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Editorial

Michael Cavanagh & Stephen Palmer

WELCOME TO THE fifth issue of the *International Coaching Psychology Review (ICPR)*. Once again, we have a rich array of articles for your enjoyment and enlightenment. The *ICPR* is increasing in popularity for many practitioners and researchers. In addition to the UK and Australasia, we are now regularly receiving articles on coaching psychology and coaching from Europe and the US. We have a growing circulation with hard copy version being sent to over 2000 BPS Special Group in Coaching Psychology members and online versions are available to APS Interest Group in Coaching Psychology members. Key people working in the field now regularly quote work previously published in the *ICPR*.

The issue starts with an extensive review of the coaching literature by Professor Siegfried Greif. Professor Greif's paper takes the wide body of coaching outcome research and attempts to identify key outcome measures which may be applicable to multiple types of coaching interventions and contexts. This is an important undertaking as it helps to bring some comparability to the coaching literature. Following on from this, Greif considers eight important experimental coaching outcome studies and reviews their findings. The final section of this article presents a research model the author hopes will both assist researchers in choosing measures and designing studies, and in building a coherent body of coaching research.

Tony Grant has contributed a very interesting paper examining the dimensions of mental health, mental illness and goal striving. Building on the work of Keyes (2003), Grant argues that coaches need a sophisticated understanding of the interaction between mental health issues and the coaching process. Where intentional goal striving is undertaken in the context of mental health, coaching clients are likely to flourish. However, where significant psychopathology is present, coaches may find their clients languishing despite considerable effort. Grant explores some of the consequences this model has for ethical conduct, coaching practice and future research.

Jonathan Passmore's paper focuses on using motivational interviewing (MI) for performance improvement at work. Traditionally MI has been used successfully in clinical and health-related settings. For example, it has been applied to stop smoking and weight control programmes. Passmore applies MI to assist coachees who lack motivation for change. The Transtheoretical five-stage model for behaviour change underpins the approach. In this paper, three short case studies of middle managers are used to highlight the theory and practice of MI. Currently MI has been used within the field of health coaching probably more than the field of coaching psychology. Although MI can be easily adapted to a range of different areas of coaching, more research is required.

In the next paper, John Sparrow's research looks at life coaching in the workplace. A cross-sectional survey of organisations was undertaken in which practices and reported outcomes were explored within small- and medium-sized organisations together with large organisations. Not surprisingly, within an organisational context, life coaching is found to be less well understood than performance coaching and there are significant differences in procurement criteria for performance and life coaching. Coaching was not reported to have as large an impact upon entrepreneurship and social purpose outcomes as other aspects of work life. This research study raises more questions and a larger scale study may provide more insight.

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The last paper by Almuth McDowall and Rainer Kurtz is based on a skills session delivered last year at the First International Coaching Psychology Conference sponsored by the British Psychological Society Special Group in Coaching Psychology and held in London. It discusses the use of psychometrics, outlines some of the advantages and potential limitations of psychometrics and then considers a specific instrument, the Saville Consulting Wave® and its application to coaching and performance coaching context at work.

We have a special editor for the next issue of the *ICPR* – Dr Anthony Grant. He has agreed to co-ordinate a special edition with the theme of *'Coaching in Organisations'*. Should you wish to discuss an idea for this edition, please contact Tony Grant (e-mail: anthonyg@psych.usyd.edu.au.)

We are looking forward to your contributions and hope you find this issue as stimulating as we have.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL COACHING PSYCHOLOGY REVIEW

Coaching in Organisations

Dr Anthony Grant is inviting contributions for the special edition of the *International Coaching Psychology Review* with the theme of 'Coaching in Organisations'.
Should you wish to discuss an idea for this edition or submit a paper, please contact Anthony Grant: e-mail **anthonyg@psych.usyd.edu.au**

Advances in research on coaching outcomes

Siegfried Greif

The review gives a theoretically grounded overview over new advances of research on coaching outcomes. In the first part general standard outcome measures and different specific methods are presented. The second part summarises studies that investigate coaching outcomes as the result of changes in pre-requisites or pre-conditions for coaching (e.g. change readiness and persistence of the client) and success factors in the coaching sessions, (e.g. esteem and emotional support the coach, clarification of the goals). The third part describes eight experimental and quasi-experimental studies, with and without random assignments. particularly individual coaching by external coaches, peer-coaching, self-coaching programmes and control groups. The results show that the different coaching interventions produce significant and sometimes strong but not always expected and consistent effects. A discussion of perspectives of theory and research and an orientation model for future outcome studies close the contribution.

Keywords: Coaching outcome, individual coaching, peer-coaching, self-coaching, coaching theory, self-reflection.

WITHIN THE LAST 10 years the number and quality of scientific evaluation studies on coaching outcome have risen. A range of authors have reviewed elements of the academic literature in coaching. Grant and Cavanagh (2004) give an overview of the existing English-language academic behavioural science literature and outlined future prospects. Recently Grant (2007) brought his annotated bibliography up to date. New empirical studies are summarised in the *German Coaching Handbook*, edited by Rauen (2005) and the *Evidence Based Coaching Handbook* of Stober and Grant (2006), and a chapter of Kuenzli (2006). They embrace both qualitative and quantitative studies and different theoretical approaches. Fillery-Travis and Lane (2006, p.35) reviewed the practitioner and academic literature and found that 'everyone likes to be coached and perceives that it impacts positively upon their effectiveness'. They conclude that coaching produces both tangible outcomes, like productivity and sales improvements and intangibles, such as better leadership or relationship handling. But like other reviews their conclusions mostly rely on pre-post comparison studies which do not give definite evidence. In a special issue of the *Consulting Psychology Journal*, Lowman (2005) sums up the state of coaching outcome research and draws the conclusion that it is still in its beginnings and that practical application dominates this research. He calls for more empirical research, which confirms the predicted effects.

Grant and Cavanagh (2004, p.17, cf. also Stober & Grant, 2006, p.4f) are open to different approaches of research, including qualitative and quantitative studies. But for future coaching research they challenge the field to focus more on evaluation studies, which fulfil the highest standards of research following established research methodologies. They call for more experimental studies, using random assignment to intervention and control groups, and group-based-research as opposed to single case studies, and to prefer objective quantitative outcome measures.

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The following article seeks to outline the latest research in coaching that satisfies minimum standards of academic rigor: namely research which measures and predicts outcomes using reliable and valid scales (see the Appendix of selected scales below) and experimental studies with control or comparison groups and random assignment of the participants to the groups or quasi-experimental studies without random assignment.

There are only a few studies that fulfil the above requirements. Grant (2007, p.72) has published a table giving an overview over the results of 12 English-language outcome studies utilising between subjects designs. In the following contribution only four of these studies will be described in detail. This paper adds German-language research, which has not yet been taken into account in English research summaries. Since some of the studies are not easily accessible to English speaking readers these studies will be described in detail, in the hope that this might stimulate more precise discussion and similar research studies. (For reasons of comparability the accessible English-language studies will be described in the same way.)

Coaching is a special type of person-centred consultation (cf. Rauen, 2005). Stober and Grant (2006, p.3f) understand coaching as a solution-focused 'systematic process (…) typically directed at fostering the ongoing self-directed learning and personal growth of the coachee.' The clients are recognised as autonomous and adult learners, who based on their experiences and knowledge, are able and ready 'to learn and engage in reflective practice'. The definition gives a well-founded theoretical direction both to theory and practice. Nevertheless, it remains difficult to distinguish coaching from other types of person-centred counselling or self-directed learning.

Building on this direction, coaching is here defined as an intensive and systematic facilitation of result-oriented problem-reflection and self-reflection as well as counselling of individual persons or groups (Greif, 2007). It aims at improving the attainment of self-congruent goals or conscious self-change and self-development. This definition and the following contribution is informed by an integrative theory of result-oriented coaching (Greif, 2007). It is based on cognitive behaviour modification (Grant, 2006) and systemic approaches (Cavanagh, 2006). In addition it uses Kuhl *et al.* (2006) assumptions of the neuropsychological motivation and personality theory of self-regulation for defining the motivational and self-regulatory prerequisites of the client. This theory explains the difficulties of the process of exploration and explication of client's self and how the experienced coach is able to facilitate the result-oriented self-reflection of her or his clients.

An adaptation of the self-awareness model of Duval and Wicklund (1972) analyses the activation process of intuitive self-attention and conscious self-reflection. According to the expanded model, self-reflection implies a comparison of ideal and real self that arouses unpleasant feelings if the person recognises negative discrepancies. The model explains why many people avoid or suppress self-reflection and need professional support for using the potentials of self-reflection for self-regulated learning and development.

According to the neuropsychological theory of psychotherapy of Grawe (2004), discrepancies of ideal and real behaviour and the resulting problems also activate motivation to change in clients. From his large meta-analysis Grawe concludes that activation of the resources of the client is the mayor success factor in psychotherapy. Adapted to the non-clinical coaching clients these factors and his behaviour rating instruments are integrated into the theory of result-oriented coaching set out below. At the end of the article a tentative and preliminary theoretically founded structural model of requirements, success factors, and outcomes of coaching summarising the research is presented for discussion. It is hoped that this might be a useful orientation for future evaluation research.

Outcome measures

A fundamental difficulty of coaching outcome research is the extreme heterogeneity of issues, problems and goals, which can be picked out as themes in different coaching interventions. Therefore, it is difficult to identify outcome measures which are applicable to the whole range of coaching interventions. As a pragmatic orientation for future research it seems to be useful to distinguish between two basic types of measures of the success of coaching: (1) General measures of success; and (2) specific outcome measures.

General measures of success typically assess outcomes that are not logically dependent on the specific problem, goal or type of intervention. These outcomes are usually independent of the theoretical approach and assumptions of the authors. Typical examples are client satisfaction or the degree of goal attainment. Such variables may also be applicable to other fields of interventions and evaluation research, e.g. training effectiveness or results of business consulting.

In contrast, specific measures depend on theoretically assumed specific effects of the type of the coaching intervention used, or the problem being addressed. Their selection depends on assumptions related to the research question. Examples are improvement of social competences following coaching of the leadership skills of junior managers, higher life satisfaction after a life coaching intervention or more effective coping with stress at work after a stress management coaching.

It is impossible to describe all scales and discuss the results of the validation studies in detail. For most of the instruments and scales mentioned below, the consistencies (Cronbach alpha) and construct validities have been tested with satisfactory results. Only particularly outstanding validations and obvious problems will be mentioned below. Since not all scales are accessible internationally a table with a list of generally acceptable scales for future coaching research is attached in the Appendix below, giving examples of items and internal consistencies.

General outcome measures

The degree of goal attainment and the satisfaction of the client are often assessed by single questions and ratings of the clients and coaches. However, there also are some studies in which these criteria are assessed more carefully, as the following two measurement approaches show. Other general outcome measures described below are changes in affect-scales, subjective well-being and life-satisfaction. This list of measures is not final. More suitable measures may well be found by future research.

(1) Goal attainment: Grant (2003) asked the students participating in his life coaching programme, before naming their life goals, to complete the Quality of Life Inventory (QOLI, Frisch, 1994) which assesses 16 life areas. After this, the participants had to define three specific, tangible, measurable, and attainable life goals, rate the perceived difficulty (four-point scale), and evaluate the degree of past success in attaining the goals (on a scale from 0 per cent to 100 per cent). He applied a Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) concept by multiplying the individual degrees of goal attainment by their difficulties, and dividing them by the number of goals. In his evaluation study, Grant (2003) compared the differences of the goal attainment scores of 20 postgraduate students before and after participating in his structured programme, based on a cognitive-behavioural concept performed by an external coach in a group setting. The comparison of the goal attainment scores before and after the coaching programme yielded highly significant and strong mean improvements of the goal attainment score. Spence (2007) discusses the strengths and limitations of this approach and recommends the use of different refined GAS-measures for future coaching research and practice.

(2) Coaching quality: Runde (2005) has developed a questionnaire instrument for a summative evaluation of coaching quality and outcome dimensions by clients (S-C-Eval). Confirmatory factor analysis reveals that the structure of the items fits perfectly to the theoretically expected three dimension of Structural, Process and Outcome Quality. The questionnaire is a consistent standardised instrument with good construct validity. It may well be useful for future evaluation studies of coaching outcome. However, it is currently only available in German and, therefore, needs translation and testing in other countries.

(3) Affect change: The reasons of the clients to ask for coaching, e.g. unsolved problems, conflicts or important but unattained goals are often associated with negative affects of the clients, ranging from distress, uncertainty or anxiety to anger after conflicts. The coaching intervention, therefore, requires a regulation of emotions (cf. Greif, 2007) and it is plausible to assume an improvement of subjective well-being after coaching (Oades & Grant, 2005; Spence & Grant, 2005). Measurements of affect or mood, therefore, belong to general measures in coaching outcome research. A widely applied measure is the PANAS (Watson *et al.*, 1988). The PANAS is based on a two-factor theory of negative and positive mood or affect. The construct validity of the instrument and its applicability in diverse research fields are well established. In Germany an instrument measuring seven dimension of explicit positive and negative affect, including the dimensions of the PANAS, called Affect Temperament Scales (ATS; Kuhl & Kazén, in prep.), is preferred often and has been applied in different fields, including coaching.

(4) Well-being: In the study of Green *et al.* (2005) for the evaluation of life coaching, in addition to the affect scales the well-being of the participants is measured by the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener *et al.*, 1985) and the scales of Psychological Well-Being (PWB; Ryff, 1989).

The four approaches give examples how to measure non-specific effects of coaching. In order to compare the effects of different studies it is recommended to apply the methods and scales in future research.

Specific outcome criteria

The following section describes three exemplary but completely different types of assessment approaches of specific outcome of coaching, a questionnaire measuring self-reflection and insight, a multidimensional Grid measure and a qualitative interview and structure analytic method designed for the evaluation of highly specific coaching success factors and outcomes of concrete cases. The approaches have been selected to show that different types of quantitative or qualitative methods may be suitable, depending on the theory, coaching intervention and focus of the study. Further types of specific measures, including behaviour observation ratings or course grades will be described in the sections below. Again the list is not final. But it mirrors the heterogeneity of coaching approaches and preferred research methods.

(1) *Self-reflection:* The Self-Reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS) of Grant *et al.* (2002) is an exemplary example for a theory-based development of two specific questionnaire scales, *Self-Reflection* (frequency of self-reflective thoughts and need for self-reflection) and *Insight* (clarity of own emotions). The SRIS has been developed as a questionnaire to be used for the measurement of coaching outcomes. Therefore, it is of particular interest in the field.

Persons who spend much time reflecting and ruminating on their personal thoughts and feelings, as described by the self-reflection scale, do not always engage a constructive problem-solving approach. Grant *et al.* (2002) found significant positive correlations of the scale to anxiety and stress. As expected after his goal-oriented coaching

programme (Grant, 2003), this type of self-reflection and also the levels of depression, anxiety, and stress showed significant decreases.

The second subtest of the SRIS, the Insight-Scale contains items on the perceived clarity of their emotions by the subjects. The results of the coaching outcome study of Grant (2003) support his assumption that coaching significantly improves the client's clarity of emotions. We would expect that this scale is useful if the coach facilitates the explication and regulation of the emotions of her or his client.

Alternative measures of self-reflection, based on different theoretical foundations are possible. The coaching definition used in this paper suggests that coaching facilitates both result oriented problem- reflection and self-reflection. Greif (2007) outlines three scales, which do not correlate with Grant's self-reflection scale, used to measure the reflection of action goals, self-organisation and behaviour of the client. Experimental research is currently under way to test the hypothesis that coaching improves clients' ability to reflect at these levels.

(2) Rohmert and Schmid (2003) employ a special measurement method based on the classical theory of personal constructs of G.A. Kelly (1955) and his Grid method, a kind of multidimensional scaling method, called *next expertizer*™ (cf. Kruse, 2004, p.163ff). They use it in a longitudinal study and claim to make specific and even implicit results of coaching measurable.

Rohmert and Schmid (2003) interviewed 30 managers three months before the beginning, in the course, and after the completion of their coaching. As in the classical Grid method they asked them to compare their coaching experience with elements like 'ideal coaching' and to define attributes, which, pairwise, describe their similarities and differences and also to rate all elements by these attributes. They constructed a multidimensional space in which all positions of the attributes and changes of their ratings can be localised. The resulting changes of the individual coachings can be described in a three-dimensional space as changes in: (1) individual; (2) social; and (3) functional attributes. Individual attributes refer to aspects of personal development. Social attributes cover social competences and changes in communication. Functional attributes describe task-related attributes and manager's performance improvements in the course of the coaching. While further research is needed to test the reliability and validity of this instrument, this interesting scaling method shows promise for future research.

(3) *Idiographic measures:* Strictly speaking, every coaching intervention differs from other coachings and can be seen as a special case. Therefore, in normal field studies, it is nearly impossible to use the same set of specific behaviour change or performance improvement measures for a large number of cases. *The Change Explorer Interview* (Greif *et al.*, 2005) is an instrument that takes account of the richness of the differences of concrete coachings and situational context conditions. It is a semi-structured interview designed to explore and evaluate the specific outcome and subjective explanations of clients and coaches. The subjects are asked to define their individual outcome criteria, explicate their subjective theory of relevant success factors in the coaching process by a structural analysis technique. The instrument seems to be useful for a qualitative analysis of concrete coaching outcomes, as well as for individual case studies.

Scientific proof of the effectiveness of coaching requires samples with comparable results and replication studies. Therefore, for future research we need more theoretically founded instruments, which like the insight scale of the SRIS of Grant *et al.* (2002) can be applied to test the predicted specific effects of different types of coaching intervention.

Prediction of outcome criteria by pre-requisites and success factors

Outcome evaluation research does not only deal with the examination of the results of coaching. It also analyses the factors which predict or cause these results. These factors are called effect or success factors. Effect factors which describe necessary or facilitating variables, presented before or at the beginning of the intervention (e.g. the change readiness of the client) are named pre-requisites or pre-conditions. Table 1 and the following passages give a summary of multivariate studies predicting outcomes by pre-requisites and success factors.

(1) According to popular opinions voluntary participation is an important motivational pre-requisite for the success of coaching. Brauer (2005, 2006) questioned 93 clients as to whether their participation in coaching was voluntary or forced by social pressure. It is remarkable that she did not find the expected significant differences in goal attainment motivation (rated via a single item) between 27 forced and 19 volunteer coachees. Indeed, the mean values were even somewhat lower for volunteer coachees.

The motivation to participate in coaching and change readiness seems to be a more complex problem, which cannot be adequately assessed by a simple rating of voluntary participation (cf. Greif, 2007). For example, using multiple regression, Brauer (2005, 2006), found that goal attainment was significantly predicted using goal specifity (R^2=.23) and control of goal realisation (R^2=.31), though not by goal difficulty.

(2) Maethner *et al.* (2005) tested the hypothesis that both change motivation and the quality of the relationship between coach and client are predictors of coaching outcomes. They analysed questionnaire ratings of 74 clients by exploratory regression analysis. They constructed an overall rating scale of client satisfaction and success and a scale for measuring the quality of the relationship between coach and client (e.g. credibility, esteem, openness, equality, sympathy) and in addition used several individual items. The quality of relationship and concreteness of the goal (R^2=.48), predicted satisfaction or goal attainment. But change motivation and concreteness of the goals were the best predictors of concrete behaviour effects (R^2=.26 single item).

(3) In a multiple regression analysis using data from 67 police officers, Runde and Bastians (2005) investigated the predictability of coaching satisfaction and goal attainment (S-C-Eval, see Appendix). As predictors they used scales evaluating the perceived process and relationship quality as assessed by the S-C-Eval instrument and additional prerequisite and effect factors.The resulting value of the squared multiple regression coefficient was R^2=.39. Relationship quality turns out as the first and strongest predictor according to the significant ß-weights. The second predictor refers to an individual analysis and diagnosis of the strengths and weak sides of the client (e.g. 'In the beginning the coach got a clear idea of my strengths and weaknesses'). The third predictor relates to the adaptation of the coaching to the individual client (e.g. 'I had an influence on the process', 'The coach adapted flexibly to my needs'). This supports the assumption that successful coaching cannot be completely obtained by standardised interventions (Greif, 2007). The fourth predictor embraces clarity of the goal definition and expectations at the beginning of the coaching (e.g. 'The coach made clear what he or she is able to do and what he can not do', 'He or she made clear what he or she expected from me').

(4) Behrendt (2004) studies a transfer of knowledge and skills learnt by managers in a seminar on employee performance interviewing. Four managers were coached by a coach with an education in systemic methods and four by a coach who followed a psychodrama concept, favouring role-play methods.

Table 1: Predictive studies of coaching outcomes (s: significant / ns: not significant predictors).

Authors	Sample	Coaching concept and research design	Pre-requisites and success factors	Outcome criteria
(1) Brauer (2005, 2006)	92 clients (mainly managers).	Individual coaching, retrospective ratings.	Voluntariness (ns), goal specifity (s), control of goal realisation (s), goal difficulty (ns), quality of relationship (s).	Goal attainment motivation (item), Goal attainment (scale).
(2) Maethner *et al.* (2005)	74 clients.	Individual coaching, retrospective ratings.	Change Readiness (single item, s), quality of relationship (scale, s), concreteness of the goals (single item, s).	Satisfaction and success (scale), goal attainment (item), Behavioural effects (item).
(3) Runde & Bastians (2005)	57 police officers.	28 individual and 29 coachings in groups, retrospective ratings.	Goal definition at the beginning (scale, s), individual diagnosis (scale, s) and adaptation of the interventions to the client (scale, s), quality of relationship (scale, s).	Satisfaction and goal attainment (scale) .
(4) Behrendt (2004)	8 managers.	Recording of the complete coachings (four based on psychodramatic and four on systemic concepts, a total of 40 sessions), retrospective ratings of the clients and their employees after an employee performance interview conducted by the managers.	Behaviour observation scales: (1) Resource activation (incl. esteem of the client, s); (2) problem actualisation (ns); (3) motivational clarification (ns); and (4) problem solving (ns).	Rating of the coaching sessions by the coach and the managers, rating of the employee interview by the managers and his employee.

Behrendt recorded the complete set of 40 coaching sessions with eight managers by video. For the assessment of success factors he uses the Cubus-Analysis, a behaviour observation method adapted from psychotherapeutic outcome research of Grawe (2004). The observers rated four success factors: (1) resource activation; (2) problem actualisation; (3) motivational clarification; and (4) problem solving.

In this study Behrendt (2004) assessed several outcome criteria, particularly ratings of all individual coaching sessions by the coach and the clients and also a goal attainment scale. In addition, employee performance interviews carried out later by the managers were rated by the employees and the managers. As expected, factor resource activation correlated significantly with the ratings of the coaching sessions by the coach (r=.31) and the client (r=.56) as well as the goal attainment in the employee performance interview (r=.43). The three remaining effect factors showed no significant correlations with the outcome criteria.

An analysis of the correlations of the individual items of the resource activation scale with the client rating of the coaching sessions revealed the highest correlations of all ratings with the observed esteem and emotional support of the client by the coach (e.g. 'The coach shows consideration', r=.55,' – 'The coach actively tries to support the client to become just like they want to be', r=.55 – 'The coach shows esteem', r=.52).

It is reasonable to suggest that the performance interviews conducted at a temporal distance from the coaching and by a third person may not assess the full impact of the predictor variables. For example, correlations of esteem and support ratings here only reached values of r=.43 and .44. But an observation item rating the activation of own contributions of the client by the coach correlated highly (r=.63). This might indicate that, as in the study of Maethner *et al.* (2005) for facilitating behaviour changes, the quality of the relationship may be a necessary but not a sufficient success factor. It may be more important to activate the clients to use their own resources and to realise their potentials.

Summarising the major results of the prediction studies, the outcome of the coaching depends on the quality of the relationship between coach and client, particularly the esteem, sympathy, consideration, openness, and support perceived by the client of the coach. The observable activation of a supportive trusting relationship is a powerful resource which may raise the courage and self-confidence of the client. But in addition, it seems to be necessary that the coach activates the client to recognise and use her or his abilities, competences, and potentials. Other factors that appear to predict the outcomes of coaching are the change readiness of the client, a clarification of the goals and expectations at the beginning of the coaching process, further specification of the goals, and control of goal realisation, as well as an individual diagnosis and adaptation of the interventions to the client.

Experimental evaluation studies

The evidential value of cross sectional predictive studies based on retrospective assessment of predictors and their correlations with outcome criteria or regression analysis is limited. Spence and Grant (2005) claim that studies based on good experimental design will improve the credibility of coaching. Table 2 and the following passages give a summary of advances of experimental coaching outcome research.

(1) Offermanns (2004) compares the results of *individual* coaching by two experienced professional coaches and a *waitlist control group*. A third group participated in a *self-coaching programme* administered in groups. Similar to other studies using self-coaching the author originally expected that this group would show lower outcome values in the intermediate range between individual coaching and the control group.

The author was able to sell the project to several companies and found 24 managers

Table 2: Experimental evaluation studies of coaching outcomes (only significant effects are reported).

