables,
outcome measurables), with the critical factors and phases in group and
team development, and with the range of models for leadership and group
decision-making discussed in the literature. Additionally, accepted psycho-
dynamic explanatory theories such as “splitting” (Klein, 1997), “scapegoat-
ing” (Girard, 1987), assumption groups (Bion, 1961), attachment theory,
dependency and interdependency in groups (Bennis & Shepard, 1956), pro-
jection and projective identification (Ogden, 1979), and the “constructive-
developmental psychology framework” (Kegan, 1982) are important
knowledge frameworks for interpreting complex group phenomena and
their relation to leadership.

A good working knowledge of the evidence-based literature about
organisation theory is also important for leadership coaching; for example,
concepts and theory about organisational roles, position power, referent power, formal and informal communications, decision-making systems, systems theory, IT and design, human factor analysis, organisational culture, mission and vision articulation, operational systems, strategic systems, force-field analysis, and organisational-development intervention strategies and theories.

Proposition 2
Accessing the Extensive Leadership Assessment and Development Research is Essential to Leadership Coaching

There are many commentaries on what might be called generalist approaches to coaching (e.g., Green & Grant, 2003; Jaques & Clement, 1994; Kinlaw, 1989; Lansberg, 1996; Whitmore, 1992; Zeus & Skiffington, 2000). These are regarded as having application for enhancing human functioning in many different contexts — including the management and leadership of groups and organisations. Such generalist coaching models and practices, while often very powerful and useful in themselves, are insufficient for the coaching of leader-managers.

The body of research literature about leadership is extensive and needs to be routinely accessed by coaches working with leader-managers. Some key empirical studies which attest to the importance and efficaciousness of leadership assessment and development interventions include Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubramaniam (2003); Barling, Weber, and Kelloway (1996); Bass (1990); Campion, Medsker, and Higgs (1993); Carless, Mann, and Wearing (1996); Gladstein (1984); Howell and Avolio (1993); Lowe, Kroeck, and Sivasubramaniam (1996); Parry and Sinha (2002); and Simons (1999). Elliott (2000) provided a digest of the important empirically validated leadership theories. These include (but are not restricted to):

- Full Range Leadership Theory (e.g., Avolio, 1996, 1999; Bass, 1985, 1998)
- Autocratic–Democratic Continuum (Tannenbaum & Schmidt, 1958)
- Path Goal Theory (House, 1971, 1987)
- Leader Member Exchange (LMX) leader styles (Graen, Novak, & Sommerkamp, 1982)
- situational leadership (Hersey-Blanchard, 1982)
- least preferred co-worker (Fiedler, 1967).

These leadership and management theories may be accessed through standard empirically based reference works on leadership, group and organisational theory; for example, Robbins, Waters-Marsh, Cacioppe, and Millett (1994), supplemented by Bass (1998) for transformational leadership. Contingency leadership theories identified factors that shaped outcomes in
group and organisational processes; for example, people–task dimensions (Blake and Mouton, 1964); co-worker preferences (Fiedler, 1967); situational factors, especially developmental readiness of the followers (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982); personality traits (Bass, 1990); and task type and complexity (Vroom & Yetton, 1973; Vroom & Jago, 1988). These have now been put into perspective by the development of transformational theories that regard leadership as a social-influence process (Bass, 1981, 1985, 1990, 1993, 1997, 1998; Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003; Howell & Avolio, 1992; Parry, 2001; Turner, Barling, Epitropaki, Butcher, & Milner, 2002; Yammarino & Bass, 1991; Yammarino, Spangler, & Bass, 1993). Transformational theories of leadership are associated with effects of significant change, adaptability to changing environments, increased commitment, extra effort and augmented outcomes. Such leadership behaviours are coachable and trainable to achieve optimal leadership profiles, as determined by outcomes (e.g., Parry & Sinha, 2002). They are also applied at the level of group and organisational culture as well as at the individual level (Pearce & Conger, 2003; Bass, 1998; Tosi, 1991). From a perspective of transformational leadership, contingency theories are broadly grouped as offering accounts of transactional influence based on assumptions of social exchange (“you do this for me and I will do that for you”) — generally a less powerful form of influencing others.

More research has been published in peer-reviewed journals about transformation leadership in the 1990s than about other leadership research theories — including the contingency theories. The Full Range Leadership Model spans both transformational and transactional leadership styles, but it needs to be augmented by the theories of leadership listed to more adequately interpret leadership for coachees. However, collectively these theories provide a powerful explanatory tool for leadership. They are essential to optimise the skills, development, performance and overall effectiveness of leader-managers.

**Proposition 3**

**A Broad Set of Skills, Methods and Strategies Is Required in the Leadership Coach**

Leadership coaching requires a repertoire of skills, knowledge and professional competencies beyond those necessary for solution-focused or goal-oriented approaches, for example. If used alone and without proper understanding of their limitations, the latter can systematically prevent uptake of evidence-based research relevant to coaching leader-managers in organisational contexts.

For instance, relying primarily on the naïve implicit assumptions held by the client and generalist coach that effective management and leadership will ensue from determining a client-generated goal or solution is more likely to result in suboptimal performance unless these same assumptions
are systematically subjected to a critical review and improvement by empirically supported leadership theories. Goals of leadership coaching should be the refinement of naïve implicit theory through the appropriate application of leadership research, to enhance client self-monitoring and the objective interpretation of self–other behaviour and its impacts.

Two well-known generalist approaches are solution-focused (Cavanagh, 2003; Grant & Green, 2001; Grant & Cavanagh, 2002; Green & Grant, 2003) and goal-directed coaching, specifically the widely used GROW model (goals, reality, opportunities, wrap-up; proposed by Whitmore, 1992, and Lansberg, 1996). However, applying solution-focused, goal-centred, and other general models to the coaching of managers and leaders in uncritical ways has limitations. Everybody has their ideas of what constitutes “good leadership”. The risk is that the uncritical application of these models will simply serve to confirm naïve client ideas. Taking up and applying expert knowledge about leadership, groups and organisations should be actively affirmed by the generalist coaching models in the case of dealing with coaching in group and organisational contexts.

**Proposition 4**

**Both “Expert Interpretation” and “Process Facilitation” Modalities Are Required in the Specialist Leadership Coaching Relationship**

Professional leadership coaching entails extending the facilitative modality of generalist coaching to include expert interpretations in the light of established evidence-based theory. These two modalities need not be regarded as mutually exclusive or contradictory, provided proper attention is paid to selecting the repertoire of skills and methods, disclosing purpose, educating the client, and obtaining informed and voluntary consent from them for each modality shift.

However, in using the expert interpretation modality, the nature of the coach–coachee relationship itself is necessarily redefined, not just extended. The issues that are raised include the type of authority vested in the professional coach, and the nature of truth, objectivity and reality-testing accepted in the relationship. Some may argue that shifting from a facilitation to an expert modality is not possible without corrupting the essentially self-directed assumption by the client of a facilitative coach–coachee relationship. But it is proposed here that these shifts can and must be navigated in the professional service of the leader-manager client. Moreover, not to engage in these shifts is to fail the test of professional responsibility of always acting in the best interests of the client by appropriately applying what is known to be true and effective.
Proposition 5
Leadership Coaching Is More Effective When Undertaken Simultaneously at Multiple Levels

Much coaching literature and discussion features the “dyadic assumption”, the assumption that coaching always takes place with individuals. However, the most effective coaching for developing leadership skills and enhancing performance enhancement takes place in interventions involving not only the individual leader-managers but also team members and other stakeholders in organisational contexts. Leadership is a social phenomenon; it is about how people influence each other and the outcomes of that (Elliott, 2003b). Sometimes large numbers of organisational members need to be involved in coaching if the leadership culture is to be changed and blocks to developing sustainable leadership removed.

It may be objected that such interventions are about consulting rather than coaching. However, it is not only possible but desirable to coach individuals one-on-one and in groups of established management teams, direct reports and other stakeholders, and often simultaneously to achieve greater impact. Such interventions necessarily involve the leadership coach in various relationships with individual clients in the organisation (e.g., as observer, facilitator, expert commentator, resource person, process consultant and trainer). Such sets of professional relationships require careful attention to organisational ethics and to contracting.

Proposition 6
The Use of Applied Ethics Is Required in Leadership Coaching

Given complex group and organisational contexts, the multiple relationships between the leadership coach and individual coachees, and the rich modalities of the coaching processes for leadership development, a further component of specialist leadership coaching is the explicit and active practice of ethics with the client(s). The importance of this is highlighted by the power a leadership coach can acquire by virtue of the information made available to them in trusted relationships with the client organisation.

Applied ethics includes the use of principles and values such as the following (Elliott, 2001a; Elliott & Engebretson, 2001):

- responsibility and accountability
- honest and informed consent
- appropriate and truthful disclosure
- respect for human dignity in the exercise of power in relationships
- avoidance of conflicts of interest
- respect for integrity
- confidentiality and the security of information.
Statements of such principles and their application need to form a backdrop to every coaching relationship within the organisation and are best seen as part of an overall contracting framework that includes attention to the requirements of relevant privacy legislation. Additionally, where the leadership coach subscribes to, and is bound by, other professional codes these need to be disclosed along with information about how concerns and complaints can be raised (i.e., putting power for such monitoring in the hands of the coachee). Establishing such ethical frameworks up-front provides guidance and remedies for most organisational situations. It also helps to ensure the autonomy and independence of the leadership coach and the dignity of all clients involved in leadership coaching.

Proposition 7
Professional Leadership Coaching Roles Need To Be Contractual

The final parameter for leadership coaching concerns the nature of the professional relationship. Bayles (1981) advanced five general models for it:

• friendship — personal relationship of mutual trust and cooperation in a joint venture
• agency — acting as an expert at the direction of the client
• paternalism — the coach is in a superior position by virtue of their knowledge and skills
• fiduciary — the coach’s superior knowledge is recognised but the coachee retains significant authority and responsibility
• contractual between autonomous entities — agreements about the sharing of resources based on an assumption of equality in relationships.

These five models of coaching relationships need to be viewed in terms of the way the power relationships are balanced in organisational contexts — the domain of leadership coaching. In coaching, and leadership coaching in particular, there will be times when the character of the coach–coachee relationship may take on many or even all of these models of the professional relationship. However, it is suggested that the “contractual between autonomous entities” relationship needs to be the dominant model. It provides boundaries essential for the leadership coach–client relationship at individual, group and organisational levels, and has the characteristics of a partnership at each of these levels.

This contractual professional model best reflects the active participation in the coaching relationship by both the coach and coachee, and the wide repertoire of competencies required in leadership coaching. It can take account of the multiple relationships involved; provide clear objectives and procedures for evaluation, recognise the various levels of accountability, confirm the confidentiality of the coach–coachee relationship and establish...
clear boundaries around confidential information; enshrine voluntary and informed consent about the use of sensitive information; and include respect for any codes of professional ethics which are appropriate for the coach. When the relationship is defined by the contractual model, the roles of coach and coachee in organisational contexts are more clearly defined.

The Character of Generalist Coaching: Models and Approaches Reviewed From the Perspective of Leadership Coaching

Denis Kinlaw (1989, pp. 24–25) defined coaching as “one-to-one conversations that focus on performance or performance-related topics”. The Centre for Creative Leadership proposed four basic types of coaching: coaching for skills, coaching for performance, coaching for development, and coaching for the executive’s agenda (cited in Zeus & Skiffington, 2000). Grant and Cavanagh (2002) in turn distinguish between three types of coaching: coaching for personal and professional development, coaching for performance, and coaching for mastery of skills (see also Green & Grant, 2003, pp. 91–94). Additionally, there are accounts of executive and business coaching (Jacques & Clement, 1994; Stephenson, 2000; Zeus & Skiffington, 2000).

Zeus and Skiffington (2000) suggest several answers to the question, “What is coaching?” They report that coaching is:

- essentially a conversation — a dialogue between coach and coachee — within a productive results-oriented context
- about learning — yet the coach is not a teacher and does not necessarily have more knowledge and skills than the coachee
- more about asking the right questions than providing answers
- about change and transformation — the human ability to grow
- about reinvention.

The points above describe generalist coaching, which helps nonclinical clients optimise some aspect of their functioning and performance in a variety of circumstances and contexts. The context for coaching may often be the workplace and the goals results-oriented (Green & Grant, 2003c); learning can be in the personal, skills or performance domains.

The role of the coach is usually taken to be that of a facilitator of learning rather than a teacher, trainer, expert, counsellor or therapist. In his doctoral dissertation, Grant (2001) assigns pivotal importance to the facilitative role of coaches, and contrasts it with expert roles such as consulting, training or advising. Grant and Cavanagh (2002, p.1) continue the same distinction. Skiffington and Zeus, (2000) also make a similar point when they describe the essential core competencies required of any coach, many of which are facilitative in character. They argue that these facilitative skills are then supplemented by coaching specialties, such as business and executive
coaching. To simply identify leadership coaching with training, advising or consulting, and therefore not as “coaching”, is to miss the point.

**Goal-Oriented Coaching**

The goal-oriented coaching models (Lansberg, 1996; Whitemore, 1992), sometimes characterised as “Tell me what you want and I will help you achieve your goal”, assume that the client knows what goals they want or need to achieve, or that they are capable of defining them with facilitative assistance. These approaches intentionally move the client quickly through the presenting issue towards defining the goal and developing an action plan and implementation strategy to achieve it. Generalist coaching is frequently goal-oriented. The GROW model (Green & Grant, 2003; Lansberg, 1996; Whitemore, 1992) is an example of such a coaching methodology.

However, goal-oriented coaching can also be damaging in certain circumstances and with certain people, for example those suffering from burnout (Elliott, 2002b). Further, its assumptions that the coachee knows what their own goals should be and that no expert knowledge from evidence-based social research is required makes it problematic in organisational contexts. The organisation itself may want to influence the shaping of the goals of individuals — and this certainly does take place through the now-widespread use of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Management Performance Indicators (MPIs) and so on.

Specialist leadership coaching needs to draw on goal-oriented approaches, but these alone are not sufficient for the professional leadership coach. In particular (applying leadership research), goal-focused approaches commonly make transactional assumptions about the coach–coachee relationship or about coachee–environment relationships (achieving expectations, meeting a target, confirming a role). This is to be contrasted with actually helping the coachee achieve their potential, which may as yet be undefined: transformational influencing behaviours are key here. In terms of the research-validated Full Range Leadership Model (Avolio, 1996; Bass, 1997), leadership coaches themselves therefore need to practice optimal balances between transactional (goal-defined) and transformational (potential enhancing) influencing, with the latter predominating, in order to assist their clients achieve their potential.

**Solution-Focused Coaching**

Grant and Cavanagh (2002, p. 4, slide 19) in developing “solution-focused coaching” put forward the following:

The solution focused approach sees the extended exploration of causes and problems as mostly unhelpful. More often than not, such exploration is guesswork, or simply identifies what we do not want to happen.

The key feature of solution focused approaches is an over-riding concern with identifying what we do want to be happening. [Solution-focused coaching] asks questions like:
What is the preferred future?
How much of it do we have now?
What would need to happen for more of that future to become a reality?
What resources do I have?
What steps can I take to move toward that desired outcome?

Grant later arrived at the following definition of solution-focused coaching: “a collaborative, solution-focused, results-orientated and systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of performance, life experience, self-directed learning and personal growth of people from normal (non-clinical) populations” (2003b, p.1). This incorporates many of the features of generalist coaching and additionally draws attention to the systematic process of coaching. It also emphasises the facilitative (rather than expert) role of coaches.

Grant (2003b) and Green & Grant (2003, p. 55) also introduced to the solution-focused approach the idea of the “coaching cycle”. This cycle is self-regulatory and moves from identifying goals to establishing a plan, then to monitoring, evaluating and modifying it. Although useful, the cycle does not include a stage which draws on scientifically derived knowledge about leadership or organisational systems or culture. It is considered the coaching model would be considerably enhanced if this were rectified. The unquestioned use of the existing model may reinforce an assumption by unsophisticated coaches of the low relevance of expert knowledge to coaching, and that there is no need to bring it into the coaching relationship. If, however, the coach’s knowledge of how to maximise the performance of the client derives from leadership and organisational research, but the coach’s methodology does not include inducting the client into that knowledge, it may be argued that the methodology is ethically unsound. Any methodology of specialised professional leadership coaching which excludes access to expert knowledge and skills is deficient.

However, it is to be noted that solution-focused coaching with its cycle of self-regulation is one of a number of models which Grant, Cavanagh and colleagues propose for use within evidence-based leadership coaching, and that these authors encourage the sharing of expert knowledge both within and about the coaching relationship (see Cavanagh, 2003; Grant & Cavanagh, 2002; Green & Grant, 2003).

**Leadership Development and Coaching: Towards Convergence**

As observed earlier, there has been little convergence between the emergent evidence-based coaching literature and the extensive existing research and theory literature about leadership. However, the recent special edition of the *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research* (2005)
sought to address this gap. In that publication, Leonard and Goff (2003) argue for a greater focus at the level of the organisation rather than of the individual in programs of leadership development:

With the move away from viewing leadership in terms of a leader-follower, dyadic transaction to more systems-based, organisational transformation approaches (Bass 1998; Kotter 1996; Kouzes and Posner, 1987), organisations have begun to look at leadership development programming as an organisational development opportunity as well as an individual leadership development process (p. 58).

In the same publication, Palus, Horth, Selvin, and Pulley (2003) propose that leadership development needs to be expanded to include the exploration of personal meaning for the coachee, or what they call “exploration for development” (p. 26). Their proposal that leadership development involves navigating complex issues (Elliott, 2002a; Elliot, 2002b) and that meaning-making is necessary to define and locate the self in relationship to the world is endorsed here (Kegan, 1994). So, too, is their attention to the proposition (p. 28) that individuals are (in part) constituted by their relationships (Gergen, 1994) and that leaders need to engage in a conversational dialogue within organisations that deliberately pursues deeper levels of shared meaning-making around difficult issues (Elliott, 2002a).

Also in the same publication, Kaplan and Kaiser (2003) review leadership assessment, including a discussion of rating scales. However, in promoting their own paradigm for a basic distinction between forceful and enabling leadership they do not do justice to the extensive literature on the subject. Not all leadership models are subject to their criticism of Likert-type scales that imply that “more is better”; for example, the Full Range Leadership Model is measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ; see also Antonakis, 2001; Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubramanian, 2003; Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1997).

Winum (2003) reviews what is distinctive about what psychologists can offer to leadership development. He observes that very few service providers who are engaged in leadership development activities are research psychologists (p. 42) and calls on the profession of consulting psychology to redress this deficiency. He proposes that the attributes that define psychologically informed approaches to leadership development be identified and clearly communicated, and argues further for the place of psychologists in leadership coaching as they have particular expertise in the science of human behaviour (p. 43) and in methodologies related to assessing behaviour (p. 44), and that they operate under a well-developed professional code of ethics (p. 45).

The contribution to Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research of Leonard (2003) is the best account of the evolution of leadership theory, which reviews the traits of successful leaders, situational analysis and models, contingency theories, transactional and transformational theories. He concludes that Bass's (1998) model of transformational leadership is the most rig-
orously tested model of the transactional–transformational genre (p. 8) and notes that all theories of leadership were developed from the point of view of the organisation, not the individual (p. 10). His proposal that all leadership development needs to address both the individual and the organisation is also endorsed here. Leonard argues that a new approach is required for leadership in “postmodern” organisations; a position that puts him in agreement with Hirschhorn (1998) and has been recently supported by Elliott (2003b). According to Hirschhorn (1998, p.6) postmodern organisations face new kinds of business challenges as previously formally established structures, roles and notions of authority prove inadequate to address the new compelling questions about feel, climate, psychology and sensibility. Elliot (2003b, pp. 5–9) suggests deeper levels of transformational personal influencing are necessary in organisational contexts to achieve sustainable flexibility, coherence, commitment and motivation.