Authors	Sample	Coaching concept and research design	General outcome criteria	Specific outcome criteria
(1) Offermanns (2004)	24 managers.	Not randomly assigned to groups with individual coaching (I), self-coaching in groups (S) and waitlist control group (W).	I: higher satisfaction in comparison to S/W, I & S: higher goal attainment and decrease of negative affect compared to W.	Better problem clarity in all groups, I: perception of more interactions in the analysis of problems, I & S: decrease of the number of categories in the perception of the problem.
(2) Sue-Chan & Latham (2004)	2 samples: (a) 30 students, (b) 23 managers.	Randomly assigned to individual coaching by external coach (E) or peer coach (P) and self-coaching (S).	(b) E: higher satisfaction compared to P & S.	(a) Highest improvements on ratings of team performance after E compared to P, highest professional credibility of E. (b) higher performance (final course grades) and credibility of E and S in comparison to C.
(3) Willms (2004)	76 students.	Randomly assigned to self-coaching group (S) and control group (C).	S higher on goal attainment and positive affect than C.	S better in comparison to C: control of hindrances of goal attainment, goal commitment, concreteness of the goals, persistence.
(4) Green, Oades & Grant (2005)	56 participants attracted by advertisement in local media.	Randomly assigned to coaching programme in groups and peer co-coaching (P) and waitlist control group (W).	P: increase on goal striving, positive affect and well-being scales (e.g. environmental mastery), decrease of negative affect.	Increase on belief in the ability to move towards goals.
(5) Spence & Grant (2005)	64 participants attracted by advertisement in local media.	Randomly assigned to individual coaching (I), coaching in groups and peer co-coaching (P) and waitlist control group (W).	Increase on goal attainment (I & P, higher for I/PW & P/W), decrease of goal commitment (W), I: increase Well-Being Scales Environmental mastery and satisfaction with life.	I&P: Increase on openness to experience & extroversion. I&P/W: higher openness to experience, I/P: higher Social Skills (emotional intelligence).

Authors	Sample	Coaching concept and research design	General outcome criteria	Specific outcome criteria
(6) Steinmetz (2005)	27 managers.	Not randomly assigned to individual coaching (I) and control group (C).	I: higher positive affect and activation.	I: higher task- or problem-oriented coping, situational control, interaction effect I/C: lower/higher Irritation.
(7) Smither, London *et al.* (2003)	Sub samples of totally 1361 senior managers.	Not randomly assigned to groups of multisource feedback with coaching (*N*=286) and without coaching (*N*=829).		Coaching group: more specific goals, more ideas for improvement from their supervisors, receive higher feedback ratings from their supervisors (small to modest effects).
(8) Finn, Mason & Griffin (2006)	23 Senior managers of a public organisation.	Waitlist control group design, random assignment to self-rating groups with and without coaching (waitlist group), three measurements (before, and after three and six months).		Improvement of self-rating scales of self-efficacy, perceptions of developmental support, openness to new behaviours and approaches to developmental planning, the effects were sustained after three months and for the last two showed additional improvement.

willing to participate, but random assignment to the groups was impossible. Therefore, only one of the two programmes was offered to the individual companies.

The subjects of the individual and self-coaching groups participated in six approximately one-hour coaching sessions. After completion of the coaching interventions, the participants were interviewed about the changes reached, particularly on the degree of goal attainment (0 per cent to 100 per cent), their satisfaction, the resulting success of the working out of new action possibilities and the practical usefulness (each by items with five-point ratings). Perceived affect state was rated at the second measurement time by the ATS affect scales.

The results were evaluated statistically by one way analysis of variances. Satisfaction with the coaching, as expected, was significantly higher after the individual coaching compared to the self-coaching groups ($p=.01$, $eta^2=.36$). The hypothesis that individual coaching results in significantly higher mean degrees of goal attainment was not supported by the results. Also, in the ratings of the practical usefulness, no significant differences could be found between the two groups. But the statistically tested differences between both intervention groups and the control group revealed a significant decrease of negative affect ($p=.00$, Helmert contrast).

For the examination of specific effects, Offermanns (2004) asked the participants at the beginning and end of the study to analyse the perceived components, perceived causes and consequences of the problem treated in the coaching. The method is called Problem-Structure-Interview (partly adopted from the Change Explorer interviews mentioned above). The pre-post differences were analysed blindly by trained experts through categories and counting of the number of categories used. The results showed that the managers, as expected, perceived significantly more interactions between external attributions of the causes of the problem to their social environment and internal attributions to their own responsibility ($p=.04$, $eta^2=.27$). The assumption that the structure of the problem after coaching, particularly after individual coaching, becomes more complex and differentiated was not confirmed by the data. Contrary to the prediction, the number of categories decreased significantly in all groups in the repeated Problem-Structure-Interview. The lowest number of categories was found in both groups following coaching. The mean was significantly different to the mean of the control group ($p=.02$, Helmert contrast). A possible post-hoc explanation is that the managers, particularly after coaching, developed a clearer and more concise and integrated subjective structure of the problem.

Since the self-coaching programme comes off nearly as positively as the individual coaching by an external expert coach, Offermanns (2004) provokingly asks: ‘Does coaching need a coach?’ The success of coaching always requires activation of resources by the client himself. Therefore, the study of the outcomes of self-coaching is theoretically interesting. The participants, however, experience the support by the coach as important and beneficial. This is mirrored in the qualitative evaluations. The participants of the self-coaching group would have preferred a personal coaching and the individual coaching resulted in higher client satisfaction.

Since the assignment of the participants to the groups was not random in this study, replication of the results are necessary, before we can be sure that they are not caused by natural differences of the companies and samples. It will be interesting to compare the results with two random design studies following below which also evaluated self-coaching programmes.

(2) Sue-Chan and Latham (2004) compare the *effectiveness of external, peer and self-coaching*. Their mayor goal is to explore who is most effective as a coach. They performed two independent studies in two different

continents. The first study was based on the dissertation study of Sue-Chan and a sample of 30 first-semester MBA-students at the University of Toronto, Canada. The second study consisted of 23 experienced managers, enrolled in an advance course in an EMBA programme on human resource development and training at the University of Western Australia. It was not possible to use a control group in these studies.

The research of Sue-Chan and Latham (2004) is exploratory, answering the question of which type of coaching is more effective – self, peer or expert coaching? Evidence supportive of the effectiveness of self-coaching in their view can be inferred from assumptions of the self-persuasion theory from Aronson (1999). Its central assumption states that self-persuasion causes more powerful and long-lasting effects than do alternative sources.

The effectiveness of peer coaching according to Sue-Chan and Latham (2004) can be derived from the classical social comparison theory of Festinger (1954) and the assumption that humans following a fundamental drive for self-comparison tend to compare their abilities with persons close to their abilities and opinions, particularly with members of their peer group.

For the effectiveness of coaching by external experts Sue-Chan and Latham (2004) refer to social psychological research on persuasion and the power of authority or credibility of the source of information. The coaching approach used in both studies is based primarily on principles of goal setting, self-management techniques and key coaching behaviours (e.g. active listening, reflecting feelings, restating ideas, asking exploratory questions, summarising periodically).

(a) Canadian study: The coaches of the Canadian study were the Associate Director of the MBA programme and a visiting Associate Professor of Organisational Behaviour. Ten members of the first-year class were selected by a recipient to serve as peer coaches. All coaches received a half-day training. The 10 self-coaches, after an introduction, watched a videotape (28 minutes) showing an MBA-student who demonstrated how he progressed in the development of self-management and verbal self-guidance skills.

Based on previous studies asking second year students to recall their observations of effective and ineffective behaviours of peers during their first year, the authors developed a Behavioural Observation Scale (BOS, 14 five-point ratings, Cronbach alpha=.73). This measure is applied in the study as an instrument for self-assessment of the team behaviour of the participants before and after the interventions, evaluation of their team performance by the external coaches, peers and self-coaches (following training) and also for the individual definition of coaching goals.

All participants in the first coaching session performed a self-assessment of their behaviour. The external and peer coaching contained two sessions in the fifth and 13th week of the semester. In the session the participants discussed their self-ratings and ways to improve their performance. Similarly, the participants of the self-coaching focused on improvement of their behaviour.

Credibility of the coach was rated by items adapted from previous studies (six five-point ratings, e.g. 'My coach has considerable expertise.'). They were administered after the first and second coaching session. Performance outcome of all participants was assessed by the BOS-Scores of the external coaches. They were the only ones who observed all participants.

The results were analysed statistically by a repeated-measures Analysis of Variance and post-hoc Scheffé-tests of mean differences. The results revealed a significant main effect of source of coaching on the total BOS-Score ($p<.05$, $eta^2=.22$). The Scheffé-Test indicated that the mean performance improvements by external coaching were higher than that by peer coaching. Also there was a significant main effect of the source of coaching for credibility ($p<.05$, $eta^2=.31$). Here,

Scheffé-tests showed that the credibility of the external coach was significantly higher than that of the peer and self-coaches.

(b) Australian study: In the second study, the design and coaching approach were identical to the previous study with three exceptions. First, the coaching was carried out by one external coach. He was an associate lecturer. Second, in the peer conditions the managers were coached by the same peer coach. Third, instead of behaviour ratings a hard performance criterion was used, namely grade earned in the EMBA course. Each participant was coached twice during the 13-week semester.

Performance was assessed in terms of the final course grade earned. Satisfaction was rated by two items (i.e. 'From my perspective, my coaching session was a satisfying experience', 'In general, I am satisfied with my coaching session', five-point ratings, Cronbach alpha=.91 and .93, respectively). Credibility of coaching was rated using a longer questionnaire with additional items (11 items, five-point ratings, Cronbach alpha=.86 and .92 for the pre- and post-measures).

Sue-Chan and Latham (2004) predict that coaching from an external coach leads to a higher course grade and higher satisfaction than coaching from a peer or one's self, and that source credibility is highest for an external coach. The results of a between-groups analysis of variance of the impact of source of coaching on performance revealed a significant difference across conditions for course grade ($p<.01$, $eta^2=.42$). A post-hoc Scheffé test showed that managers, after external coaching and self-coaching, earned higher grades than managers coached by peers. But external coaching did not result in significantly better grades than self-coaching. Significant main effects and mean differences were found also for the satisfaction ratings by repeated-measures analysis of variance ($p<.001$, $eta^2=.63$) and following Scheffé tests. Managers in the external coaching and self-coaching conditions were significantly more satisfied than those in the peer and self-coaching conditions. A further repeated-measures analysis of variance showed a significant difference in credibility across coaching conditions ($p<.01$, $eta^2=.48$). Here the post-hoc Scheffé test revealed that the external coach and self-coaching are perceived to be significantly more credible.

In summary, the study of Sue-Chan and Latham (2004) only partly confirms the hypothesis that coaching from external coaches leads to higher performance or credibility than peer coaching and self-coaching. Contrary to the assumptions, self-coaching results in higher performance and credibility than peer coaching. Managers trust in the professional expertise of the external coach but also in their own. Fully confirmed is the hypothesis that satisfaction is highest after external coaching. The positive impact of self-coaching found in their studies supports the results of the studies of Offermanns (2004). The question remaining open for future research is whether the effects can be explained as a result of self-persuasion.

Both external coaches and peers had the same training in coaching competences. Nevertheless, the perceived credibility differences of external and peer coaches supported by anecdotal evidence reported in the studies of Sue-Chan and Latham (2004) are strong. Students in the external coaching group of the Canadian study stated that the coach gave them 'excellent focus' while several in the peer coaching group did not perceive a peer to be sufficiently knowledgeable to give them useful feedback. In the Australian study managers coached by the external coach highlighted that the 'ideas from the coaching sessions were brilliant because I immediately put these into effect … with great results. I wanted a high distinction … and I got it.' The peer was evaluated even more negatively than in the Canadian study. One noted that 'there was little that was either effective or ineffective about peer coaching'. The notes cited indicate that professional credibility of the coach might be

a crucial requirement for the coach and the acceptance of her or his feedback. These interesting functions of professional credibility should be examined by future research.

(3) Willms (2004) carried out a larger investigation, into the effects of self-coaching and the prediction of the individual outcome by measures related to the self-regulation theory of Kuhl *et al.* (2006). He compared *self-coaching in groups* and a *control group* of *N*=76 students. His self-coaching programme is based on a combination of goal setting with methods of goal reflection, planning, and realisation. The participants were assigned randomly to the self-coaching or control group, matching pairs of subjects according to their neuroticism-scores (NEO-FFI). At baseline participants completed the NEO-FFI personality questionnaire and the Volitional Components Checklist of Kuhl and Fuhrmann (1998), a positive affect scale of the ATS as well as a translation of the Goal Scale from Snyder *et al.* (1991) evaluating the perceived optimism attaining goals.

The self-coaching programme contained three 90-minute sessions and extended over a period of 16 days. In the first meeting the participants were instructed to reflect and define their goals of all relevant areas of their life, to select the five most important goals which seemed attainable within 16 days and to define them as concretely as possible. In addition, they were asked to evaluate previous trials towards goal attainment. In the two following sessions the participants were trained how to solve problems, how to transfer their plans into practice and how to deal with unexpected difficulties.

After approximately 16 weeks the degree of goal attainment of the self-coaching group was significantly higher than that of the control group (one-sided t-test, p=.01, d=.51) and also positive affect (one-sided t-test, p=.04, d=.41). These results support the finding of other studies showing that group self-coaching programmes are effective interventions, measured by general applicable criteria.

The author hypothesised that goal commitment and concreteness together with self-regulation competences can be improved by coaching. A multivariate discriminant analysis of the mean differences at the end of the study revealed that it is possible to separate the self-coaching and control group significantly by goal commitment, concreteness of the goals and specific self-regulation competences, particularly control of hindrances and persistence. In the self-coaching group Willms (2004) found significant improvements of three scales of the Volitional Components Checklist (Kuhl & Fuhrmann, 1998), Goal Imagination, Goal Oriented Attention and Planning Ability applied before and after the coaching programme. Goal-oriented self-coaching, therefore, promotes the development of the self-regulation competences, which are necessary for reaching goals.

Willms (2004) further explored whether goal attainment at the second measurement time could be predicted by personality attributes and self-regulation competences assessed at baseline. The results showed that goal attainment was predicted by a number of variables. In both groups persistence predicted goal attainment significantly (p=.03, eta^2=.13 and p=.26, eta^2=.25). In the control group additional predictors like determination (p=.00, eta^2=.39), concreteness of the goals (p=.03, eta^2=.13), chances to realise the goals (p=.03, eta^2=.13), and control of hindrances (p=.03, eta^2=.13) showed significant effects. It seems reasonable to suggest that the self-regulation competences found in the self-coaching group may be favourable pre-requisites of other types of coaching interventions. It is also possible that to attain their goals successfully the subjects of the control group required the additional favourable pre-requisites.

The study sheds light on the question of how motivation and self-regulation competences and other prerequisites facilitate self-regulated learning and self-changes by self-coaching. Despite these findings it would

be premature to conclude that self-coaching books and programmes should replace individual coaching. In the studies of Offermanns (2004) and Willms (2004) it was a difficult task to motivate the subjects to participate in the programme continuously to the end. At least some remained only because they did not want to ruin the scientific study of the committed author. Therefore, we would expect that only a minority of subjects – those with exceptional motivation and self-regulation competences – will complete self-coaching programmes and thus be able to profit from such approaches.

(4) The next two studies concentrate on a special form of life coaching, using peer-coaching. In the first study Green *et al.* (2005) tested the *effectiveness of a peer-coaching programme* in comparison to a waitlist control group (12 months). They recruited 56 participants from originally 107 applicants by advertising in the local media of New South Wales, Australia. Subjects with high values in a clinical Brief-Symptoms Inventory were excluded from the study. The participants were assigned by a matched-randomisation to the first coaching group (*N*=28) and the waitlist control group (*N*=28).

The concept is based on the *Coach Yourself* life coaching of Grant (2003) administered in groups. The programme started with a one-day workshop (short lectures on theories and techniques, self-reflection exercises and discussions) followed by nine weeks with one-hour meetings (review of the programme and peer-coaching by pairs of the participants co-coaching each other on the progress during the preceding week and the development of action plans, for 15 to 20 minutes respectively). Further peer-coaching meetings in addition to the formal programme were encouraged. The waitlist control group and the first coaching group later underwent identical assessment. Their coaching intervention started after a 10-week waiting period.

The basic hypothesis of their study is that the life-coaching programme results in significant increases on measures of goal-striving, well-being, hope, and mental health. In order to test their hypothesis they assessed a set of general and specific outcome measures. As an input for Goal Attainment Scaling they asked the participants to identify and rate eight personal strivings in their everyday life. Well-being was rated by the participants by the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener *et al.*, 1985), scales of Psychological Well-Being (PWB; Ryff, 1989) and the PANAS affect scales (Watson *et al.*, 1988). Perceived belief in the ability to initiate and maintain movements towards goals (agency) and belief in the ability to conceptualise routes to a goal (pathways) was measured by the Hope Trait Scale (HTS; Snyder *et al.*, 1991). Mental health was examined by the Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21; Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995).

The results of the study were analysed by repeated measures Analysis of Variance and variables with skewed distributions by non-parametric tests. As expected, it was only in the peer-coaching intervention group that significant increases were shown on goal striving (p=.00) and positive affect (PANAS, p=.00) and also on the PWB-subscales of personal growth (p=.00), environmental mastery (p=.00) positive relations with others (p=.02), purpose of life (p=.00) and self-acceptance (p=.00). Tested by the non-parametric Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, expected improvements were also found on the scales autonomy (PWB, p=.02) and the scales agency (p=.00), pathways (p=.01) and total hope (HTS, p=.00) and a reduction of negative affect (PANAS, p=.02). But a Man-Whitney U-test between groups at time 2, here indicates a significant difference between groups only for negative affect and agency. On the DASS-21 scales of depression, anxiety and stress, no significant decreases could be confirmed.

A possible explanation why not all expected improvements within the peer-coaching-groups and particularly differences between the groups could be found, may be that, in line with the results of Sue-Chan and

Latham (2004), peer-coaches lack sufficient professional credibility. The following study is interesting in that it has a similar design but also includes an individual coaching group.

(5) In the second life coaching study Spence and Grant (2005) analyse the *differences between individual* and *peer-coaching in groups in comparison to a control group.* As in the study of Green *et al.* (2005), they attracted their participants by advertisement in local media. Of an original sample of 131, 89 completed a pre-programme screening, 13 subjects with high values in a clinical Brief-Symptoms Inventory were excluded from the study. The remaining *N*=64 participants were randomly assigned to one of three groups: individual life coaching (*N*=21), peer-coaching based on the life coaching programme described above (*N*=22), and a waitlist control group (*N*=21). Both first intervention groups attended 10 weekly coaching sessions by trained coaches.

In this exploratory study, the authors investigated whether the effectiveness of individual compared to peer-coaching enhanced goal attainment and goal commitment as well as improvement of life satisfaction, positive affect and psychological well-being. They also asked whether self-reflection decreases while insight increases after coaching (in line with the findings of Grant, 2003). In addition, they looked for improvements in self-reported Emotional Intelligence and changes in personality scales. Dependent measures included ratings of goal attainment and goal commitment, the SRIS questionnaire (Grant *et al.*, 2002) mentioned above, well-being-scales (Satisfaction with Life Scale, five items, Positive & Negative Affect by the PNAS, see above) and Psychological Well-Being by the Depression, Anxiety and Stress-Scale (DASS-21; Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). Personality traits were measured by the NEO-FFI personality questionnaire and Emotional Intelligence (EI) by the Shutte Self-Report Inventory. This is a 33-item instrument with subscales for mood regulation, appraisal of emotions, social skills, and utilisation of emotions, (Schutte *et al.*, 1998).

The results were analysed statistically by paired sample t-tests (within-subjects differences) and by univariate analyses of variance (between-subjects differences). Starting with a comparison of the pre-post measures, all groups showed increased levels of goal attainment with significant increases for both individual and peer-coaching groups. In the control and in peer-coaching groups the commitment score decreased significantly while the mean did not change significantly in the individual coaching group. The Satisfaction with Life Scale and the Environmental Mastery scale of the Psychological Well-Being questionnaire rose significantly after individual coaching. No significant changes were noted in the Self-Reflection scale. Only peer-coaching resulted in a significantly higher level of insight. There was an increase in Emotional Intelligence across all groups, but only the pre-post-differences of the subscales Emotion Perception and Social Skills reached a level of significance. The results showed that coaching had no impact on mental health scales. But Extroversion and Openness to Experiences increased following peer-coaching. Conscientiousness showed significant increases in all groups.

The results of the analysis of the differences between the groups show that goal attainment is significantly higher for individual coaching than for both peer-coaching ($p<.05$, $d=.53$) and control group ($p<.001$, $d=1.29$). Also as expected, the peer-group values were significantly higher than those of the control group ($p<.05$, $d=.67$). Goal commitment values were significantly higher for the individual coaching than for both peer-coaching ($p<.05$, $d=.65$) and the control group ($p<.001$, $d=1.01$). No significant differences were found on any of the subjective well-being and mental health subscales. But of the psychological well-being variables, environmental mastery showed a significant higher level for individual

coaching compared to both peer-coaching ($p<.05$) and the control group ($p<.05$). No significant differences between groups were observed in the Self-Reflection and Insight scales. Only one subscale of the Emotional Intelligence scales, Social Skills was found to be significantly higher for individual coaching than for peer-coaching ($p=.05$). On Openness to Experience a highly significant difference was observed between both intervention groups ($p<.001$) and the control group ($p<.001$).

As in the study of Sue-Chan and Latham (2004) individual coaching was found to be superior in many (but not all) outcome criteria to peer-coaching. The use of a control group by Spence and Grant (2005) show that participants significantly profited from peer-coaching. But when taken with the findings of Green *et al.* (2005) these studies show that coaching interventions, even when they have a similar surface format, do not always produce consistent effects. An explanation may be that the process of coaching has to be adapted to the concrete problems and themes of the clients. For example, it might not always be adequate to focus on emotional clarity and in such cases we would not expect a specific improvement of insight. In future research it might be necessary to analyse and control the coaching process for deviations from the coaching concept, which is implicitely assumed in the hypotheses.

(6) Steinmetz (2005) studied the special effects of individual coaching for *stress management* offered to 46 managers of one organisation. Of these 15 participated in the coaching interventions and 12 formed the control group. Random assignment to the groups was impossible but the author carefully tested baseline differences and also possible mutual influencing of the participants by intra-class-correlations. She found no differences violating the assumption that the groups are comparable and no mutual influences within and between the groups. The coaching was designed to promote both reflection and training of the participants. It was based on the cognitive stress inoculation and management concept of Meichenbaum and Novaco (1985), containing phases of information, learning and training, application and post training support.

Steinmetz (2005) predicted that coaching would improve subjective well-being, coping with stress, situational control of stress and self-leadership or reduces irritation after stress at work. She measured subjective well-being using two subscales (Activation and Positive Mood) of an instrument developed by Becker (1988) similar to the PANAS. She also assessed coping with stress using the German version of the Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS; Endler & Parker, 1990). The CISS contains three subscales: Task- or Problem-Oriented, Emotional and Avoidance oriented coping strategies. The items refer to self descriptions of typical coping behaviour. An example for task-oriented coping is 'In stress situations I think about how I solved similar problems before' (rated using a five-point scale ranging from 'very atypical' to 'very typical'). Situational control of stress was measured by a subscale of the German Stress Reaction Scales of Janke *et al.* (1985, ratings referring to the perceived analysis of the stress situation and actions intended to control the stress). A short German version of the Self-Leadership-Questionnaire of Houghton and Neck (2002) was used to assess Behaviour Focused, Natural Reward and Meta-Cognitive Strategies of self-regulation (an example for behaviour focused strategies is: 'I carefully think about what I want to achieve in the future'). Irritation after stress at work is measured by a scale by Mohr (1991, e.g. 'It is difficult for me to switch off after work').

Not all results confirmed the authors predictions. Analysis of variance with repeated measurements showed that Task- or Problem-Oriented Coping ($p=.01$, $eta^2=.21$) and also Situational Control ($p=.01$, $eta^2=.20$) in comparison to the control group improved significantly after coaching. Coaching also resulted in significantly more

Behaviour-Oriented Self-Leadership ($p=.02$, $eta^2=.20$). Activation ($p=.01$, $eta^2=.27$) and Positive Mood ($p=.03$, $eta^2=.17$) as measured by the subjective Well-being or Affect Scales was significantly higher in the intervention group. As expected, there was also a significant interaction between the intervention and group effects on the reduction of Irritation after stress at work ($p=.00$, $eta^2=.28$). The effects found support the position that the design of a specialised coaching concept based on a standard programme may lead to more predictable specific results than using professional coaches with very different coaching concepts.

(7) The last two studies compare the effects of *multi-source feedback* without coaching and combined with coaching. The largest and most often cited comparison study was published by Smither, London *et al.* (2003) from La Salle University and State University of New York, Stony Brook. The total sample was based on 1361 senior managers in a large global corporation. As a part of a company-wide multisource feedback programme the managers received a feedback report from feedback ratings gathered by supervisors, peers and self in Autumn, 1999. The senior manager's supervisor received a copy of the report and was allowed to use it as an input to the formal appraisal process. In the study the managers were asked to create one to three development goals based on the multisource feedback. The study is a quasi-experimental pre-post design with two samples (executive coaching vs. no coaching). The second multisource feedback evaluating the improvement of the ratings was performed in Autumn, 2000. One-thousand-two-hundred-and-twenty-nine (90.3 per cent) participated in the second survey. After receiving the first feedback report, 404 (29.7 per cent) participated in the external executive coaching group. These large numbers are impressive. But a problem is that the selection of the coaches and the coaching obviously were very heterogeneous.