Defining the Parameters of Specialist Professional Leadership Coaching

Reviewing the evidence-based coaching literature, seven propositions have been put forward, which collectively define leadership coaching in group and organisational contexts. It has been argued that uncritical acceptance of simplistic generalist coaching methodologies is inadequate for the complexities of leadership development. Moreover, these methodologies can encourage the assumption that it is not necessary to introduce the extensive body of scientifically validated leadership theories to the coaching relationship. They do not systematically promote access to the empirically supported interpretations and theories about group and organisational behaviour that are part of the theoretical background of leadership in organisational settings and which have been shown to optimise performance and a range of desirable outcomes.

This critique involves the expansion and redefinition of the leadership coaching relationship to include expert modalities along with facilitative modalities. Leadership coaching in organisations is best undertaken simultaneously at different levels, of which the individual (or dyadic coaching relationship) is just one. This can be achieved with benefit for the client(s) if proper attention is paid to applied ethics and other appropriate accountabilities. Finally, it was argued that the most satisfactory model of the professional relationship is the contractual one: it permits the other professional relationship models to come to the fore appropriately at different phases of the coaching relationship.

Leadership coaching should be regarded as a specialist form of coaching. The peer-reviewed literature on coaching needs to integrate the extensive evidence-based research on leadership, groups and organisations. This need has recently begun to be recognised, and it is hoped that this chapter advances discussion on the topic.
References


Part 3

Evidence From the Field
An Evaluation of a Life-Coaching Group Program: Initial Findings From a Waitlist Control Study

Suzy Green, Lindsay G. Oades and Anthony M. Grant

Life coaching has grown substantially in the last few years and received considerable media coverage worldwide (Rock, 2001). However, there have been few empirical investigations into its efficacy (Grant, 2003). The study outlined in this chapter aims to add to this limited empirical base.

Within the coaching literature the distinction is often made between business, executive, workplace and life coaching. The first three focus on work or team goals, whereas life coaching usually takes place outside the corporate environment and is concerned with the individual’s whole life. It is important to note that the definition of coaching is evolving as the field establishes a clear identity. One definition popular in life coaching is bringing about sustained cognitive, emotional and behavioural changes that facilitate the attainment of goals and the enhancement of performance, either in work or personal life (Douglas & McCauley, 1999). The term coaching has been used in the corporate setting for decades. Executive coaching aims to help executives improve their performance, and consequently the performance of the overall organisation (Kilburg, 1996). Life coaching, which did not have a real presence until the early 1990s, has been more recently defined as “a collaborative, solution-focused, results-oriented and systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of life experience and goal attainment in the personal and/or professional life of … non-clinical clients” (Grant, 2003, p. 254). This definition will be used here.

Despite increased public interest in, and demand for, life-coaching services, psychologists have been slow to present themselves as possessing knowledge and skills applicable to life coaching. They have also been slow
Evidence-Based Coaching

to undertake research in the area. Consequently, the majority of life coaches are nonpsychologists. As the coaching industry is as yet unregulated in many countries including Australia, anyone may identify themselves as a life coach (Grant, 2001).

Coaching is an emerging theoretical and applied subdiscipline of psychology. It has been described as an applied positive psychology which draws on and adapts established psychological approaches and involves the “systematic application of behavioural science to the enhancement of life experience, work performance and well-being for individuals, groups and organizations who do not have clinically significant mental health issues or abnormal levels of distress” (Australian Psychological Society Coaching Psychology Interest Group, Mission Statement, 2003).

Grant (2001), formulated a psychology of coaching using theories and techniques from clinical and counselling psychology in a cognitive-behavioural solution-focused framework for application to a nonclinical adult population. These theories and techniques include the Transtheoretical Model of Change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1984), a model of self-regulated learning, and other components that all have extensive research histories in psychology (see Grant, 2001, for a review). The study outlined in this chapter evaluates their efficacy in the coaching of a nonclinical population.

Coaching provides an environment conducive to setting and striving toward goals. Although there has been extensive research conducted on the benefits of goal-setting per se, the use of goal-setting strategies within a coaching environment is only just beginning to be researched. Grant (2001) suggests that coaching programs should draw on literature such as Locke’s (1996) and Latham and Locke’s (1991) research findings that cover a range of important findings about goals (e.g., goal-specificity, goal-difficulty). Developing a coaching methodology which involves setting and striving for goals, and leads to benefits such as attaining goals and wellbeing is a priority for research.

The constructs of wellbeing and happiness have received little empirical attention within the field of psychology during the last 50 years; rather, the focus has been on illness and depression. More recently, a positive psychology has emerged which focuses on personal strengths and virtues and what makes life meaningful, and investigates valued subjective experiences such as wellbeing, happiness, and hope (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Prevention is foregrounded in positive psychology. In the last decade, prevention researchers have demonstrated that personal strengths (e.g., optimism, hope) help buffer against mental illness (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

The World Health Organization Global Burden of Disease Study (Murray & Lopez, 1996) reported that mental-health problems account for almost 11% of the disease burden worldwide. In Australia, the 1997 National Survey of Mental Health and Well-being of Adults found that almost one in five (18%) Australian adults were affected by mental illness during the 12-
month period from mid-1996 to mid-1997 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1997). In an attempt to address the costs associated with this, which include lost wages, medical costs and disability claims (Mrazek & Haggerty, 1994), emphasis is currently being placed on both promoting mental health and preventing mental illness, with many government initiatives being put in place worldwide. Promoting mental health involves positive treatments which are targeted at the general population and aim to “promote levels of well-being or build upon or draw out a person’s existing strengths” (Keyes & Lopez, 2002, p. 50), that is, which build on positive human traits (e.g., wellbeing, happiness, hope, authenticity) that may act as a protective factor to mental illness. Research into such interventions — of which life coaching is a prime example — is sorely needed. In addition, the study of traits such as optimism within a coaching environment may also help to integrate coaching psychology into the existing empirical psychological literature on these.

Positive psychology is also concerned with the study of hope. Hope theory emphasises thinking processes and consists of three cognitive components: goals, agency and pathways thoughts (Snyder, Michael, & Cheavens, 1999). Hope is seen as the belief in one’s ability to initiate and maintain movement towards a goal (agency) and to conceptualise routes to a goal (pathways). Snyder, Rand, and Sigmon (2002) purport that positive emotions result from unimpeded movement towards one’s desired goals or successfully overcoming obstacles. Conversely, negative emotions result from the unsuccessful pursuit of goals, where agentic and/or pathways thinking may not have been sufficient, and/or obstacles have not been able to be overcome. To support this claim, Snyder et al. (2002) refer to studies in which participants who encountered severe difficulties in attaining their goals reported lowered wellbeing (Diener, 1984; Emmons, 1986). Based on previous findings, it may be hypothesised that the act of setting a goal within a life-coaching program will trigger agentic and pathways thoughts, bringing about positive emotions and wellbeing.

Although life-coaching research is embryonic and more evidence is required to establish its effectiveness, there is some recent evidence to support its use. For example, in 2003, Grant conducted a study using the life-coaching program Coach Yourself (Grant & Greene, 2001), in which 20 adults focused on attaining goals that had eluded them for an average of 23.5 months. Results showed that participation in the program was associated with significantly enhanced mental health and quality of life and increased goal-attainment.

Although Grant’s (2003) study provides preliminary evidence for the effectiveness of life coaching he noted the lack of a control group as a limitation to his study. Without one, it can be argued that the effects may not have occurred as a result of the intervention. The study outlined in this chapter eliminated this limitation by using a randomised control design. In addition, it focused on the positive effect of life coaching on
hope and wellbeing. The hypothesis of this study was that those assigned to the life-coaching group would show significant increases on measures of goal-striving, wellbeing, hope and mental health.

Method
Participants
Potential participants were recruited by advertising in the local media of the Illawarra region, New South Wales, Australia. The Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI; Derogatis & Melisaratos, 1983) was used to identify healthy participants and exclude those who may have been better suited to a clinical intervention. A cut-off score was used to determine eligibility for the groups. Those participants identified as having scores two standard deviations above the mean on the Global Severity Index of the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) or on two subscales of the BSI (i.e., a score of 70 or above) were excluded from participation. Eligible participants were 56 adults (18–60 years), 42 females and 14 males. The majority fell within the 31–40 and 41–50 age ranges (mean age = 42.68, SD = 9.59). BSI t scores ranged from 33–67 (mean = 53.50, SD = 8.80), with the majority of participants’ scores falling within the 51–60 range.

Procedures
Experimental Design
Appropriate participants were randomised to either a 10-week life-coaching intervention group or a waitlist control condition. The participants in the waitlist control group received no intervention during the time that the participants in the intervention group completed the 10-weeks of life coaching intervention; at the end of this period, and after assessments of both groups, they then also completed the same 10-week life-coaching intervention (see Table 1).

Randomisation
From an initial pool of 107 applicants, 56 participants were randomly assigned (using a waitlist control matched-randomisation procedure) to Group 1 (coaching group, n = 28) or Group 2 (waitlist control group, n = 28). The pool of remaining applicants included 25 participants who were

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<td><strong>Research Design</strong></td>
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<td>Group 1</td>
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<td>Group 2</td>
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identified as having high levels of psychological distress and 26 participants that were not needed due to excess numbers. Of the 56 participants assigned to take part in the study, 6 participants (3 control, 3 experimental) withdrew before the initial intervention was completed (before Time 2).

All of the participants completed a set of questionnaires prior to the start of the life-coaching intervention or the waitlist control period (i.e., Time 1) and then were reassessed approximately 1 week after the 10-week life-coaching intervention or control period (i.e., Time 2).

**Life-Coaching Intervention**

The life-coaching intervention used was the *Coach Yourself* (Green, Oades, & Grant, 2002) group program. This is a structured life-coaching program based on a solution-focused, cognitive-behavioural model (Grant & Greene, 2001). Briefly, the experimental condition was a group-based life-coaching intervention consisting of a one-day workshop where the facilitators presented theories and techniques in a short-lecture format. Participants were introduced to the major theories and techniques of the program and participated in individual self-reflection exercises and small-group discussions. In the first session they completed a life-inventory task to examine the main areas of their lives (e.g., work, health, relationships) and then selected one specific, measurable goal that could be attained, or towards which significant progress could be made, within a 10-week period.

In the following nine 1-hour weekly sessions major theories and techniques of the *Coach Yourself* program were reviewed and then participants paired off to co-coach each other. This consisted of each participant spending approximately 15–20 minutes as coach and 15–20 minutes as coachee. In the co-coaching sessions, participants had the opportunity to discuss progress during the preceding week and to develop action plans for the forthcoming week, with the assistance of the facilitator. They were also encouraged to self-coach or to establish a co-coaching relationship during the week to monitor progress towards their goal.

A coaching checklist (developed by the researcher) was designed in order to assess fidelity to the *Coach Yourself* program. Participants were asked to check off the major components that they used in the 10-week program to provide scientific evidence of fidelity to the intervention.

**Waitlist Control Group**

Those participants randomly assigned to Group 2 (the waitlist control group) completed a 10-week waiting period simultaneous to Group 1’s 10-week life-coaching intervention, and underwent identical assessment at the end of the period. Within 1 week postintervention, assessments were completed and the participants in the control group (Group 2) began the same life-coaching intervention (see Table 1).
Measures

Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI)
The Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI; Derogatis & Melisaratos, 1983) was used to determine eligibility for the groups. This is a 53-item self-report instrument that verifies whether psychiatric symptoms have been experienced in the preceding seven days. It covers nine symptom dimensions (somatisation, obsessive–compulsivity, interpersonal sensitivity, depression, anxiety, hostility, phobic anxiety, paranoid ideation, and psychoticism) and provides a general index of distress, the global severity index (GSI). It is a short form of the Symptom Checklist–90–Revised (SCL–90–R) and takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. Individuals endorse the relevance of each item to their experience in the past seven days on a 5-point scale ranging from 0 = not at all to 4 = extremely. Derogatis and Melisaratos (1983) reported relatively high alpha coefficients for each of the nine subscales, ranging from .71 (psychoticism) to .85 (depression). Test–retest stability for the measure is high, with a range of .68 (somaticism) to .91 (phobic anxiety). Previous studies have found very good test–retest and internal consistency reliabilities and high correlations with the comparable dimensions of the SCL–90–R (Derogatis & Melisaratos, 1983).

Striving for Personal Goals
To assess striving for personal goals we used Emmons’s (1986) procedure of eliciting a set of personal “strivings” from each participant. These were defined as things that you typically or characteristically are trying to do in your everyday life. Participants were asked to identify eight personal strivings, which were assessed by the question, “In the last 10 weeks, how successful have you been in attaining your strivings?” Responses were rated on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 (1 = 0% successful and 5 = 100% successful).

Wellbeing
Wellbeing was assessed using measures of subjective wellbeing (SWB) and psychological wellbeing (PWB), as suggested by Ryan and Deci (2001), who state that the understanding of wellbeing may be enhanced by using both measures. SWB was assessed using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1995) and the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988).

The SWLS is a well-validated measure of subjective satisfaction with life that allows respondents to weight domains of their lives in terms of their own values (Pavot & Diener, 1993). It is a 5-item instrument using statements such as, “In most ways, my life is close to my ideal”. Participants respond on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). This measure possesses adequate psychometric properties and exhibits good internal consistency (Larsen, Diener, & Emmons, 1985), moderate stability, and appropriate sensitivity to changing life circumstances (Heading & Wearing, 1991). Cronbach alpha coefficients (.80 to .89) and test–retest reliability values (.54 to .74) provide evidence of reliability. PWB was assessed using the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988).
to .83) have been in the acceptable range (Pavot, Diener, Colvin, & Sandvik, 1991). A similar alpha coefficient of .85 was achieved in this study.

The PANAS (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) was used to measure both positive and negative affect. This 20-item measure asks participants to rate how much they had felt 10 positive and 10 negative moods during the past month or so. Positive affect (PA) reflects the extent to which a person feels enthusiastic and alert, including feeling interested, strong and inspired. Negative affect (NA) reflects mood states such as feeling guilty, afraid, hostile and nervous. Participants respond on a 5-point scale (1 = very slightly, 5 = extremely). Internal consistency reliability coefficients for the PA and NA subscales are excellent, with alpha coefficients ranging from .84 to .90. Test–retest reliabilities for an 8-week retest interval ranged from .45 to .71 (Watson et al., 1988). The alpha coefficients in the study outlined in this chapter were .83 for PA and .80 for NA.

PWB was assessed using the Scales of Psychological Well-Being (Short Form; Ryff, 1989b). This 14-item measure has six subscales: autonomy, mastery, relationships, purpose, growth and meaning. The scales are theoretically grounded (Ryff, 1989b) and have been validated in numerous studies employing samples that are community and nationally representative (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Ryff (1989b) found that the alpha coefficients ranged from .87 to .93, while in this study they ranged from .68 to .89.

Hope
The Hope Trait Scale (HTS; Snyder et al., 1991) is a 12-item measure of the two dimensions of hope (agency and pathways), ranging from 1 = definitely false to 4 = definitely true. It consists of four agency items designed to measure belief in the ability to initiate and maintain movement towards goals, four pathways items designed to measure ability to conceptualise routes to a goal, and four filler items. A total score is deemed most appropriate for the global measurement of hope and is calculated as the sum of the eight items (range = 8–32). Test–retest reliabilities for the HTS suggest temporal stability (.83 over a 3-week interval, .73 over an 8-week period; Snyder et al., 1991). Alpha coefficients for the two subscales are acceptable (agency = .71–.77, pathway = .63–.80; Snyder et al., 1991). The alpha coefficients in the study outlined here were .79 for agency and .80 for pathways. This instrument demonstrates both internal reliability and temporal stability with two separate yet related factors, as well as an overarching hope factor (Babyak, Snyder, & Yoshinobu, 1993).

Mental Health
The 21-item Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21; Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995) was used as a measure of psychopathology. This scale has been used to assess psychopathology in both clinical (Brown, Chorpita, Koroši, & Barlow, 1997) and community populations (Antony, Bieling, Cox, Enns, & Swinson, 1998). Internal consistency (Lovibond & Lovibond,
1995) and test–retest reliability (Brown et al., 1997) have been found to be good. Cronbach alphas for the DASS-21 subscales have been found to be .94 for depression, .87 for anxiety and .91 for stress (Antony et al., 1998). The alpha coefficients in the study reported here were .81 for depression, .68 for anxiety and .82 for stress.

**Statistical Analyses**

Tests of normality on the scores of Group 1 and Group 2 at Time 1 were carried out. Assumptions of normality were violated for autonomy (PWB), negative affect, pathways (hope), and depression, anxiety and stress for Group 1 and pathways, agency, and total hope, and depression, anxiety and stress for Group 2. Shapiro-Wilks statistics produced significance levels below .05. On these scales, participants more frequently endorsed items at the extremes of ratings. Responses on the DASS-21 scales (Group 1 and 2) and the negative affect subscale (Group 1) were positively skewed, with typical responses indicating low levels of depression, anxiety, stress and negative affect. Responses on all other scales, that is, PWB (autonomy) and HTS (agency, pathways, total hope), were negatively skewed, with typical responses indicating that participants were experiencing a high level of the items on these measures. An attempt to transform these variables was made, though this proved unsuccessful. Consequently, relevant nonparametric tests were undertaken on all variables that violated the assumptions of normality.

To examine differences in the scores from Time 1 to Time 2, $2 \times 2$ repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted for each of the dependent variables. Alpha was set at .05. Where the interaction effects of time and group were found to be significant, further analyses were conducted. To examine between-group differences within times, pairwise comparisons of group means at Time 1 and 2 were made using the Bonferroni statistic to control for multiple comparisons. To examine differences in scores over time between groups the nonparametric Friedman and Mann–Whitney U-tests were used for those variables that violated assumptions of normality.