The participation in the coaching in some lines of the company was optional, but in some lines all senior managers were required to work with a coach. Potential executive coaches were identified by the company, by recommendation of executive coaches or via word of mouth. Based on meetings and a review of the biographical sketches of the coaches they were matched to the individual managers. Each manager had only two or three coaching sessions.

At the interim survey (July, 2000), the raters assessed the progress of the goal attainment of the senior manager, the degree of sharing feedback with the rater and his asking for suggestions by five-point ratings. Since the last two items correlated highly, they were put together in a common scale (Cronbach alpha=.93). For the comparison of the multi-source feedback eight items which were identical in Autumn, 1999, and Autumn, 2000, testing periods were used. (e.g. 'Demonstrates technical expertise to resolve business issues', 'Seeks out and listens to customers' and peers' views to establish their concerns', 'Takes calculated risks needed to achieve results'). This scale was found to have excellent internal consistency (Cronbach alphas=.91 and .87). Goal specifity was rated independently by two of the authors of the study (four-point ratings, interrater reliability=.73).

The authors tested four hypotheses:

1. Feedback recipients who use an executive coach are more likely than other feedback recipients to set specific (rather than vague or general) goals.
2. Caching encourages managers to share their feedback with raters and solicit more suggestions for improvement.
3. Coaching is positively related to improvement in multisource ratings, partially mediated by goal specifity and sharing feedback suggestions from raters.
4. Coaching process is positively related to improvements in multi-source ratings.

Consistent with the first hypothesis, the results of the study revealed a small but significant (t-test) improvement of the goal

specifity of the coaching group in comparison to the no-coaching group ($p<.01$, $d=.16$). Multivariate analysis of variance confirmed the predicted significant mean improvement of the dependent variables sharing feedback and soliciting ideas for improvement from their supervisors after coaching ($p<.01$, $d=.36$). However, the differences of the effects between the groups were medium and not consistent with the hypothesis. Managers in the coaching condition were not more likely than other managers to share their feedback and solicit ideas for improvement from peers or direct feedback. The third hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between coaching and improvement mediated by goal specifity and sharing feedback suggestions was tested by hierarchical regression analyses. The results did not support this hypothesis, nor was the fourth hypothesis supported. Summarising their main results, senior managers after an executive coaching are more likely to set specific goals, solicit ideas for improvement from their supervisors from their supervisors and receive higher ratings from their supervisors and direct report.

Smither *et al.* (2003) very cautiously discuss the results of their study. They admit that the effect sizes are only small to modest. But they nevertheless justify the coaching investment by assuming that for senior managers even small improvements may result in meaningful economic benefit. Further open questions, partly mentioned by the authors, are whether in future studies the number of coaching sessions should be higher and whether the quality standards of the coaching should be improved and if multisource ratings, which define more concrete developmental goals, might be more suitable. In addition the complicated and not random assignment of participants to the coaching intervention is a problem. Selection effects on the outcome criteria cannot be excluded.

(8) Finn *et al.* (2006) refer to the study of Smither *et al.* (2003) and compare *self-feedback with and without coaching*. Here the participants were randomly assigned to the groups. Twenty-three senior level managers of a large public sector organisation participated in this study of authors. The participants were members of a 12-month leadership effectiveness programme. Twenty-three senior managers were elected to participate in the executive coaching.

The first group, self-feedback with coaching, commenced their coaching immediately after assessing self-feedback. The second group did not begin coaching until the first group completed coaching (approximately three months later) and served as a control group.

The effectiveness of coaching was evaluated by the following five self-rating feedback scales assessed at three measurement times, before the first coaching, directly after the coaching period and six months later:

1. *Self-Efficacy* (11 items, e.g. 'In relation to the team you manage, how certain are you that you can get your team to consistently perform to an acceptable standard?').
2. *Perceptions of Developmental Support* (five items, e.g. 'I feel supported in my development efforts').
3. *Positive Affect* (five items, e.g. 'How often have you felt energised at work over the past month?').
4. *Openness to New Behaviours* (four items, e.g. 'I explore alternate ways of behaving with my team').
5. *Approaches to Developmental Planning* (five items, e.g. 'I have an action plan for reaching my development goals').

The authors tested two main hypotheses. First, they hypothesised that leaders who participate in executive coaching would improve in the outcome measures compared with the control group. Second, they predicted that the leaders who have improved directly after the coaching sessions would sustain their improvements six months after completing the coaching.

After the first coaching period, four of the five scales showed the expected signifi-

cant improvements and mean differences between coaching and waiting group (t-tests). Only negative affect did not differ significantly as expected. However, the sustained long-term effects of the coaching intervention tested after six months are remarkable. The scales Openness to New Behaviours and Approaches to Developmental Planning even reveal an additional significant increase.

The results of the field experiment of Finn *et al.* (2006) nearly fully support their hypotheses. Theoretically very interesting is that their data reveal stronger long-term than short-term improvements. Some subjects show an additional increase three months after the coaching. Such possible sleeper effects should be considered in future research. But as the authors discuss themselves, the study was based merely on self-assessments. Finn, Mason and Griffin plan another study of behaviour changes by observation data.

Discussion

The samples, education of the coaches, and the coaching interventions between (and in some cases also within) the experimental studies discussed above are different and the scales applied are heterogeneous. The samples include managers of enterprises and public organisations or students. Five of the eight studies use external coaches, three formats of peer-coaching and three self-coaching programmes. Most, but not all studies, apply coaching approaches based on goal setting and behaviour modification technologies. Not all coaches have completed a full professional education and bring along practical experience. The coaches in the study of Sue-Chan and Latham (2004) had only a half-day education. Also the numbers of coaching sessions are different, ranging from two to seven sessions. It is all the more remarkable that short coaching interventions of a few sessions after a short training already result in significant and sometimes strong effects, even improvements of course grades of managers in an EMBA-course at the university (Sue-Chan & Latham, 2004). We can underline the conclusion of Spence and Grant (2005, p.154) that 'coaching appears to benefit those who receive it, regardless of the format'.

Several studies employ self-coaching programmes in groups developed by the authors. In the study of Offermanns (2004) the self-coaching programme was first planned as a special kind of control. She was surprised that it produced similar effects to those of external coaching with the exception of client satisfaction. Similarly, Sue-Chan and Latham (2004) show that individual coaching is not by all criteria significantly more effective than self-coaching. Presumably special outcome criteria will be necessary to explore outcome differences between individual coaching and self-coaching.

It has yet to be explained by experimental studies why coaching interventions, despite different samples, approaches, and formats have significant and in some studies strong effects on outcome criteria. It is plausible to adopt the theory of Grawe (2004) on the effects of resource activation to the field of coaching. First evidence is given by the small pilot study of Behrendt (2004), mentioned above.

With few exceptions all experimental studies use goal attainment and client satisfaction or affect scales as outcome measures. The results of most of the studies with comparable design show similar results. This supports the assumption that coaching interventions seem to be effective in terms of general measures of success.

Outcome measures, which are used to assess special effects of coaching based on specified theoretical assumptions, are called specific outcome measures. Few studies used comparable specific criteria for success. The studies of Grant (2003), Green *et al.* (2005) and Spence and Grant (2003, 2005) are an exception. However, their findings hold inconsistencies which are difficult to explain.

The possibly complex effects of coaching on scales of self-reflection have to be clarified by theoretical analysis and further research (cf. Greif, 2007). Derived from the motivation and personality theory of Kuhl (1992), we predict that in stress situations state-oriented persons tend to spend too much time in unspecific self-reflecting and, being fixated in their brooding, do not act goal-oriented. In contrast, action-oriented managers, confronted with a problem are predicted to act spontaneously and avoid investing time in problem- and self-reflection. They often act rashly, without examining alternative actions which might be more effective. Therefore, different interventions and behaviour changes might be optimal depending on the state or action orientation of the client. With state-oriented clients, the coach should impede their ruminating and stimulate shorter phases of result-oriented reflections followed by goal-oriented actions. On the other hand, with action-oriented managers, the coach should stop rash action and support result-oriented problem- or self-reflections and the examination of alternative solutions before starting to act. In future research these relationships could be analysed using the Action and State Orientation scales of Kuhl (1992), the SRIS of Grant *et al.* (2002) and scales of specific types of result-oriented problem- and self-reflection, e.g. reflection of own action goals and of the self-organisation pursuing goal attainment (Greif, 2007).

We also predict that depending on the focus of the specific coaching intervention different specific types of self-reflection will be influenced. For example, coaching of overloaded managers coping with by too many jobs and projects may result in a high self-reflection on priorities and goals. After coaching students to reduce procrastination in studying for examinations, we would expect an increase in self-reflection on their organisation. However, since result-oriented self-reflection is a time consuming, difficult and often unpleasant process, we expect that action oriented managers will reduce their level of self-reflection rather quickly after coaching. Nevertheless, they may have developed better meta-cognitive-competences to use reflection when it seems to be necessary.

An orientation model for future research

A meta-analysis of evaluation research in the field of coaching is a desirable vision (Stober & Grant, 2006, p.5). It is not, however, feasible today, since there are to few comparable studies. One can have doubts whether it is presently already possible to develop an effect model of coaching which offers a summary of the empirical research. However, for guiding future evaluation research, for stimulating replication studies, and making meta-analysis possible, we risk venturing a preliminary orientation model in Figure 1. This model summarises the patchwork of results on the effects of coaching and is related to psychological theories as mentioned above (cf. Greif, 2007).

Pre-requisites are factors facilitating coaching success which are present before or in the beginning of the first coaching session. Examples supported by first research results are the professional credibility of the coach or the clarification of the first goals and expectations of the client in the conversation before beginning the coaching. Other preconditions found in evaluation studies are change readiness of the clients and their persistence pursuing their goals.

Success factors in the coaching process are factors predicting positive outcomes, which can be observed in the coaching sessions and the context situation of the client describing interventions, their attributes, and consequences in the course of the coaching. The model differs between five success factors observed in the coaching sessions: (1) esteem and emotional support by the coach; (2) facilitation of result-oriented problem- and self-reflections; (3) clarification of the goals of the client; (4) activation of the resources of the client; and

Figure 1: Orientation model of predictors and outcome criteria of coaching.

Pre-requisites of the Coach	**Success Factors in the Coaching Process**	**Specific Outcome Criteria**	**General Outcome Criteria**
(1) Professional credibility	(1) Esteem and emotional support by the coach	(1) Problem clarity and goal concreteness	Degree of goal attainment
(2) Clarification of goals and expectations of client	(2) Result-oriented problem- and self-reflection	(2) Social competences	Client satisfaction
Pre-requisites of the Client	(3) Clarification of goals	(3) Performance improvement	Affect changes
(1) Change readiness	(4) Activation of the resources of the client	(4) Result-oriented reflection and self-regulation	General well-being
(2) Persistence	(5) Individual analysis and adaptation	(5) Traits and abilities	

(5) individual analysis of the client and adaptation of the intervention to the special goals, attributes, and situation of the client. The assessment of most of these factors by behaviour observation studies of real coaching ideally requires the readiness of the clients to video or sound tape confidential coaching sessions. Behrendt (2004) successfully convinced managers to participate in his study. We have started research with business and law students. More research on effective processes in coaching sessions is necessary if we want to understand how coaching works and how we can train coaches.

It is difficult to summarise *specific outcome criteria* of evaluation research. Depending on the field and goals of the study the authors use heterogeneous measures. Tentatively five groups or clusters of variables may be: (1) Problem clarity and goal concreteness (ratings of problem and goal descriptions of the client by experts); (2) social competences (e.g. rating of social skills or observation of team performance, emotional clarity or insight and openness to experiences measured by questionnaire scales); (3) performance improvement (course grades as a simple example); (4) self-regulation (e.g. control of hindrances of goal attainment, environmental mastery and persistence and self-efficacy assessed by self-ratings, developmental planning by multisource rating formats and also the competence to calm down negative affects and irritation after work); and (5) general traits and abilities (e.g. Extraversion measured by the NEO-FFI personality questionnaire). In future evaluation research it will be important to validate the usefulness of coaching by different types of methods and outcome criteria, including behaviour observation data or objective performance measures.

General outcome criteria for assessing the effectiveness of coaching included in the model are degree of goal attainment and satisfaction with the coaching. Goal specifity in some studies may be important, but is not included as a general outcome criterion in the orientation model. As Grant (2006, p.160) reports, there are cases where it is more useful to set more abstract and sometimes even vague goals. But changes of positive and negative Affect rated by the PANAS or comparable scales seem to be useful and important standard measures in future research. Particularly, in life coaching formats, well-being scales like the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Pavot & Diener, 1993) and scales of Psychological Well-Being (Ryff, 1989) are interesting measures. But as the research results show, with the exception of environmental mastery, not all scales can be expected to be impacted by coaching consistently.

The model in Figure 1 can also be used to explain the effects of self-coaching and also effects in the control-group. High self-confidence of the clients in their own expertise, strong change readiness and persistence are pre-requisites, which facilitate spontaneous self-regulated learning and change. Not only participating in a self-coaching group but even being selected in a waitlist and having to fill out questionnaires in the pretest probably will stimulate of at least some subjects reflections on their goals and intentions to change their behaviour. Hypothetical success factors of self-coaching are clarification of the goals in the process and especially an activation of the resources of the client and evaluation of the outcome after each self-instructed session. But an external coach would be expected to produce better outcome scores if the clients trust in the professional competence of the coach is higher than in their own competences to solve their problems. Also the coach should be able to support clients with difficulties in clarifying their goals and low persistence to follow their goals. Her or his emotional support functions as an additional personal resource. Differing from a standard programme the experienced coach should be able to analyse the characteristic features of the client and to adapt her or his intervention methods flexibly to the individual case.

The model describes only simple relations between pre-requisites, success factors and criteria. As Maethner *et al.* (2005) found, it can be expected that success factors have different effects on different criteria. The consideration of cultural differences and the personality of the client result in much more complex relations (cf. Greif, 2007).

Carry out more and better evaluation research may help us understand coaching outcomes more accurately. Presumably, professional coaching must also become more effective in practice in order to produce evidence of its effectiveness. Looking at coaching outcomes both in practice and research, we should not only focus on improvements of mean values of effectiveness, but also on the variation range of the results, particularly low success rates or failure rates. Similar to medical therapy of illnesses, it is necessary to guarantee as far as possible a reliable and consistent positive success rate. A self-critical analysis of both strength and weaknesses through coaching evaluation research can help us to identify the critical prerequisites and success factors which make the difference between success and failure of coaching. Grant and Cavanagh (2004, p.9f.) claim a scientist-practitioner model where the education of coaches requires teaching theoretical and empirical foundations of coaching, embracing basic knowledge about basic research methodologies. In this vision, ideal coaches are ambitious and sophisticated scientist-practitioners who are open to scientific knowledge and the evaluation of their performance by scientific methods and continuously ready to improve their interventions by this knowledge and their practical insights.

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Appendix: Table of selected instruments and scales (alphabetic order, authors cited are the original authors or developed an adaptation for the field of coaching).

Name of instrument	Authors	Description and subscales (example items)	Scaling type	Cronbach Alpha
ATS	Kuhl & Kazén (in prep.)	Affect Temperament Scales (23 items): 1. Joy (positive affect). 2. Helplessness (negative affect). 3. Motoric activation. 4. Sensory activation. 5. Dullness. 6. Calmness. 7. Indignation (aggression).	Four-point ratings	 .85 .71 .72 .73 .78 .85 .79
PANAS	Watson, Clark & Tellegen (1988)	Rating of positive and negative affect (state and trait versions). *Positive Affect:* Extent to which a person feels enthusiastic, active, and alert (10 items: e.g. attentive, interested, alert, excited, enthusiastic, inspired). *Negative Affect:* subjective distress and other aversive mood states (10 items: e.g. distressed, upset, hostile, irritable, scared, afraid).	Five-point ratings	.86 – .90 .84 – .87
PWB	Ryff (1090)	Psychological Well-Being, subscales (84, 54 or 14 items): 1. *Self-acceptance* (positive attitudes toward oneself). 2. *Positive relations* with others (warm and trusting interpersonal relations). 3. *Autonomy* (self-determination, independence, regulation of behaviour from within). 4. *Environmental mastery* (ability to choose or create suitable environments). 5. *Purpose in life* (feeling that there is purpose in and meaning to life). 6. *Personal growth* (develop one's potential, grow and expand as a person).	Six-point ratings	.93 .91 .86 .90 .90 .87
SWLS	Diener *et al.* (1985)	Satisfaction with Life Scale (five items): e.g. 'In most ways, my life is close to my ideal'; 'The conditions of my life are excellent'; 'I am satisfied with my life'.	Seven-point ratings	.87

Name of instrument	Authors	Description and subscales (example items)	Scaling type	Cronbach Alpha
S-C-Eval	Runde (2005)	Summative Coaching Evaluation of the (coaching quality and outcome dimensions, 31 items): 1. *Structural quality* (context conditions, e.g. adequate room, time schedule, contract, and explanation of the coaching concept, nine items). 2. *Process quality* (e.g. preparation, performance and methods of the coach, 11 items). 3. *Outcome quality* (quality of the relationship, improvement of problem solving competence of the client, future recommendation of coaching and the coach, and percentage of goal attainment, 13 items).	Six-point ratings and one per cent rating of goal attainment	.81 .80 .92
SRIS	Grant *et al.* (2002)	*Self-Reflection and Insight Scales:* *Self-Reflection* (perceived frequency of self-reflective thoughts and need for self-reflection,12 items): e.g. 'I frequently examine my feelings'; 'I frequently take time to reflect on my thoughts'; 'I have a definite need to understand the way that my mind works'. *Insight* (clarity of own emotions, eight items): e.g. 'Often I find it difficult to make sense of the way I feel about things' (recoded); 'I usually know why I feel the way I do.'	Six-point scales	.91 .91

A languishing-flourishing model of goal striving and mental health for coaching populations

Anthony M. Grant

Coaching focuses both on facilitating goal attainment and enhancing well-being. Yet there has been little work on developing models that integrate mental health/illness issues with goal striving. This is important because many distinctions between coaching and therapy have been based on the supposed differing levels of psychopathology in clinical, counselling and coaching populations. However, research suggests that some coaching clients have high levels of depression, anxiety or stress, and there is recent evidence that coaching clients who voluntarily seek life coaching tend to have higher levels of psychopathology than individuals who undertake coaching as part of a workplace coaching program. These findings underscore the importance of coaches having a sophisticated understanding of the issues related to coaching and mental health. Drawing on recent languishing-flourishing work in the area of positive psychology this paper presents a new provisional model of goal striving and mental health/mental illness with two key dimensions: (i) mental health-illness; and (ii) intentional goal striving (high or low). The languishing section of the model represents individuals who are have low levels of psychological or subjective well-being but do not have elevated levels of depression, anxiety or stress. The acquiescent section is where individuals have good levels of mental health and but have low levels of intentional goal striving. The flourishing section is where individuals have high levels of mental health and are actively engaging in high levels of intentional goal striving. The model also delineates a distressed but functional client group who have high levels of intentional goal striving, but significant levels of psychopathology, and distinguishes those from clients with major psychopathology but very low levels of intentional goal striving, Recommendations are made for future coaching research and practice.

IT IS OFTEN SAID that coaching is not therapy and that coaching does not aim to treat psychological problems, mental illness or other issues of pathology. Rather, coaching clients are looking for ways to better attain their goals, improve their performance and enhance their quality of life (see, for example, Whitworth *et al.*, 1998). Are these mantras in fact true? If not, how can we integrate issues related to mental health and goal striving within a coaching-related model?

As the practice of coaching develops and as research into coaching advances, our understanding of the parameters of the coaching industry and demographics of coaching clients has become more sophisticated. As this knowledge has developed, it has become increasingly clear that there is a discrepancy between espoused ideas about what coaching 'should' be and the reality of what happens in real-life coaching practice. In reality, the boundaries between coaching practice and therapeutic practice are somewhat blurred.

That there has been little theoretical or empirical research exploring the boundaries between coaching and therapy is a serious shortcoming in the coaching literature. Clearly, the coaching industry and coaching psychology would benefit from coaching-related models that delineate issues of goal striving, mental health/mental illness and psychopathology.

In this paper past approaches to distinguishing coaching from therapy are discussed. The key foci of coaching; goal striving, well-being enhancement and goal attainment, are distinguished from the foci of therapeutic interventions which are identified as the treatment of psycho-

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pathology. Drawing on recent languishing-flourishing work in the area of positive psychology (Keyes, 2003), this paper then presents a new provisional model of goal striving and mental health/mental illness for use in coaching research and practice. Recent comparative research, presented in this paper, suggests that coaching clients who voluntarily seek life coaching have higher levels of psychopathology than individuals who undertake coaching as part of a workplace coaching programme. These findings underscore the importance of coaches having a sophisticated understanding of the issues related to coaching and mental health.

Coach or couch?

A wide range of factors have been used to differentiate coaching from therapy. Coaching is said to have an greater emphasis on structured conversations and goal attainment (Hart *et al.*, 2001), and greater variation in modes of delivery, with coaching being conducted in short sessions, by face-to-face, by 'phone or e-mail (Richard, 1999). Coaching is also said to be more focused on solution construction rather than problem analysis, and focuses on the present rather than on the past (Berg & Szabo, 2005) or unconscious facets of behaviour (Levinson, 1996).

However, for each distinction offered, alternative viewpoints have been presented. For example, it has been proposed that coaching is developmental rather than goal focused (Kilburg, 2000), should incorporate the past as well as the present (Kemp, 2005), should focus on emotions rather than actions (Schlegelmich & Fresco, 2005), and should prioritise the delivery of expert skills-based knowledge rather than focusing on self-directed learning (Fox, 1983).

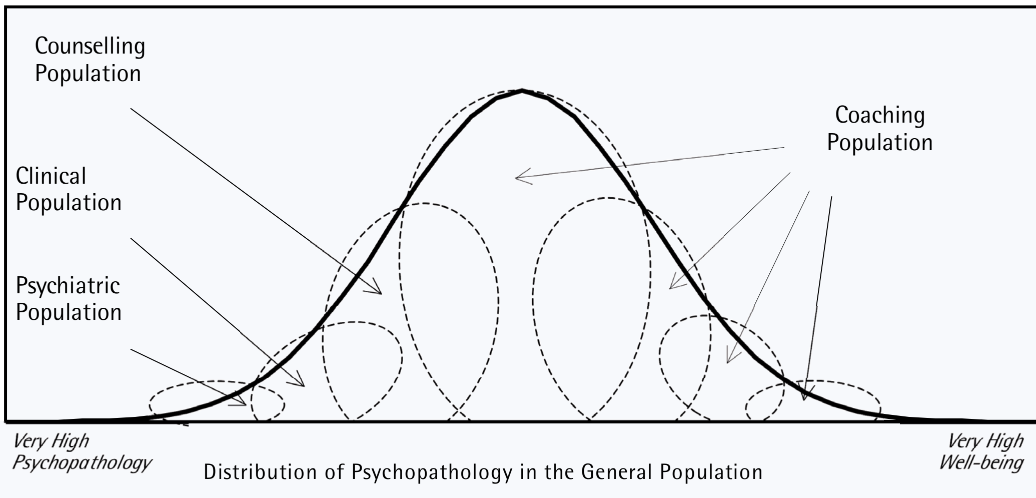
Such distinctions centre on *how* coaching is conducted, rather than *who* the coaching client is, or the specific *focus or goals* of the coaching intervention. Whilst distinctions based on how coaching is conducted give a useful overview of what coaches do with their clients, they give an incomplete picture of the differences between coaching and therapeutic modalities, and they give little guidance to coaches about how to deal with psychopathology within a coaching engagement (for further discussion see Bluckert, 2005).

The normal curve: Distinguishing the abnormal pollution?

Another way that coaching has been differentiated from therapy considers the different levels of degree of psychopathology seen in coaching, counselling and clinical populations. This somewhat simplistic approach is based on the distribution of psychopathology in the general population which is represented as lying on the normal distribution (Krabbendam *et al.*, 2004). In such approaches the extreme end of the normal distribution of psychopathology (say, approximately three to four standard deviations below the mean) can be deemed to be a psychiatric population, with less extreme sections of the distribution being deemed clinical, counselling and coaching populations respectively (see Figure 1; see Cavanagh (2005) and Sperry (2004) for detailed discussions of this issue).

This approach to delineating coaching from therapeutic modalities is based on two fundamental assumptions. First, that coaching clients do not present clinically significant problems for treatment or are from a 'non-clinical' section of the population. Second, that coaching is primarily about enhancing goal striving and well-being rather than treating mental illness or distress. This is an important and central philosophical assumption about coaching and coaching psychology, and reflects the espoused viewpoint of a large number organisations including the Association of Coaching (AC), the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC), the International Coach Federation (ICF), the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches (WABC), and a wide range of individual commentators such as Parkes (1955), Whitmore (1992), and Williams and Thomas (2004).

Figure 1: Theoretical distribution of psychopathology in the psychiatric, clinical, counselling and coaching populations.



The notion that a range of client groups *per se* can be distinguished by reference to varying degrees of psychopathology is central to the Australian Psychological Society (APS) distinctions between coaching, counselling and clinical psychology. The APS Interest Group in Coaching Psychology (IGCP) defines coaching psychology as 'the systematic application of behavioural science, which is focused on the enhancement of life experience, work performance and well-being for individuals, groups and organisations with *no clinically significant mental heath issues or abnormal levels of distress*' (italics added; APS IGCP, 2003).