**RESULTS**

The means and standard deviations of scores at both pre- and postintervention by group assignment are presented in Table 2. Tests of differences between the scores of the life-coaching group (Group 1) and the waitlist control group (Group 2) at Time 1 were conducted. Paired samples $t$ tests on Time 1 scores for all variables with a normal distribution (i.e., satisfaction with life, positive affect and environmental mastery, purpose in life, personal growth, self-acceptance, and positive relations with others) showed no significant differences between Group 1 and Group 2 at Time 1 (baseline), with the exception of Group 2 being significantly lower on the SWLS, $t (52) = 2.837, p = .006$. This difference was controlled for in subsequent analyses.
Table 2
Pre- and Postintervention Means and Standard Deviations of Psychological Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Coaching intervention</th>
<th>Control</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>Pre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal-striving</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWLS</td>
<td>22.60</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>6.13</td>
<td>5.73</td>
<td>5.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>32.08</td>
<td>37.32</td>
<td>31.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>6.06</td>
<td>6.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>17.52</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>17.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>5.92</td>
<td>5.11</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWB-PG</td>
<td>67.76</td>
<td>73.36</td>
<td>70.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>6.58</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>7.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWB-EM</td>
<td>57.54</td>
<td>64.12</td>
<td>56.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>10.64</td>
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<td>8.26</td>
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<tr>
<td>PWB-AUT</td>
<td>59.92</td>
<td>61.88</td>
<td>61.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>13.86</td>
<td>11.48</td>
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<tr>
<td>PWB-PRWO</td>
<td>62.44</td>
<td>68.18</td>
<td>59.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>10.78</td>
<td>10.08</td>
<td>7.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWB-PRWO</td>
<td>60.06</td>
<td>70.28</td>
<td>60.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
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<td>7.28</td>
<td>8.26</td>
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<tr>
<td>PWB-SA</td>
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<td>65.94</td>
<td>56.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>12.32</td>
<td>9.80</td>
<td>10.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGENCY</td>
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<td>25.32</td>
<td>22.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>5.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>PATHWAYS</td>
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<td>25.92</td>
<td>25.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL HOPE</td>
<td>44.48</td>
<td>51.24</td>
<td>47.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>9.51</td>
<td>7.10</td>
<td>6.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEP</td>
<td>6.16</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>6.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>6.45</td>
<td>3.78</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANX</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>STRESS</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>8.06</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>7.35</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Note: SWLS = Satisfaction with Life Scale, PA = positive affect (PANAS), NA = negative affect (PANAS), PWB-PG = personal growth PWB scale, PWB-EM = environmental mastery PWB scale, PWB-AUT = autonomy PWB scale, PWB-PRWO = positive relations with others PWB scale, PWB-PRWO = purpose in life PWB scale, PWB-SA = self-acceptance PWB scale, Agency = trait hope agency subscale, Pathways = trait hope pathways subscale, Total Hope = trait hope total scale, DEP = DASS-21 depression scale, ANX = DASS-21 anxiety scale, STRESS = DASS-21 stress scale; p values given as two-tailed.
Mann–Whitney U-tests were carried out on those variables that violated the assumptions of normality (i.e., negative affect, pathways, agency, hope, depression, anxiety, stress and autonomy) and revealed no significant difference between the two groups for these variables at Time 1. Analyses of the Coaching Checklist revealed that participants used 100% of the major components of the Coach Yourself program in the initial workshop; however, they only used 52% of components in the weekly review sessions during the 10-week coaching program. There were, however, no differences in self-reported frequency of use of such components, suggesting that one component was not used more than the other. These results indicate fidelity to the program. Significant treatment-by-time interaction effects were found for goal-striving, $F(1, 38) = 22.00, p = .000$, positive affect, $F(1, 48) = 12.46, p = .001$, and all remaining scales of psychological wellbeing: personal growth, $F(1, 48) = 14.03, p = .000$, environmental mastery, $F(1, 48) = 10.84, p = .002$, positive relations with others, $F(1, 48) = 5.96, p = .018$, purpose in life, $F(1, 48) = 14.84, p = .000$, and self-acceptance, $F(1, 48) = 14.54, p = .000$. Pairwise comparisons were made to examine the simple effects of time on scores, using the Bonferroni statistic to control for multiple comparisons. Each primary study variable is reported on below.

**Goal-Striving**
In the coaching intervention group, follow-up tests revealed significant increases in goal-striving, mean difference (MD) = –1.201, $SE = .167$, $p = .000$, whereas participants in the control condition showed no such changes ($p > .10$).

**Positive Affect (PANAS)**
In the coaching intervention group, follow-up tests revealed a significant increase in Positive Affect (PANAS), MD = –.5240, $SE = .986$, $p = .000$, whereas participants in the control condition showed no such changes ($p > .10$).

**Psychological Wellbeing (PWB)**
In the coaching intervention group, follow-up tests revealed significant increases on the subscales of personal growth (MD = –.405, $SE = .068$, $p = .000$), environmental mastery (MD = –.472, $SE = .101$, $p = .000$), positive relations with others (MD = –.407, $SE = .087$, $p = .000$), purpose in life (MD = –.728, $SE = .132$, $p = .000$) and self-acceptance (MD = –.640, $SE = .110$, $p = .000$), whereas participants in the control condition showed no such changes ($p > .10$).

The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, the equivalent nonparametric test for the repeated measures ANOVA, was performed to examine changes within each group over time for the variables negative affect, autonomy (PWB), agency, pathways, and total hope (HTS), and depression, anxiety and stress. Results revealed significant increases from Time 1 to Time 2 on the variables negative affect, autonomy, pathways, agency and total hope for Group 1,
whereas the control group (Group 2) showed no significant change in these scores over the same period. A Mann–Whitney U-test between groups at Time 2 indicated there was no significant difference between group scores at that time for the variables autonomy, pathways and total hope. However, there was a significant difference between Groups at Time 2 for negative affect and agency (hope). There were no significant decreases from Time 1 to Time 2 for depression, anxiety and stress. Significant results are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative affect</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$N = 25, T = -2.423, p = .015$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy (PWB)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$N = 25, T = -2.625, p = .009$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency (hope)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$N = 25, T = -3.262, p = .001$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathways</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$N = 24, T = -3.461, p = .001$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total hope</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were no significant decreases in depression, anxiety and stress. This may be accounted for by a floor effect as participants were preselected to be low on such variables. Significant increases were found in measures of satisfaction with life, goal-striving, positive affect, hope and psychological well-being, together with a significant decrease in negative affect.

**Discussion**

The study sought to evaluate the effectiveness of a life-coaching group program. Results of the waitlist-control study indicated that a cognitive-behavioural solution-focused life-coaching group program led to increases in goal-striving, SWB, PWB and hope.

In regard to increased goal-striving, it was found that participants who had completed the life-coaching intervention reported significant progress towards the eight personal strivings they had listed prior to the intervention. Such attainment of higher-order goals suggests generalisability of the intervention beyond the specific goal each person chose to pursue during the 10-week coaching group.

The findings in regard to wellbeing involved increases in the measures which together represent SWB: satisfaction with life, positive affect and a significant decrease in negative affect. Additionally, there were significant increases on all six scales of PWB (Ryff, 1989b). Ryff (1989b) noted the following characteristics of high scorers:

- self-acceptance — possessing a positive attitude towards the self
- positive relations with others — having warm, satisfying, trusting relationships with others
- autonomy — being self-determining and independent
environmental mastery — having a sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment

> purpose in life — having goals and a sense of direction

> personal growth — having a feeling of continued development.

These results suggest that the life-coaching program enhanced an array of wellbeing components, including many important aspects of positive psychological health. Thus, not only did the life-coaching intervention lead to increased goal-attainment, but also to increased wellbeing. These results are consistent with Grant’s (2003) study, which also found significant increases in goal-attainment and quality-of-life measures.

However, results of the study did not support hypothesised increases in mental health as evidenced by significant decreases in depression, anxiety and stress. Although overall means on the depression, anxiety and stress subscales of the DASS-21 decreased for the life-coaching group postintervention, these were not statistically significant. These findings are not consistent with Grant’s (2003) study, which did find significant decreases in depression, anxiety and stress. The results of the study outlined here may be explained by a floor effect, as participants in this study had been screened for psychological distress prior to undertaking the coaching program. The mean scores for both groups were within the normal range on all subscales of the DASS-21 preintervention.

Significant increases in agency, pathways and total hope for those participants undertaking the life-coaching intervention were also found in the study reported on in this chapter. These results are consistent with hope theory, which suggests the articulation of goals stimulates hope (Snyder et al., 1999). Hope theory may also be useful in explaining enhanced wellbeing as it states that the unimpeded pursuit of desired goals results in positive emotions and wellbeing (Snyder et al., 2002). Snyder (2000) claims that hope is best enhanced by integrating solution-focused, narrative and cognitive-behavioural interventions designed to “help clients in conceptualising clearer goals, producing numerous pathways to attainment, summoning the mental energy to maintain the goal pursuit and reframing insurmountable obstacles as challenges to be overcome” (p. 123). This definition describes the goals of a life-coaching intervention. It seems, therefore, that a cognitive-behavioural, solution-focused coaching intervention such as the one used in this study may be a hope-enhancing intervention.

This is the first waitlist control study completed of a group life-coaching intervention which shows significant increases in goal-striving, wellbeing and hope in participants. As the waitlist control group went on to become a life-coaching group, the as-yet unanalysed data collected from that second stage may provide further evidence for the efficacy of the intervention. A final question is whether the gains, especially those made in wellbeing, will be maintained over time. Data were also collected after the
coaching intervention. When it is analysed it is expected to provide information about the maintenance of gains, and any losses or further gains.

There are a number of limitations to the study that need to be considered when interpreting the results. Its design did not allow the researcher to determine whether this intervention was more effective than a standard support group offering only support and information about goals. Thus it is possible that some group-dynamic or group-cohesiveness variable might have been responsible for all or some of the changes in goal-striving and wellbeing. Future studies might benefit from examining these variables in a support group compared with a matched life-coaching group where cognitive-behavioural and solution-focused techniques are used.

In addition, participants were self-selected members of a specific community who may not have been representative of the general population. As volunteers, they may also have been particularly motivated to achieve their goals. Some participants stated the intervention had come along “just at the right time” (i.e., transition periods such as retirement, divorce). However, it can also be argued that the majority of coaching clients will be voluntary and motivated, with the exception of those who are required by an external authority to attend (e.g., workplace coaching).

The study relied on self-report inventories. Issues of particular relevance to self-report of wellbeing may be the perceived social desirability of wellbeing and consequent faking of it, and a general tendency to respond positively to test items. In addition, the participants may have felt a need to please the facilitator and thus may have overreported goal-striving and wellbeing (i.e., ingratiating bias). It should be noted that this phenomenon is not unique to the study reported on here. In future it would be preferable to minimise complete reliance on self-report inventories as measures of change.

Future research may also be enhanced by the use of qualitative analyses of what participants believe to be the most useful components of the program. This could provide further information about how to enhance goal-striving, wellbeing, hope and overall change.

Notwithstanding these methodological limitations, the study outlined here indicates that a cognitive-behavioural, solution-focused life-coaching group program can enhance goal-striving, wellbeing and hope. Given the impact that the life-coaching intervention had on wellbeing and hope for participants, future research could investigate the use of life coaching as an intervention for promoting mental health by increasing wellbeing, building resilience and buffering against mental illness. This potential of life coaching is particularly significant given the current cost of mental illness at an individual and societal level.

References
groups and a community sample. Psychological Assessment, 19(2), 176–181.


interest_groups/coaching/default.asp


Individual and Group Life Coaching: Initial Findings From a Randomised, Controlled Trial

Gordon B. Spence and Anthony M. Grant

Life coaching is quickly becoming the preferred choice of many who seek to enhance personal experience in almost any domain of life (e.g., work, relationships, health). That is, when facing difficulties related to the clarification of, and/or progression towards, important life goals, it is becoming increasingly common for individuals to employ the services of a life coach. However, despite the popularity of life coaching, it has yet to attract much intellectual inquiry and there is little empirical evidence that can attest its effectiveness. As such, the practice of life coaching has run well ahead of related theory and research. Lacking any substantive grounding in science, the life coaching industry is currently propelled by a steady stream of anecdote and hyperbole; and lacking any form of regulation, it is a confusing and difficult industry for potential customers to navigate. In short, the life-coaching industry is currently something of a “free-for-all” and were it to be subjected to a serious critique, it would likely suffer many of the criticisms previously levelled at the human potential movement (HPM) which flourished during the 1960s and 1970s.

In our opinion, life coaching has considerable potential. Most notably, it is closely aligned to the general aims of “positive psychology”, with real opportunities to build human strengths (e.g., resilience, optimism) and enhance the quality of life of individuals and larger groups. However, we believe that this potential may be seriously compromised should the industry not choose to build credibility. Of course, one way to develop the credibility of life coaching (aside from industry regulation) is to place it in the scientific domain. As such, this chapter represents an attempt to address a deficit in the knowledge base by outlining initial findings from a randomised, controlled trial that compared two different forms of life coaching.
Two important clarifications are required at this point. First, life coaching is defined here as a "collaborative solution-focused, results-oriented and systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of life experience and goal attainment in the personal and/or professional life of ... nonclinical clients" (Grant, 2003). Second, it should be noted that the programs described in this study did not differ in terms of content (as both were grounded in the same cognitive-behavioural, solution-focused framework) but in the mode of delivery. That is, one experimental group received individualised coaching, delivered by a professionally trained coach, while the second group received group-based peer coaching, where untrained group members co-coached each other throughout the duration of the program. These groups will be referred to as the "professional coaching" and "peer coaching" groups respectively.

** Manifestations of the Human Potential Movement **

Although the personal development imperative can be traced as far back as the ancient Greek precept "know thyself" (Schultz, 1973), recent interest appears to have been catalysed by the emergence of humanistic psychology in the 1950s. Dissatisfied with the predominant psychologies of the day (i.e., psychodynamics and behaviourism), theorists like Maslow and Rogers presented positive, growth-oriented accounts of human behaviour that, over the course of the following decades, were to become popular with academics and laypeople alike.

Of most interest to the current discussion, however, is the HPM, which emerged at around the same time but whose origins differed slightly to those of humanistic psychology (Schultz, 1973). Described by Howard (1970) as an amorphous collection of practitioners typified by an "anything goes" eclecticism, the movement shared the humanist belief that, under the proper conditions, it is possible to facilitate the movement of an individual towards self-actualisation. According to HPM practitioners, the best conditions for growth were to be found in groups of like-minded others, and during the 1960s there was a proliferation of encounter groups offering everything from personal growth laboratories (Schultz, 1973) to nude sensitivity training (Howard, 1970). While these early forms of encounter are not as popular as they once were, contemporary manifestations of the HPM include the highly energised, mass-motivation approaches of an increasing number of lifestyle "gurus". For many, these motivators are the most recognisable faces of HPM.

Over the past 30 years, however, numerous aspects of the HPM have been subject to considerable scrutiny and widely criticised. For example, the HPM and its representatives have been accused of theoretical incoherence (Grant, 2001), false premises and false promises (Sipe, 1987), gross irresponsibility and rampant commercialism (Reber, 1995). Elsewhere, Cain (2002) notes that the HPM has been characterised by an anti-intellectual
Individual and Group Life Coaching: Initial Findings

It is argued here that life coaching is the HPM's most recent manifestation and, were the coaching industry to be subjected to a serious critique, that many of the criticisms previously levelled at the HPM could equally be applied to coaching.

Several factors contribute to this argument. First, life coaching continues to lack any form of industry regulation, so that the title ‘life coach’ has been adopted by a diverse range of people with vastly different levels of training and experience, and skills and methods. Second, psychologists have been slow to become involved in coaching and this has tended to alienate coaching from the rich knowledge base of behavioural science. As a result, coach training has tended to be dominated by proprietary coaching systems, many of which appear to lack theoretical coherence. Third, a lack of empirical research means that the benefits of life coaching have yet to be established. As such, evidence of many of the positive outcomes that are commonly linked to life coaching (e.g., enhanced wellbeing, improved work performance, better interpersonal relationships) exists at the level of intuition and hype rather than being grounded in science (Grant, 2001).

Life Coaching: An Empirical Vacuum

At the time of writing, a search of peer-reviewed psychological journals (using PsychINFO) with the keyword “life coaching” produced only a single empirical article. In this study, Grant (2003) had participants complete a 10-week self-coaching program in a group format ($n = 20$). The program required each subject to generate three specific, achievable personal goals and then attend ten 50-minute weekly cognitive-behavioural, solution-focused group coaching sessions. The results indicated that participation in the program was associated with significantly higher levels of goal attainment; lower levels of depression, stress and anxiety; higher levels of insight; and lower levels of self-reflection. The latter result was of particular interest as it suggested that life coaching may induce a movement away from ruminative patterns of self-reflection (that might impede progress to goals) and toward reflective processes that might be more supportive of attaining goals. Clearly, further research is needed to substantiate such an assertion; however, these results provide preliminary evidence that points to the effectiveness of life coaching.

In addition to this initial study, a second study has recently been reported. Green, Oades and Grant (2003), in a partial replication of Grant’s earlier study, assessed the effectiveness of a peer-coaching program using a longitudinal design (of 12 months) and a waitlist control group. The results for both groups indicated significant increases in self-reported positive affect, psychological wellbeing and hope, and significant decreases in negative affect. Interestingly, no significant differences were observed in depression, stress and anxiety, although this was not greatly surprising as
these indices were used to screen participants before acceptance into the program. These results were maintained at 3- and 6-month follow-ups.

These initial efforts provide some evidence that group and peer life-coaching programs can have an effect on important aspects of personal functioning. The study outlined in this chapter, however, aims to replicate that of Green et al. (2003) and extend it through the inclusion of an experimental condition in which participants receive professional one-to-one life coaching. This inclusion is useful as it permits comparisons to be made between professional coaching and peer coaching (both to each other and to a control group) and reflects research designs that have been found to be useful in clinical settings.

**Comparative Research in Clinical Settings**

At first glance, individual treatments might appear to be the optimal format for helping interventions (and group formats suboptimal), if it is assumed that the exclusive attention of a clinician leads to superior outcomes. However, clinical studies have cast doubt on this. For example, in a recent meta-analysis of 23 treatment studies, McRoberts, Burlingame and Hong (1998) reported mixed findings, with little observable difference between individual and group-based formats (although individual cognitive behavioural therapy [CBT] tended to outperform groups for the treatment of depression). Analysis also showed that both formats consistently exceeded the gains made by no-treatment control groups. These findings of equivalence between individual and group formats reflect the results of earlier meta-analyses (Miller & Berman, 1983; Robinson, Berman, & Neimeyer, 1990), treatment studies involving children with anxiety disorders (Manassis et al., 2002) and severe learning difficulties (Chadwick, Momcilovic, Rossiter, Stumbles, & Taylor, 2001), and a range of adult conditions treated with cognitive therapy (Morrison, 2001).

Given these findings, there is some basis for supposing that the effectiveness of life coaching might be relatively independent of the format in which it is delivered. While this is an empirical question that the study outlined in this chapter seeks to address, it is also difficult to examine as life coaching and psychotherapy are directed toward individuals with fundamentally different concerns (i.e., personal growth vs. the reduction of clinical symptomatology).

**The Current Study**

This exploratory study was designed to investigate the impact of life coaching on measures of goal-striving, mental health, personality and metacognition. The following research questions were of particular interest:

1. Are individual and group-based life coaching formats equally effective at enhancing the goal-attainment and goal-commitment of individuals?
2. Does individual coaching improve coachee levels of psychological functioning (as measured by life satisfaction, positive affect, negative affect,
psychological wellbeing and measures of psychopathology), as suggested by recent findings (Grant, 2003; Green et al., 2003).

3. Do participants report reduced self-reflection and increased insight following both forms of coaching (as reported by Grant, 2003)? If so, does individual coaching provide additional benefits in this regard?

4. Does life coaching improve self-reported emotional intelligence (EI)? Previously untested, this question assumes that EI plays an important role in both the attainment of personal goals and mediation of the relationship between personal goals and subjective wellbeing (Spence, Oades, & Caputi, 2003).

5. What influence does life coaching have on personality characteristics? Although this question is also untested, some evidence does exist to suggest that long-term training programs may have an impact on some personality characteristics (Norlander, Bergman, & Archer, 2002).

Method

Preprogram Screening
Participants responded to advertisements placed in a local newspaper and on an internet website. No eligibility criteria were set for potential participants and 131 expressions of interest were received. Upon registration, each respondent received an information package and preprogram questionnaires. From the initial pool of 131 respondents, 89 participants completed and returned the preprogram questionnaires.

Preprogram screening of respondents for levels of psychological distress was conducted using the 52-item Brief Symptoms Inventory (Derogatis, 1993). The exclusion criterion was set at two standard deviations above the mean on the BSI, and at this level 25% of the initial sample (n = 22) were ineligible to participate. These people were contacted by phone and letter and offered the option of a clinical referral.

Participants
Of the 67 participants who remained after the screening procedure, 3 were forced to withdraw prior to the commencement of coaching, leaving a total pool of 64 participants. These 47 females and 17 males, aged between 21 and 62 years (mean = 38.59, SD = 10.44), were randomly allocated to one of three experimental groups. Group 1 (professional coaching; n = 21) consisted of 15 females and 6 males aged between 21 and 53 years (mean = 37.90, SD = 10.31), group 2 (peer coaching; n = 22) consisted of 17 females and 5 males aged between 21 and 55 years (mean = 35.81, SD = 9.85), and group 3 (the waitlist control; n = 21) consisted of 15 females and 6 males aged between 26 and 62 years (mean = 42.20, SD = 10.64). Two participants withdrew during the first phase of the study (i.e., weeks 1 to 10), one each
from groups 1 and 2. However, as they withdrew in weeks 4 and 5 they were not replaced.