The APS distinguishes counselling psychology as being predominantly focused on the use of 'therapeutic techniques' in the amelioration of distress. Thus 'individuals may seek assistance from a counselling psychologist to help them to … 'manage stress and conflict at home and work, deal with grief, loss and trauma, [and] overcome feelings of anxiety and fear' (APS, 2007a).

In contrast, 'clinical psychologists are specialists in the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of psychological problems and *mental illness*' (italics added; APS, 2007b), with the majority of the training of clinical psychologists primarily focusing on the identification and treatment of psychopathological states.

The focus of coaching psychology then is subtly different to that of clinical and counselling practice. As can be seen from the above APS definitions, the primary focus of clinical and counselling practitioners is the alleviation of psychopathology or distress and addresses such issues directly. In contrast, the primary focus of coaching is not explicitly on alleviating psychopathology or primarily dealing with distress, rather it is about assisting clients in articulating goals and helping them systematically strive toward goal attainment. These goals may be developmental or focused on enhancing performance or acquiring a specific skill set.

The psychopathology of coaching clients: Three recent studies

There has been very little empirical research into the levels of psychopathology found in coaching clients. Although there have been concerns that coaching is being used as a de facto form of therapy (Berglas, 2002), and various authors have reported anecdotal concerns about the overlap between coaching and therapy (Naughton, 2002), to the present author's best knowledge only

three studies have quantitatively collected data on the extent to coaching populations manifest psychopathology.

As part of a study of the effectiveness of life coaching, Green *et al.* (2005), surveyed a total of 107 potential life coaching clients from a community sample and found 52 per cent had clinically elevated scores (a score of two standard deviations above the mean) on the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI: Derogatis & Melisaratos, 1983). The BSI is a well-validated self-report health screening instrument designed to be used with both clinical and non-clinical populations (Preston & Harrison, 2003).

Reflecting Green *et al.*'s (2005) finding, and using another community sample and the same BSI screening criteria, Spence and Grant (2007) found that 25 per cent of 84 participants in a life coaching programme had clinically elevated BSI scores. It worth noting that whilst Green *et al.* (2005) drew their sample from a regional centre with a relatively low socio-economic status, Spence and Grant (2007) drew their sample from a capital city with a relatively higher socio-economic status. The comparative results of these two studies suggest that individuals who seek life coaching may have higher than average levels of psychopathology, and such levels may be reflective of the specific population from which the sample is drawn.

A third study examined the extent of psychopathology in 43 participants who took part in a workplace coaching programme in an Australian high school. Using the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scales (DASS; Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995) Grant *et al.* (2007) found that 4.6 per cent of participants had levels of depression at the 90th percentile or above, 21.9 per cent had levels of anxiety at the 90th percentile or above, and 18.6 per cent had stress levels at the 90th percentile or above (note: percentiles used follow recommendations of Crawford & Henry, 2003). These levels of depression, anxiety and stress appear to be in accord with the general levels found in the teaching profession (see van Dick & Wanger, 2001). The DASS is a well-validated self-report measure of depression, anxiety and stress suitable for use in both clinical and non-clinical populations (Clara *et al.*, 2001; Henry & Crawford, 2005)

The sample sizes in these three studies are not large enough to draw definitive conclusions. However, they provide useful preliminary empirical evidence about psychopathology in coaching populations, and indicate that these levels can vary considerably depending on the specific population. This point is further reinforced by recent Australian research examining the mental health of 7500 individuals from a number of professions which found that 15 per cent of lawyers, 10 per cent of accountants and nine per cent of information technology professionals had symptoms indicative of moderate or severe depression (*Australian Financial Review*, 2007). Together these findings illustrate the inadequacy of differentiating coaching from counselling or clinical populations merely by means of levels of population psycho-pathology, and emphasise that coaches need more sophisticated theoretical frameworks.

Psychopathology: A languishing-flourishing distinction

Given that a proportion of clients presenting for coaching will have mental health problems, do such issues exclude them from coaching? Can a professional coach ethically coach someone with an anxiety disorder, when the goals of the coaching engagement are about a work or leadership development-related issue, or if the client who becomes depressed during the coaching engagement? How are we to understand such mental health issues in relation to goal attainment within a coaching context?

Recent theorising from within the positive psychology area may be useful here. Keyes (2003) has proposed a model for use in the study of mental health and mental illness within the positive psychology framework. Keyes conceptualises mental health and mental illness as being separate constructs

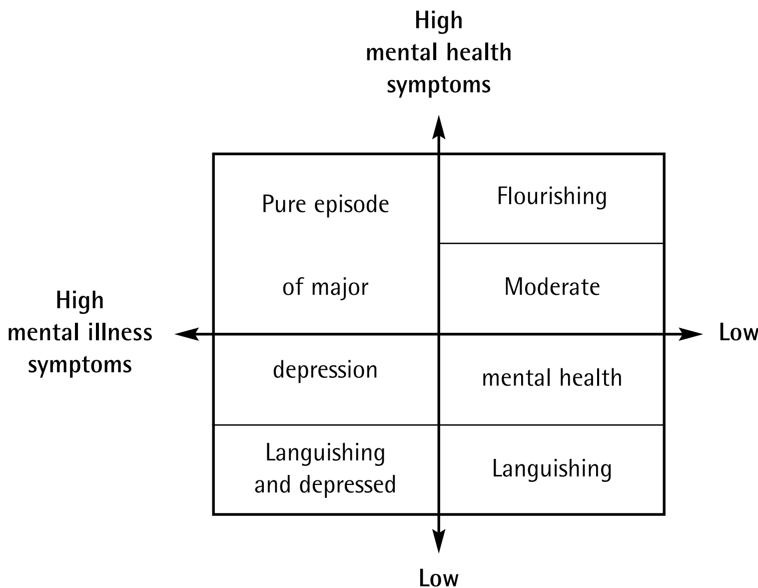
with two orthogonal dimensions: the mental health continuum and the mental illness continuum (see Figure 2). In brief, within Keyes's model the mental health dimension is represented by high or low levels of psychological well-being, for example, self-acceptance, positive relations with others, personal growth, purpose in life, environmental mastery and autonomy (Ryff & Keyes, 1996). The mental illness dimension is represented by a presence or absence of symptoms indicative of depression, for example, anhedonia, insomnia or hypersomnia.

For Keyes, mental health is far more than the mere absence of mental illness symptoms. Individuals high in mental health and low in mental illness are designated as *flourishing* in life, whereas those low in mental health and low in mental illness symptoms are designated as *languishing*. Those with low mental health and high mental illness are designated as both languishing and depressed (for details, see Keyes, 2003). Keyes estimates that only approximately 25 per cent of the population can be considered to be flourishing.

Languishing has been defined as 'a state in which an individual is devoid of positive emotions toward life, is not functioning well psychologically or socially, and has not been depressed within the past year', whereas flourishing can be understood as 'a state in which an individual feels positive emotions towards life and is functioning well psychologically and socially' (Keyes, 2003, p.294).

The languishing–flourishing delineation may have considerable utility for coaching. However, Keyes's approach as it stands does not explicitly incorporate the elements of goal striving and goal attainment so central to coaching practice. Coaching is after all primarily focused on facilitating intentional goal striving and goal attainment (Whitmore, 1992). Thus, a useful adaptation of Keyes's approach for use in coaching would need to explicitly incorporate both a mental health/illness dimension and a goal striving dimension.

Figure 2: Keyes's Model of Mental Health and Diagnostic Categories (Keyes, 2003; reproduced with permission).



Goal striving and coaching

Goal striving sits at the very heart of coaching. Implicit in the notion of goal striving is the concept of intentionality; the purposeful pursuit of the goal. It is thus important to distinguish between 'strivings' and 'aspirational goals'. The concept of striving implies that the individual has somehow invested in the intentional pursuit of a goal, and is actually engaged in its pursuit. This can be contrasted with the notion of aspirational goals.

The notion of aspirational goals has traditionally referred to higher order, values-based goals that an individual hopes to achieve (see, for example, Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). However, the contemporary meaning of term 'aspirational goal' has taken a new direction and reflects recent political rhetoric (Milbank, 2007). In line with recent usage 'aspirational goals' can be understood as goals that an individual expresses interest in achieving, but in reality is unwilling or unable or to work towards or make a commit to. For example, political leaders may have a aspirational goal of reducing global greenhouse gas emissions and global warming, but not have actually begun the striving process by setting specific pollution reduction benchmarks or enacting legislation.

Of course, not all goals are created equal. Different types of goals differently impact on individuals' performance and their subjective experience of the goal striving process. For example, Coats *et al.* (1996) found that people who tended to set avoidance goals had higher levels of depression and lower levels of well-being. Other studies have found that approach goals are associated with both higher levels of academic performance and increased well-being (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). Performance goals tend to focus individual's attention on issues of personal ability (Gresham *et al.*, 1988), and such attentional focus can actually impede performance when the task is complex or the goal is perceived as highly challenging, and the individual is not skilled or is low in self-efficacy. In such cases learning (or mastery) goals may better facilitate task performance (Seijts & Latham, 2001).

Self-concordance, goal striving and mental health

Sheldon and Elliot (1998) noted that not all personal goals are personal. Individuals can pursue specific goals for a wide range of reasons, and the specific motivations underpinning goal striving can have an important impact on well-being. For example, the degree to which a specific goal is self-concordant has an important impact on the emotions associated with the goal (Koestner *et al.*, 2002). Self-concordance refers to the degree to which a goal is perceived by the individual as being autonomous, that is emanating from the self (a internal perceived locus of causality indicating greater self-concordance), as compared with a goal that is perceived by the individual as being controlled by factors outside of the self or by the introjected ideas of others (external perceived locus of control indicating less self-concordance) (Sheldon & Elliot, 1998). It is important to remember that goals are nearly always motivated by a complex combination of internal and external factors (Spence *et al.*, 2004). Thus a dimensional rather than categorical approach is appropriate here.

Goals that are self-concordant and in alignment with the coachee's core personal values or developing interests are more likely to be engaging, and self-concordant goals are associated with higher levels of goal attainment, greater goal satisfaction and well-being (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999; Sheldon & Kasser, 1995). Further, both goal content (intrinsic or external) and goal motivation (autonomous or controlled) make significant contributions to psychological well-being or lack of well-being (Sheldon *et al.*, 2004).

As can be seen from the above discussion, goal striving and goal attainment may not necessarily be associated with mental health or well-being. Indeed, individuals may have high levels of goal striving and goal attain-

ment, yet have low levels of well-being and mental health. These observations have important implications for a coaching-related model of mental health and goal striving.

A languishing-flourishing model of goal striving and mental health

The proposed model of goal striving and mental health presented in Figure 3 has two key dimensions: (i) the mental health-illness spectrum; and (ii) intentional goal striving (high or low).

There has been considerable discussion attempting to define the differences between mental health and mental illness. One approach argues that mental health is more than the mere absence of mental illness (e.g. Keyes & Lopez, 2002; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). This view posits that the presence of mental health is best indicated by high levels of psychological and subjective well-being, rather than the mere absence of depression, anxiety or stress, whereas mental illness is indicated by the presence of high levels of depression, anxiety or stress.

Measures of well-being and life satisfaction tend to correlate between –.40 and –.55 with measures of psychopathology such as depression, indicating a shared variance of about 25 per cent (Keyes, 2003). Given the degree of shared variance, one useful way of visually representing the relationship between mental health and mental illness is in a Venn diagram with separate but overlapping dimensions representing mental health and mental illness (following the work of Grünbaum (2003) this is represented as a quadratic polygon in Figure 3).

It should be noted that the areas within this diagram are representative only, and are not meant to imply any specific distribution pattern in terms of numbers or percentages of coaching clients in each specific area, and of course, individuals will move from one area to another over time.

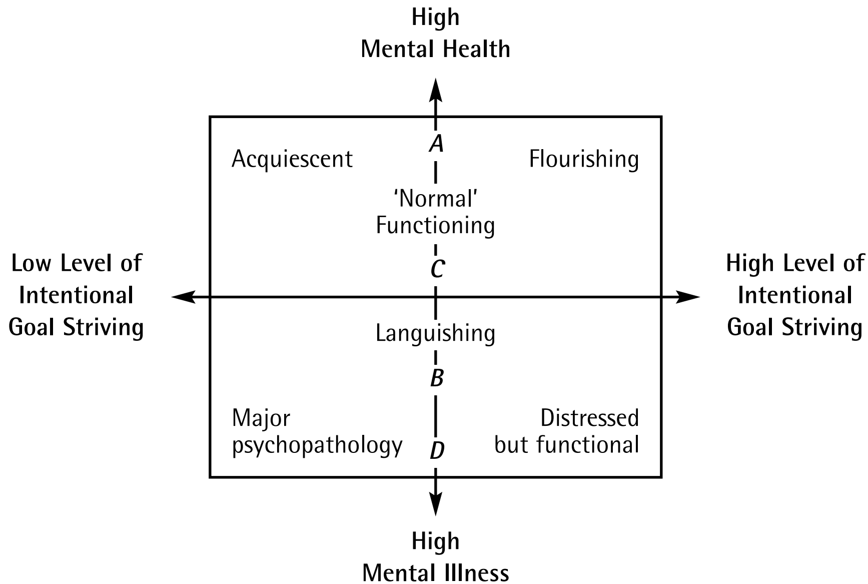
The mental health area is represented in the figure as falling between point *A* and point *B* (where *A* represents high mental health, and *B* represents low mental health) with the mental illness area is represented as falling between point *C* and point *D* (where *C* represents low mental illness and *D* represents high mental illness). Snyder *et al.* (2003) advocate the use of a dimensioning approach to the process of labelling and measuring mental health and illness, and argue that 'all dimensions would have the inherent capability of yielding information that varies in content from maladaptive to adaptive' (p.29).

Flourishing

The concept of flourishing used in this model extends Keyes's construct. Where Keyes defines flourishing by primary reference to the presence of mental health and the absence of mental illness, flourishing in the present proposed model is defined also by explicit reference to the intentional pursuit of goals. The far top right-hand area of this figure is where individuals have high levels of mental health and are engaging in high levels of intentional goal striving. This is the area of flourishing. Many would consider this area to be the ultimate goal of the coaching process. Goals in this area can be expected to be highly self-concordant because the long-term pursuit of self-concordant goals are associated with higher levels of well-being (Sheldon *et al.*, 2004). The relationship of levels of self-concordance to this area is of course is an empirical issue, and further research is needed here.

In relation to workplace coaching, clients in this area can be expected to be fully engaged in their work, find meaning and purpose in their work lives, and have positive relations with others in the workplace. However, it is important to note that high levels of intentional goal striving are not necessarily equivalent to 'getting things done', 'upward and onward' or 'high performance'. An individual may be intentionally striving to achieve less, for example, increasing the quality rather than quantity of their work performance, or redefining their

Figure 3: Proposed model of goal striving and mental health.



career path based on personal values, rather than corporate or social definitions of success. Indeed, increasing numbers of executives are engaging in such career plateauing (The Families and Work Institute, 2004). Individuals in this area may also be engaging in practices of *intentional non-striving* as in Buddhist and some mediative traditions. Paradoxically, such mindful or mediative activities can be also understood as being strivings in the pursuit of acceptance goals. Such acceptance goals may be articulated as 'My goal is to unconditionally accept whatever I experience, by bring my attention back to my breathing whenever my attention wonders.' Although the concept of strivings in the pursuit of acceptance goals may appear contradictory, such attitudes of purposeful awareness and intentional acceptance is central to mindfulness meditation (Kabat-Zinn, 1995).

Acquiescence

The top left-hand section of Figure 3 is where individuals have good mental health but have low levels of intentional goal striving, although they may well hold aspirational goals. This is the area of acquiescence. Here individuals enjoy psychological and subjective well-being, but are not actively engaged in an intentional goal striving process characteristic of the flourishing domain. To be acquiescent is to assent tacitly, to consent, to agree with other's wishes, and is the act or process of accepting. In this quadrant goals are likely to be only moderately self-concordant, as individuals may well show a greater tendency to accept decisions made for them by others or by setting aside the pursuit of their own goals in preference for the goals of others.

The notion that individuals can have good levels of mental health, and yet not be intentionally pursuing goals of their choice may at first glance appear to be incongruent. However, many parents will be familiar with the experience of having to set aside their own personal career goals so that their partner or children have the opportunity of pursuing their goals. Paradoxically, setting aside their own goals may still result in parents experiencing psychological well-being, on dimensions such as positive relations with others and purpose in life (Ryff, 1989).

In the workplace, individuals in this area are the 'happy but disengaged'. It can be expected that individuals in this quadrant would be physically and emotionally present, but not actively engaged with the goals of the organisation. Although some individuals may well purposefully choose the kind of work that does not demand engagement, it may be that individuals in this area over time will become increasingly bored with the daily work routine, and may well drift into the area of languishing.

Languishing

The overlapping area between points *B* and *C* represents individuals who have low levels of psychological or subjective well-being without elevated levels of depression, anxiety or stress. This is the area of languishing. Whilst individuals who are languishing may be intentionally striving towards goals (possibly with the assistance of a coach), in general their lives are likely to be devoid of the pleasure often associated with intentional goal striving (Street, 2002). Such individuals may well be engaged in the pursuit of conditional goals.

Conditional goals are goals that are pursued because the individual believes that that its attainment will bring happiness and well-being (Street, 2002). For example, an individual may be striving to acquire a specific sum of money in the belief that 'everything will be fine' once that sum is in the bank. Such goals are likely have a relatively low level of self-concordance. The languishing state at the higher end of the goal striving dimension thus encompasses the notion of 'deferred happiness syndrome' in which individuals persist in the long term with life situations that are difficult, stressful and exhausting in the belief that this sacrifice will pay off in the long term (Breakspear & Hamilton, 2004).

Distressed but functional

The bottom right-hand area is the area of distressed but functional clients. Here we find individuals presenting for coaching who have high levels of intentional goal striving. They may highly functional, in terms of work performance, social status and earning capacity, yet still be dysthymic or even clinically depressed, anxious or stressed. Issues of mental health or mental illness here can range from moderately dysthymic or distressed (as represented by the areas aligned with point *C*) to more serious levels of mental illness (as represented by the areas aligned with point *D*).

This area is an area of significant challenge for coaches who do not have clinical or counselling training (Cavanagh, 2005). This is because, contrary to popular belief, it is not always easy to recognise depression or anxiety, particularly for those who are untrained in such diagnostics (Leimkuhler *et al.*, 2007; Preville *et al.*, 2004). Indeed, coachees in this area are unlikely to present for treatment for mental illness, and may not even be aware that they have such problems. The coachee is far more likely to present with issues related to time management, interpersonal communication difficulties or workplace disengagement.

Major psychopathology

The bottom far left-hand area in the model is the area of major psychopathology. Here we find clients with high levels of mental illness, which might include illness such as major depression, major anxiety disorders, serious chemical dependencies, self-defeating behaviour patterns or major personality disorders. In addition, clients in this area have low to very low levels of intentional goal striving and low to very low levels of functionality.

The term functionality in this context refers to the degree to which an individual is capable of carrying out the activities of daily living in occupational, social, or personal domains (see Roper *et al.*, 1980). According to the Global Assessment of Functioning Scale as presented in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (APA, 2000) very low functioning might be characterised by a danger of harm to self or others, a failure to maintain personal hygiene, serious impairment in judgment, serious

impairment either occupational or school functioning, interpersonal relationships, judgment, thinking, and/or mood.

Although it may appear self-evident that individuals in the bottom far left-hand area a are not suitable candidates for coaching, some commentators have suggested that coaching might be a more acceptable alternative to therapy, especially for those who are resistant to therapy (Filippi, 1968; McKelley & Rochlen, 2007). Coaching methodologies have been found to be effective in enhancing skills generalisation in social skills training programmes for schizophrenia (Gottlieb *et al.*, 2005) and for improving adherence to antidepressant treatment among primary care patients (Brook *et al.*, 2005). Further, some have suggested that life coaching might be a suitable therapeutic intervention for disorders such as Adult Attention Deficit Disorder (Ratey, 2002).

It is in this quadrant that the boundaries between coaching and therapy become dangerously blurred. Whilst a solid argument can be made in favour of *trained mental health professionals* using coaching methods to treat some forms of psychological disorder (e.g. schizophrenia, depression), this would be ethically unacceptable for coaches who are not trained mental health professionals (Spence *et al.*, 2006). This is because overconfident, poorly trained coaches may not recognise the limits of their competency and inadvertently do harm to their clients (for further discussion on these issues see Buckley & Buckley, 2006; Cavanagh, 2005; Sperry, 2004).

Can inappropriate coaching interventions do harm?

There has been very little discussion within the coaching literature as to whether coaching interventions can be harmful (Berglas, 2002). This is an important question particularly for coaching clients in the lower section of the model between points *C* and *D*, where individuals have increased vulnerabilities. The somewhat limited coaching outcome literature to date suggests that coaching interventions *per se* tend to be effective (for a recent review, see Grant & Cavanagh, 2007), but to date there has been little or no work examining the possible negative effects of coaching in vulnerable populations.

Support for the notion that, under certain conditions, coaching may be harmful for vulnerable populations comes from the clinical literature. First, it has been shown that not all interventions are equally effective. For example, cognitive behavioural interventions tend to be more effective than non cognitive-behavioural therapies for generalised anxiety, social phobia and obsessive-compulsive disorders (Chambless & Ollendick, 2001), and this suggests that some coaching interventions will be more effective than others.

Second, and more worryingly, the inappropriate use of psychological treatments can result in enduring psychological or physical damage. Lilienfeld (2007) lists a number of therapies that can be explicitly harmful through inappropriate usage. For example, expressive-experiential therapies can be harmful for some clients, as can be confrontational ‘boot-camp’ style interventions for conduct disorder, recovered memory therapy and critical stress debriefing.

Additionally, whilst some interventions might be ineffective and not directly harmful, they may carry *indirect* harm (such as elongated periods of suffering) and various ‘opportunity costs’ (such as lost time). Lilienfeld (2007) cautions that the costs of indirect harm should not be underestimated. This warning may be particularly salient for organisational and executive coaching clients, where both personal and business costs should be taken into account. For example, failure to address clinical levels stress or depression in a senior executive who is receiving coaching could result in an escalation of mental health problems, burn out and eventual executive derailment, and this could have serious consequences for the

coachee, their family, and for organisational stakeholders as a whole. Coaches who are highly skilled and well-informed about mental health issues are ideally placed to help prevent such unfortunate occurrences.

Ethical issues

If a coach is not qualified as a mental health professional they still have a legal and ethical duty of care to address the issue by making a preliminary assessment and considering referral options (Spence *et al.*, 2006). Even in the face of obvious symptomology, many clients are reluctant to accept a mental illness diagnosis or preliminary assessment, and are often reluctant to accept a referral to a qualified mental health professional (Bluckert, 2005).

Thus a key challenge for the coach is to determine if and how to work with the coachee. If the coachee is not prepared to take a referral to a qualified mental health practitioner for treatment, the coach needs to make a decision about whether or not to continue coaching. Ethically this is problematic because the focus of therapy is the explicit treatment of psychopathology. Coaches offer coaching services not therapy. Thus, most coaches would be acting unethically if they engaged in therapy with clients, as they would be acting beyond the boundaries of their competence (AC, 2006; ICF, 2005; WABC, 2003). In line with the understandings of coaching outlined above, a coach who is not a trained mental health professional may ethically work with a coachee from the distressed but functional population as long as the goal of coaching is not *intended* to primarily address psychopathology or serious intrapersonal or interpersonal distress, and as long as the coaching does not impede recovery from such distress.

However, for coachees in the far lower right hand area, their distress may be of such a magnitude that it significantly impedes their progress towards their coaching goals. Such clients are the ones where, despite robust goal setting at the beginning of each session the coaching conversation keeps returning to therapeutic issues, and the coach finds themselves repeatedly acting as a supportive counsellor. At some point the coach may have to take a firm stand and insist that the coachee seeks treatment. One way to deal with this is for the coach to highlight how the presenting symptoms are preventing goal attainment, and how appropriate treatment will help the attainment of the goals of coaching. Supervision for the coach is essential here and ideally from a supervisor or mentor with extensive experience in such issues.

If on the other hand the coachee is willing and prepared to accept a referral to a qualified mental health practitioner, the challenge for the coach then becomes one of how to establish a working relationship with a suitability trained therapist. This is about managing the possible three, four or even five-way relationship between (for example) the therapist, the coachee, the sponsoring organisation, family members and the coach themselves. This is not an endeavour for the unskilled or fainthearted. Managing the boundaries and interests of multiple stakeholders takes tact and a considerable investment in time and effort. Done poorly it can have a considerable negative influence on outcomes. Conversely, done well, there may be considerable potential to foster growth and recovery.

Future directions in research and practice

This paper has presented an initial theoretical model that integrates goal striving and mental health-illness and has discussed ethical issues related to coaching and mental illness. This has begun the process of developing a framework that situates the concepts of languishing, acquiescence and flourishing within the coaching and goal striving process. The model presented in this paper has utility for individual coaching and in organisational contexts. Future research should seek to empirically validate this model, for example, by developing

screening tools that map on to this model and which cover the full mental health-illness spectrum. We also need to discover the relative percentages of coaching clients in each area. This model also has potential in organisational context in terms of mapping well-being and workplace engagement, and when coupled with validated assessments may prove to be a useful framework for coaching for well-being in the workplace.

The main focus of coaching is on helping clients move from languishing or acquiescence to flourishing. It is the energising sense of fulfilment inherent in helping clients move from 'good to great' that attracts many individuals to work in the coaching industry. But just because we are solution-focused and positively-orientated does not mean we should be problem-phobic. It is all too easy to avoid the difficult issues of mental health and mental illness in coaching clients. In the past the coaching industry has side-stepped this issue with the mantra of 'it's coaching, not therapy'. This is no longer good enough.