A diverse range of occupations was represented in the final sample, with at least half holding employment in the corporate sector (e.g., consultants, human resource professionals, executive officers, administrators) and the other half including students, psychologists, teachers, writers, professional coaches, actors, and small business owners.

Procedure
Once advised of their group allocation, participants attended an information night at which the first author outlined the coaching programs and answered any questions. Participants in group 3 (the control group) also attended an information night at this time, although their program was not to commence until phase II (approximately 10 weeks).

Professional Coaching (Group 1)
After attending the information night, participants (the “coachees”) were allocated to a coach for the duration of phase I. They then received 10 weeks of one-to-one life coaching, with each session lasting 45 minutes. Coaching was conducted by seven coaches, all of whom had received postgraduate-level training within the Coaching Psychology Unit (CPU). They had been selected to minimise variability in coaching methods and were instructed to employ the combined solution-focused, cognitive-behavioural coaching (SF-CBC) approach in which they had been trained. Sessions were conducted at a location in Sydney’s central business district, and coachees attended their sessions on the same day and time each week. In the event of nonattendance, coachees and coaches would liaise directly and, where possible, make alternative arrangements to catch up on lost sessions.

To ensure that the group 1 coaching followed the correct SF-CBC format, group supervision meetings were held on a fortnightly basis for the participating coaches. These lasted between 60 and 75 minutes and were facilitated by an experienced coach who was familiar with the SF-CBC framework and was otherwise uninvolved with this study.

Peer Coaching (Group 2)
Participants attended a 1-day coaching workshop at which they were introduced to the program and received a Peer Co-Coaching Manual containing a series of SF-CBC exercises (based on Grant & Cavanagh, 2002; Grant & Greene, 2001). The primary objectives of this workshop were to introduce participants to the basic principles and techniques of the SF-CBC approach and to assist in developing their future vision, identifying desired outcomes, setting at least one specific and measurable personal goal, and developing action plans.

After completing the workshop the participants then attended a weekly 75-minute group co-coaching session (for 10 consecutive weeks), where
group members coached each other, in dyads, towards attaining their goals. These sessions were conducted on weekday evenings at the University of Sydney and consisted of a 15-minute review of selected materials covered in the workshop, and two 30-minute co-coaching sessions (with each participant receiving a session).

Although present at all the coaching sessions, the group facilitator had minimal input in the co-coaching process. However, in order to facilitate a structured coaching conversation, participants were provided with note-taking sheets and a guide that contained an array of suggested coaching questions. This “Guide to RE-GROW” was an extension of Whitmore’s (1996) Goal–Reality–Options–Wrap-up (GROW) model, with the inclusion of Review and Evaluation sections to begin each session. RE-GROW is a process model, designed to outline the stages a productive coaching session should pass through in order for the coachee to take away a written action plan at the end of each session.

Measures

Goal-Attainment and Goal-Commitment
Participants were asked to identify three personal goals and then rate them on a 5-point scale in terms of successful attainment \((1 = 0–20\% \text{ successful} \text{ to } 5 = 81–100\% \text{ successful})\) and current commitment \((1 = \text{not at all committed} \text{ to } 5 = \text{extremely committed})\).

Subjective Wellbeing
This was measured using the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) and the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PNAS; Bradburn, 1969). The SWLS is scored by rating agreement or disagreement with five statements on a 7-point scale \((1 = \text{strongly disagree} \text{ to } 7 = \text{strongly agree})\), while the PNAS rates five positive adjectives (e.g., happy, joyful) and five negative adjectives (e.g., angry, anxious) on a 6-point scale \((1 = \text{not at all} \text{ to } 6 = \text{extremely so})\). Both scales have had good reports for reliability and validity (Emmons, 1986).

Psychological Wellbeing
Psychological wellbeing was assessed using the Scales of Psychological Wellbeing (Ryff, 1989) on six dimensions: autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, personal growth, self-acceptance and positive relations with others. It is a 54-item measure scored on a 6-point scale \((1 = \text{strongly disagree} \text{ to } 6 = \text{strongly agree})\), with good reports for internal consistency and reliability (Ryff, 1989).

Psychopathology
This was measured using the Depression, Stress and Anxiety Scale (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995), a well-validated clinical instrument.
**Metacognition**

Metacognition was measured using the Self-reflection and Insight Scale (Grant, Franklin, & Langford, 2002). Consisting of 20 items, this measure seeks to assess individuals’ propensity to reflect on, and derive insight from, their thoughts, feelings and behaviour on a 6-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*). Good internal consistency (α = .91 and .87 respectively) and test–retest reliability over seven weeks (.77 and .78 respectively) have been reported for it (Grant et al., 2002).

**Trait Emotional Intelligence (EI)**

This was measured using the Schutte Self-report Inventory (Schutte et al., 1998), a 33-item measure rated on a 6-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*). Good psychometric properties have been reported for it and confirmatory factor analysis has revealed four subscales: mood regulation, appraisal of emotions, social skills, and utilisation of emotion (Petrides & Furnham, 2000).

**Personality**

Personality was measured using the NEO Five Factor Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1985), a 60-item measure rated on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*) which has been shown to reliably measure extraversion, neuroticism, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness.

**Results**

**Coaching Attendance Rate**

A coaching attendance rate was calculated by dividing the total number of absentees by the total number of possible (individual or co-coaching) sessions. For group 1, attendance was 96% (i.e., 8 nonattendees out of 200 individual sessions), whereas group 2 attendance was 72.4% (i.e., 58 nonattendees out of 210 group co-coaching sessions). While catch-up sessions were not formally arranged, some co-coaching pairs did conduct sessions outside the group. An independent groups *t* test revealed a significant difference in attendance rates (*t* = –4.413, *p* < .001).

**Within-Subjects Analyses**

The results of paired-sample *t* tests for all variables are shown in Table 1. All groups reported increased levels of goal-attainment, with significant increases noted for both group 1 (*t* = –6.051, *p* < .001) and group 2 (*t* = –2.187, *p* < .05) but not group 3 (*t* = –0.442, *p* = .661). Interestingly, despite significant increases in goal-attainment, group 2 participants reported significantly lower postcoaching goal-commitment ratings (*t* = –6.051, *p* < .001), while group 1 ratings appeared to be maintained (*t* = –1.022, *p* = .315). Finally, group 3 participants also reported significantly lower commitment (*t* = –6.051, *p* < .001).
### Table 1
Means (Standard Deviations) and Significance Levels by Time and Treatment Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Individual Coaching (Group 1)</th>
<th>Group Co-coaching (Group 2)</th>
<th>Control Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Attainment (GA)</td>
<td>2.37 (0.97)</td>
<td>3.65 (1.06)</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Commitment (GC)</td>
<td>4.28 (0.99)</td>
<td>4.50 (0.95)</td>
<td>.315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective Wellbeing (SWL)</td>
<td>23.70 (5.27)</td>
<td>25.90 (5.39)</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Life (SWL)</td>
<td>23.68 (4.23)</td>
<td>24.05 (4.10)</td>
<td>.841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Affect (PA)</td>
<td>20.15 (4.56)</td>
<td>20.60 (5.72)</td>
<td>.783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Wellbeing (PWB)</td>
<td>41.08 (4.95)</td>
<td>41.95 (9.6)</td>
<td>.433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy (AU)</td>
<td>36.90 (7.09)</td>
<td>41.30 (7.07)</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Mastery (EM)</td>
<td>47.30 (3.41)</td>
<td>48.20 (4.38)</td>
<td>.410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Growth (PG)</td>
<td>43.67 (5.85)</td>
<td>44.40 (5.72)</td>
<td>.416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose in Life (PL)</td>
<td>44.13 (7.26)</td>
<td>43.90 (7.63)</td>
<td>.819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Reflection and Insight (SRI)</td>
<td>41.08 (7.13)</td>
<td>41.65 (8.76)</td>
<td>.656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression, Stress and Anxiety (DS)</td>
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<td>Anxiety (ANX)</td>
<td>1.95 (2.28)</td>
<td>2.15 (2.81)</td>
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<td>Stress (STR)</td>
<td>3.00 (2.69)</td>
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<td>.223</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Reflection and Insight (SRI)</td>
<td>61.65 (8.90)</td>
<td>60.65 (8.47)</td>
<td>.627</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insight (INS)</td>
<td>38.20 (6.07)</td>
<td>38.65 (5.63)</td>
<td>.643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Intelligence (EI)</td>
<td>35.29 (4.27)</td>
<td>36.70 (4.62)</td>
<td>.147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mood Regulation (MDR)</td>
<td>35.15 (4.19)</td>
<td>38.00 (4.12)</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion Perception (EMP)</td>
<td>44.65 (4.92)</td>
<td>46.75 (5.02)</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Skill (SSK)</td>
<td>16.05 (2.46)</td>
<td>16.50 (2.56)</td>
<td>.325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Neuroticism (NEU)</td>
<td>31.20 (7.38)</td>
<td>29.60 (9.13)</td>
<td>.174</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extroversion (EXT)</td>
<td>43.00 (4.92)</td>
<td>44.60 (6.28)</td>
<td>.123</td>
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<td>Agreeableness (AGR)</td>
<td>46.95 (5.43)</td>
<td>47.50 (4.88)</td>
<td>.435</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness (CON)</td>
<td>44.70 (5.24)</td>
<td>45.70 (6.08)</td>
<td>.126</td>
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<tr>
<td>Openness to Experience (OPE)</td>
<td>43.65 (5.79)</td>
<td>47.20 (7.06)</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Measures: GA = goal attainment, GC = goal commitment, swl = satisfaction with life, pa = positive affect, na = negative affect, au = autonomy, em = environmental mastery, pg = personal growth, pl = purpose in life, pr = positive relations with others, sa = self-acceptance, str = stress, anx = anxiety, dep = depression, sr = self-reflection, insg = insight, mdr = mood regulation, emp = emotion perception, ssk = social skill, utlz = utilising emotion, neu = neuroticism, ext = extraversion, opg = openness to experience, agr = agreeableness, con = conscientiousness; p values are given as two-tailed.
In general, coaching appeared to have minimal impact on the mental health of participants. While few significant differences were observed between time 1 and time 2, levels of life satisfaction did increase significantly for individually-coached participants \( (t = -2.463, \ p < .05) \) and approached significance for co-coaching participants \( (p = .052) \). In addition, only the group 1 participants reported significantly higher levels of environmental mastery \( (t = -3.833, \ p < .001) \), suggesting that individual coaching may have enhanced their sense of control over external conditions. Curiously, significantly lower levels of depression were reported by the control group at time 2 \( (t = 2.226, \ p < .05) \); however, this result appears to be explained by the unusually high precoaching ratings of two participants in this group.

Participation in the coaching programs was not associated with any significant changes in self-reflection, while only the peer-coaching participants reported greater levels of insight \( (t = -2.460, \ p < .05) \). Similar to the result reported by Grant (2003), group 1 participants did report a slight decrease in self-reflection, although this was not significant \( (p = .627) \). Also, despite a general increase in trait EI across all three groups, significant increases only occurred within the individual coaching group and only for two variables: emotion perception \( (t = -2.460, \ p < .05) \) and social skills \( (t = -3.123, \ p < .01) \).

Finally, while significant increases in conscientiousness were observed in both the coaching groups, this increase was also observed in the control group \( (p < .05) \) and this cannot therefore be considered to have occurred as a consequence of coaching. Participation in the peer-coaching program was associated with significantly higher openness to experience \( (t = -3.492, \ p < .01) \) and extraversion \( (t = -2.429, \ p < .05) \), while the control group reported significantly less openness to experience \( (t = -2.429, \ p < .05) \).

**Between-Subjects Analyses**

Between-subjects analysis was conducted using ANOVA (with time 1 scores used as a covariate) and highly significant differences were observed for both goal-attainment, \( F(2,55) = 12.257, \ p < .001 \), and goal-commitment, \( F(2, 55) = 10.176, \ p < .001 \). Pairwise comparisons showed significant differences in goal-attainment between all groups, with ratings significantly higher for group 1 than for both group 2 \( (p < .05, \ d = 0.53) \) and group 3 \( (p < .001, \ d = 1.29) \). In addition, group 2 goal-attainment was significantly higher than for group 3 \( (p < .05, \ d = 0.67) \). For goal-commitment, ratings were significantly higher for group 1 than for both group 2 \( (p < .05, \ d = 0.65) \) and group 3 \( (p < .001, \ d = 1.01) \), but no difference was noted between the latter two \( (p = .36) \).

No significant differences were noted between the groups on any of the subjective wellbeing variables (i.e., life satisfaction, \( p = .239 \); positive affect, \( p = .824 \); negative affect, \( p = .415 \)) or indices of psychopathology (i.e., depression, \( p = .165 \); stress, \( p = .196 \); anxiety, \( p = .295 \)). Analysis of the psy-
chological wellbeing variables, however, did yield one significant difference: environmental mastery, $F(2, 54) = 3.355$, $p < .05$. Pairwise comparisons revealed significant differences for group 1 compared to both group 2 ($p < .05$) and group 3 ($p < .05$), but no difference was noted between the latter two ($p = .976$). No significant differences were observed for the remaining wellbeing variables, although personal growth ($p = .079$) and purpose in life ($p = .070$) did approach significance at the .05 level.

In general, there was little change in the metacognitive processing of participants across all coaching conditions. No significant differences were observed in self-reflection ($p = .493$), nor in the ability of participants to derive insight from their thoughts, feelings or behaviour ($p = .431$). Also, only one trait EI variable, social skills, was found to be significant, $F(2, 56) = 3.525$, $p = .05$, while mood regulation ($p = .271$) and utilising emotions ($p = .990$) were nonsignificant, and emotion perception only approached significance at the .05 level ($p = .062$). Surprisingly, a pairwise comparison for social skills revealed that participants in individual coaching scored significantly higher on this variable at postcoaching than their peer-coaching counterparts ($p < .05$).

Finally, personality variables remained fairly stable across the coaching period with the notable exception of openness to experience, $F(2, 55) = 9.465$, $p < .001$. Further analysis of this result revealed highly significant differences between both groups 1 and 2 and the control group (both $p < .001$), whereas no difference was observed between the two coaching groups ($p = .610$).

**Discussion**

While highlighting the considerable potential of life coaching to increase the quality of life of individuals and communities, this chapter has cautioned that such promise will be seriously compromised unless efforts are made to validate the efficacy of life-coaching interventions. In doing so, life coaching will enter the realm of science, where increased dialogue and debate will (it is hoped) help to “raise the bar” of life coaching and build much needed credibility.

To support this general aim, we were careful to ensure that this research was conducted rigorously using the best possible experimental design (given the logistical challenges presented in such “real world” research). The study was conducted as a randomised controlled trial, as this is generally considered to be the most appropriate means for determining the efficacy of an intervention (Bilpitt, 1996).

It should be noted that the results presented in this chapter are preliminary findings from phase I of a study that will run for a total of 10 months. As such, any conclusions derived from the data are tentative and may be influenced by additional data to be collected from phase II and subsequent follow-ups.
Coaching Versus No Coaching

Consistent with previous findings (Grant, 2003; Green et al., 2003) this data set indicates that coaching appears to benefit those who receive it, as compared to those who do not (regardless of format). While direct causal effects are always difficult to establish in action research, it can at least be stated that there is an association between coaching and increased goal-attainment and satisfaction with life, greater perceived control over environmental factors and greater orientation towards new experiences (i.e., novelty and innovation) behavioural and cognitive flexibility.

On the surface, this finding seems to be somewhat intuitive and rather insubstantial. After all, the presence of another person (whether a trained coach or a supportive other) in goal-directed conversations would seem to be helpful in identifying challenges, generating options, evaluating progress, actioning planning and maintaining motivation. While the data presented here seem to support this, the situation is not that simple. The presence of another person (whether skilled or unskilled) is not a necessary and sufficient condition for the attainment of goals, as people often suspend their goal-directed activities even when assisted by skilled helpers (Miller & Rollnick, 2002). What the data do represent, however, is a first step in substantiating the claims of many practising coaches that coaching does enhance goal-directed effort and personal experience (e.g., life satisfaction, self-efficacy). Of course, the more interesting question relates to the differential effects inherent to different forms of coaching.

Professional Versus Peer Coaching

Goal-Striving

While significant improvements in goal-attainment were noted for both coaching groups, professionally-coached participants reported significantly more progress than those in the peer-coaching group. Interestingly, while goal-commitment ratings remained relatively stable in group 1, group 2 participants reported significant decreases (a result that is reflected in the differing attendance rates of each group).

Three factors may be reflected in these group 2 results. First, the structure of the peer-coaching sessions may have diluted the quality of the group experience for many participants. It is likely that the use of the peer-coaching dyads created too much fragmentation within the group and, as this restricted the amount of group discussion time, did not permit group members to benefit from the experiences of others. Second, the quality of the coaching relationships formed within this group may not have been sufficient for dealing with critical issues in the coaching process. For example, lower commitment and attendance ratings may relate to the inability of these relationships to resolve difficult issues related to ambivalence and/or negative self-beliefs. If so, participants are likely to have struggled with motivation and these ratings may reflect a disengagement from the goals and the process.
Finally, in so far as no restrictions were placed upon the goals that individuals adopted, this group can be regarded as reasonably heterogeneous in this respect. That is, while some group members did share qualitatively similar goals, there was little uniformity of goals held within the group overall and, presumably, little sense of common purpose (over and above the desire for personal development). This raises a question for future research: Is group-based coaching more effective for groups with shared goals (e.g., weight loss)?

Wellbeing
The study outlined in this chapter yielded less impressive findings than those reported by Green et al. (2003), with only two of the subjective and psychological wellbeing variables showing any significant improvement (satisfaction with life and environmental mastery). Given that both coaching groups significantly increased their levels of goal-attainment, it is not surprising that life satisfaction also increased. This relationship is well reported in the literature (Diener, 1984).

The more striking result relates to the greater sense of environmental mastery reported by the individually-coached participants. According to Ryff (1989), high scores on this dimension of wellbeing are indicative of individuals who are resourceful, capable of managing their environment and able to control complex external activities that help them to meet their needs and live according to their values. That this sense of mastery improved for group 1 subjects (but not for group 2) suggests that individuals learn more about how to manipulate their external conditions when they receive one-on-one coaching from a trained professional. Between-group differences in this dimension may also help to explain why goal-attainment ratings differed between groups 1 and 2, and suggests that group 2 co-coaching did not adequately emphasise the importance of using environmental factors in the service of personal goals.

Personality
The current data set does not permit any strong claim to be made about the ability of coaching to influence personality per se. Nonetheless, evidence gathered here indicates that coaching may have an effect on the openness-to-experience factor of the NEO Five Factor Inventory. This factor, associated with creativity, imagination, flexible thinking, novelty and curiosity, encapsulates many of the attributes required for problem-solving and planning for the future. As the coaching conducted in this study was solution-focused and future-oriented, it is not surprising that both coaching groups showed increases in this dimension, while the control group decreased. If these increases were maintained over subsequent follow-ups, it might be possible to claim that life coaching can influence this important aspect of personality.
Mental Health Issues

These initial results indicate that coaching had minimal impact on the mental health of individuals. This is somewhat surprising given that a fundamental aim of life coaching is to enhance the life experience of those who seek it. An explanation may reside in the selection criteria used in this study. Given that life coaching is most appropriate for individuals with relatively low levels of psychological distress, we considered it ethical to exclude those identified as suffering from high levels (measured using the BSI). However, in creating a sample of reasonably happy, well-adjusted individuals, it is conceivable that we have also created a ceiling effect in relation to the measurement of wellbeing. That is, when participants score highly on precoaching measures of wellbeing (as many in these groups did), subsequent improvements on the same dimensions become difficult to detect even where they are attributable to coaching because the subject has already provided such high ratings.

Data collected in this study (and by Green et al., 2003), indicate that some people who present for life coaching have considerable levels of psychological distress. In the study outlined in this chapter, 25% of volunteers were identified as being better suited to some form of clinical treatment, whereas Green et al. (2003) reported that over half of the volunteers (52%) fell into this category. It is clear that researchers of life coaching need to be mindful of the strong likelihood that invitations to participate in a free coaching program (for research purposes) will attract some individuals who would be better served by services of a noncoaching nature. Therefore, it is recommended that researchers screen volunteers prior to the commencement of coaching using a reliable and valid clinical inventory and develop a simple procedure for referring individuals who appear to need clinical assistance.

Conclusion

This chapter outlined preliminary findings from the first phase of a randomised controlled trial that was designed to investigate the differential effects associated with one-to-one professional coaching and group-based peer coaching. Thus far, coaching in either format appears to assist goal-attainment, improve satisfaction with life, provide a greater sense of control over the environment and open coachees to a greater range of experience, when compared to a no-coaching control group.

The data presented in this article also suggest that trained professionals make a difference to the quality of coaching outcomes. That is, those participants who received professional coaching appeared to be more engaged in their goals and possessed a greater sense of goal-related mastery. In contrast, untrained peer coaching, while delivering several positive outcomes, was associated with a tendency to disengage from goal-striving and the coaching process. It would appear that regular goal-related discussions
are insufficient to facilitate goal-progression and that much depends on the skill of the person directing those discussions.

In conclusion, life coaching is an area appropriate for rigorous scientific enquiry. Indeed, studies of the sort outlined in this paper are important for raising the credibility of life coaching and securing the future of the industry. Of course, it will be important for future investigators to carefully consider the designs and methods they employ in life-coaching research. As such, we encourage others to contribute to this small but growing empirical body of knowledge, in the hope that it will help life coaching to emerge from the shadow of the human potential movement. Only by exposing itself to the greater objectivity of the behavioural sciences will life coaching attract the attention of those who have hitherto viewed the area with suspicion.

References
Grant, A.M., & Cavanagh, M. (2002). *Become your own life coach: The key to successful change*. Sydney, Australia: University of Sydney Centre for Continuing Education.


A Pilot Study to Assess the Effects of Life Coaching With Year 12 Students

Marilyn A. Campbell and Sallie Gardner

The increasing popularity of life coaching can be anecdotally evidenced by the growing number of life coaches advertising their services. Numerous training courses in life coaching have also emerged claiming to impart the knowledge required to become a successful life coach. What life coaching actually is, however, and what its benefits are, remains controversial. Recent research conducted by Grant (2003) has demonstrated that a life-coaching program with adults positively influenced self-reported mental health, quality of life and goal-attainment. Similarly, Green, Oades, and Grant (2003) reported that life coaching with adults enhanced their striving for goals, wellbeing and hope.

While these preliminary results appear promising, confusion in the literature concerning definitions of life coaching persist. For example, there are terms such as personal coaching, lifestyle coaching, business coaching, executive coaching, sports coaching, parent coaching, career coaching and relationship coaching. In the public perception, however, coaching is generally identified with sports coaching or executive coaching (Garman, Whiston, & Zlatoper, 2000). When life coaching is applied to school students, the terminology becomes even more blurred. Coaching with students is sometimes called academic coaching, which has been described as neither counselling nor tutoring (Dansinger, 2000).

While life coaching is a relatively new phenomenon, another form of coaching, peer coaching, has had a long history in schools. Peers have been used to teach reading with same-age or cross-age peers, with increases in reading achievement shown for both tutors and those they tutor (Gensemer, 2000). Peers have also coached others with emotional difficulties, such as...
anger (Besley, 1999), behavioural difficulties (Rasmussen & Lund, 2002) and anxiety (Campbell, 2003), with benefits for both coaches and those they have coached. The peer-coaching literature is not simply restricted to students but is used extensively in the context of beginning teachers and has had positive results (Jenkins & Veal, 2002).

We define life coaching in this study as working with a population of normal, nonclinical clients with the emphasis on enhancing personal growth rather than fixing problems. Life coaching is different from teaching but similar to mentoring as it is an ongoing, confidential, one-on-one relationship between coach and student (Witherspoon & White, 1996). It is a change process for the enhancement of individual performance, personal growth and wellbeing. The relationship between the school counsellor, acting in a coaching role, and student is an equal one where the student sets the agenda and the coach provides individual support in times of transition.

Intuitively, there appear to be several immediate benefits to using life coaching with young people and, more particularly, with final-year high school students. At points of transition, students consider life changes including study, new challenges and career decisions. As Jones and Frydenberg (2000) found, first-year university students' level of academic stress was greater at the beginning of semester, during the transition from school, than at the end of semester prior to the examination period. Life coaching offers a unique opportunity to support senior students with the stresses and demands of their final year in secondary school. In addition, a coaching program can assist students in maintaining a balanced lifestyle. Further, early intervention can have more long-lasting effects throughout their lives. Other benefits could be enhancement of self-esteem, better career choices and being able to resist peer pressure. A significant amount of time, money and effort is committed to educating young people, but upon leaving school, many of these skills and attitudes are not put to best use. Allowing students to reflect on their lives, taking into account what is working for them already, and building on existing strengths as well as adding new ones, more adequately prepares them for life after school.

One study which has evaluated the effects of a coaching intervention on the academic and personal development of college students is by Steinwedel and Wilmington (2001). Thirty-six allied health students self-selected to join an experimental group (n = 10) who received coaching and two control groups (n = 13). The control group A completed pre and post measures while control group B completed only post measures. The results showed improved self-efficacy in the coached students as well as those students reporting that coaching helped them achieve their academic goals.

Although Ponzo (1977) first talked about the counsellor coach in schools, there does not seem to have been any research studies evaluating coaching with school students. However, in April, 2003, the South Dakota School Counselors Association in America hosted a pre-conference session on “Life coaching: New opportunities for school counsellors”.
The current study focused on two research questions. First, to investigate if there were any differences between students who elected to participate in life coaching and those who did not. Second, to investigate if individual life coaching enhanced the academic performance, emotional wellbeing and problem-solving ability of participants, as well as improving their relationships with others.

**Method**

**Participants**

One hundred and four Year 12 students at a Catholic coeducational college in a state capital city in Australia were invited to join a life-coaching program for the year run by the school psychologist/counsellor. Seventy-one students (68%) volunteered to participate in the program, but given the resource constraints, it was necessary to restrict the number of participants to 12. These students were randomly chosen within the five pastoral care classes with 2 or 3 students from each class being selected. Two other groups were then chosen matched by gender, age and academic achievement within the pastoral care classes. The first control group were selected from students who had volunteered to be included in the program and the second control group was selected from students who did not wish to participate in the life coaching. There were 5 males and 7 females in each of the three groups.

**Measures**

*The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ).* The SDQ (Goodman, Meltzer, & Bailey, 2003) is a 25-item self-report measure for use with adolescents. Ten items are worded as strengths and 15 as difficulties. The items are divided into 5 scales of 5 items each: emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity, peer problems and prosocial behaviours. The items are scored 0 for “not true”, 1 for “somewhat true” and 2 for “certainly true”. Five items are worded positively and scored in the opposite direction. All except the last scale of prosocial behaviours are added to generate a total difficulties score ranging from 0 to 40.

*Rosenberg’s Self-esteem Scale.* This scale (Rosenberg, 1965) is a self-report measure which is used to assess self-esteem. Ten items are marked on a 4-point scale, scored as 4 for “strongly agree”, 3 for “agree”, 2 for “disagree” and 1 for “strongly disagree”. There are 5 items that are negatively worded and are scored in reverse. The total self-esteem score is obtained by summing the 10 responses to yield a range of scores from 10 to 40.

*Adolescent Coping Scale (ACS).* The ACS (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1993) is an 80-item self-report measure assessing coping strategies. The items are rated on a 5-point scale, 1 for “doesn’t apply”, 2 for “used very little”, 3 for “used sometimes”, 4 for “used often” and 5 for “used a great deal”. Previous factor
analysis identified 18 scales which represent 18 common coping strategies used by adolescents, such as social support, worry, ignore the problem or physical recreation. These 18 scales can also be identified as three styles of coping: solving the problem style, non-productive coping style and reference to others style.

**Academic achievement.** This was measured using percentiles from grades obtained in Year 11.

**Teacher Rating Form.** This form completed by teachers used a 10-point scale for each student, rating their ability to manage relationships, social standing among peers, effort in academic work and ability to solve life’s problems.

**Self-rating Form.** This form was completed by each student as a self-report measure assessing the same areas as the Teacher Rating Form on a 10-point scale.

In addition, a focus group interview was conducted and case-study data were collected.

**Procedure**

A talk about life coaching was given by the school counsellor to all the Year 12 students and their parents during an orientation to Year 12 night. During the normal interviews for Year 12s by the principal and deputy, students were asked if they wished to participate in life coaching. Of those students interested in receiving life coaching, 12 were randomly selected. A comparison group of 12 students were matched for age, gender, academic attainment and pastoral care class. A further 12 students who did not wish to participate in life coaching were also matched for age, gender, academic attainment and pastoral care class with the life-coaching students. These 36 students were administered the Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaire, the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale, Adolescent Coping Scale and the Self-rating Form. All of the five pastoral care teachers completed the Teacher Rating Form for each selected student in their class. A focus group was conducted with the students from the second control group to investigate their reasons for not wanting coaching.

The life coaching consisted of a different number of sessions for each student over a 6-month period according to their different needs and extracurricular commitments. Most students attended one session per fortnight for the first two terms of the year. The first session usually consisted of establishing rapport and then discussing the definition of coaching by asking the student what they considered coaching to be. A mutually agreed definition was usually that coaching is to enhance performance and support growth throughout this year of transition and that the student and coach would work as equal partners. The analogy of sports coaching was used — to motivate, push and cajole students, to keep up their flagging morale and
to keep them on tasks and focused on their goals. The students’ own goals were then discussed either in relation to career planning and aspirations, sporting goals, study goals, managing stress and achieving a balanced life, money and health concerns. Explaining the process and setting another time finished the first session. In subsequent sessions, short and long-term goals were transcribed and obstacles to the achievement of these goals discussed, strategies to achieve goals and motivation to do so, monitoring of steps, celebrations of successes and changing strategies for failures, focusing and reflection were the main strategies employed. Empowerment and reflection were emphasised. After 4 months, face-to-face counselling was supplemented with email counselling.

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, Rosenberg’s Self-esteem Scale, the Teacher Report Form and the Student Report Form were re-administered after 6 months of coaching. In addition, interviews and case-study data were collected from the coaching group at this time. The above measures, as well as the Adolescent Coping Scale and academic achievement, will be re-administered in another 6 months.

Results

Precoaching

Comparison between the three groups of students (the coached, those who wanted coaching and those who did not want coaching) found there were no statistical differences on age, mean age = 16.36 years, $F(2, 35) = .111, p = .895$; academic achievement, $F(2, 35) = .207, p = .814$; or teacher report before the students undertook coaching, $F(2, 35) = .141, p = .869$ (See Table 1).

However, there were significant differences between those who were undertaking life coaching and those who were not in their perceptions of their total coping on the Self Report Form, $F(2, 35) = 7.695, p < .05$. There were also differences in coping with relationships, $F(2, 35) = 5.096, p < .05$,

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Table 1</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>16.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Achievement</td>
<td>4.83 (2.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Teacher Report</td>
<td>26.83 (5.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Self Report</td>
<td>30.17 (5.88)&lt;b&gt;1&lt;/b&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>5.92 (1.73)&lt;b&gt;1&lt;/b&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic effort</td>
<td>5.17 (1.80)&lt;b&gt;1&lt;/b&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life’s problems</td>
<td>5.83 (2.17)&lt;b&gt;1&lt;/b&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDQ total problems</td>
<td>9.00 (4.92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenberg’s self-esteem scale</td>
<td>19.67 (4.46)&lt;b&gt;1&lt;/b&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
with post hoc analysis showing that the students who were going to have coaching perceived themselves as less able to cope with relationships than those who did not want coaching. There were differences among the three groups on how much effort they rated themselves as putting into academic work, $F(2, 35) = 4.736, p < .05$, with post hoc analysis showing that the students who wanted coaching but were not going to receive it reported they put more effort into academic work. This result was surprising as the

### Table 2
Means (and Standard Deviations) on the SDQ for the Three Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Coached Yes Control</th>
<th>No Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre Mean (SD)</td>
<td>Post Mean (SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>2.92 (2.47)</td>
<td>2.67 (2.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct Problems</td>
<td>1.00 (1.13)</td>
<td>1.17 (1.53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyperactivity</td>
<td>3.25 (2.22)</td>
<td>3.58 (1.51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Relationships</td>
<td>1.83 (1.80)</td>
<td>1.58 (1.73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-social</td>
<td>8.58 (1.24)</td>
<td>8.67 (1.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Problems</td>
<td>9.00 (4.92)</td>
<td>9.00 (4.77)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3
Means (and Standard Deviations) of Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale for the Three Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Coached Yes Control</th>
<th>No Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre Mean (SD)</td>
<td>Post Mean (SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenberg</td>
<td>19.67 (4.46)</td>
<td>19.58 (4.68)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4
Means (and Standard Deviations) on the Teacher Rating Form for the Three Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Coached Yes Control</th>
<th>No Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre Mean (SD)</td>
<td>Post Mean (SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coping with relationships</td>
<td>6.75 (1.42)</td>
<td>6.83 (1.34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coping with peers</td>
<td>6.75 (1.60)</td>
<td>6.92 (1.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic effort</td>
<td>6.83 (1.53)</td>
<td>7.42 (1.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to solve life's problems</td>
<td>6.50 (1.31)</td>
<td>6.92 (.90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26.83 (5.12)</td>
<td>28.08 (3.92)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
coached group and those who wanted to be coached were randomly assigned. There were also differences in the groups about their perceived ability to solve life’s problems, \( F(2, 35) = 6.102, p < .01 \), with post hoc analysis showing that both control groups reported that they were more able to solve life’s problems than the target group. There were no differences on the total Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire between the three groups \( F(2, 35) = 0.83, p = .445 \). However, there was a difference between the groups on the scale of Not Coping \( F(2, 35) = 3.383, p < .05 \), with post hoc analysis showing that the control groups differed. Those students who did want coaching also reported lower self-esteem than those who chose not to have coaching, \( F(2, 35) = 4.922, p < .05 \).

A focus group of the 12 students who chose not to participate in coaching revealed that the majority of these students believed that they did not need coaching (as also shown by higher self-esteem scores and more productive coping strategies), that they did not have time to fit coaching into their busy schedules, and had things pretty much sorted out for themselves.

Mid-Point Results
After 6 months there were no differences, based on paired sample \( t \) tests, from the pre-test to the post-test scores on the SDQ total, \( t(35) = –1.098, p = .28 \), or any of the component scales (see Table 2): the Rosenberg Self-esteem Inventory, \( t(34)=0.229, p=.82 \) (see Table 3); the Teacher Scale, \( (t(35) = –1.117, p = .271) \) (see Table 4); or the Self-report Scale, \( f(35) = 0.175, p = .862 \) (see Table 5).

Two Case Studies
“Annette” is 17 years old. She identified that she wanted to improve her grades to Bs, and save enough money to go on a biology excursion to Heron Island and to the formal. In the second session, she planned to create a timetable for study and wear her prescribed glasses for reading. By

| Table 5 |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                | Coached          | Yes Control      | No Control       |
|                | Pre Mean (SD)    | Post Mean (SD)   | Pre Mean (SD)    | Post Mean (SD)   |
| Coping with relationships | 5.92 (1.73) 7.33 (1.44) 7.50 (1.78) 7.33 (1.16) 8.00 (1.48) 8.08 (1.73) |
| Coping with peers | 7.08 (1.31) 7.17 (1.34) 8.00 (1.04) 8.08 (1.79) 7.92 (1.38) 7.58 (1.56) |
| Coping academically | 6.17 (1.40) 6.08 (1.17) 7.25 (1.71) 6.67 (1.30) 6.67 (1.50) 6.08 (1.44) |
| Academic effort | 5.17 (1.80) 6.58 (1.78) 7.42 (1.78) 6.33 (2.19) 6.17 (1.80) 5.75 (1.96) |
| Solving life’s problems | 5.83 (2.17) 6.83 (1.27) 8.00 (1.41) 7.08 (1.73) 7.67 (1.16) 7.25 (1.55) |
| Total          | 30.17 (5.9) 34.0 (5.12) 38.17 (5.27) 35.5 (4.36) 36.42 (4.52) 34.75 (5.08) |
the third session, “Annette” had already experienced changes. She was handing in her assignments by the due date, which made her feel more satisfied, her results had improved, and she had cut back on time spent at the gym; for exercise, she walked her dog instead. She had also cut back on her hours at her part-time job because her parents, who apparently had been impressed with the changes, had offered to pay for the trip to Heron Island. Having done the homework timetable and study planner, she also recognised the need to cut back on her social life, so she began to identify other goals, which related to her thoughts and feelings. Her new goals were related to management of her anger. She incorporated strategies her brother had identified, and the plan became to practise “Stop. Think. Act Cool.” She also continued to work towards her academic goals and had realised that wearing her glasses diminished her headaches.

“Adrian” is also 17 years old. His goal was to achieve an A in every subject. He was quite clear that, in the longer term, his goals included obtaining a job “with no financial limitations”. Interestingly, he then also stated that he wanted to be “in tune with himself” and “in touch with his higher place”. He identified his main obstacle as being “inherently lazy”. He decided to change his television-viewing habits and become organised, which meant including time in his schedule for drum practice. He also changed his goals as the time passed. His new goals became to achieve fitness by jogging in the morning, and riding his bike after school, then to play the drums before settling in to study and to become more flexible. When he went on to the email system he also emphasised that he wanted to maintain face-to-face, one-to-one contact, because, “that builds the relationship, and shows you care a whole lot more”. His most recent emails indicate that he feels confident that he is managing his study time wisely. He has said that he is coping well while striving to do more, and feels more passionate about this each day.

**Discussion**

The initial findings from this pilot study found there were some differences between those students who volunteered to participate in the life-coaching sessions and those who did not. The students who volunteered to participate in coaching initially reported a lower total score on the Self-report Form than those who did not volunteer to participate. These students saw themselves as less able to manage relationships, put in less academic effort, and were less able to solve life’s problems than those students who were not entering coaching. In addition, they reported using more non-coping strategies and showed lower self-esteem scores. This seemed unusual as these 12 students were randomly chosen from the 71 students who initially wanted to participate in the coaching program. However, it is interesting to note that 68% of all students volunteered to participate in life coaching. This
number was unexpectedly high and shows the demand that there is for professional life coaches in the school system. A preliminary evaluation of the quantitative data shows that there were no significant changes on any of the measures, namely, the SDQ, Rosenberg, Teacher or Self-report Form, from the beginning of coaching to the 6-month data-collection point. However, there were trends beginning to appear which indicated that the coached students were gaining in confidence and in effort. Interestingly, there were also trends which indicated decreases for the noncoached students in these areas.

While the SDQ showed no statistically significant changes, there was a trend for the non-coached students to report more total problems than 6 months previously, while the coached students reported no change. The Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale also showed no significant changes. This could be because the scale is uni-dimensional, and global self-esteem measures tend not to show large changes over short periods of time as this measure is reasonably stable (Cassidy & Trew, 2001; Kinnunen, Feldt, & Mauno, 2003).