Given that a significant number of coaching clients will have problems related to mental illness, it may high time for the major coaching bodies to make basic training in mental health issues, understanding of mood disorders and referral procedures a compulsory part of any coach certification process. In addressing this issue with coaches who are not psychologists, organisations such as the AC, ECMC, ICF and WABC should take a proactive position on this issue. Indeed, not to take such action is to fail to meet basic ethical duty of care requirements for our coaching clients, the coaching industry and society at large.

The proposed model presented in this paper is meant to be a starting point for future discussion and research about the integration of mental health, mental illness and goal striving within a coaching context. A sophisticated understanding of the issues related to coaching, goal striving and mental health can only help the coaching industry further flourish.

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Addressing deficit performance through coaching – using motivational interviewing for performance improvement at work

Jonathan Passmore

Resistance from coachees is a problem met by executive coaches in all fields. The continued interest in executive coaching by organisations has seen coaching beginning to be used more widely. An increasing number of low and average performing managers are following their high performing peers into the executive coaching room. One particular challenge facing the coaching psychologist is how to engage individuals where motivation for change is low.

This paper draws on a five-stage model for behaviour change and an approach developed in the clinical setting which can usefully be applied to executive coaching to help the coaching psychologist address some of these behavioural challenges and add to their core coaching techniques through combining Motivational Interviewing (MI) techniques with their existing repertoire of skills.

The paper starts with a review of the development of motivational interviewing, before moving to explore the evidence for MI as an intervention, which is largely within the health sector. The paper builds on this evidence by exploring how MI may be applied within non-clinical settings, as a tool to address poor performance resulting from low motivation to change. The paper also suggests other potential uses for MI such as in health coaching around stop smoking campaigns or obesity.

Keywords: Executive coaching, performance coaching, poor performance, deficit coaching, performance management, Motivational Interviewing, coaching psychology, Transtheoretical Model and behaviour change.

COACHEE AMBIVALENCE about change is a reality for coaching psychologists working with executives in the workplace. Yet coaching models are limited in their value in addressing coachee ambivalence. There has been so far little discussion of the readiness of the coachee for change and few of the current coaching models consider the 'stage' of change a coachee may be at, before commencing with the coaching process. Motivational Interviewing (MI) may be a useful contribution to the skill set of executive coaches, when used alongside behavioural and cognitive behavioural models (Passmore, 2007a).

This paper first discusses the development of MI and the theoretical bases in which it is grounded. The practice of MI is described with reference to the research literature. The paper then considers evidence from the application of MI in coaching, where MI has been applied in an organisational setting to resolve ambivalence about change. Finally, the paper offers suggestions as to when the coaching psychologist could most effectively use MI alongside more traditional coaching interventions.

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Development of MI

MI was developed in largely clinical environments by therapists working with drug and alcohol dependency. Therapists working with clients from these groups found that change processes in therapy mirrored natural change outside therapy. A key predictive factor whether people would change or not was they way they spoke about change during their sessions with the therapist. Clients who made statements that signalled a high level of motivation and a strong commitment to change, were more likely to make change, than those demonstrating resistance. Alongside this was a recognition that the language used by the client, could be influenced by interpersonal interactions with the therapist (Miller & Rollnick, 2002). Thirdly that changes in the words and language used by the client was a strong predictor of future behaviour change. It was observed that the style of interaction affected the change talk of the client, with empathic styles facilitating stronger change talk, and more confrontational methods generating less strong change talk or resistance talk (Miller & Rollnick, 2002).

The strong facilitative nature of MI has links to the humanistic counselling tradition, with its person-centred method of communication (Joseph, 2002). In the case of MI these person-centred discussions are goal related, which contrasts with person centred therapy. MI aims to enhance intrinsic or internal motivation towards behavioural change, by helping the resolution of ambivalence to change which is felt by the client (Miller & Rollnick, 2002; Resnicow *et al.*, 2002).

The approach also contrasts with traditional behavioural coaching approaches which are grounded in extrinsic motivators such as praise (Passmore, 2007b). In these cases the coach may seek to encourage a behaviour change through recognising and praising the efforts of the coachee, and encouraging actions which move the coachee towards the organisations expressed goals. MI takes the view that such approaches can have an adverse effect, and strength resistance to change. In MI the coach explores the values and goals of the coachee, and how their current behaviour may be discrepant with their ideal behaviours. The aim of the coach in this approach is to help the coachee clarify their ambivalence towards change.

Theory base of MI – Transtheoretical Model

A key concept of MI is to assess the coachee's state of readiness to change. The Transtheoretical Model (Diclemente & Prochaska, 1998) is a well-researched and influential model, describing how people prepare to change, and how successful change is maintained. The model argues that individuals progress through certain stages, as part of a change cycle.

The transtheoretical model argues that people experience different thought patterns at different stages of change. These include consciousness raising, where a person learns new facts or ideas that support making change, occurring at the contemplation stage, and self-liberation, such as making a commitment to change, occurring at the action or maintenance stages (Perz *et al.*, 1996). Likewise, the balance between pros and cons of a specific behaviour varies with an individual's stage of change. The coachee in the preparation stage experiences more negative cognitions and emotions towards their current behaviour, than a person in the contemplative stage of change.

Miller notes that movement through the stages is not always a straight path from precontemplation to maintenance, with relapse to an earlier stage, and spiralling through the stages, typically occurring before long-term maintenance is achieved

A key concept of MI is the importance of tailoring interventions to meet an individual's stage of change; it has been discovered that the style of helping must match the motivation of the person (Project MATCH, 1997a, 1997b).

Table 1: Using MI and other interventions within a Model of Change.

Change Stage	Intervention model	Focus for work
Pre-contemplation	Motivational Interviewing	Encourage the coachee to reflect on their current behaviour.
Contemplation	Motivational Interviewing and Cognitive Behavioural	Encourage the coachee to explore their current behaviour, its wider affect on their network (colleagues, friends and family).
Planning	Motivational Interviewing and Behavioural	Encourage Coachee to establish a plan of action; long-term and intermediate goals.
Action	Behavioural	Encourage Coachee to reflect on barriers and stakeholders. Who is going to be on their side and who is against them? Who will encourage and who will block their moves for change?
Maintenance	Behavioural	Hold the coachee to account, reflecting back previous goals and discussing barriers and stakeholders and referring back to values (motivators).

Passmore adaption from Diclemente and Prochaska (1998), Five-Stage Model of Change.

At the pre-contemplative, contemplative or sometimes preparation stages ambivalence is experienced by the client. This may be summarised by the statement; what's the point of changing? Ambivalence can often keep the client grounded, and not able to make the required change. It often explains why the person has not responded to demands from their partner and others to attend the training course or to correct the deficit behaviour, such as drug taking or abuse.

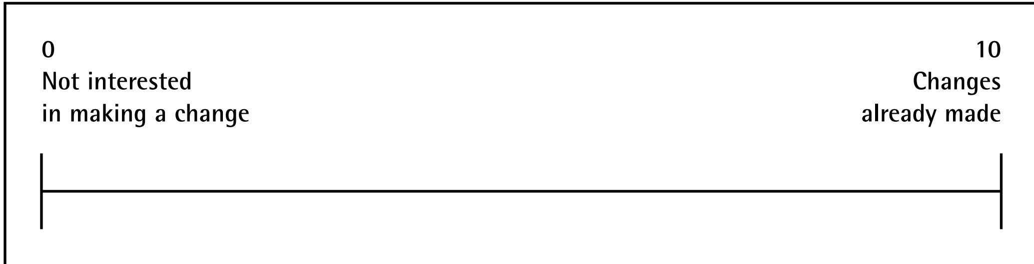
A therapists' response to such ambivalence, may be to offer unwelcome advice, education or options of action. Such interventions from the therapist are likely to result in resistance from the client, and frustration for both therapist and client. Resistance behaviours are often responses to the style of interaction, that is, a mismatch between the client's stage of change, and the therapists' approach. In organisational settings this may result in a coachee showing reluctance to attend the coaching sessions, complaints about the organisation being unfair in mandating attendance or complaints about the coach.

When applied to coaching the MI approach requires the coaching psychologist to recognise and understand ambivalence as a natural part of the change process (Miler & Rollnick, 2002) and to work with it. In line with MI, it is essential for the coach to know which stage of change the coachee is at. One way of doing this is to ask the coachee to rate their perceived readiness to change on a scale of 0 – 10, with 10 being that they have already made change, and 0 being not at all interested in changing.

This can be rephrased, depending on the nature of the relationship to 'If 10 was you would bust down the door to make this happen and 1 is you can't be bothered to get up from the chair, how motivated are you to…'. A alternative way of doing this is to draw the dimensions and ask the coach to mark where they are with a cross on the scale between 1 and 10 (Figure 1).

A second key concept of MI is that there is a discrepancy between the coachee's values and goals, and their current behaviours. For successful change to occur, the individual needs to be willing to believe that the target behaviour is personally

Figure 1: Change Continuum.



important to them, this often means that the goal is aligned to their personal values. Secondly, they must be ready to make the change a priority in their life.

The third element of MI involves the concept of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). In the 'ready, willing and able' trimumvirate, no amount of readiness will compensate for perceived inability (Rollnick, 1998). In this case, of skills deficit, the coach can step back into the role of trainer, mentor and facilitator to support the coachee in learning the new behaviours or skills required. This may involving drawing on a behavioural based models (Alexander, 2006; Skiffington & Zeus, 2003), or a facilitative model for supporting the development of the required skills.

One source of hope for coachees from the MI approach, is that there is no 'right way' to change, and if one given plan for change does not work, a coachee is only limited by their creativity as to the number of other approaches that may be tried.

These three concepts of MI are related, for example, readiness, relies on a perception of intrinsic importance and confidence to change (Miller & Rollnick, 2002). A coachee who does not see change as important, is unlikely to be ready to change, furthermore, a coachee who perceives change to be impossible, is unlikely to rate their readiness to change as very high. Exploring coachee ambivalence through the practice of MI helps to clarify which of these three concepts is keeping a client stuck in ambivalence, in turn identifying to the coach, which aspect of motivation needs to be the focus of change talk.

Clinical research

Most of the evidence base for MI comes from the clinical psychology environment where MI has been extensively used in drug and alcohol counselling, with strong evidence of effect (Burke *et al.*, 2003; Miller & Moyers, 2002; Solomon & Fioritti, 2002). It has also been applied to the field of chronic illness management, for example, helping people with diabetes to achieve better control of blood glucose (Channoon *et al.*, 2003; Prochaska & Zinman, 2003), in teenagers contraception interventions (Cowley *et al.*, 2002), and in cardiac management (Kazel, 1998). However, to date MI has remained within the health and clinical psychology environment, yet it has potential for wider application such as by use in coaching psychology when combined with individual models for change such as the Transtheoretical Model described above and when used as part of a wider repertoire of skills such as behavioural and cognitive behavioural coaching interventions (CBC).

Applying MI in coaching psychology

This approach has been developed based on MI as a coaching tool to help of address deficit performance. It aims to retain the core spirit of the counselling based approach but focus its application within a workplace context.

The basis behind MI interactions is that the relationship between coach and coachee is collaborative. The coach provides empathy and support, never criticising the coachee's efforts. The relationship is like a partnership

with the coachee being responsible for their progress, which fits with the application of behavioural and cognitive behavioural coaching, as these too can be highly collaboratively.

In applying the techniques from MI a number of key lessons can help increase the likelihood of success. The coach should avoid suggesting options, until the coachee has resolved ambivalence and is getting ready to take action. Coachees are free to choose their own method of change, in turn increasing the likelihood of long-term success. Coaches may try to persuade the coachee about the urgency, and the potential benefits of change, however, such tactics generally increase resistance and diminish the probability of change (Miller & Rollnick, 1991). Overall, the coach should aim to make the coaching session between the coach and coachee feel more like a dance than a wrestling match.

In this approach, MI has been applied in three separate phases. The first phase involves exploring the ambivalence of the coachee. The second phase involves building the intrinsic motivation and self efficacy of the coachee. The third phase, involves strengthening the coachee's commitment to change.

In the first phase, the coach uses open questions to encourage the coachee to talk about their situation at work, what has happened, what they feel and why they feel as they do. In this approach the aim would be to come alongside them. Initially this is difficult as unlike most coaching assignments where the coachee is either self-referred or is a keen participant, for these assignments the coachee has often been a less willing or suspicious participant. As a result the starting point is to make clear during the contracting stage that the coach's role is a servant to the coachee. Further, that the coach is not there to provide advice or to tell them what they should do; their actions are their choice and each carries associated consequences. The aim during the early phase is to get the coachee to do most of the talking, with the coach listening and promoting the coachee to reflect on their values and goals, in contrast to their actions.

A second core skill at this first stage is reflective statements demonstrate active listening and empathy to the coachee. This requires the coach to hold back from moving rapidly towards more directive and action orientated questions that are more typical of behavioural and cognitive behavioural interventions (Neenan, 2006; Alexander, 2006). Reflection is not a passive process. It is the coach who decides what to reflect on and what aspects to ignore. In this way the coach can direct the attention of the coachee and encourage them to focus on aspects which may help them to reframe the situation or move forward.

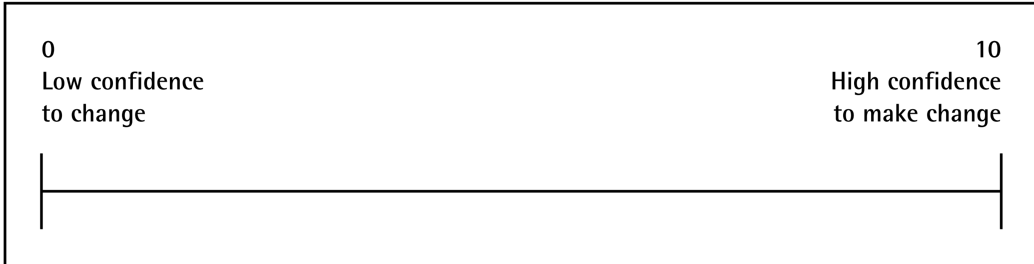
Ambivalence to change may be apparent because importance is high, however, confidence is low. To assess confidence to change, a confidence ruler can be employed, followed by: 'Why are you an X on the scale and not a zero?' and 'What would it take for you to go from X to a higher number?'

Offering affirmations also has an important place in MI. Affirmations facilitate an atmosphere of acceptance, helping to build confidence to change in the coachee and

Figure 2: Reflective listening.

Coachee: *'I have been referred by my manager for this meeting.'*
Coach: *'You've been asked by your manager to attend some coaching.'*
Coachee: *'I don't really feel that it's fair. In fact most of what she does is not fair. I don't need coaching. It's not me who needs to change it's her.'*
Coach: *'So, it seems to you that your manager has been unfair in referring you for coaching and that she has to look at her own behaviour as well.'*

Figure 3: Ambivalence Continuum.



demonstrating the coach is working as an alley of the coachee.

During phase one, the processes highlighted above helps to clarify and explore ambivalence. However, there is a danger for the coach of becoming stuck in ambivalence with the coachee. In order to maintain momentum, the coach can utilise directive processes, for eliciting and reflecting on change talk.

In order to elicit change talk, the ruler method described previously may be utilised. For example, it may be appropriate to clarify the coachee's rating of importance to address change and then to ask:

> 'Why are you at an X (x being a number) and not a zero?'
>
> 'What would it take for you to go from X to a higher number?'

It may be useful for a coachee to fill in a decisional balance sheet (see Figure 4), to reflect and reinforce ambivalence previously explored and discussed with the coachee. However, from personal experience coachees can be reluctant to complete the sheet for themselves. As a result the coach can help in this process and capture responds from the coachee, verbally summarising these and noting them down on the sheet. In this way the coachee has a record of their thinking at the end of the discussion.

Whether a person will continue to explore change talk or veer away, depends on how the coach responds. When resistance occurs, it is a sign that that the coachee is not keeping up.

Two summarising techniques can be useful to the coach to amply the reaction or to reframe it. Amplified reflections with an exaggerated emphasis, encourage the coachee to elicit the opposite argument of their ambivalence

Amplified reaction
Coachee: *'I couldn't accept a transfer to a new role in the organisation, my colleagues will think that I have failed in my current job and delays are my fault?'*
Coach: *'You couldn't handle your colleagues' reaction?'*

Reframing is a technique which acknowledges the validity of the coachee's claim, but the information is reflected back in a new light, more supportive of change.

Reframing
Coachee: *'I have applied for promotion so many times, they don't want me to have it and that's it. I am stuck in this role until I retire.'*
Coach: *'It sounds as though you have been amazingly determined. In spite of the disappointments you have received when you have applied in the past, you are still determined to progress your career her and fulfil your potential.'*

Emphasising personal choice and control, or shifting the focus away from the resistance, maybe other useful strategies to help roll with, and not confront resistance.

Figure 4: Coaching for change Balance Sheet.

Benefits of activity	Costs of activity	Benefits of change	Costs of change

The third phase of the MI process involves strengthening commitment. The coach needs to look for signs of decreased resistance, and decreased discussion about the problem from the coachee's perspective. Continuing the example from Figure 2, the coachee may say 'Well I guess I also need to do something too, to help my manager recognise the skills I have.'

A discrepancy between a person's goals, and their current behaviours, should now be clear, the next step is to help the coachee consider methods to achieve the goals. One route to achieve this would be brainstorming options; the coachee's task is then to select a preferred option. A plan for change can then be devised, including summarising issues such as: why change is important, how specific goals can be reached, predicting obstacles, and evaluating how change will be measured. The more the coachee verbalises the plan, the more commitment is strengthened. All of this has strong similarities with action planning within the behavioural and cognitive behavioural approaches.

The key elements of MI practice may be summarised as:

- Seeking to understand and affirm the coachee's perspective via summaries and reflective listening.
- Keeping the coachee focused on change talk, through selectively reinforcing the coachee's own motivational statements.
- Monitoring degree of readiness to change, and rolling with resistance.
- Accepting and affirming the coachee's choice of change and self-direction.

The evidence for MI in coaching psychology

MI is a new approach within coaching. As an advanced technique it requires a high level of skills in framing questions, active listening and accurately summarising. It also requires an appreciation of human behaviour and motivation. Coaching psychologists are rightly keen to review the efficacy of each intervention. As yet the evidence for the efficacy of coaching in the workplace is still in its infancy (Passmore & Gibbes, 2007) and MI is no exception to this. The evidence for MI to date shows it to be a valuable approach in counselling addictive and habitual behaviours, but as yet no studies have been undertaken in respect of its efficacy in the workplace. Initial evaluation evidence from coachees who have experienced MI coaching suggest that MI may be worthy of more detailed research investigation. This evidence is drawn from reviews from coachees of their experience on the completion of the coaching intervention.

Three short cases are presented here with quotes from the coachee as an illustration of the range of opinions expressed. While the reaction level evaluation show coachees appreciate the coaching interaction and there appears to be some impact on motivation, such evaluation is inadequate for us to conclude that MI coaching is effect as a tool for addressing deficit performance and low motivation. A further rider to the studies is that all of them were drawn from coaching in the UK with middle managers. However, based on this sample evidence MI is worthy

of further investigation as coaching psychologists plan and prepare the RCT studies which counselling has employed to demonstrate its value as a one-to-one intervention.

The first case is Susan, a middle manager in a public sector organisation. The coaching relationship involved four coaching sessions. The initial referral was from the organisation human resources team who had been asked by Susan's line manager to 'sort her out'. Susan revealed during her coaching session that she had worked for the organisation for 30 years, she had less than five years to go until retirement, and that the place had changed under the new senior appointments. The session spent a significant proportion of the time exploring values and life goals, which contrasts with a more behavioural or cognitive approach. At the conclusion of the relationship Susan reflected back that she was now reflecting on her motivation levels and how she might address her low motivation so she feel better about going to work each day.

> *'You have made me think about why I keep coming to work, and what I have to give to colleagues who are just starting out on their careers …'*

In Susan's case, the reaction feedback suggests that she has moved through the contemplation stage of the Transtheoretical Model, but had not completed the planning stage. As a result there is no action at a behavioural level which is planned or which is being tested out. Unfortunately, given the nature of coaching in real organisations, there is no evidence about Susan's plan or her subsequent actions.

Jack is a middle manager who lost out on an internal promotion. He felt bitter about the appointment process, and while able to welcome his new boss and get on with his old job, he was going through the motions. The reaction feedback at the end of the coaching relationship identified his need to act. Jack identified action plan choices as make the decision to move by start looking for a new job, or find tasks in his current role which he did enjoy and focus his energies on these to make a difference. Jack too was able to identify that a failure to change could result in him become a victim of the organisation. His language changed during the coaching and as it progress he was quoting stories of other managers from earlier in his career who had become characters of derision as they were 'old buffers' stuck in the past. Jack was determined not to become a source of ridicule from younger colleagues. By the end of the coaching Jack had identified a plan to take control of the situation. This involved planning his own departure and finding a new role which he found more rewarding, with a fresh challenge in a different organisation. He had allocated himself 12 months to find the role, and set other criteria which were essential and others which were desirable, to evaluate potential opportunities against.

The third case is Phil. Phil is a manager of a large team of building staff, which had a strong masculine culture. The behaviour and language used was inappropriate for the environment, and the appointment of female director responsible for the business had brought Phil into conflict with the director and subsequently the human resources director. Phil was referred on the basis of 'coaching, but if he can't change it will be disciplinary action'. The MI interventions offered an opportunity to explore how his elder mother, aunt, and his daughter, would react to the work styles in the team. The reframing conversations moved Phil's view towards one where he was able to express that that such language in what had been an all male environment may have been acceptable, but in a mixed work environment the style of working could result in people being offended and upset. Further that, as with his daughter, women had skills and the right to work in an environment where they were free from inappropriate remarks. In reviewing his approach Phil described how he viewed the situation differently, and while it was harmless fun, it could upset people. His change of heart in what was appropriate and inappropriate enabled a fresh approach in tackling such behaviours across the whole team,

which he led, challenging his colleagues in their behaviour, and having a plan to help him change his behaviour, so leading by example. In Phil's case he was able to make the move over six months from a fixed position to a new perspective, moving through pre-contemplation:

> *'This is not a problem, we have done this for years and no one has ever complained. It's all to do with my new boss, who is a woman.'*

Through the contemplation stage:

> *'Well I would not like my daughter to be call that word.'*

Into the planning stage:

> *'I have heard that at XYZ they took down the calendars and there is a swear box, we could try ideas like that too I guess.'*

The final step was a plan of action which Phil implemented, this helped him address his and his teams behaviours.

A word of caution from the Transtheoretical Model, and from what we know of human behaviour; human behaviour is difficult to change. The desire to change our behaviour and an actual change are two different things. In the first we may have the desire to change (Willing) plan of action (Ready) and the skills (Able). However, to succeed, we need to be persistent. This maintenance aspect requires the individual to continually catch themselves slipping back into old behaviour pattern and re-energising themselves to return to the plan. Support during this phase should not be underestimated, so the use of rewards and allies can help the coachee to continue after the coaching assignment has ended.

In selecting MI as an approach initial reaction evidence suggests that MI is best suited where the coachee may not be the client and has commissioned the coaching themselves. But instead have been referred by others within the organisation. In cases of working with deficit performance we have found that more traditional approaches, behavioural and cognitive behavioural interventions, were not helping the coachee to move forward. In these situations the coachee seemed highly resistant to change, yet they continued to attend coaching, as the organisation had mandated their attendance. This can occur in mergers and planned change where new roles have been identified and people allocated to new roles or have been asked to change and adopt the new ways of working of the lead partner in the merger.

A second circumstance is where the coachee is referred for coaching as a final step prior to the commencement of capability or disciplinary action. In this situation the threat of consequences is clear, but from my experience the coachee either rejects their manager's view that they need to change or believe that their manager is being unfair. The coachee is thus 'stuck' and is heading for a direct collision with the organisation (Passmore & Whybrow, 2007).

Proposed model

In these cases outlined above, the organisational client is often seeking explicit behavioural change. However, before behavioural based coaching can commence, the coach needs to explore and resolve the ambivalence to the situation, or threat faced by the coachee. Behavioural or cognitive behavioural coaching can then be used to develop the new skills or beliefs for success.

Research (Passmore, 2007c) suggests coaching psychologists already use a wide range of interventions, effectively using an integrated approach through combining humanistic, behavioural and cognitive behavioural elements. MI is a complimentary set of techniques which can be added to their repertoire with the appropriate training, although the nature of the intervention may make it less suitable for non-psychologists. The Integrative Coaching model (Passmore, 2007a), offers one way which the approach can be combined with other widely used coaching approaches such as behavioural, cognitive behavioural and facilitative (Palmer & Whybrow, 2006).

While not explored in this paper, MI also has strong potential for application in other areas of work by coaching psychologist such

as in health coaching and could compliment current Cognitive behavioural practice which has already been shown to be widely effective in health coaching intervention (Palmer *et al.*, 2007). Examples could include the application of MI to support smoking cessation either working with organisations encouraging their employees to adopt more healthy lifestyles or working with local health trusts (Primary Care Trusts in the UK) to promote behavioural changes where motivation is a factor.

Conclusion

The development of MI as a tool within coaching offers a new departure. Its integration as an element within a wider model could help coach psychologists to broaden their repertoire and offer a distinct approach which is grounded in psychological practice and is complimentary to already popular approaches.

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Life coaching in the workplace

John Sparrow

Objectives: *There is increasing recognition of coaching's situated nature. Different emphases in coaching are being utilised in different contexts with differing performance expectations. Life coaching has witnessed rapid growth within the last five years, primarily outside but increasingly within the workplace. The objective of this research is to establish the understanding, utilisation, and outcomes associated with life coaching in the workplace. Procurement practices within organisations are also explored.*

Design: *A cross-sectional survey of organisations is undertaken. Practices and reported outcomes are explored within small- and medium-sized organisations together with large organisations. Private, public and community and voluntary sector organisations are sampled.*

Methodology: *A postal questionnaire assessing 39 potential organisational outcomes, 93 potential individual outcomes and 21 potential procurement criteria for both performance and life coaching was developed. Responses from 51 organisations were obtained.*

Results: *Life coaching is found to be less well understood than performance coaching. Significant differences between organisational sizes and sectors in practices and perceived outcomes are identified. Coaching has significantly less impact upon entrepreneurship and social purpose outcomes than more general organisational outcomes. The outcomes more typically associated with life coaching are not secured to the same extent as outcomes typically associated with performance coaching. Both coaching in general and life coaching secure rectification outcomes to a greater extent than positive well-being outcomes. There are significant differences in procurement criteria for performance and life coaching.*

Conclusions: *A potential role for a life dimension in workplace coaching may be evolving. The contribution of the current study and other prospective research towards the development of theory and practice are discussed.*

THE INTERNATIONAL COACH FEDERATION SURVEY (2007) estimates that there are at least 30,000 people operating as coaches worldwide. There has been exponential growth in both the practice of, and research into coaching (Bluckert, 2004). The overwhelming majority of published research studies upon coaching in the workplace address work performance coaching within large organisations. These studies have been of great value in fostering theorising about coaching processes and in shaping evaluation methodologies. Early research bracketed coaching and mentoring as distinct from training (e.g. Rogers, 1989). Subsequently, researchers and practitioners sought to define coaching distinctly (Clutterbuck, 1998). More recently, distinctions between the forms and emphases of coaching have been considered (Cavanagh & Grant, 2004) and typologies developed (Grant & Zackon, 2004; Jackson, 2005). In addition, the context of coaching has now been acknowledged more explicitly and the complex milieu of considerations, social constructions and expectations more fully appreciated. Examples of coaching in the public sector (Olivero *et al.*, 1997), business (Leedham, 2005), teaching (Killion, 2002) and medicine (Atik, 2000) etc., can, therefore, be found. A significant body of research upon the outcomes of

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coaching has accumulated. Most of the research considers coaching generically however. There are no major differential evaluations of the processes and outcomes of specific forms and contexts of coaching.

There are two broad sets of factors that raise the need for recognition of differentiations in evaluating coaching: coaching form and context issues, and different types of outcome. These two sets of factors have implications for how organisations will approach the procurement of coaching.

Coaching form and context issues

Coaching form and context issues provoking investigation include the emergence of life coaching (in contrast to performance coaching), coaching within smaller and medium-sized organisations, coaching for social purpose outcomes and coaching for positive well-being.

Life coaching

There is an increasing recognition of the interplay between work and other aspects of life. Accordingly, life coaching has witnessed rapid growth within the last five years. Grant and Zackon (2004) distinguish life coaching (with a focus upon clarifying and pursuing life goals and values) from executive coaching, small business coaching and career coaching. In contrast to performance coaching, most of the coaching relationships are secured privately. There are very few independent empirical studies of its impact. The value of holistic life (including work) support *within* the workplace is now also being argued, however. This is evident in considering work-life balance (e.g. McIntosh, 2003) through addressing motivational problems that are affecting personal performance, for example. Whilst executive coaching has acknowledged the whole person in coaching sessions, in the main, coaching in the workplace emphasises fundamental aspects of behaviour, skill and personal qualities needed to secure 'effective' work performance. A broader conception of coaching has been argued for. Lazar and Bergquist (2003) suggest a clear role for 'making sense of one's life and the fundamental values and meaning that get expressed through choice and action' within business coaching. This more embrasive form of coaching 'can open the conversation about how one's personal values match or mismatch those of the organisation in which we work and the personal and organisational impact of that match or mismatch … This form of coaching can initiate inquiry into *who we are being* (as distinct from *what we are doing*) at a specific stage in our life and how that fits into some larger plan' (p.3). Gooding (2003) suggests that life coaching offers a different paradigm within helping relationships. Some have argued that the shift of focus towards 'life as a whole' have de-skilled the role of coach to little more than can be achieved by friends and family (Lagnado, 2002). Others have argued that it brings a perspective to workplace coaching that is valuable. Killion (2002) summarises its role in supporting head teachers. Chambers (2005) highlighted improved career decision making and work life balance for GPs throughout a programme of life coaching sessions. Kirby (2005), in summarising the impact of life coaching within a UK city council, noted positive changes in their career and life in general, reduced stress, and of help in returning to work. Perry (2006) described how local government lawyers benefited in terms of achieving 'specific goals in both their personal and professional lives' (p.101). A proportion of the published impacts of coaching are written by the coaches undertaking the work. Whilst this can bring useful insights into specifics and dynamics in the context, there can be a degree of evangelism in the reporting. Systematic external evaluation is clearly needed. The emergence of life coaching as a distinct stream of workplace coaching raises questions concerning its role, differential procurement, process and outcomes.

Coaching within smaller and medium-sized organisations

Attitudes and practices with regard to human resource development in smaller organisations have been found to be different from larger businesses (Hyland & Matlay, 1997). In parallel, the potential of coaching to support entrepreneurs has also been argued (Thompson, 2006). Entrepreneurship and small business start-up has been argued to have larger life impact than employment (Parker, 2002). Entrepreneurial learning occurs in a rather piecemeal fashion. Thorpe *et al.* (2006) highlight the importance of the *ability* of the entrepreneur to self-reflect from their interaction with the environment. The depth/criticality of reflection refers to the extent that explanations of what lies 'behind' events are sought and learned from. Anderson and Boocock (2002) found that critical reflection and re-evaluation is rare and that learning processes beyond single loop learning are unlikely in small organisations. The potential for coaching (and in particular, a life coaching dimension) has been argued by Sparrow (2007) to promote more critical reflection amongst entrepreneurs and foster a learning-to-learn capability. There are no evaluations of coaching that contrast approaches and impacts in large vs. smaller firms. The perceptions of owner managers and entrepreneurs within small firm contexts have not previously been studied. The contribution of coaching to entrepreneurial learning warrants investigation.

Coaching for social purpose outcomes

Conceptions of the *effectiveness* of organisations are evolving. Definitions of 'success' focused around profit, financial performance and business performance are being replaced with notions that embrace social responsibility, community impact and the broad achievement of social purpose (Beck, 1997). This has implications for both for the perceived meaningfulness of work (and associated levels of job satisfaction) and the complexity of demands upon individuals. The extent to which coaching has been used effectively to enhance social purpose has not been studied.

Coaching for positive well-being outcomes

Much of psychological theory and practice and organisational behaviour intervention has been based upon the restoration of normalcy. Under this thinking people may fall short of some baseline conception of adequate functioning and be supported to achieve this level of effectiveness. Many coaching interventions support coachees to consider aspects of their performance that limit them (or are unhelpful) and bring them up to appropriate standards. 'Positive psychology is an umbrella term for the study of positive emotions, positive character traits, and enabling institutions. Research findings from positive psychology are intended to supplement, not remotely to replace, what is known about human suffering, weakness, and disorder. The intent is to have a more complete and balanced scientific understanding of the human experience – the peaks, the valleys, and everything in between' (Seligman *et al.*, 2005, p.411). Evaluations of the relationships between coaching and positive psychology have been considered in a special issue of the *International Coaching Psychology Review* (Cavanagh & Palmer, 2007). The extent to which current coaching in the workplace results in rectification and positive psychology outcomes is worthy of investigation. Similarly, life coaching specifically can secure rectification and positive psychology outcomes. Green *et al.* (2006) report utilising cognitive behavioural techniques within life coaching sessions and securing positive psychology-related impact upon goal striving, well-being and hope. The extent to which its operation in the workplace secures these different outcomes needs to be established.

The current study, therefore, sought to address four major considerations: (i) the outcomes associated with *performance* vs. *life coaching*; (ii) the contribution of coaching to *entrepreneurs* and *smaller organisations* in addition to those for employees and larger

organisations; (iii) the role of coaching in *enhancing the social purpose* in addition to the enterprise effectiveness of organisations; and (iv) the perceived impact of coaching in terms of *positive psychology outcomes* in addition to rectification outcomes.

Types of outcome

There is an emerging body of research detailing potential benefits of coaching at the organisational level in addition to the individual level.

Impacts upon organisations

Numerous studies have established or hypothesised benefits to organisations from the use of coaching. At the highest level, Stalinski (2004) reports impacts on corporate vision and strategy. Kilburg (2000) discusses improvements in strategic planning. Stern (2001) highlights a contribution to organisational learning and Haeckel (1999) potentially upon adaptability of the enterprise. Grant and Zackon (2004) note improved change management, and Davis (2004) notes the contribution in terms of *sustained* change and development. Others have indicated functional benefits to businesses including: improved employee retention, improved morale and satisfaction, improved business relationships, increases in performance and enhanced staff management and leadership skills, and empowerment (Sales Academy, 2007). Wilson (2004) reports a survey conducted by the Industrial Society highlighting fuller use of talents/potential and higher organisational performance/productivity. McGovern *et al.* (2001) report reductions in conflict, and improvements in productivity, quality, customer service and teamwork. Other surveys (e.g. International Coach Federation Survey, 1998) detail improved profit, client service and competitiveness, and an ability to develop people for the next level. More mundane benefits have also been reported (e.g. reduction in length of meetings) (Killion, 2002). The *symbolic* contribution of coaching has also been highlighted. The Industrial Society (1999) found in their survey of UK firms that the most cited benefits included the *demonstration* of commitment to individual development. With regard to smaller organisations, Kitching and Blackburn (2002) report perceived benefits of training in terms of improved worker skills for their current jobs, business survival, helping the introduction of new equipment or software into organisations, improving skills for future jobs and addressing specific work problems. Whether coaching *per se* can contribute in these regards has not been established and these questions were, therefore, included. The potential contribution to entrepreneurship has also been explored. Doyle and O'Neill (2001) detail the benefits of mentoring, Westhead *et al.* (2005) highlight developments associated with entrepreneurial experience, and Cope and Watts (2000) highlight entrepreneurial learning. These may benefit from coaching support (e.g. spot opportunities more easily, exploit identified opportunities more easily, develop network of relationships, building reputation, adapt to new circumstances, effectiveness of learning process). The potential role of coaching in supporting the achievement of social purpose can be assessed in terms of aspects that have been highlighted as particularly salient in that context. Flannery and Dieglmeier (2000) report that leading social purpose enterprises entails achieving social purpose; social goal setting; working with less precise 'technologies' and techniques; maintaining effective relationships with more complex amalgams of social beneficiaries, intermediaries and partners; and, working with more ambiguous measures of effectiveness.

Impact upon individuals

In addition to the above benefits for organisations, coaching research and practice has explored impact on individuals. Fundamental performance has altered in terms of productivity (Olivero *et al.*, 1997) and response to empowerment (Lazar & Bergquist, 2003).

Broader impacts in terms of quality of life have also been investigated (Griffiths, 2005). Impacts have been reported in terms of health or fitness improvement, better family relationships, increased energy and more fun (International Coach Federation Survey, 1998); reflecting to see the big picture, feeling good with more energy and positive feelings, having attitudes values and beliefs more aligned, job satisfaction and being relaxed and less driven (Leedham, 2005). Behavioural changes in terms of co-operation, listening, focus on results and receptivity to feedback (Paige, 2002); attaining a determined set of stretch goals and dealing with dilemmas (Kets de Vries, 2004) have been reported. Work benefits also include alignment with the organisation, vision, strategies for goal achievement, confidence, leadership and task completion (Compasspoint Nonprofit Services, 2003); tackling bigger challenges with more skill and confidence, achieve better results, capability, level of contribution within the organisation, and individual growth and development (Sales Academy, 2007). Leadership and decision-making skills have been found to benefit from coaching: courage, risk taking and problem-solving; values, ethics and integrity; 'hard' executive business skills such as marketing and negotiation; commitment, responsibility and accountability; and, systems thinking (Stalinski, 2004). Other skills benefits include: presentational skills, anger management and stress management (Kilburg, 2000); improved coping with stress (Gyllensten & Palmer, 2006); creativity, innovation and risk management (Watson, 2004), and on-going self-directed learning and personal growth (Grant, 2003a). Improvements in priority setting, delegation, balance between home life and work, performance effectiveness and stress reduction are reported by Atik (2000) and setting specific, rather than vague, goals by Smither *et al.* (2003).

Personal qualities have also been reported to be developed: presence, increased motivation levels, can initiate inquiry into *who they are being* (as distinct from *what they are doing*), express their deepest longings and life-joys, recognise broader thinking and feeling that are shaping *underlying assumptions and beliefs* (Lazar & Bergquist, 2003); increased openness to personal leaning and development (Wilson, 2004); engagement and improvement in self-esteem (Kassell, 2005). Key aspects of emotion are highlighted: expression of positive emotions, enhanced emotional stability and openness to new experiences (Grant, 2003b). Aspects of selfhood have been considered: self image, self correction and self generation (Laske, 2003); expanding the level of self awareness (Dawdy, 2004); self-expression (Griffiths, 2005). Because of the interest in the study in entrepreneurship impacts, the entrepreneurial learning developments highlighted by Sullivan (2000) were explored (i.e. achieving objectives and abilities to learn, cope with problems and cope with change).

Enhancements in several of the outcomes in the above listing could be expected from life rather than performance coaching. Studies that expressly reported outcomes linked to life coaching led to the addition of items associated with life coaching *per se.* These were: proactivity, making autonomous and informed decisions, being more assertive, planning in non-work areas of life, and reduction in fear of the unknown (Kirby, 2005); circumstances that hold the person back and self-discovery (Perry, 2006); procrastination and action orientation (Kersley, 2002); and, time management and organisational skills (Chambers, 2005).

Some of the individual benefits reported in previous studies could be regarded as 'positive psychology' outcomes rather than rectification or remedial facets of behaviour, and research exploring this broad realm of outcomes is warranted. Furthermore, there is research that has explored specific positive psychology outcomes. Studies range from focused assessment of 'satisfaction with life' (Diener *et al.*, 1985) and facets of positive affect (Clark & Tellegen, 1988) through to

larger frameworks of psychological well-being. Satisfaction with life has been assessed by Diener *et al.* (1985) through questions such as 'In most ways my life is close to my ideal', 'I am satisfied with my life', and 'So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.' The Positive Affect Scale (PA) from the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS) assesses the extent to which a person feels enthusiastic and alert, including 'interested', 'strong' and 'inspired' (Clark & Tellegen, 1988). More specifically, optimism (Arakawa & Greenberg, 2007) and hope (Snyder *et al.*, 1991) have also been researched. There are some frameworks of positive psychology outcomes considering well-being, happiness and broad interpersonal skill (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) or character strengths and virtues (wisdom, humanity, temperance, justice, courage and transcendence (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Procurement of coaching

Clearly the forms and contexts of coaching and the different types of outcomes are likely to be a major factor in the extent to which organisations will wish to use different forms of coaching service, and the considerations they address in procuring coaching. Research suggests that there are other considerations that the purchasers of such services also address. Sparrow and Arnott (2004) reported a survey of medium- and large-sized UK organisations, and found that organisations placed emphasis (in descending order) upon the 21 criteria for coach selection detailed in Appendix 1. Several hypotheses can be made to suggest that procurement priorities may vary in different contexts. Priorities may differ for example, between procuring life coaching services and performance coaching services, and there may be differences between larger and smaller organisations.

Methodology

An extensive questionnaire was developed to assess perceptions of practices and outcomes of coaching. The questionnaire was sent to owner-managers of smaller organisations (both SME and voluntary/community organisations), and human resource directors of larger private, public and community/voluntary sector organisations. Public sector organisations are financed and controlled by central government, local authorities, or publicly funded corporations. Private sector organisations are financed and controlled by individuals or private institutions, such as companies, stockholders, or investment groups. The definition of SME used for the study was businesses which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding 50 million euro, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding 43 million euro (European Commission, 2005). Donoghue *et al.* (1999) outline criteria by which community and voluntary sector organisations can be defined. Organisations in this sector are:

1. *Organised:* they have an institutional presence and structure;
2. *Private or non-governmental:* they are institutionally separate from the State;
3. *Non-profit distributing:* they do not return profits to their managers or owners;
4. *Self-governing:* they are fundamentally in control of their affairs;
5. *Voluntary:* membership is not required legally and they attract voluntary contributions of time and money.

The study was, therefore, constructed to support cross sectional analyses of different organisational sizes and industrial sectors. A quota sampling approach was used to ensure sufficient responses in each category for statistical analysis purposes. The emphasis in the research was to contrast practices in different settings. A study seeking to capture the 'general' position within UK organisations as a whole would have to secure responses from organisations in direct proportion to their prevalence in the economy. This would, for example, mean that 95 per cent of the sample would need to be from SMEs.

The databases used for the sampling were separate listings of organisations purchased for prior research purposes. A listing of HR directors in organisations with more than 250 employees had been used in previous coaching research (Sparrow & Arnott, 2004). A listing of community and voluntary sector organisations had been purchased for prior research upon the sector. A listing of SMEs was purchased for the current study.

Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they believed specific coaching processes and outcomes occurred in their organisation. Responses to all questions were rated on a six point scale (0 – Not at all, 1 – Nominal, 2 – Low, 3 – Moderate, 4 – Considerable, 5 – Very substantial),

The questionnaire used in the study is presented in Appendix 1. The items in the questionnaire relate directly to the literature outlined in the Introduction to this paper. In total, 39 potential benefits of coaching to organisations were examined. Ninety-three questions concerning potential individual benefits were included in the current study. Participants were asked to indicate the extent of importance they attached to the 21 criteria in procuring life and performance coaching services, explored by Sparrow and Arnott (2004).

Responses were obtained from a total of 51 organisations, of which, 24 were private sector organisations, 13 were public sector organisations (e.g. NHS trusts, universities, colleges and museums and art galleries) and 14 were community and voluntary sector organisations. 33 of the responses were from small- and medium-sized organisations (<250 employees) and 18 were from larger organisations.

Analyses and findings

The analyses undertaken sought to compare mean responses from organisations in different sectors and/or of different sizes (SME/Large). One way ANOVA and post hoc multiple comparisons of means were made to establish the statistical significances of mean differences. In addition, some analyses contrasted ratings given to particular sets of items (e.g. performance vs. life coaching outcomes, rectification vs. positive well-being outcomes, etc.). *T*-tests for paired samples were used to establish the significance of mean differences.

Life vs. performance coaching

Participants were asked to indicate their own assessment of their level of understanding of performance and life coaching. The average level of understanding of life coaching was significantly lower than the average level of understanding of performance coaching (t=3.186, df(52), p<0.01).

Figure 1 presents comparisons between the use of performance and life coaching within organisations of different sizes.

Sixty-one per cent of larger organisations (i.e. more than 250 employees) used performance coaching compared to 45 per cent of the smaller organisations. In contrast, only 18 per cent of smaller organisations had used life coaching in the workplace and 28 per cent of larger organisations. The proportions of organisations using performance coaching were broadly comparable across the three sectors: 48 per cent of private, 54 per cent of public and 50 per cent of CV sector organisations. In contrast, only seven per cent of CV sector organisations, 23 per cent of public sector organisations and 30 per cent of private sector organisations had used life coaching.

Impact upon organisational outcomes

There were differences in the extent to which several specific enterprise benefits were felt to follow coaching. In addition, comparisons were made between broad sets of outcomes such as general enterprise benefits, entrepreneurship-related benefits and social purpose-related benefits.

Differences in specific enterprise benefits reported

Perceived enterprise benefits varied by organisational size and industrial sector. Smaller organisations reported greater

Figure 1: Percentages of organisations using performance or life coaching.

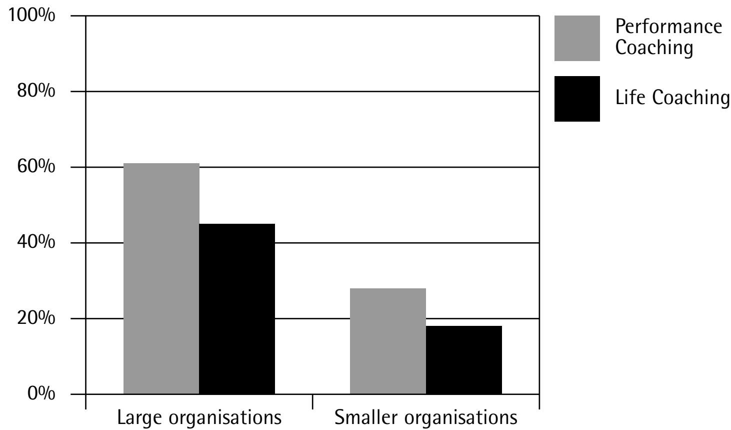
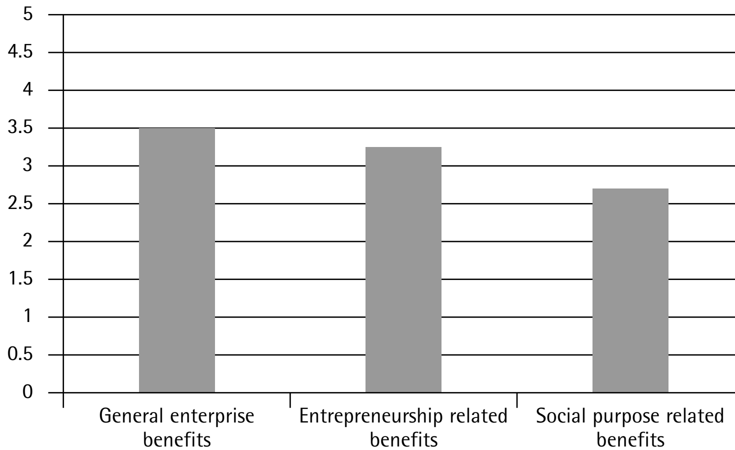


Figure 2: Mean reported extent of different categories of enterprise benefits.



impact in terms of development/achievement of business vision (F=6.672, df(1,41), p<0.05) and empowerment (F=4.374, df(1,40), p<0.05). Using Tukey's HSD post hoc comparisons, public sector organisations reported greater impact upon reducing length of meetings than private sector organisations (Mean diff=1.272, Std error=0.467, p=0.026) and greater impact on entrepreneurial reputation building than community/voluntary sector organisations (Mean diff=1.183, Std error=0.466, p=0.040).

General, entrepreneurship and social purpose-related benefits

Figure 2 details differences between three broad types of organisational benefits: general, entrepreneurship and social purpose related benefits.

The average level of impact on 'entrepreneurial' outcomes was calculated by adding the five items assessing entrepreneurship (i.e. spot and exploit opportunities, network relationships, building reputation, adaptability and entrepreneurial learning). The mean extent to which these benefits were

reported (3.16) was significantly lower than general enterprise benefits (3.54) (t=3.348, df(42), p<0.01).

The average level of impact upon 'social purpose' outcomes was calculated by adding the five items assessing social purpose (i.e. achieving social purpose, social goal setting, appropriate processes, relationships with beneficiaries, intermediaries and partners, and working with ambiguous measures). The mean extent to which these benefits were assessed (2.72) was significantly lower than general enterprise benefits (3.54) (t=8.172, df(42), p<0.001). Social purpose-related benefits were also significantly lower than entrepreneurship-related benefits (t=4.170, df(44), p<0.001).

Impact upon individual outcomes

There were differences in the extent to which several specific individual benefits were felt to follow coaching. In addition, comparisons were made between broad sets of outcomes: performance-coaching-related outcomes vs. life coaching related outcomes, and positive well-being vs. rectification outcomes.

Differences in specific individual benefits reported

Perceived individual benefits varied by organisational size and industrial sector. Smaller organisations reported greater impact upon delegation than did larger organisations (F=4.214, df(1,41), p<0.05). The centrality of owner-managers in smaller organisations is acknowledged to be one of the major barriers to growth. Delegation in that context is, therefore, of real significance. The impact upon the extent to which individuals attain specific stretch goals was significantly greater in larger than smaller organisations (F=6.278, df(2,39), p<0.05). In terms of sector differences, using Tukey's HSD post hoc comparisons, public sector organisations reported greater impact than CV sector organisations upon alignment with the organisation (Mean diff=1.067, Std err=0.426, p=0.044), systems thinking (Mean diff=1.267, Std err=0.434, p=0.016), creativity (Mean diff=1.083, Std err=0.409, p=0.032), and attaining a determined set of stretch goals (Mean diff=1.375, Std err=0.524, p=0.033). Using Tukey's HSD post hoc comparisons, public sector organisations reported greater impact than private sector organisations (Mean diff=1.059, Std err=0.377, p=0.021) and CV sector organisations (Mean diff=1.333, Std err=0.441, p=0.013) upon recognising broader thinking that is shaping the assumptions being used. Public sector organisations reported greater impact than private sector organisations (Mean diff=1.222, Std err=0.454, p=0.028) and CV sector organisations (Mean diff=1.444, Std err=0.537, p=0.037) upon sense of justice.