The Teacher Report Form also showed no statistically significant changes from Time 1 to Time 2. There appears to be a halo effect operating with teachers as they scored each student similarly on all aspects of ability. There also appears to be a trend for all teachers to rate all students more highly after working with them for 6 months. This could be a result of the good relationships the teachers develop with their students. Research with teachers has shown that while they are competent in detecting learning problems in students (Shinn, Tindal, & Spira, 1987; Stevens, 1982; Wilton, Cooper, & Glynn, 1987), they are not as accurate in specifying a particular diagnosis (Abidin & Robinson, 2002; Gottlieb, Gottlieb, & Trongone, 1991) and often under-identify internalising of problems by students (Gardiner, 1994; Green, Clopton, & Pope, 1996; Pearcy, Clopton, & Pope, 1993). However, at both data-collection points, overall, teachers rated all students consistently lower on their abilities to manage relationships, expend academic effort and solve life’s problems than the students themselves. Studies have shown that teachers perceive students’ problems differently from the students themselves. Fanshawe and Burnett (1999) found this incongruence between responses of high school students and their teachers on evaluating student problems. The teachers regarded the students’ problems as more serious than the students did and also had more doubt about the students’ ability to cope. In addition, it is interesting to note a trend for teachers to rate the coached group of students as expending more academic effort after 6 months of coaching than either of the control groups.

The Self-report Form, although again not statistically significant from Time 1 to Time 2, showed some interesting trends. Overall, the coached students rated themselves as improving in their ability to manage relationships and academic effort, while the noncoached students in both control groups rated themselves lower in these abilities than at Time 1. Especially interesting was the trend of the coached students to report that they were
increasing their academic effort compared to the non-coached students, who reported that they were expending less effort than at the beginning of the year. This is a significant finding because if this trend continues, it will show that life coaching increases motivation and effort at a time when motivation tends to decrease.

An analysis of the qualitative data showed that all students who were in the coaching program expressed satisfaction with coaching. In fact, many students in the first control group who had initially wanted coaching but who were not included in the program because of limitations with resourcing, were still expressing disappointment 6 months later. Therefore, there were clearly benefits gained from the life-coaching sessions, such as developing a positive relationship with a caring adult who provided a structure for the young person to explore their goals and increase their motivation and effort to achieve them. These results, together with the quantitative trends, indicate that life coaching may have potential for building resilience and wellbeing in young people.

There are, however, limitations to this study. First, the small sample size means that the results should be treated with a degree of caution. Second, the sample was drawn only from one school and further research is needed with populations from different schools. Third, the results reported are from a midpoint data collection and it is hoped that the trends which are showing after 6 months of coaching will increase to significant differences at the 12-month point of data collection.

In summary, life coaching seems to have a positive effect on Year 12 students, increasing their goal-setting abilities and their motivation. It will be interesting to assess their progress at the end of Year 12 and then 12 months after they have left school. Future research is indicated to provide more evidence that life coaching can make a positive difference in young people's lives.

References


Peer Coaching: A Practical Model to Support Constructivist Learning Methods in the Development of Managerial Competency

Richard K. Ladyshewsky and William Varey

It has been noted that managerial competency progresses through five stages: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient and expert (Quinn, Faerman, & Thompson, 2003). Boyatzis and Kram (1999) argue that many managers will cycle through these stages as they move around within industries as part of their career progression. Achieving expert status, therefore, is an ongoing process and requires knowledge, cognition and metacognition (Higgs, 1997). Metacognition is particularly important to achieve the deep learning associated with managerial excellence as it involves knowing what one knows, knowing when and how one comes to know it, being able to think and plan strategically, and the ability to monitor and consistently evaluate one’s own competence. Peer coaching (PC) can enhance critical thinking and metacognition and support the development of managerial competency.

The influence of PC on managerial competence is supported by cognitive development theory (Piaget, 1977; Sullivan, 1953; Vygotsky, 1978, 1986). Peer interaction promotes cognitive development because it often leads to critical cognitive conflicts. For example, when a learner discusses authentic problems and concerns with another peer, they often become aware of a contradiction in their knowledge base. The learners experience a lapse in equilibrium and will attempt to initiate strategies to restore equilibrium, for example, by engaging each other to find a solution that both can accept. This inquiry, which is framed around an authentic task, enables learners to reconstruct (Biehler & Snowman, 1997) their understanding of the phenomenon under question.
For PC to be effective, partnerships must be based on trust and respect (Ladyshewsky, Baker, & Jones, 2001; Zeus & Skiffington, 2000). The equality that is present in PC supports a mutually rewarding discourse because of the absence of power and evaluation pressure. Learners can be more open with one another and explore more fully areas of critical cognitive conflict. Since peers are at an equal level, the coaching discourse is far less threatening than, for example, a discussion with a supervisor. Even if exploration peers cannot resolve the cognitive conflict after this, they may feel more empowered to approach their supervisor as a dyad for support.

This absence of power and evaluation is important to maintain in the PC relationship. Joyce and Showers (1995) state that traditional feedback is problematic in a PC relationship as it often becomes evaluative. Evaluative feedback negatively influences the coaching experience because of the emergence of status differences. Information exchanges must remain non-evaluative (Ackland, 1991; Showers, 1984; Skinner & Welch, 1996), which is achieved by providing nonjudgmental comments that focus largely on inquiry. By confining discourse to learning objectives, and using a predominance of inquiry methods, the integrity of the PC experience can be maintained. This integrity is important as the coaching process is highly influenced by the social and psychological aspects of the relationship (Ackland, 1991).

Hence, peer coaches must be good at active listening, questioning, probing, paraphrasing and summarising (Zeus & Skiffington, 2000). Peer coaching has features in common with other forms of traditional coaching, mentoring, teaching, supervision and counselling. However, PC has unique dynamics that neutralise status imbalances and provide reciprocal metacognitive learning opportunities. To achieve a functional PC relationship, the dyad must progress through several distinct stages. Different facilitation skills are needed at each stage. The eight stages are described below:

Step 1  Assessment and trust building
Step 2  Planning — time and place
Step 3  Formalise process and scope
Step 4  Define purpose and goals
Step 5  Clarify facts and assumptions
Step 6  Explore possibilities
Step 7  Gain commitment to actions
Step 8  Offer support and accountability

The eight stages comprising this conceptual PC model were developed by comparing and contrasting different types of coaching relationships (Dotlich & Cairo, 1999; Fournies, 1987; Horst, 1999; Krisco, 1997; MacLennan, 1996; Rylatt, 2000; Thorne, 2001) and then modifying them for peer coaching (Varey, 2002). Each step in the PC model is directed towards achieving a specific and necessary outcome. The outcomes for each stage, and the
## Table 1

### Peer Coaching Component Stages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Objective of each stage (Desired outcome)</th>
<th>Integrated dependency (Effect if missed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment and trust building</td>
<td>Peers assess each other for compatibility as to their stage of development and as to the compatibility of their respective learning needs.</td>
<td>Trust and understanding are not built into the relationship, and participants do not see themselves as equals — relationship fails due to lack of reciprocity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Timing and place for formal peer coaching sessions are agreed to distinguish a commitment to a structured process from an informal program.</td>
<td>If sessions are cancelled, held at inconvenient locations, incomparably timed or consistently interrupted, they will be seen as unproductive and motivation for both participants will decline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formalising process and scope</td>
<td>The learner's particular needs at present and the scope of the individual session are determined based on a balance of priority of interests and available time.</td>
<td>If the coachee's needs do not drive the process and determine the scope, actions will not be relevant. Commitment wanes. If scope not balanced effectively within constraints, no outcomes will result — again resulting in declining commitment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining purpose and goals</td>
<td>The coach explores with the learner the focus of their learning objective(s) and asks coachee to further define goals and objectives as necessary to achieve clarity.</td>
<td>Unless both parties gain this understanding, only symptomatic and surface-level solutions will be discovered and the main goals will not be uncovered or desired objectives not achieved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarifying facts and assumptions</td>
<td>The coach asks the coachee to separate assumptions from facts and may do so provide alternative and nonevaluative perspectives to assist in objective clarity of actual position.</td>
<td>If not challenged, misconceptions easily resolved by third-party objectivity are left unresolved and may compound learning barriers. The coachee does not develop self-awareness, and previously unknown areas for improvement or development that are relevant to the coachee are not discovered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploring possibilities</td>
<td>Conversations move from correctly identifying the issue, event or dilemma to developing possibilities for solutions. The learner finds their own path out of the learning maze assisted by the coach who creates space for exploring different scenarios. The coach shares information and possibly suggestions but does not offer definitive advice.</td>
<td>If the range of solutions are not constructed by the coachee, the coaching experience leaves the coachee feeling unempowered and dependent on the coach. Lack of exploration runs the risk of partial solutions and strategies are acted on in a trial-and-error manner, negating the benefit of the reflective metacognitive learning process. Time taken at this stage to develop satisfactory answers (as seen by the coachee) generates commitment, increased prospect of action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaining commitment to actions</td>
<td>Conversation moves to creating verbal commitment to identified actions with clear outcomes. Required resources and flow-on effects are considered.</td>
<td>If constraints, real or imagined, are not explored, actions may be frustrated and trust in the process will decline. If actions are vague, the assessment of outcomes is difficult — reducing further reflection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering support and accountability</td>
<td>The coach offers follow-up support with genuine interest in the results rather than imposing accountability. Follow-up is structured by the coach to assist in motivation, learning support and ongoing trust-building, reinforcing cycle and reciprocity in the learning relationship.</td>
<td>Without structured ongoing support and investment in the joint relationship, follow-up is seen as obligated accountability only. The PC process becomes strained, trust declines and is likely to stop with only one or two cycles. Without the ongoing support there is no link between sessions to reinforce the structured part of the process as a complete cycle.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
negative consequences if that stage is not fulfilled, are explained more fully in Table 1.

The model provides a way of consciously managing the PC process. The use of additional tools to enhance the application of this PC framework can also be applied to further increase the effectiveness of the relationship. These tools include learning journals, personal learning objectives, and reflective summaries of actions and outcomes of PC sessions.

What is unique about the PC process is its reciprocity. It assumes that in any cycle of PC, the role of the coach, who is a cofacilitator of the process, and the role of coachee, whose learning objectives are to be the focus of the particular coaching session, are made distinct. But once the learning focus changes towards the needs of the other party, roles are reversed. Often this alternating action is done concurrently or in parallel or even simultaneously. The particular learning needs of the participants, their level of proficiency at the management of the logistics of the PC relationship, and their respective required learning rates influence the adoption of the most efficient configuration. It is noted that to prevent an imbalance from developing, both participants should over time have equivalent participation in both roles of coach and coachee. This maintains the level of perceived reciprocity and equality between the participants, thus maintaining the dynamic that enhances the prospects of ongoing commitment and learning.

Given the theory in support of PC, it is useful to validate whether this model actually leads to the deeper metacognitive insights needed to promote managerial competency.

Methods

Forty-three students (14 women, 29 men) participated in a PC program. Students were enrolled in a postgraduate business certificate/diploma or master’s level course. Forty-one students (95%) were studying part-time. Students were required to establish personal learning objectives and to maintain reflective learning journals that related to the content being studied within their unit and their own personal learning experiences. The learning objectives were to be applied to a specific problem or challenge in the workplace. The learning objective(s) and journal entries were the resources the student used during PC discussions. This helped the student to keep the focus on their personal learning needs as they related to their project.

Students selected a peer coach from the class and were required to meet at least once every 2 weeks. In most cases a face-to-face meeting took place but in some cases, because of work commitments or geographical distance, telephone or email was used to maintain contact. The purpose of the meetings was to provide students with a safe place to discuss learning objectives and questions stemming from their projects.

All students received a 1-hour orientation and booklet on PC and its relationship to their professional development. The PC relationship lasted
for one trimester (12 weeks, 32 students) or two trimesters (24 weeks, 11 students). The duration depended upon which unit the student was enrolled in. To receive credit for the PC experience, all students were required to submit one or two reports that described their experience. This report, along with their learning objectives and an excerpt from their learning journal, was worth 20% of their grade.

Students submitted a total of 71 PC reports for this research. These reports, including learning objectives and journal excerpts, were entered into N-VIVO, a qualitative data management software program, for analysis. The investigator developed a series of coding formats that represented conceptual themes that emerged from reviewing the written reports and excerpts. A research assistant was employed to code the transcripts. He was briefed on each code by a written definition. Once he felt that he had a good grasp of the coding definitions, the investigator and research assistant together coded 10 pages of data. Comparisons were then made between the coding labels of the investigator and research assistant. This process was repeated three times, at which point the inter-rater reliability of the research assistant to the investigator was comparable. The research assistant then coded the remaining transcripts. The codes reported here represent those that provide insights into the depth of learning that resulted from the PC experience and assist in validating the PC model described in this article.

Results and Discussion

The eight-stage PC model presented by Varey (2002) was evident in the written comments from the students. In stage 1, assessment and trust building, successful relationships were based on careful selection of a peer coach. As the partnership began to develop, trust was established — as evidenced in the following quotations:

- It is important to pick a peer coach who has some knowledge at a comparable level to you, relating to your learning objective.
- In selecting a peer, I decided to choose someone with whom I could speak frankly and was not in a direct competitive situation.
- By building a professional rapport and getting to know each other at a deeper level, a broke down any barriers to open and honest communication and feedback.
- I hadn’t shared my writings with anyone, outside of family and friends, so for me to do this required trust beyond normal working relationships.

In stage 2, planning — time and place, the relationships that flourished had commitment from both parties. Meeting schedules were adhered to and people came through on the commitments they had made. Coaching relationships that floundered shared stories of missed or cancelled meetings and delays between contact. The momentum was lost and the perception of a lack of interest eroded the relationship.
In stage 3, formalising process and scope, an element of formality was needed to ensure the PC sessions were focused and directed towards the achievement of learning outcomes. Regular meetings, an agenda, a focus on objectives and journal entries were some of the formal processes used to ensure that the PC sessions were effective. The validity of these processes is evident in the following quotations from the students:

The need to peer coach in a formal sense dictated that a simple framework should be adopted to obtain the best possible result.

Participants must be given the time to get to know the norms and adapt or adjust accordingly to encourage honest evaluation. A certain amount of ground rules, delegation of tasks, must be set to enable equal contribution.

Dyads that did not follow a formal process noted that greater attention to this stage of the framework would have improved their PC experience.

There was a need for us to add a bit more formality to our discussions so that we could identify actions and responsibilities.

We may have missed out on opportunities to learn. This could be due to the lack of formality in our reflection, and critical thinking on the when and why of our approach.

In stage 4, defining purpose and goals, the reflective learning journal and personal learning objectives provided the content and material needed for peer coaching. Coaches could use this information to focus on learning experiences, targets and goals.

The learning journals tended to provide a good input to the peer coaching sessions and were often the basis for our discussion. We used them to share what we had learned and form an opinion on how relevant that information was to our own situation.

John had felt that he had lost focus on this objective, but realised by talking his objectives through with me how he can now move forward … We engaged and focused on his learning objectives in great depth over time.

In stage 5, clarifying facts and assumptions, the ability of the coach to clarify some of the facts and assumptions from the coachee depended to a great degree on their own coaching, questioning and communication skills. Application of these skills in a nonevaluative way, helped to preserve the relationship.

My peer coach is a good active listener and reminded me of the importance of actively listening, not just planning my next sentence.

The process adopted for the coachee’s first feedback session was to focus more on reflective insight. To do this we used an open reflective enquiry process to discuss each objective, why it was relevant to her, discover insights from events observed already, go into depth with these examples and reflect on how these examples relate to the goals, discuss how to create more opportunities for reflective observation; explore next steps to achieve the stated outcomes, envision possibilities for work role application and discuss progress.

Where good communication principles were not employed, or the coach did not try to clarify underlying facts or assumptions, participants became skeptical or critical of the relationship.
On a few occasions John was too quick to give advice. I would have preferred that he helped me to discover the best course of action by asking questions.

Fred began to criticise my learning objectives since they contained two spelling mistakes, and also stated that I was trying to achieve too much. I started feeling a little defensive towards Fred at this point since he had started with this negative feedback.

In stage 6, exploring possibilities and alternatives, discovering new insights helped to boost the coachee's self-confidence and self-efficacy. By exploring personal knowledge and examining new possibilities and alternatives, the belief in one's own abilities increased and promoted the transfer of skills into authentic situations.

[My coach] gave me insights into my own behavior and that of my work colleagues, which provided me with guidance as to whether my actions were right or wrong and gave me much increased confidence on how to take the next steps.

I believe self-confidence or self-efficacy is one of the most important ingredients to assist in personal development, and the peer coaching situation has helped my personal development.

In the past I would be filled with self-doubt and feelings of failure during critical learning events. With the help of a coach, I found that this was dramatically lessened.

In stage 7, commitment — create action, and stage 8, accountability — offer support, it was clear that a commitment to the relationship and collaborative action helped to progress the learning of the coachee and team. The coach provided a "safety net" for the coachee to explore knowledge gaps and uncertainties about their management. Managers were, in turn, encouraged to take more risks in their learning and management action. The support offered by the coach was also an advantage to help process learning events and work–life balance issues.

It was a relief not to feel alone. We also spoke with other members of the course and it was reassuring to find that we all felt the same.

Treating each other as colleagues acknowledges the mutual risk and establishes the sense of safety in facing the risk.

In addition to the validation of the PC model, learning outcomes that supported knowledge, cognition and metacognition were also evident. These learning outcomes were broken down into five thematic representations to best describe the learning that took place:

> Knowledge expansion — Coachee gains more knowledge through the dialogue of peer coaching. This can be new knowledge or it can be knowledge that adds value to existing knowledge frameworks. It is constructed from the knowledge-base of both parties.

> Perspective sharing — Where both parties recognise that they have similar perspectives on issues, serving to solidify knowledge.

> Knowledge verification — A situation where either party experiences a verification of knowledge they already possess.
Cognitive conflict — A phenomenon of PC whereby existing knowledge frameworks of both parties are thrown into question. There is evidence of questioning and uncertainty expressed by both parties around a specific knowledge-set.

Alternative perspectives — One or both parties gains a different perspective on a common theme from the other party’s approach or background. By actively engaging in dialogue with another learner about authentic task problems, the possibility of knowledge expansion became quite evident:

There were many more insights that came out of the structured reflective listening process that had not, and may not otherwise have, come into awareness, creating value for the learner.

Perspective sharing was another benefit. Through the process of evaluating one’s knowledge base, and seeing that it was a view shared by another credible source, learners could construct knowledge frameworks that helped to ground their practice as managers. Bandura (1971, 1997) refers to this as vicarious reinforcement:

By involving John in the design reviews, I was able to pick up some of the knowledge that he had. The knowledge transfer was both “explicit” and “tacit”. The “explicit” knowledge transfer consisted of John pointing me towards past designs as examples of how things had been done previously. The “tacit” knowledge related to some good tips on how John approaches design review.

While expanding and strengthening knowledge-frameworks is important, so too is the verification of existing knowledge. Through the verification of knowledge, learners can generate operational norms to guide their management actions:

John was pleased with the peer coaching I was able to provide as he felt my techniques helped him further explore his current thinking and he gained real value from the sessions.

The presence of cognitive conflict was a particularly rich metacognitive experience as it required participants to articulate “what they know” and “what they do not know”. The structured conflict increased each party’s understanding of the concept under debate and often led to shifts in perspective:

A fundamental result of our peer coaching has been to encourage a balance between thinking in parallel and in deliberately provoking constructive conflict between us in an effort to further explore possibilities, and this has worked well for us.