Performance coaching related outcomes vs. life coaching related outcomes

It has been noted that the individual outcomes associated with coaching could be elements that might be primarily addressed through performance coaching or alternatively, through life coaching. Researchers classified the 93 individual outcomes. Eleven items specifically reported in previous research studies to be outcomes of life coaching were coded as life coaching outcomes. In addition, a further 43 items were coded as life coaching outcomes. Thirty-nine items were coded as potential outcomes of performance coaching.

Figure 3 details differences between the mean levels of reported impact for performance coaching oriented (3.33) and life coaching oriented individual outcomes (3.07).

There was statistically significantly greater impact upon performance coaching related items than life coaching related outcomes (t=5.233, df(36), p<0.001).

Rectification vs. positive well-being outcomes

Items were also coded in terms of positive psychology related outcomes as opposed to rectification items. Sixty-eight items were coded as rectification-oriented. In addition to the 15 items chosen specifically on the basis of the summarised positive psychology

Figure 3: Mean reported performance coaching related vs. life coaching related individual outcomes.

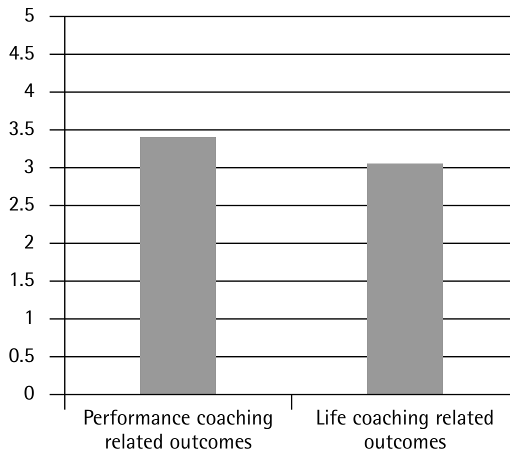
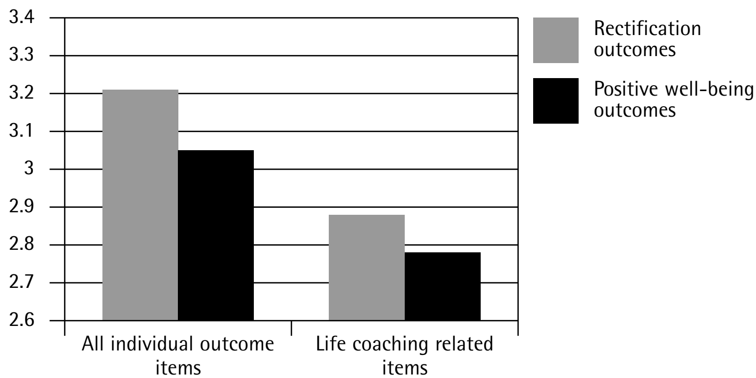


Figure 4: Mean reported rectification vs. positive well-being outcomes for all individual outcome items and life coaching related items specifically.



research, a further 10 items were coded as positive psychology related outcomes. Items here included, for example, energetic; fun; courage and risk taking; and personal growth. The mean scores for rectification items and positive well-being items were calculated for each respondent. Paired *t*-test comparisons were made between these two sets of scores. Figure 4 details the differences between the overall mean levels of rectification and positive well-being outcomes. Figure 4 also details the differences between rectification and positive well-being outcomes for items specifically coded as life-coaching-related.

Figure 4 highlights that there was statistically significantly greater coaching impact upon rectification related outcomes (3.29) than positive well-being related outcomes (2.87) (t=5.633, df(36), p<0.001). With regard to life coaching items specifically, Figure 4 highlights that there was significantly greater impact upon rectification outcomes (3.20) than positive well-being outcomes (2.86) (t=5.457, df(38), p<0.001).

Procurement criteria

Given the significant differences in understanding and impact of life and performance coaching, one might hypothesise differences in procurement criteria. Some organisations report a policy not to utilise life coaching. Several have not sought it. Somewhat different procurement emphases were apparent.

Table 1 details the rank orders of extent to which different criteria are sought in procuring performance and life coaching. Relevant management experience (t=2.589, df(34), p<0.05), knowledge of the organisation (t=3.309, df(34), p<0.01) and experience in the industry (t=2.758, df(34), p<0.01) are regarded as significantly less important in procuring life coaching. In terms of differences between sizes of organisations and industrial sectors in procurement criteria, smaller organisations seek knowledge of the organisation more than larger businesses for performance coaching (F=4.740, df(1,33), p<0.05), and third sector organisations feel cost is more of an issue for life coaching than private sector organisations (Mean diff=1.129, Std err=0.479, p=0.05).

Discussion and conclusions

Coaching plays an important role within the workplace. It is clear that there are many areas of improvement that individuals are perceived to secure. Furthermore, organisational benefits are also attributed.

There are clear differences between sizes of organisations and industrial sectors in their experiences of coaching and the outcomes they secure. Coaching is not reported to have as large an impact upon entrepreneurship and social purpose outcomes as other aspects of work life. This may be because the conventional success factors associated with employment are the default themes and foci of coaching agreements. The 'need' for realising potential in entrepreneurial and social purpose terms is a quite recent development. An alternative explanation is that such outcomes are inherently more difficult to secure.

The current study has shown that life coaching is being procured and practised within the workplace. It is, however, less well understood than performance coaching. Outcomes more highly associated with life coaching are not perceived to be secured to the same extent as outcomes primarily associated with performance coaching. Furthermore, life coaching in workplace settings appears to secure rectification outcomes to a greater extent than positive well-being outcomes. This conflicts with a fundamental argument for life coaching, i.e. releasing potential. It may be however that less tangible outcomes as a whole are not perceived so readily as *behavioural* changes and are given lower ratings. It may be that more diffuse outcomes are less identifiable than *specific* behaviours.

The holistic nature of life coaching may have a role within the workplace. Whether this holism represents a new paradigm of helping (Gooding, 2003), is a more complete form of coaching, or is a 'dimension' of coaching that can be applied within existing coaching approaches remains a question. The broad recognition that *executive* coaching needs to acknowledge the whole person and wider life considerations suggests that life coaching can have a role in complex knowledge work. The acknowledgement of a life dimension to coaching may have been seen to be the 'preserve' of senior executives and not sufficiently important for the work of others. The unerring trend towards knowledge work means however, that it is the knowledge, thinking and decision making of many individuals in the workplace that now contribute to organisational success and the life coaching perspective may increasingly have a role more widely in the workplace.

Whether life coaching is being offered as an independent form of coaching or as an adjunct to other coaching support again is not yet clear. Will established performance coaches offer this component? Will organisations procure life coaching distinctly? The current study suggests that some of the

Table 1: Reported differences in the rank orders of extent to which different criteria are used in procuring performance and life coaching.

Performance coaching	Life coaching
Professional standards	Track record
Track record	Personal style
Coaching experience	Coaching experience
Related management experience	Coaching qualifications
Structured approach	Evidence of CPD
Coaching qualifications	Culture fit
Evidence of CPD	Cost
Cost	Structured approach
Culture fit	Related management experience
Presentation and materials	Presentation and materials
Knowledge of organisation	Supervision
Issue fit	Issue fit
Experience in the industry	Geographic coverage
Supervision	Knowledge of organisation
Geographic coverage	Experience in the industry
Scalability	Scalability

attributes currently sought from providers of performance coaching are not considered as important in the provision of life coaching. It has not been established by the study, however, that life coaching *benefits* from a lack of familiarity with an organisation or particular industry (though such an argument might be put). It may therefore be that procurement criteria of the two forms of coaching will progressively blur.

The current study has identified perceptions of the value of coaching and some interesting differences. There are limitations in the study. The study has used a cross sectional survey methodology. Whilst the responses secured have provided sufficient statistical power to detect differences, it is clear that an larger scale study might be able to identify further differences. The study uses a positivist epistemology. Concepts are used and assessments of them are sought. Clearly these may not be the constructs used by the respondents. It may be that items are not understood in the same way by each participant. There may be many other outcomes that the survey by definition failed to see. The study has also solely explored the *benefits* of coaching. It has not considered any adverse outcomes or difficulties in the utilisation of coaching. There is clear value in complementary qualitative and interpretivist research exploring the meaning and situated impact of life coaching within workplaces.

Evidenced-based coaching can only benefit from acknowledging the different dimensions and contexts of coaching and undertaking associated investigations.

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Appendix 1: The Coaching Survey Questionnaire.

Reference No: ....

The Procurement of Coaching Services

The following questions relate to the procurement of coaching services within your enterprise.

The questions use a scale ranging from 0 to 5 where 0 means 'not at all' and 5 means 'very substantial'. Please underline a number on the scale to indicate the answers that are appropriate to you and your enterprise.

Coaching here is being defined as:

'... an ongoing professional relationship that helps people produce extraordinary results in their lives, careers, businesses, or organisations.
Through the process of coaching, clients deepen learning, improve their performance, and enhance their life'. (The International Coaching Federation)

The ***scope*** of coaching provided through the workplace however can vary. Since the 1980s, *performance* coaching has been used to enhance competencies in businesses. More recently, *life* coaching has been offered to people outside of the workplace, but increasingly within the workplace. The following definitions of performance and life coaching may be helpful:

Performance coaching involves '... working with a person inside the business to get things done and improve performance.' (European Mentoring and Coaching Council)

Life coaching helps you to '... realise your potential, and attain success in both your personal and professional life.' (uklifecoaching.org)

Before starting on the main questionnaire, it would be useful to know if you or your enterprise have used coaching services.

Please tick	Performance coaching	Life coaching
Have you used coaching services personally?	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Has your enterprise used coaching services?	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No

It would also be useful to know how you would assess your own understanding of performance and life coaching.

Please underline a scale point	Performance coaching	Life coaching
To what extent do you feel you know about	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5

Benefits to the enterprise	
Please indicate the extent to which coaching helps …	**Extent**
Solve a specific work problem	0 1 2 3 4 5
Business performance/survival	0 1 2 3 4 5
Improve profit, client service and competitiveness	0 1 2 3 4 5
Being better able to introduce new equipment/process into the enterprise	0 1 2 3 4 5
Enhance strategic planning	0 1 2 3 4 5
Develop/achieve business vision	0 1 2 3 4 5
Develop/achieve business strategy	0 1 2 3 4 5
The ability of the business as a whole to ' learn'	0 1 2 3 4 5
Adaptability of the business	0 1 2 3 4 5
Change management	0 1 2 3 4 5
Productivity	0 1 2 3 4 5
Quality	0 1 2 3 4 5
Customer service	0 1 2 3 4 5
Business relationships	0 1 2 3 4 5
Demonstrate commitment to individual development	0 1 2 3 4 5
Management and leadership skills development	0 1 2 3 4 5
Individual performance improvement	0 1 2 3 4 5
Achieve fuller use of talent and potential	0 1 2 3 4 5
The potential for sustained change and development	0 1 2 3 4 5
Improve skills for current job(s)	0 1 2 3 4 5
Improve skills for the future	0 1 2 3 4 5
Improve employee retention	0 1 2 3 4 5
Improve morale and satisfaction	0 1 2 3 4 5
Develop key person for the 'next level'	0 1 2 3 4 5
Improve teamwork	0 1 2 3 4 5
Reduce conflict	0 1 2 3 4 5
Empowerment	0 1 2 3 4 5
Hold shorter meetings	0 1 2 3 4 5
Entrepreneurship: spot opportunities more easily	0 1 2 3 4 5
Entrepreneurship: exploit identified opportunities more easily	0 1 2 3 4 5
Entrepreneurship: develop network of relationships	0 1 2 3 4 5
Entrepreneurship: build reputation	0 1 2 3 4 5
Entrepreneurship: adapt to new circumstances more easily	0 1 2 3 4 5
Entrepreneurship: to learn effectively	0 1 2 3 4 5
Achieving social purpose	0 1 2 3 4 5
Social goal setting	0 1 2 3 4 5
Effectiveness of use of processes, technologies and techniques to achieve social purpose	0 1 2 3 4 5
Effectiveness of relationships with social beneficiaries, intermediaries and partners	0 1 2 3 4 5
Ability to work with ambiguous measures of effectiveness of social purpose	0 1 2 3 4 5

Individual benefits	
Please indicate the extent to which coaching helps …	**Extent**
Specific performance improvement	0 1 2 3 4 5
Enhance productivity	0 1 2 3 4 5
Priority setting	0 1 2 3 4 5
Delegation	0 1 2 3 4 5
Balance between home, life and work	0 1 2 3 4 5
Overall effectiveness	0 1 2 3 4 5
Reduce stress	0 1 2 3 4 5
Job satisfaction	0 1 2 3 4 5
Tackle bigger challenges with more skill and confidence	0 1 2 3 4 5
Increase level of contribution to the organisation	0 1 2 3 4 5
An individual grow and develop	0 1 2 3 4 5
Enhance overall capability	0 1 2 3 4 5
Personal 'presence'	0 1 2 3 4 5
Increase motivation	0 1 2 3 4 5
Increase openness to personal learning and development	0 1 2 3 4 5
Improve coping with stress	0 1 2 3 4 5
Clearer self image	0 1 2 3 4 5
Listening	0 1 2 3 4 5
Increase co-operation	0 1 2 3 4 5
Increase focus on results	0 1 2 3 4 5
Receptivity to feedback	0 1 2 3 4 5
Alignment with the organisation	0 1 2 3 4 5
Vision	0 1 2 3 4 5
Strategies for goal attainment	0 1 2 3 4 5
Confidence	0 1 2 3 4 5
Leadership	0 1 2 3 4 5
Task completion	0 1 2 3 4 5
Reduce procrastination	0 1 2 3 4 5
Set more specific (rather than vague) goals	0 1 2 3 4 5
Feel more positive (e.g. enthusiastic, alert, inspired etc.)	0 1 2 3 4 5
Have more hope	0 1 2 3 4 5
Be more optimistic	0 1 2 3 4 5
Achieve objectives	0 1 2 3 4 5
Ability to learn	0 1 2 3 4 5
Ability to cope with problems	0 1 2 3 4 5
Ability to cope with change	0 1 2 3 4 5
Feeling good, more energy, positive feelings	0 1 2 3 4 5
Self-awareness	0 1 2 3 4 5
Can see the big picture	0 1 2 3 4 5
Relaxed, less driven	0 1 2 3 4 5
Attitudes, values and beliefs more aligned	0 1 2 3 4 5

Individual benefits *(continued)*	
Please indicate the extent to which coaching helps …	**Extent**
More positive emotions	0 1 2 3 4 5
Emotional stability	0 1 2 3 4 5
Openness to new experience	0 1 2 3 4 5
To be better at what he/she does	0 1 2 3 4 5
Clearer about who he/she is	0 1 2 3 4 5
Ability to self-correct (scan and analyse to be a continuous learner)	0 1 2 3 4 5
Ability to self-generate (can develop new self-image, find new inner resources)	0 1 2 3 4 5
Improve risk management	0 1 2 3 4 5
Be a better systems thinker	0 1 2 3 4 5
Have a better quality of life	0 1 2 3 4 5
Be more organised	0 1 2 3 4 5
Engagement	0 1 2 3 4 5
Have better family relationships	0 1 2 3 4 5
Increase energy	0 1 2 3 4 5
Be more fun	0 1 2 3 4 5
The development of values, ethics and integrity	0 1 2 3 4 5
Courage, risk taking and problem solving	0 1 2 3 4 5
Commitment, responsibility and accountability	0 1 2 3 4 5
Presentational skills	0 1 2 3 4 5
Anger management	0 1 2 3 4 5
Stress management	0 1 2 3 4 5
Time management	0 1 2 3 4 5
Being able to say: ' Have a life that is closer to my ideal'	0 1 2 3 4 5
Being able to say: ' I am satisfied with my life'	0 1 2 3 4 5
Being able to say: ' I have got the important things I want in life'	0 1 2 3 4 5
Creativity: to be able to find new ways of . . .	0 1 2 3 4 5
Innovation: to be able to introduce a new product/process/culture	0 1 2 3 4 5
Interpersonal skills	0 1 2 3 4 5
Enhance on-going self-directed learning and personal growth	0 1 2 3 4 5
Address a behaviour that was holding the person back	0 1 2 3 4 5
Acquire how-to techniques and skill development: e.g. marketing, negotiation	0 1 2 3 4 5
Attain a determined set of stretch goals	0 1 2 3 4 5
Recognise broader thinking and feeling that are shaping the assumptions being used	0 1 2 3 4 5
Develop strategies to deal with dilemmas	0 1 2 3 4 5
Assertiveness	0 1 2 3 4 5
Empowerment to make autonomous and informed decisions	0 1 2 3 4 5
To become more proactive	0 1 2 3 4 5
Ability to plan	0 1 2 3 4 5
Reduce fear	0 1 2 3 4 5
Self-discovery	0 1 2 3 4 5

Individual benefits *(continued)*	
Please indicate the extent to which coaching helps …	**Extent**
Health or fitness improvement	0 1 2 3 4 5
Happiness	0 1 2 3 4 5
Well-being	0 1 2 3 4 5
Self-expression	0 1 2 3 4 5
Self-esteem	0 1 2 3 4 5
Action orientation	0 1 2 3 4 5
Wisdom	0 1 2 3 4 5
Humanity	0 1 2 3 4 5
Temperance	0 1 2 3 4 5
Justice	0 1 2 3 4 5
Courage	0 1 2 3 4 5
Transcendence (meanings of life)	0 1 2 3 4 5

Procurement of coaching services		
Please indicate the extent to which you would look for each of the following attributes in procuring coaching services	**Performance coaching services**	**Life coaching services**
Overall coaching experience	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Track record	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Personal style	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Culture fit	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Structured approach	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Costs	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Professional standards	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Knowledge of your organisation	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Issue fit	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Evidence of continuous professional development	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Related management experience	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Experience of the industry	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Appropriate coaching qualifications	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Scalability	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Has a coach/supervisor themselves	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Presentation and materials	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Geographic coverage	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Flexibility of the coach (use range of models, etc., and work with other coaching organisations)	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Focus on delivering results	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Uses professional body standards, codes of ethics, etc.	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Ability to apply a variety of practices/approaches	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
Other (please specify)	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5

And finally, it would be helpful to know a little more about you and your enterprise:

Approximately how many employees do you have in the UK?..

To what extent is it the intent to grow the enterprise? | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |

In which industry sector do you operate? ....

What is your role in the enterprise? ....

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your views are much appreciated.

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Making the most of psychometric profiles – effective integration into the coaching process

Almuth McDowall & Rainer Kurz

This practical paper is based on a skills session as delivered at the first International Coaching Psychology Conference held in 2006. It commences by discussing the use of psychometrics in general by emphasising the four psychometric principles as hallmarks of a good test; and outlining some of the advantages and potential limitations of psychometrics. In this paper a contemporary instrument, the Saville Consulting Wave® is introduced and its application is discussed in relation to coaching, with particular reference to a performance coaching context at work. It is concluded that no psychometric test is a panacea for each and every situation, but that skilful use greatly enhances the coaching process.

Keywords: Psychometrics, reliability, validity, freedom from bias, standardisation, objectivity, test user, test taker, Saville Consulting Wave®, Five Factor Model of Personality, Great Eight Competencies, competency at work.

PSYCHOMETRICS ARE NOT FOR EVERYONE, and certainly not for every coach. To illustrate, coaches who see their practice rooted in Humanistic or Rogerian approaches may favour an ongoing dialogue over the use of assessments during the coaching relationship. Anecdotal evidence for instance suggests that a number of coaches practicing career coaching favour other techniques, such as interviews, value card sorts or questioning techniques derived from counselling psychology over the use of tests or questionnaires. However, we believe that psychometrics can make an effective contribution to any coaching relationship, if, like a good seasoning, they are used sparingly and with care. This article is based on the skills-based session that was delivered at the First International Coaching Psychology Conference in December 2006, and thus necessarily takes a practical rather than theoretical focus. Our discussion focuses on the use of coaching and psychometrics at work, rather than other contexts.

First, we debate the value of psychometrics in coaching in a general sense, by discussing what psychometrics are, how to choose psychometrics, how to use psychometrics and when to use them in a coaching process. This will also entail a critical perspective on their potential limitations, with particular reference to the end user. Next, we will take our readers through a case study, using an actual profile, offering different approaches for interpretation and future use, leading to a final conclusion and recommendations for best coaching practice.

What defines a psychometric test?

Psychometric measures or instruments divide into ability tests where answers are scored as 'right' or 'wrong' and self-report questionnaires where there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. For convenience we will use the term test as shorthand in line with current practice.

It is important that coaches understand what psychometrics are, as even versed practitioners may find it difficult how to tell

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whether a measure is 'fit for purpose'. Whilst this following section may at first glance seem simplistic, the fundamental understanding of psychometric principles is core to their use. Defining characteristics of a psychometric measure are four psychometric principles: reliability, validity, freedom from bias and standardisation (Rust, 2004).

Reliability refers to whether a measure is consistent, across time, across people and different applications (Rust & Golombok, 1999). The most commonly reported form of reliability is internal consistency, measured through Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha, which tells us to what extent all items measure the same underlying construct (Cronbach, 1951). Reliability can however be more powerfully established through research procedures such as test re-test or alternate form comparisons. If the association between scores people obtain on different occasions at time one and time two or across two versions is sufficient, satisfactory reliability has been established.

Validity refers to whether a measure actually measures what it says it does. This principle is perhaps the most complex, as there are different forms of validity. Content validity assesses whether an instrument measures everything that it should be measuring. For instance, a work-based competency measure would in all likelihood need to measure different behavioural constructs, and not just one. Construct validity tells us whether the underlying psychological construct of a measure holds up. This can be established through procedures where scores from a new measure of a construct are correlated with an existing test of that construct. Criterion-related validity tells us whether test scores are associated with objective criteria, for instance whether results of a test correlate with productivity or performance scores.

Reliability is a pre-requisite for validity (Rust & Golombok, 1999) as any measure has to be reliable to be valid – if we cannot observe reliable results, we cannot be sure that these are not only due to chance alone. Saville and Nyfield (1975) summarised their interplay as: 'Reliability is about getting the test right, validity is about getting the right test.'

Freedom from bias means that a test should produce consistent results for everyone. If a test is biased, it means that groups of people, such as men and women, are getting different scores. One of the main sources in our multi-cultural society is item bias, where speakers of English as a second language interpret colloquial items, such as 'beating around the bush', or idiomatic items in a different way to native speakers (e.g. Daouk *et al.*, 2005). At the same time, it is possible that there are real and genuine differences between different groups of people, women for instance score higher on the inter- personal aspects as measured by the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire [TEIQ] (Petrides & Furnham, 2004).

Standardisation means that the test is administered and used under standardised conditions, and interpreted in a standardised way. Tests are typically either norm-referenced, where an individual's score is compared against general (e.g. General Population) or specific norms (e.g. Senior Executives), or criterion-referenced against a common benchmark that should be achieved on a test. An example for a norm-referenced ability test in the context of work would be the Watson Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal UK where the manual would refer both to the general working population as a potential benchmark comparison group, but also specific norm groups such as MBA students or senior managers. Standardisation also refers to standardised procedures when administering, scoring and interpreting a test, as the same procedure should be applied in each and every situation and for every test taker to ensure that human error and situational influences are minimised. The test manual would provide test takers with guidance here; some tests such as the Rust Advanced Numerical Reasoning Appraisal [RANRA], for instance, can be administered either timed or un-timed.

Thus, a good instrument should adhere to all four principles and have corresponding information in the test manual. In the UK, test reviews are available to members of the British Psychological Society via the Psychological Testing Centre while in the US the Buros Foundation publishes test reviews (see web-links at the end of this article).

Potential challenges for using psychometrics in coaching

There are some limitations around the use of psychometrics that we note upfront. There are some tests, such as the famous Rorschach Ink Blot test (e.g. Vernon, 1933), that are used with subjective interpretation. Most standardised instruments are purportedly objective, however, although even their use entails an element of subjectivity. Particularly personality profiles rely on the skilled interpretation of the test user to ensure objectivity. Another limitation is their choice of test as practitioners may prefer to keep using tried and tested measures. The research on personality measures is an example. Research over the last decades has consistently shown that the 'Big Five' model of personality factors provides an excellent summary of personal characteristics that is very robust (e.g. Barrick & Mount, 1991). There are many tests that build on this trait model, such as the NEO FFI, the HPI or the Orpheus. Not all practitioners have taken this information on board however, and stick in every situation with measures based on older models that they are used to, such as older 'type' measures. This can result in 'evangelical test users' – practitioners who solely rely on one or few tests. Whilst we do understand, and even advocate, that repeat use of a measure will make coaches better at providing in-depth and rounded assessments, this also brings the danger of over-interpretation. Test users may interpret individual scores too literally, or read too much into overall profiles, without corroborating their validity with the coachee.

Current training models, such as the British Psychological Society (BPS) Certificates in Occupational Testing in the UK, set minimum qualification requirements for test use. Level A training covers ability tests and is universally accepted by all reputable test publishers. Level B (Intermediate) training allows practitioners to use one personality instrument in the workplace only with short conversion training required for other questionnaires to safeguard accurate standards of interpretation. Further conversion training that safeguards correct interpretation of a specific instrument is usually required but may be expensive and thus somewhat limit practitioners appetite to move beyond a limited 'toolkit' that they are familiar with.