On a number of occasions, the peer discussions involved heated discussion on some aspects due to differing points of view. This reinforced my own learning experience by allowing me to see that others may have sharply opposing opinions or interpretations of events.

The discussion of learning issues during moments of cognitive conflict also produced insights that had not been considered before. This was achieved by gaining access to an alternative perspective. It enriched the metacognitive experience by requiring participants to retrieve what they knew and to compare and contrast it with what they were hearing in the discussion.
Through the process of being coached by Jane, I had a major shift in my view on marketing and where it sits philosophically with my future.

One of the most outstanding spin-offs from the sessions was the experience and information I gained from the other member’s learning objectives.

My peer coach was very supportive and also assisted by his observations of my style, which were at times different to what I perceived.

The outcomes of this PC experience provide support for the PC method as a framework to support learning. Competency development requires that managers continually reflect upon and construct new meaning from their experiences. It is this reflection-in-action and reflection-about-action (Schon, 1991) that leads to the development of mastery. Peer coaching supported the development of self-awareness and enhanced critical thinking by engaging students in metacognitively rich discussions on management. The emergence of cognitive conflict and the realisation that there were different perspectives increased opportunities for thoughts and feelings to emerge about one’s own thinking.

The PC process also aligned closely to the eight-stage model described by Varey (2002). Students appeared to assess their compatibility for partnering (stage 1) and then worked towards planning how and when their PC sessions would take place (stage 2). The learning objectives and journals were used to scope out the learner’s needs (stage 3) and the coach used this information to help the coachee further work through their knowledge gaps (stage 4). The dialectic that took place during PC sessions helped coachees to separate facts from assumptions and to consider previously unknown perspectives (stage 5). From here, coaches supported their partners by exploring possibilities and new ways of managing the authentic tasks under question (stage 6). Supporting the coachee in implementing action and supporting them during action was also evident (stages 7 and 8).

Much of this success was attributed to the appropriate use and practice of coaching skills and communication. What appeared to make the relationship flourish and promoted learning was the use of nonevaluative communication. Successful PC partnerships were able to maintain the social and psychological aspects of the relationship through their use of appropriate coaching technique (Ackland, 1991; Zeus & Skiffington, 2000). By applying appropriate coaching technique, the critical element of trust was established. Having trust meant that students could explore their own learning about their work with peers, without fears that the self-disclosure would be used against them. This equality dimension was an important corequisite.

In this PC program, participants were able to expand their knowledge-base through discussion and through access to the tacit knowledge of their coach. The structured conflict and controversy and exposure to alternative perspectives heightened learning. Intense debate, argument and disagreement, within an environment of trust and support, encouraged deeper reflection and learning and further grounded what participants did and did not know about their management skill. These experiences are metacognitively
rich in that they require learners to think and plan constructively and to represent their knowledge effectively in ways that permit efficient retrieval. It also provides them with the ability to monitor and consistently evaluate their own managerial competence — an essential constructivist-learning element.

Conclusion
Peer coaching appears to be a viable strategy that management and leadership programs should consider as part of their development framework. The PC model reported in this research is a useful template to assist learners in understanding the coaching process. Investment in each of the eight stages appears to yield a positive coaching and learning outcome. Therefore, participants in PC situations should be encouraged to develop the necessary skills and practices so that they can effectively apply this coaching model to their personal development experience.

References


Emotional Intelligence and Coaching: An Exploratory Study

Margaret Chapman

Emotional Intelligence

Originally conceived by Salovey and Mayer (1990) and popularised by Goleman (1996, 1998), emotional intelligence (EI) is said to be the ability to accurately perceive, understand, integrate and effectively manage one's own emotions and those of others. Goleman argues EI is a basic requirement for the appropriate interpretation of intelligence quotient (IQ). Exploring the links between EI and leadership, Goleman (1998) claims that emotional competencies are twice as important as pure intellect and expertise for the excellence of “star performers”.

Such claims have been criticised as being overly sensational, exaggerated and poorly conceptualised, and leading to fuzzy definitions and speculative thinking (cf. Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000; Mayer, 2001). Nevertheless, the idea has captured the attention of both practitioners and researchers worldwide.

Whether EI is best considered a set of specific abilities (Salovey & Mayer, 1990), a set of coping skills (Bar-On, 1997) or a set of management competencies (Goleman, 1996; 1998) is not explored within this chapter. The focus here is on more pragmatic concerns: the development and assessment of interventions that offer a route to improved EI. Slaski (2001) suggested that EI is best described as both a model for understanding human behaviour and a framework for personal, management and leadership development. The study reported on in this chapter uses EI as a framework for personal development.

While much has been written in the popular and practitioner press of the value of investing in EI development, there are few empirical studies specifically reporting on how to develop these essential capabilities and to what outcomes (Chapman, 2002). While the literature on EI acknowledges
the importance of providing relationship support in order to help individuals develop social and emotional competencies (Kram, 2001), it gives little attention to the potential role of coaching.

**Coaching and Emotional Intelligence**

Grant (2003, p. 5) defines coaching as “a collaborative, solution-focused results-oriented and systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of work performance, life experience, self-directed learning and the personal growth of the coachee”. Coaching is thus a facilitative relationship, in which the coach asks the right questions, is pro-active and enables individuals to achieve their own goals and solutions to problems, using their own resources.

What distinguishes competent coaches, Grant suggests, are three meta-competencies, *rational intelligence* (the ability to conceptualise and reason from first principles; to get to the heart of an issue and adopt a “metaview”), *systems intelligence* (an understanding of how business functions; how family systems work; how human systems function, adapt and change; and the ability to create change in complex systems) and *emotional intelligence* (the awareness of self and others; cognitive and emotional flexibility and using emotions to set and reach goals).

Drawing on Grant’s proposition, it makes sense to use coaching interventions to develop EI competencies. However, with the exception of Kram (2001), such a proposition is absent from the current EI literature, and there has so far been no discussion about the most effective coaching techniques to develop social and emotional competencies.

To address this gap and to contribute to the call for an evidence-based approach within coaching (e.g., Grant, 2002), this chapter outlines an exploratory case study designed to develop the EI capabilities of a team of seven housing officers (HOs) employed within a large local public authority located in the East of England.

While the use of coaching is rapidly expanding within business and industry in the United Kingdom (UK; Neenan & Palmer, 2001), there is a dearth of empirical studies designed to evaluate the effects of particular models used in coaching, and the benefits of coaching to individuals and organisations (Carter, 2001). Where such literature exists, the primary focus is on the benefits and outcomes of coaching within the executive population (cf. Olivero, Bane, & Kopelman, 1997). Furthermore, the literature that explicitly considers the role of coaching in developing EI is likewise conspicuous by its absence. The study outlined in this chapter is (to the authors’ knowledge) the first to relate EI to coaching in a non-executive population.

This chapter reports a four-phase EI intervention which draws on the guidelines for developing emotional intelligence advocated by Cherniss and Adler (2000). The four phases are secure organisational commitment, prepare for change, train and develop, and evaluate.
Method

Phase 1: Secure Organisational Commitment
Securing top-level commitment for Human Resource Development (HRD) initiatives is not always easy, especially when it relates to interventions designed to develop social and emotional competencies, or “soft skills” (Cherniss & Adler, 2000). The key factors in eliciting such support are moving when the timing is right, securing powerful sponsorship (with emotionally intelligent leadership), linking with business needs and demonstrating high quality.

In the study outlined in this chapter the head of Housing Services was committed to developing the capabilities of the 150 employees within his sphere of responsibility, particularly through interventions that pay attention to the psychological aspects of HRD. Consequently, the notion of EI was received favourably as it made sense in terms of the nature of the HO role; that is, the work included a high emotional factor (or e-factor). Within the public sector in the UK there is increasing pressure on performance management and consequently the timing was right for an intervention aimed at raising the Housing Officers’ EI.

Phase 2: Prepare for Change
Cherniss and Adler (2000) assert the importance of determining organisational and individual needs prior to any EI intervention. A systematic needs analysis was carried out to establish the expected outcomes from the EI initiative, in addition to gauging the readiness of the HOs for the project and establishing benchmarks against which the intervention could be evaluated.

Assessment measures: The Myers–Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) was used to assess the psychological type of both individuals and teams.

The Boston Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (BEIQ) was used to measure individual EI. This measure was developed from research designed to investigate the relationship between workplace stress and EI in front-line police officers (Chapman & Clarke, 2003; Clarke, 2000) and is adapted from Weisinger (1998). It is a self-report questionnaire comprising 44 statements relating to emotion-focused actions. Using a 5-point Likert scale, respondents rate themselves on the extent to which they find it easy or difficult to carry out specific actions within the work situation. The responses relate to five specific areas of emotional behaviour: self-awareness, emotion management, self-motivation, relationship management and emotional coaching. The BEIQ has high face validity, test–retest results show reliability alpha coefficients of .7, and the BEIQ shows good convergent validity with established EI measures (.71 with the ASE Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire [EIQ:M]; Dulewicz & Higgs, 2000a).

The team leader’s emotional intelligence was assessed using the EIQ:M 360° managerial version. At the time of the study it was the only EI 360° feedback tool available for the managerial population in the UK.
Qualitative interviews were also conducted with a team of seven housing officers (the team leader and six team members) and key stakeholders to gather multiple sources of feedback on the perceived individual, team and organisational needs, and expected benefits from the intervention. An analysis of these data revealed the following goals:

- to establish a strong team identity and sense of collaboration and cohesion
- to develop a team which is unified and committed to a shared set of values and centred on a common purpose and vision
- to enhance the profile of the team and engender positive working relationships with a range of stakeholders
- to develop the skills and potential of individual members for the benefit of the team and the organisation
- to build a climate of openness, high trust, support and shared learning
- to facilitate a working environment that is dynamic, energetic, fun and gets the job done.

Cherniss and Adler (2000) assert that a central element of the preparation phase is the need to engage the commitment and the motivation of the target group. This was achieved via a verbal and written briefing on the theory and background of EI and what the intervention would involve.

Phase 3: Train and Develop

The literature on EI development suggests that attention needs to be given to using learning methods and techniques that address both cognitive and affective elements of EI and that explicitly use the multisensory approaches of accelerated learning (Rose & Nicholl, 1997), multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1993) and “brain-based” or (“brain-friendly”) learning (Jensen, 1995, 1996). Further, EI development requires a more transformational experience, incorporating distributed practice (cf. Cherniss & Adler, 2000).

Thus, the intervention consisted of the EI assessment, a series of 5 one-day experiential group workshops for the HOs, individual one-to-one coaching and keeping a “feeling diary” or journal (adapted from Bayne, 1989, and Burns, 1990). The intervention was based on a five-step model of EI (Chapman, 2001) adapted from Weisinger (1998).

The individual one-to-one coaching drew on a broad cognitive and behavioural framework which was action-oriented and solution- and goal-focused. The aim of the coaching was to provide the HOs with a personal space in which to reflect on learning outcomes from the workshops and from their individual life experience, and to review the way they felt about the work they undertook, themselves and their peers. The coaching was also designed to help the learners anticipate and prepare for lapses and to deal with setbacks.
Phase 4: Evaluate Change

In order to explore the outcomes of the intervention, the evaluation was based on the principles of an illuminative evaluation (Parlett & Hamilton, 1977, as cited in Bramley, 1996) and consisted of a reassessment of levels of EI (individually and collectively for the HOs) and interviews with both the participants and stakeholders identified in Phase 1.

Results

The results of analysis of pre- and postmeasures of EI as assessed by the BEIQ indicated that across all five dimensions (self-awareness, emotion management, self-motivation, relationship management and e-coaching) the overall EI mean scores had increased (see Figure 1).

A paired samples $t$ test indicated that the differences were statistically significant in four of the five dimensions and for the overall EI score, the one exception being emotion management (see Table 1). The most significant shifts were reported on the intrapersonal dimensions.

360 Degree Assessment

Postintervention assessment of the team leader’s EI as measured by the EIOM 360° version indicated a widening gap between the manager’s own perception of EI and that reported by team members. Whereas at the preintervention stage team leader and team members were broadly in agreement about the team leader’s overall level of EI, postintervention data showed that the leader’s estimation of her own EI had fallen, while the team members’ estimation of her EI had risen. This finding runs counter to the

![Figure 1](image_url)

Boston EIQ scores for housing officers pre- and post-EI intervention, March and September 2002.
findings of Dulewicz and Higgs (2000b) that suggest that colleagues’ ratings on 360º feedback instruments typically tend to be lower than self-assessments.

Illuminative Evaluation

The primary concern of illuminative evaluation is with description and interpretation, rather than measurement and prediction. The method by which this is achieved is progressive focusing, which means the systematic reduction of the breadth of enquiry to give more concentrated attention to emerging themes. The value of this approach is that it seeks to reflect the diversity of thoughts, feelings and opinions of all stakeholders engaged in the research (Bramley, 1996).

Focus groups and individual interviews were conducted with program participants and key stakeholders involved in Phase 1. The findings reported here centre on the outcomes for the participants, with particular emphasis on the role of the workshops and coaching in developing their social and emotional (EI) competencies.

An analysis of the interview data revealed universal and emphatic agreement by the HOs as to the importance of the coaching element within the EI intervention. As one participant observed:

… it gave me a sort of privacy and a security element, when you are talking one-to-one probably things came out … that I might have been hesitant to discuss, say, in the group environment …

The HOs reported that the personal reflective space provided within the coaching sessions allowed time for reflection and to explore their feelings about incidents at work and with other people (and to record them in their journal), and their caseloads. In addition, they said they were enabled to explore specific issues arising from the workshops, to develop clearer goals, to widen their perceptions of themselves and others, and to broaden their horizons.

In particular, the cognitive orientation of the coaching enabled individuals to “tilt their world” slightly and to identify the relationship between
their thoughts, feelings and behaviours, providing empirical support for the notion that coaching encourages individuals to increase their self-awareness of thoughts, moods and emotions (Neenan & Palmer, 2001).

Nevertheless, while the HOs valued and gained a great deal from the coaching sessions, when asked whether the one-to-ones alone would have helped develop their EI, they emphatically asserted “you need both”; that is, that to develop the *intrapersonal* and *interpersonal* dimensions of emotional intelligence, the intervention needed to incorporate facilitated workshops and individual one-to-one coaching sessions:

(Do you think coaching alone would develop your EI?) … yeah, to some extent… but I think the benefit of doing it as a team … you could have done it individually; but it was the benefit of seeing people in a team … (Growing together?) … yeah and I think that is how the team succeeded, you wouldn’t necessarily have opened up if you were on your own in the coaching, it is actually easier for someone to say, “look at me, this is my weakness” or “look at me, this is my strength” and to talk about it there and then … real-time feedback …

I wouldn’t have liked just the workshops, or just the one-to-one coaching either, I think there was … a good balance, because I think in the one-to-one you go much deeper … felt very self-conscious … about … I just wouldn’t have felt as comfortable if it was all one-to-one … (from the point of view of developing emotional intelligence) … definitely you needed the balance of the group and the one-to-ones … as I say, if it had just been the one-to-ones you perhaps wouldn’t have explored everything … it would have been too uncomfortable, too much like therapy … like you were being analysed, whereas it was more like “well we have talked about this and I know I can go into my one-to-ones in more depth, there are things that need to be discussed in the group and you also get feedback …

In terms of the interpersonal dimension of EI, the illuminative evaluation revealed increased levels of team cohesion and collaboration and an increased awareness of individual differences and diversity, which led to mutual understanding both between the team members and between the HOs and the other teams they interact with. As one participant observed, “there is no right or wrong, just difference”.

**Discussion**

The exploratory study reported on in this chapter indicated that an integrative coaching framework based on solution-focused, cognitive and behavioural approaches can indeed lead to statistically discernible increases in self-reported EI scores and also to positive qualitative evaluations from participants.

The study also suggests that when developing the social and emotional competencies of a team in order to facilitate cohesion, collaboration and group identity, it may be useful to consider the conjoint use of both one-to-one individual coaching and group coaching experiences, although further research will be needed to tease out the relative contributions of these.

A puzzling finding, however, was that there was a deterioration in levels of agreement between the team leader and HOs concerning the team leader's EI at work. It was found that postintervention, the team leader's
self-ratings were lower than the ratings of her by others. This may have been due to increased awareness on the part of the HOs of the nature of EI, and how to identify it in the behaviour of others.

Limitations
When interpreting these findings, there are a number of limitations which should be taken into account. The exploratory study outlined in this chapter did not use a control group, so it is possible that the effects could have occurred naturally. In addition, the sample size was small. Further, the key outcome measure — the BEIQ — is a self-report measure of EI. Self-report means of assessing EI have attracted criticism (e.g., Thingujam, 2002); it has been argued that self-report EI measures lack discriminate validity with established personality traits (e.g., Davies, Stankov, & Roberts, 1998) and are thus assessing personality facets rather than EI.

Future Directions
Future research should include a control group that does not participate in a coaching intervention (although such controlled experimental designs are quite difficult to arrange in most workplaces). In addition, future research into the impact of coaching on EI should seek to use a range of EI measures and employ both self-report and ability-based measures. A further challenge now is to identify which elements of the coaching approach adopted in the study outlined in this chapter make a difference in which area. These elements include not only variations in delivery modality (e.g., individual, one-to-one coaching vs. group) but also the characteristics of the coaching relationship.

The results of this study can also be considered a contribution to evidence-based practice in applied psychology. As Briner (1998) has asserted, there is good reason to think that practitioners sometimes use techniques without sufficient evidence of their efficacy, while researchers do not readily produce evidence that can be used or interpreted by practitioners. It might be argued that coaching is in danger of being accepted as an effective practice without sufficient evidence. The study outlined here presents a small but valuable piece of evidence that coaching does indeed appear to have utility as a means of enhancing interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies.

References


Change Readiness in Coaching:
Potentiating Client Change

John Franklin

Nearly everybody wants to change some aspect of themselves or their world, yet despite the presence of numerous excellent self-help books (e.g., Grant & Greene, 2001; Phillips, 1992; Robbins, 1995) and professional assistance, few clients are as successful as they would wish.

It is commonly assumed that when a person seeks the assistance of a coach to help them achieve their goals they are ready and willing to effectively engage in the change process. Unfortunately, considerable evidence suggests that this assumption is frequently incorrect (Shumaker, Schron, Ockene, & McBee, 1998).

The stages of change model (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1982) proposes that clients may be thought to lie on a continuum in a change cycle. The proposed stages of change are precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance and termination or relapse. This approach has proved to be extremely influential and provoked a major reevaluation of the need to actively work with clients to develop their motivation to participate in the change process (DiClemente, 2003). Unfortunately, in its original form the model told us very little about how to move people from one stage to another, and in particular how to get a person into the critical action stage. Similarly, despite the development of a number of measures (Readiness to Change questionnaire, University of Rhode Island Change Assessment, Stages of Change Readiness and Treatment Eagerness scale), these measures possess poor agreement and the model does not identify exactly which characteristics of clients are related to successful change (Sutton, 2001). In a similar manner, there has been considerable debate as to whether or not change is best conceptualised as occurring on a continuum or in stages (Blanchard, Morganstern, Morgan, Labouvie & Bux, 2003; Glenn, 2002).
There has been little study of the factors responsible for successful change in coaching. Thankfully, however, this issue has been the subject of a great deal of discussion (but surprisingly little comprehensive empirical investigation) in the related area of therapeutic change. Although coaching has a more positive focus on helping clients achieve their goals while therapy is more focused on remediating problems, it is possible that many of the same factors underlie the successful achievement of change.

What we do know with confidence is that despite the great advances that have been made in the treatment of many problems, especially since the advent of the DSM-III (American Psychiatric Association, 1980), the overall success rate in numerous areas is still frustratingly low. Variable take-up rates, completion rates and response rates, combined with non-response among some individuals, relapse rates, limited generalisation and the issue of clinical versus statistical change all indicate that we still have a lot to learn about how to help people achieve the changes they desire in life (Bergin & Garfield, 1994).

Treatment outcome is the product of a number of factors. Although a great deal of attention has been focused on therapy, the therapist, the environment, and the interaction between the therapist and the client (Barlow, 2000; Gold & Stricker, 1993; Hersen, 2002), relatively little attention has been focused on client change factors (Hubble & Duncan, 1999). While there has been a great deal of speculation as to which client characteristics are associated with change, there has been surprisingly little empirical investigation of precisely which factors are associated with successful change. To date most such empirical investigations have been essentially incidental to treatment outcome studies, and as such have been restricted to a small range of possible predictor variables which were often chosen for other design reasons. The client factors which have received the most research attention include demographic variables (Garfield, 1994), perfectionism (Blatt, Quinlan, Pilkonis, & Shea, 1995), motivation (Orlinsky, Grawe, & Parkes, 1994), involvement (Blatt, 2001), resistance (Beutler, Sandowicz, Fisher, & Albanese, 1996), degree of disturbance (Reich & Green, 1991) and expectation of change (Snyder, Michael, & Cheavens, 1999).

The most significant and comprehensive attempts to empirically examine the subject of client variables comes from Hanna and Ritchie (1995) and Hanna (1996) who identified the following seven client factors as critical to the change process:

1. a sense of necessity to change
2. readiness to experience anxiety and difficulty
3. awareness of the existence and nature of a problem
4. willingness to confront the problem
5. willingness to expend the effort needed to change
6. hope that change is possible
7. social support, especially from a change agent.
Important as Hanna and Ritchie’s (1995) study was, it was limited by representing the views of only 17 people who had achieved some form of significant change. To date no comprehensive study has sought to empirically determine which factors are actually associated with change. This chapter reports on two studies, including the first empirical study ever to undertake a comprehensive evaluation of a range of potential client change factors as they relate to successful change.

Method and Results

Study 1: The Views of Experienced Psychologists Concerning Important Client Change Factors (Riley & Franklin, 2003)

In the first study, undertaken by Ella Riley and myself, the participants were 66 senior specialist psychologists (mean duration of practice 12.3 years) who came from a range of settings and had a variety of orientations. They completed the Change Readiness scale (Franklin, 2003), a 23-item questionnaire in which respondents indicated on a 0–4 scale the relative importance of each item to a client successfully engaging in the change process and achieving change. The items in the Change Readiness scale were chosen to represent concrete aspects of client behaviour which could easily be the focus of an intervention.

While a majority of psychologists thought that all of the 23 factors were at least somewhat important to change, analysis of the results indicated that the following 11 client factors were judged to have the greatest impact:

1. recognition of one or more difficulties that must be worked on
2. accepting primary responsibility for change
3. persistence when faced with setbacks or failures
4. willingness to commit as much as time as required to be successful
5. preparedness to experience some discomfort in the process of change
6. ability to reflect on and make sense of their thoughts and feelings
7. flexible and adaptable thinking
8. setting specific and realistic goals
9. believing that change is possible
10. being solution- not problem-focused
11. being comfortable talking about emotions.

Somewhat surprisingly, no significant differences were found between psychologists of different orientations in their ratings of which of the 23 factors had a bearing on successfully achieving change.

Study 2: Factors Associated With Actual Change (Cumberland & Franklin, 2003)

In the second study, undertaken by Rose Cumberland and myself, 15 psychologists reported on the change achieved by 37 of their clients on four transtheoretical outcome measures (e.g., ‘How rapidly had the client pro-
gressed to date", and 'The stage of change the client has reached with respect to their presenting problem'). Clients were also rated on a 26-item version of the Change Readiness scale (Franklin, 2003) and the results analysed via multiple regression to determine which client characteristics were most strongly associated with successful change. The analysis was adjusted for the number of sessions the clients had received.

The client factors which had the strongest associations with the four outcome measures were:
1. recognising that they have an issue which must be worked on (p = .000)
2. believing that change is possible (p = .000)
3. ability to set specific and realistic goals (p = .000)
4. accepting primary responsibility for change (p = .001)
5. insight into the real nature, cause and maintenance of their problems (p = .002)
6. willingness to examine and face up to the difficulties in their life (p = .004)
7. preparedness to experience some discomfort (p = .005)
8. ability to form a good working relationship (p = .014)
9. persistence when faced with setbacks or failures (p = .02).

Those client factors with the strongest association with the anticipated speed of future progress in dealing with their central issues were:
1. ability to make sense of their own thoughts and feelings (p = .005)
2. ability to understand the emotions of others (p = .001)
3. ability to manage their own emotions (p = .006)
4. flexible and adaptable thinking (i.e., not rigid or black and white; p = .014).

These results suggest that a somewhat different set of client factors are associated with achieving significant underlying change, as opposed to making initial progress in dealing with the presenting issues.

**Discussion and Implications**

The first of these studies builds on Hanna and Ritchie’s (1995) study by specifying a set of relatively specific client skills and behaviours that experienced psychologists consider to be associated with the ability of a client to engage in and benefit from attempts at change. The results are in broad agreement with Hanna and Ritchie, but have the benefit of specifying the client characteristics in a more concrete manner that could easily be the focus of remedial work. Although the study did not include social support, its findings go beyond the seven factors discussed by Hanna and Ritchie (1995) and Hanna (1996). The much larger sample employed and the surprising agreement between psychologists of different theoretical orientations further strengthen the study.

The second study is unique as it represents the first attempt to identify in an empirical manner those characteristics of clients which are associated
with them achieving their desired changes. Despite the difference in method between the two studies there was general agreement as to which client characteristics are most strongly related to change.

Although the two studies were in broad agreement, the second study in particular identified factors not covered by Hanna and Ritchie. The ability to set specific and realistic goals is closely related to perfectionism, which, although not mentioned by either Hanna and Ritchie (1995) or Hanna (1996), has been identified as significant in a variety of other studies (e.g., Blatt, Quinlan, Pilkonis & Shea, 1995; Shafran & Mansell, 2001). Accepting primary responsibility for change, flexible and adaptable thinking, and the ability to form a good working relationship were also found to have strong associations with change and thus should not be overlooked in assessing the preparedness of a client for coaching (Horvath & Luborsky, 1993; Waddington, 2002).

If future research reveals essentially the same factors to be involved in coaching as in these studies, then an important implication of these findings is that clients entering coaching should be assessed on those factors which were found to be positively related to all outcome measures. Coaches should thus pay particular attention to the following characteristics of their clients:

1. recognition and acceptance that there is an aspect of their life that must be worked on
2. a belief (not just a hope) that change is possible
3. ability to set specific and realistic goals
4. accepting primary responsibility for change
5. accurate insight into the real nature, cause and maintenance of their difficulties
6. willingness to examine and face up to the contributing problems in their life
7. preparedness to experience some discomfort in the process of change
8. ability to form a good working relationship with the coach
9. persistence when faced with setbacks or failures.

The results also suggested that if coaching clients have significant underlying issues, then in order to make substantial progress in dealing with these other difficulties, they would be significantly advantaged if they were able to:

1. make sense of their thoughts and feelings
2. understand the emotions of others
3. manage their own emotions
4. think in a flexible and adaptable manner.

The implication of these findings is that if they also prove to be true of coaching then it would be foolhardy to proceed with a change program without first checking that clients understood the process and were properly prepared to get the most out of it. Depending on the extent to
which these qualities are not present in a client, it may well be more important to work on these, rather than the concerns for which the client is seeking help. In some cases coaches will be well-equipped to deal with such problems, but in others it may be more appropriate to refer the client to a psychologist or some other professional better able to work with them.

These studies suggest that change may be thought to involve three steps. First, an acknowledgement by the client that there is an area of their life which they wish to change in some way. Second, they have a sufficient understanding of the process of change, and adequate skills, to enable them to actively participate in change. Third, either they know how to make these changes themselves or have access to a trained professional who can help them achieve their goals. The last of these steps is what is conventionally thought of as the business of coaching, while the first two are all too frequently just assumed to be true of those seeking help. In recognition that many clients may have difficulty with these earlier steps, Change Readiness Training has been developed and includes four components of potential assistance to coaches:

1. brief change readiness scales to help quickly identify barriers to change
2. a compact self-assessment booklet designed to help clients to understand the preconditions of change, the nature of change and how they may prepare themselves to successfully change
3. a more extensive self-help workbook to help clients to clarify their goals, remove barriers to change and achieve their desired goals
4. specific techniques for the coach to help clients make the changes they desire.

Copies of these materials are in beta form and are available from the author on request.

In conclusion, it needs to be acknowledged that there are a number of limitations to the research studies reported here. These are being addressed in future studies, four of which are currently under way. It would be of great interest and value to undertake similar studies of coaching to determine if the same or other factors are barriers to change. Specifically, it would be valuable to repeat the above studies with experienced coaches and examine the effects of a variety of other recently identified factors which may affect the ability of clients to change. Additionally it would be of great interest to examine coaches’ views on what is essential, important and irrelevant to change, and the relationship of these and other factors to attaining goals and the way in which these successes generalised to other areas of clients’ lives.

References


About the Contributors

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Michael Cavanagh is both a coaching and clinical psychologist, and is Deputy Director of the Coaching Psychology Unit at the University of Sydney. He holds a Bachelor of Arts with a major in psychology with first class honours from the University of Sydney. He has recently completed the Doctor of Philosophy/Master of Clinical Psychology program at Macquarie University. Michael’s background encompasses coaching and training in a wide variety of public and private enterprises, both in Australia and internationally. A registered psychologist, he has over 17 years’ experience in facilitating personal, group and organisational change. His coaching practice and teaching emphasises the use of empirically validated techniques and draws on the cognitive–behavioural, solution-focused and systems approaches. Together with Tony Grant, Michael continues to develop and teach the world’s first postgraduate degree program in coaching psychology at the University of Sydney.

Anthony M. Grant, PhD
Anthony Grant is a coaching psychologist. He holds a Bachelor of Arts with a major in psychology with first class honours from the University of Sydney, a Master of Arts in behavioural science and a PhD in coaching psychology from the Department of Psychology at Macquarie University. Tony’s background is most definitely grounded in the realities of the commercial world. Having left school at the age of 15, he completed his training as a carpenter, and then made a successful transition into direct sales and marketing before beginning tertiary studies and commencing a third career as a coaching psychologist. In January 2000, Tony established the Coaching Psychology Unit at the Department of Psychology in the University of Sydney — the first such unit in the world — where he is currently the director. A registered psychologist, Tony has over 15 years experience in facilitating individual and organisational change. The past six of those years
have been exclusively focused on executive and quality-of-life coaching practice, and researching and developing empirically validated coaching strategies and models.

**Travis Kemp, PhD**

Travis Kemp joined the International Graduate School of Management at the University of South Australia in 2002 and now holds the position of MBA Program Director and Senior Lecturer in Management. Prior to this he held the position of Global Manager, Leadership Assessment with Electronic Data Systems Corporation (EDS). There he managed the globally dispersed EDS leadership coaching team and the multirater feedback process, working with leaders and executives in the US, Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. Travis has had a diverse career, beginning his professional life as a physical and outdoor education teacher before moving into adult education, training and development, management consulting, psychology, counselling and human resources. He has consulted in team, leadership and personal development to organisations. As an organisational and coaching psychologist, Travis also maintains his executive coaching practice with clients in the US, Asia and Australia.

**Elizabeth Allworth, PhD**

Dr Elizabeth Allworth is a director of Allworth Juniper Organisational Psychologists, a Sydney-based firm that specialises in psychological assessment, career development and performance measurement services. She has over 12 years of consulting and research experience. She lectures in the assessment course of the University of Sydney coaching program and is also a regular guest lecturer in the postgraduate organisational psychology program at Macquarie University. Elizabeth is an honorary research associate of the University of Sydney.

**Marilyn Campbell, PhD, and Sallie Gardner, MEd**

Marilyn Campbell and Sallie Gardner are both registered teachers and registered psychologists who have had extensive experience working as school counsellors. They are vibrant, exciting workshop presenters who use experiential learning as a basis for their work. Both have presented at state and international conferences. Sallie is currently working as a school psychologist and has written a book on life coaching. Marilyn is working as a lecturer at the Queensland University of Technology and has published many articles in refereed journals. She is a foundation member of the Life Coaching Network, which Sallie established on the Gold Coast in 1999 in response to practitioners with behavioural science training wanting to distinguish their coaching skills from others'.
Margaret Chapman, MSc, CPsych
Margaret Chapman is a coaching psychologist who has had a successful consultancy practice for over five years. She has received two awards from the Economic and Social Research Council to pursue postgraduate study as a mature student at the universities of Sheffield and Loughborough, where she has submitted her doctoral dissertation exploring emotional intelligence discourses in managerial learning and development. Margaret has over 16 years’ experience in facilitating individual and organisational change, and is an associate fellow of the British Psychological Society. Margaret’s approach is informed by both her academic learning and her practical experience in management and human resources management.

Susan David, MA
Susan is a psychologist with a 14-year background in training, facilitation and professional development. Her area of expertise is the application of evidence-based psychological principles and emotional intelligence to performance effectiveness. She has been an invited speaker at local and international conferences, and has worked and presented in the US, Canada, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia. Susan holds a bachelor degree with honours and a masters degree in psychology. She has been awarded numerous prizes and scholarships, and has been published in international peer-reviewed journals. She owns a Melbourne-based business that offers executive, business and personal coaching, clinical psychological services, and organisational interventions. She is completing her PhD on emotional intelligence at the University of Melbourne.

Ray Elliott, MEd, Grad Dip Appl Psych
Ray Elliott is an organisational psychologist and consultant specialising in leadership training and management development, and in individual and team coaching. He works as an executive and senior management coach with CEOs, department heads, board members and with senior and middle management teams from small, medium, national and international companies. He has consulted to diverse organisations spanning the retail, manufacturing, armed forces, legal and medical services, education, consulting and local government sectors. Ray holds postgraduate qualifications in organisational psychology, education, ethics and ritual. He was the founding national convenor of the Australian Psychological Society’s Interest Group on Coaching Psychology.

John Franklin, PhD
John received his PhD from the University of New South Wales and a Masters of Clinical Psychology from Flinders University, and is currently a fellow of the Australian Psychological Society. He is the author of two books and over
40 publications, and is currently the director of the Clinical Psychology Training program at Macquarie University. He established Australia’s first Anxiety Disorders Clinic at Prince Henry Hospital in 1978 and Australia’s first Health and Anxiety Clinic at Macquarie University in 1997.

**L. S. (Suzy) Green, PhD**

Suzy Green is a coaching and counselling psychologist. She has recently completed a PhD in clinical psychology at the University of Wollongong, investigating the effectiveness of group life coaching and its impact on goal-striving, hope and wellbeing. She has experience in clinical, counselling and coaching psychological practice and has been asked to form part of a panel on coaching research at the forthcoming International Coach Federation Australasia conference. Suzy is interested in the application of coaching psychology to health, education and personal and professional development. She is a member of the Australian Psychological Society and the University of Sydney Coaching and Mentoring Association.

**Barbara Griffin, PhD**

Barbara Griffin holds a Bachelor of Arts — Psychology (Honours) from Macquarie University and a PhD from the University of Sydney. She is a registered psychologist with experience in academic research and applied settings. Her work has involved psychometric testing for selection and survey design and analysis in both the private and public sector. Her PhD research involved developing and testing a model of adaptability for a selection context. Barbara lectures in psychometric testing and selection for the senior undergraduate psychology program and in the assessment course of the Coaching Psychology Unit at the University of Sydney.

**Richard Ladyshewsky, PhD**

Richard Ladyshewsky’s PhD research, completed in 2000, focused on the development of clinical reasoning and professional competency using peer coaching. His expertise in the area of peer coaching is shared by providing consultative assistance to educational programs in the health sciences sector across Canada, the US, South-East Asia and Australia. Currently, Richard teaches organisational behaviour, managerial effectiveness, and leadership at the masters and doctoral level and carries out research at the Graduate School of Business, Curtin University of Technology, Perth, where he has been since 1999. Peer coaching continues to be a major research initiative with a focus now on management and leadership education and organisational learning.
Lindsay Oades, PhD
Lindsay Oades is a clinical, coaching and research psychologist who is a co-director of Work Life Coaching International. Lindsay is also employed as a lecturer at the University of Wollongong, with research interests in the areas of applied mental health, goal-striving and evaluation of coaching-based interventions, particularly with health and lifestyle emphases.

Carla Parry, PhD
Carla Parry received her Master of Social Work (1998), Master of Arts in sociology (2000) and a joint PhD in sociology and social work (2002) from the University of Michigan. She is currently Project Co-Director at the Coaching Research Consortium. Dr Parry has considerable experience with the design, implementation, and evaluation of solution-focused interventions, having worked as an applied researcher, clinical social worker, and life coach. Her current research includes work on quality of life in cancer survivorship, practice interventions in health care, and psychosocial 'thriving' — a process of transformational change and conscious living.

Gordon Spence, BPsy(Hons), Grad Dip Appl Sci (Psychology of Coaching)
Gordon Spence is a PhD student within the Coaching Psychology Unit at the University of Sydney. He holds a BPsyc (Hons) from the University of Wollongong and has recently completed a Graduate Diploma in Applied Science (Psychology of Coaching) from the University of Sydney. His doctoral research focuses on the role that attentional control plays in relation to goal-attainment, emotional intelligence and psychological wellbeing. In addition to his research activities, Gordon also runs a private coaching practice and lectures within the Coaching Psychology Unit. Prior to commencing his tertiary studies, he spent 13 years specialising in export trade finance, during which time he worked in Australia, New Zealand and the UK. Gordon is the president of the University of Sydney Coaching and Mentoring Association.

Dianne Stober, PhD
Dianne Stober received her PhD in clinical psychology from Georgia State University in 1995 and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Emory University–Grady Health System 1995–1997. She is currently Project Co-Director at the Coaching Research Consortium. Dr Stober combines research and clinical experience in health psychology and interpersonal relationships with her experience as a life coach to achieve a broad view of human growth and development. Her focus, both in research and applied interventions (life coaching and psychotherapy), has been on maximizing growth and quality of life. Her commitment to facilitating and understanding individuals’ growth and potential is evident in all her professional activities.
William Varey, MLM

Peter William Varey graduated with a Bachelor of Jurisprudence and a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Western Australia and has worked as a commercial and corporate lawyer. In the early 1990s he worked in Indonesia in the finance, mining and manufacturing sectors and on his return to Australia became the partner of a leading national law firm working on merger, growth, reconstruction and divestment of corporate groups. In 1999 he founded the Forsyth Consulting Group to combine with other specialist consultants to develop an integrated approach to organisational development. In 2001 he also developed the Confident Friend® executive coaching program to combine research into breakthrough thinking and peer-coaching processes and to deal with the psychodynamics of the status imbalance in professional consulting relationship.

Peter Webb, Grad Dip Appl Sci (Psychology of Coaching)

Peter Webb is an executive coaching psychologist, a graduate of the University of Sydney’s Graduate Diploma in Applied Science (Psychology of Coaching), and principal of Intentional Training Concepts Pty Ltd. He has accumulated over 800 hours of coaching directors, executive managers and partners to achieve a recognised lift in their interpersonal, managerial and leadership competencies. Peter holds a Bachelor of Economics degree with honours (majoring in organisational psychology) from the University of Queensland and he is a registered psychologist (NSW). He also holds a Bachelor of Health Science (Naturopathy) from the Australian College of Natural Medicine, and he draws on new discoveries in biology and chaos theory to show leaders how to use their ‘wise intention’ in making difficult decisions.