Despite these possible limitations, skilful use of psychometrics can add value to any coaching process. However, it is important to consider some of the common misconceptions about psychometrics which have long been noted (Rust, 2004). There is a commonly held belief that psychometrics treat everyone in a robotic simplistic way, and fail to draw out rich individual differences, for instance, with reference to stable underlying preferences (personality). This can be argued to the contrary. Whilst the psychometric profile itself should be robust, objective and standardised, its value lies in the discussion with the coachee, where care is taken to verify this evidence by drawing out relevant examples that illustrate typical behaviours. For some coachees, the profile may be accurate as it stands. Others may have found ways of compensating for natural preferences, for instance, overcoming a tendency to overlook detail by utilising appropriate checking mechanisms.

The second misconception addressed here is that tests are impersonal. Again, we highlight the fact that their value lies in the individual discussion of the profiles, which should always be a two-way process and give the coachee ample room to share their experiences. It is up to the coach to use this evidence with her or his professional judgement and, triangulate with the profile itself to formulate a comprehensive psychometric assessment.

Third, there is a widely held belief that people cheat on personality questionnaires to present themselves in the best possible light. A well designed questionnaire however should have build in checks that pick up any exaggerations or inconsistencies that flag to the coach whether this is a problem. Tests in the past used specific items to form a Social Desirability scale to flag possible attempts to fake, an example being the EPQ (Eysenck Personality Questionnaire). Modern questionnaires often profile consistency and acquiescence using sophisticated computer scoring algorithms; the Orpheus for instance has four different audit scales which assess potential positive or negative distortion, as well as checking for inconsistent or contradictory responses. More fundamentally though, there should be no need for the coachee to try and bias his or her responses in a trusting coaching relationship. Whilst candidates trying to distort their responses may be a problem in a selection context, the context of coaching should be such that trust and transparency are established from the beginning, making such attempts to manipulate unnecessary and unlikely.

Last but not least, there is also a misconception that psychometrics put people into 'boxes'. This is likely to be due to the popularity of 'type' measures that presume that people pertain to a number of psychological types that remain stable over life-time. Contemporary instruments that are designed for use in the workplace acknowledge, however, that people's personal preferences or styles can change and thus be targeted through activities such as coaching. Examples for measures that combine the measurement of stable characteristics with the prediction of work-based competencies are the Occupational Personality Questionnaire (Saville *et al.*, 1984) and Saville Consulting Wave®, (Kurz *et al.*, in press) both developed under the leadership of Professor Peter Saville. The scales in these tools are work relevant rather than designed to measure general or clinical constructs. They operate at the level of detail that reflects the true complexity of people and jobs rather than at the parsimonious yet highly abstract level that academics prefer. The tools distinguish between the measurement of psychological traits on one hand and the reporting of derived Competency Potential scores that translate this specialist terminology into the everyday language of competencies backed by large scale criterion validation evidence on the other hand.

The advantage of such competency-oriented measures is that they can be used at various stages in the coaching process. Good coaching lets a coachee become more aware of what they can do with their life and prepares them to take more responsibility for it. This is achieved through sessions structured around questioning. The test results can for example support the use of each stage of the GROW (Goal, Reality, Options, Will) approach originally put forward in the 1980s (Alexander & Renshaw, 2005) that sequences or orders those questions in sessions.

First, they can be used as a baseline measure that helps coach and coachee understand the general goals aspired to, the current reality, the option of building on specific strengths or tackling development needs, and what the coachee is likely to commit to. It is likely to be useful to bring in other evidence, too, such as a 'value elicitation' task or a 'lifeline' exercise that generates evidence over and above the psychometric profile. Second, as these measures allow for behaviour change, they can also be used as an evaluation tool towards the end of a long-term coaching process, or in a stand-alone follow-up session to measure where progress has been made.

The next section illustrates the use of psychometrics in coaching using actual, albeit anonymised, profile excerpts generated using the Saville Consulting Wave® Professional Styles questionnaire. This section will commence with an introduction to the underlying model, then move to explain the profile; resulting in suggestions for interpreting and using the information present.

Using Saville Consulting Wave® Styles Questionnaires in Coaching

The Saville Consulting Wave® model (see MacIver *et al.*, 2006) is hierarchical, providing four levels of detail and utilising a century of personality research as well as technological advances to create an integrated suite of tests. Figure 1 shows the four behaviour clusters at the apex that provide a broad overview of the key characteristics that underpin work performance. Each cluster is comprised of three sections that are particularly suitable for finely grained assessment. Each section consists of three dimensions that measure behaviour at the level of detail expected by experienced psychometric test users. Each dimension breaks down into three facets that jointly define the dimension. These facets provide breadth of measurement while maintaining clarity of meaning.

The model incorporates, as shown in Table 1, the Great Eight competencies (a model of generic workplace effectiveness) as well as widely-accepted psychological constructs such as the Big Five personality factors, motivational need factors and intelligence.

Barrick and Mount (1991) outlined the research base for the broad Big Five trait factors that have frequently been found and replicated in personality research **O**penness to Experience, **C**onscientiousness, **E**xtraversion, **A**greeableness and **N**euroticism (the initials of which form the handy OCEAN mnemonic). They traced back the origins of the Big Five to the work of Norman (1963) and acknowledged that over the years different names had been used for what is now understood to be essentially the same construct set. Neuroticism is increasingly referred to in the wake of Positive Psychology as Emotional Stability or Confidence while Agreeableness and Openness to Experience are sometimes measured through their opposite pole, e.g. Independence and Conventionality respectively.

The emergence of the Big Five model as the higher-order categorisation of self-report personality factors eventually led to the development of the 'Great Eight' competencies model by Kurz and Bartram (2002), whose model added Need for Power, Need for Achievement and Intelligence oriented competency constructs. They defined competencies in relation to their significance for performance at work as 'sets of behaviours that are instrumental in the achievement of desired results or outcomes'. Ability or personality traits in contrast 'exist' and can be measured in isolation from a work context.

Table 1: Mapping of Great Eight Competency Factors and Psychological Constructs against the Saville Consulting Wave® Behaviour Clusters.

Wave Behaviour Clusters	Great Eight Competencies	Psychological Constructs
Solving Problems	Analysing & Interpreting	Intelligence
	Creating & Conceptualising	Openness to Experience
Influencing People	Interacting & Presenting	Extraversion
	Leading & Deciding	Need for Power
Adapting Approaches	Supporting & Co-operating	Agreeableness
	Adapting & Coping	Emotional Stability
Delivering Results	Organising & Executing	Conscientiousness
	Enterprising & Performing	Need for Achievement

Saville Consulting Wave® integrates the two leading assessment models into the 'Fab Four' higher-order factors and the 'Terrific Twelve' sections as shown in Figure 1 that provide a more detailed differentiation to reflect the true complexity of people and jobs.

Solving Problems is important in all jobs. Individuals have to first critically evaluate problems, then investigate the issues and generate innovation.

Influencing People is also usually important in terms of building relationships, communicating information and leading people.

Adapting Approaches is related to constructs of Emotional Intelligence that underpin resilience at the work place, flexibility in the face of change and support of others.

Delivering Results, finally, is about detailed implementation of assigned work, structuring of work tasks and motivational drive to bring things to conclusion.

Whilst a range of tools are available based on the Saville Consulting Wave® model, the remainder of this section will concentrate on the Professional and Focus Styles measures as they are most pertinent to coaching situations.

Using the Psychometric Profile

Three features of Saville Consulting Wave® Styles questionnaires are briefly explained below with reference to Figure 2.

The report always profiles the dimension scores on a 1 to 10 standardised 'Sten' scale. Each dimension of the questionnaire is comprised of three facets for which a Sten

Figure 1: The Saville Consulting Wave® Behaviour Model.

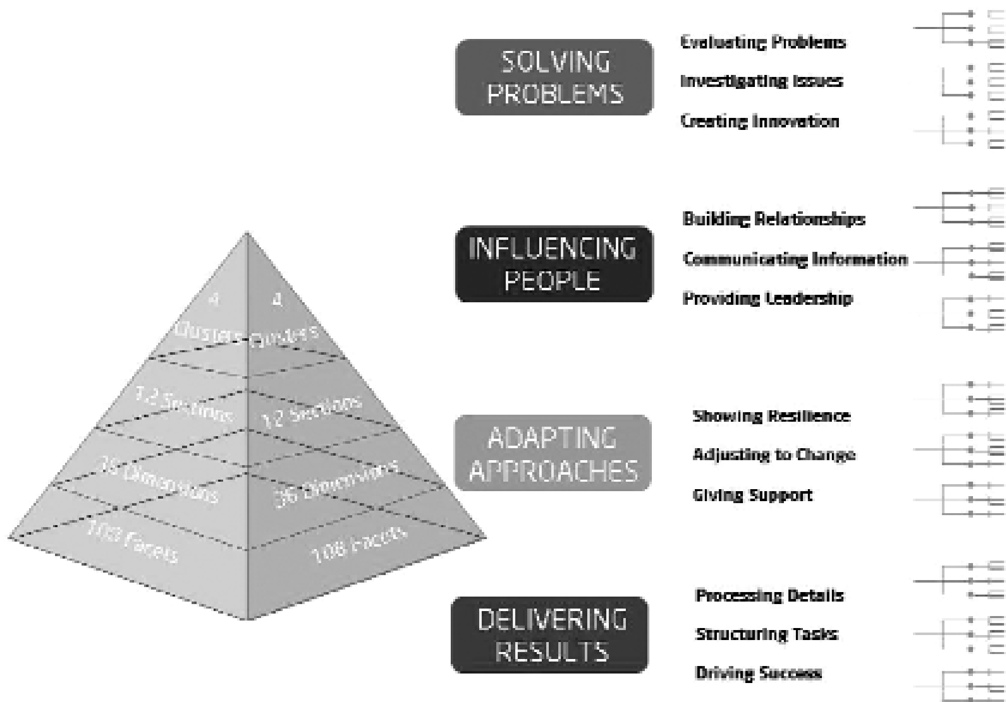
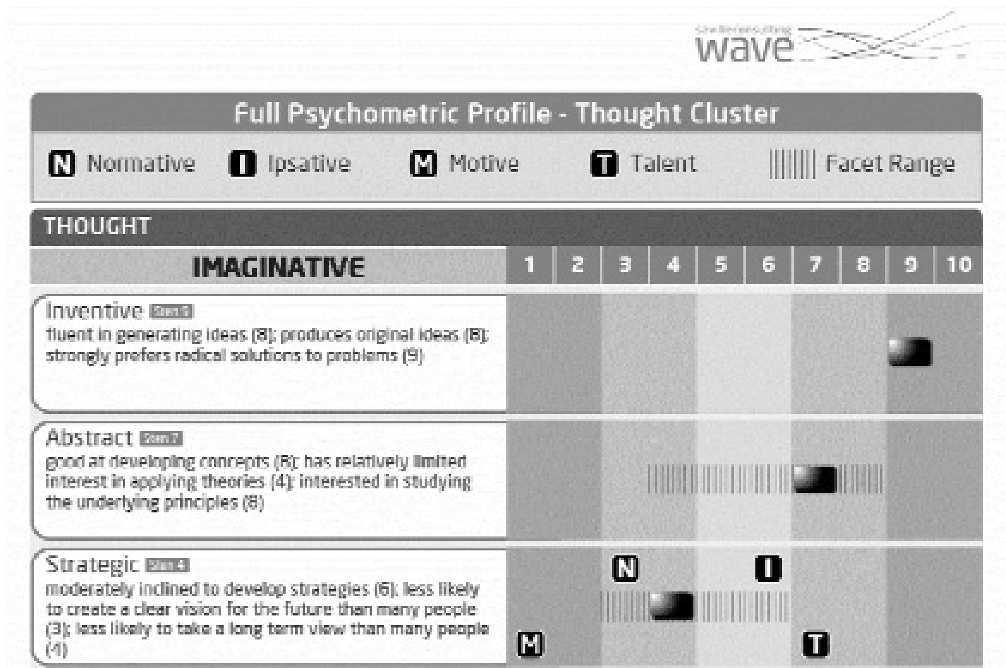


Figure 2: Saville Consulting Wave® Psychometric Profile Excerpt of the Professional Styles Expert report.



value is given after the verbaliser text. If the facet Sten results differ by three or more Stens then this is shown through 'Facet Range' hatching on the report. Such ranges pick up very subtle aspects of the individual that represent their uniqueness; and provide valuable information to the coach that can feed into an entire series of coaching sessions based on the individual's profile.

The Styles questionnaires present blocks of six items that have to be rated on a nine-point 'agree-disagree' rating scale (normative rating). If any items receive the same rating they presented once more but this time in a ranking task screen where individuals have to state which item is 'most' and 'least' true for them (ipsative ranking). This dynamic dual response format is unique to Saville Consulting Wave®. It enables validity checks (was the test taker honest?) but also homes in on the areas where the individual is most likely to experience conflicts under pressure. 'Normative-Ipsative Splits' are displayed in the profile if there is a substantial difference between normative rating and ipsative ranking results. Normative ratings are likely to reflect everyday behaviour while ipsative rankings are likely to reflect behaviour under pressure when time and resources are limited. The ipsative scores will pull down the results of those who have been very generous on themselves in the normative rating, and boost the scores of those who have been overly self-critical in their ratings. Again, this provides valuable information to the coach, particular when being asked to coach in an organisational context where impression management is in fact part of everyone's job.

Each block consists either of Motive items that are personality oriented or Talent items that are competency oriented. Each facet in the model has one item of each type. A 'Motive-Talent Split' is shown if there is a substantial difference highlighting areas where individual preferences and actual

behaviours are misaligned. Where Talent is lower than Motive, individuals effectively have identified themselves a development area. Where Motive is lower than Talent, individuals may, at worst, be at risk of burn-out as their behaviours are not supported by underlying motivation. This information can also be utilised to good effect in coaching sessions, for instance by conducting a gap analysis ('Where do you think you are at the moment, and where would you like to be?').

Using a competency potential profile

Coaching that is focused on improving performance is one of the most common applications in organisational settings. Thus, it makes intuitive sense to incorporate a psychometric measure focused on competence into the coaching process. The Wave® contains such a competency profile that maps people's preferences concisely against behaviours that are effective and valued in the workplace. Please refer to Figure 3 for an example profile for a 'Peter Purple' showing scores on 12 Behaviour Sections with scores on the three Behaviour Dimensions that sit under each summary heading. Scores are also reported in Stens based on the validation evidence where hundreds of managers were rated on the effectiveness of their behaviours. The Behaviour Competency model is structurally parallel to the Professional Styles model with sophisticated equations that optimise criterion-related validity linking the personality and competency taxonomies (see Kurz *et al.*, in press).

Whilst such profiles are immensely useful, as their language and structure is easily mapped against typical organisational competencies, they can also be overwhelming for the coachee, who is presented with a wealth of information, as each of the 12 competencies has a separate score. Plus, as stated earlier, there is always the necessity to corroborate the information with the coachee.

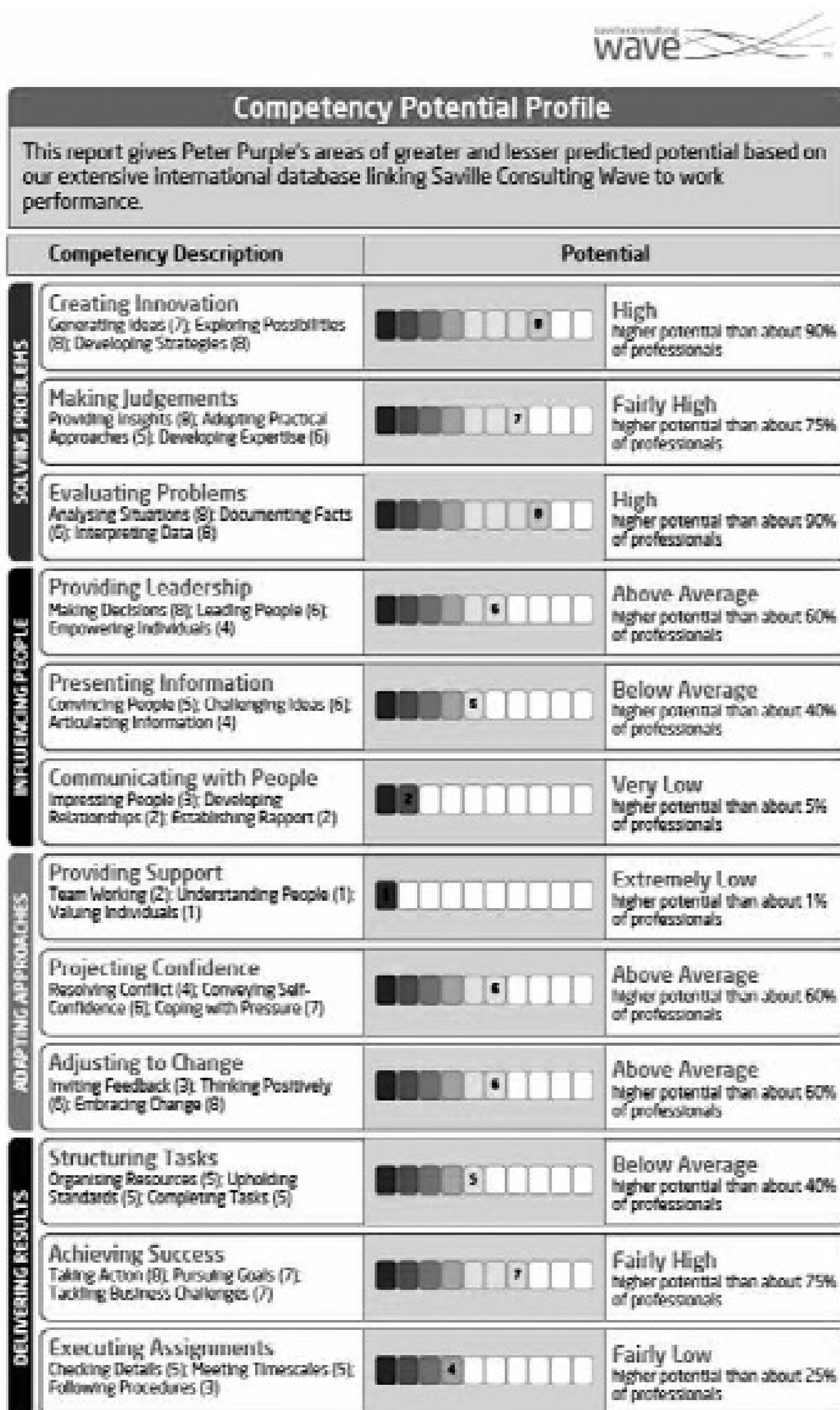
One way of eliciting this information that is useful is to use 'talent traffic lights'. As the competency profiles use colour coding, where high scores are marked in green, medium ones in amber, and low scores in red; it can be conducive to get coaches to think about their 'red, green and amber lights' before disclosing the profile; which we set out below.

Turning Competency Profiles into 'Talent Traffic Lights'

Step 1: First, describe the competency areas that are particularly important in this context ('Requirement Profiling'). This could be based on consultation with the client, the coachee, or both. Accurate profiling of the requirements contributes to a coaching session by highlighting the areas that are key to the role and avoiding undue emphasis on less important areas that would detract from the coaching process. This needs to be done as preparation for the relevant coaching session, and can feed into the introduction and setting the scene in the actual session itself. In terms of discussing the profile itself, we have found it helpful to take a very open approach, where we get coachees to think about the competencies in their own words, before disclosing the actual profile. In the context of Peter Purple's profile outlined in Figure 1, required competencies were 'thinking outside the box' (e.g. Creating Innovation, Evaluating Problems, Presenting Information) and also 'moving away from the silo mentality' (Providing Leadership, Communicating with People, Providing Support).

Step 2: Having introduced the purpose of the assessment ('e.g. Today, I would particularly like to use this assessment to explore how you innovate and work with others at work') the profile is discussed in more detail. It can be useful to start off with 'green lights', in order to get coachees into a positive and receptive frame of mind, and enable them to later utilise their areas of strength to work on other aspects. Ask the coachee to describe their 'green lights' as they see them at the moment – which are their current strengths in general? Ensure to elicit concrete examples. Then, it may be neces-

Figure 3: Peter Purple Competency Potential Profile.



wave

Competency Potential Profile

This report gives Peter Purple's areas of greater and lesser predicted potential based on our extensive international database linking Saville Consulting Wave to work performance.

	Competency Description	Potential	
SOLVING PROBLEMS	Creating Innovation Generating Ideas (7); Exploring Possibilities (8); Developing Strategies (8)	8	High higher potential than about 90% of professionals
	Making Judgements Providing Insights (8); Adopting Practical Approaches (5); Developing Expertise (6)	7	Fairly High higher potential than about 75% of professionals
	Evaluating Problems Analysing Situations (8); Documenting Facts (5); Interpreting Data (8)	8	High higher potential than about 90% of professionals
INFLUENCING PEOPLE	Providing Leadership Making Decisions (8); Leading People (6); Empowering Individuals (4)	6	Above Average higher potential than about 60% of professionals
	Presenting Information Convincing People (5); Challenging Ideas (6); Articulating Information (4)	5	Below Average higher potential than about 40% of professionals
	Communicating with People Impressing People (3); Developing Relationships (2); Establishing Rapport (2)	2	Very Low higher potential than about 5% of professionals
ADAPTING APPROACHES	Providing Support Team Working (2); Understanding People (1); Valuing Individuals (1)	1	Extremely Low higher potential than about 1% of professionals
	Projecting Confidence Resolving Conflict (4); Conveying Self-Confidence (6); Coping with Pressure (7)	6	Above Average higher potential than about 60% of professionals
	Adjusting to Change Inviting Feedback (3); Thinking Positively (6); Embracing Change (8)	6	Above Average higher potential than about 60% of professionals
DELIVERING RESULTS	Structuring Tasks Organising Resources (5); Upholding Standards (5); Completing Tasks (5)	5	Below Average higher potential than about 40% of professionals
	Achieving Success Taking Action (8); Pursuing Goals (7); Tackling Business Challenges (7)	7	Fairly High higher potential than about 75% of professionals
	Executing Assignments Checking Details (5); Meeting Timescales (5); Following Procedures (3)	4	Fairly Low higher potential than about 25% of professionals

sary to corroborate this through further questioning. To illustrate, Peter Purple is high on Creating Innovation, but less so on Presenting Information. Appropriate questions might be 'When, and under what circumstances are you at your best when generating new ideas and developing new strategies?' or 'How can you ensure that you communicate these ideas to other people?'

Step 3: Now ask the coachee to describe their 'amber lights' – these are competency areas where they are doing ok, but could do better; or perhaps do not have the time or opportunity to do what they want to do. These may not be as salient to the coachee as 'green' or 'red' areas, and thus require quite specific prompting. Referring to the profile in Figure 2, a potential amber area for exploration is Adjusting to Change, where there is a difference between how the individual embraces change (very readily) and how they invite feedback from others (not so effectively). An effective question might be 'How do/ how can you ensure that others think about change at work in the same way that you do?'

Step 4: Ask the coachee to describe their 'red lights' – any areas that definitely need more work? The profile in Figure 2 would indicate someone who is less competent at people skills, than at managerial transaction, for instance, the score on Providing Support is extremely low. Open questions should draw out relevant examples (e.g. 'How do you support others at work?', 'Can you describe a time when you did this effectively?'). As there might be a discrepancy between the score and how people see themselves, it may be necessary to disclose the scores at this point; and structure the conversation around the difference between the score and examples given. Using Peter Purple's example, it turned out in the discussion that this individual could actually support others when required, but would give priority to operational requirements over people skills in his day-to-day tasks.

Step 5: Last, triangulate the evidence from this discussion with the actual profile, and probe further particularly where there were gaps or contradictions. Then work with the coachee on concrete action planning – how can they use their 'green lights' (current strengths) to work on their amber and red areas? Relating this back to the Peter Purple, he acknowledged that Providing Support to the entire team of workers was something he found difficult; consequently his specialist skills were better used in a more strategic and operational role. However, it also transpired that the potential for innovation could be facilitated at an individual and interpersonal level, as this person proved adept using his innovation potential to support particular individuals at work who were experiencing very unusual challenges, such as a subordinate who had faced very taxing personal circumstances.

Steps 1 to 5 could feed directly into an action plan for future coaching sessions, perhaps ideally with some support from the line manager to ensure that behaviour change takes place; even if details of the coaching sessions remain confidential. For Peter Purple, further information from the Professional Styles report could prove valuable as the response checks would indicate someone who tended to be ruthlessly honest, and thus rather harsh on himself; which would need to be born in mind by the coach, particularly if other individuals in the same organisation were also to receive coaching.

Conclusion

The approach outlined above is of course only one potential application of psychometrics. The Saville Consulting Wave® suite, and particularly the competency profile, is particularly suited to performance coaching in a work context for managerial levels. For other coaching purposes, for instance providing career coaching to young individuals who are about to enter or entering the world of work, a different instrument, or indeed an approach without psychometrics, might be more suitable. We do not believe that there is

any such thing as a 'best test', but rather that test users should use the right test for any given purpose. This article, nevertheless, demonstrated how psychometric profiles can make a valuable contribution to the coaching process. Modern psychometric measures such as Saville Consulting Wave® provide not just psychometric profiles but output in competency oriented terminology that is easy to understand for coach and coachee alike. The complexity of standardised Sten scores can be reduced by the 'Talent Traffic Lights' approach outlined to pinpoint development needs as well as areas of strengths that can be leveraged to maximise performance and well being at work.

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Buros Library of Mental Measurements:
http://www.unl.edu/buros/bimm/html/library.html

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