The Australian Psychological Society Ltd

Interest Group in Coaching Psychology

The British Psychological Society

Special Group in Coaching Psychology

International Coaching Psychology Review

Volume 10 No. 2 September 2015

ISSN: 1750-2764

International Coaching Psychology Review

Subscriptions
International Coaching Psychology Review (ICPR) is published in March and September. It is distributed free of charge to members of the British Psychological Society Special Group in Coaching Psychology and the Australian Psychological Society Interest Group in Coaching Psychology members. It is available to non-members (Individuals £50 per volume; Institutions £60 per volume; single copies £25) from: The British Psychological Society, SGCP, St. Andrews House, 48 Princess Road East, Leicester LE1 7DR. UK.

Abstracting and indexing: The *ICPR* is abstracted in psycINFO, Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts and Google Scholar. The *ICPR* is included Cabell's *Directory of Publishing Opportunities in Educational Psychology and Administration* and Cabell's *Directory of Publishing Opportunities in Educational Curriculum and Methods.*

Notes for Contributors

The *ICPR* is an international publication with a focus on the theory, practice and research in the field of coaching psychology. Submission of academic articles, systematic reviews and other research reports which support evidence-based practice are welcomed. The *ICPR* may also publish conference reports and papers given at the British Psychological Society Special Group in Coaching Psychology (BPS SGCP) and Australian Psychological Society Interest Group in Coaching Psychology (APS IGCP) conferences, notices and items of news relevant to the International Coaching Psychology Community.

Case studies and book reviews will be considered. The *ICPR* is published by the BPS SGCP in association with the APS IGCP.

1. Circulation

The circulation of the *ICPR* is worldwide. It is available in hardcopy and PDF format. Papers are invited and encouraged from authors throughout the world. It is available free in paper and PDF format to members of the BPS SGCP, and free in PDF format to APS IGCP members as a part of their annual membership.

2. Length

Papers should normally be no more than 6000 words, although the Co-Editors retain discretion to publish papers beyond this length in cases where the clear and concise expression of the scientific content requires greater length.

3. Reviewing

The publication operates a policy of anonymous peer review. Papers will normally be scrutinised and commented on by at least two independent expert referees (in addition to the relevant Co-Editor) although the Co-Editor may process a paper at his or her discretion. The referees will not be aware of the identity of the author. All information about authorship including personal acknowledgements and institutional affiliations should be confined to the title page (and the text should be free of such clues as identifiable self-citations, e.g. 'In our earlier work…').

Continued on inside back cover.

The British Psychological Society
Special Group in Coaching Psychology

*

The Australian Psychological Society Ltd
Interest Group in Coaching Psychology

*

International Coaching Psychology Review

*

Volume 10 No. 2 September 2015

*

Contents

Editorial: 10 years, 10 volumes of the *International Coaching Psychology Review*

Stephen Palmer & Sandy Gordon

DOUG MACKIE asks 'Who sees change after leadership coaching? An analysis of impact by rater level and self-other alignment on multi-source feedback'. Using multisource feedback from 31 executives and senior managers from a large not-for-profit organisation, he assesses the effectiveness of strength-based coaching and self-other rater alignment on leadership outcomes after six sessions of coaching.

Our second article also focuses on leadership. In this paper Tony Fusco, Siobhain O'Riordan and Stephen Palmer explore and bring together Group Coaching and Authentic Leadership Development (ALD). A Grounded Theory approach was used in this study. The authors put forward an underpinning theory of Group Coaching and ALD and introduce a model of authentic leadership based on the core concepts of conscious, competent, confident and congruent leadership.

In 'Walking a mile in an executive's shoes: The influence of shared client-coach experience on goal achievement' Alex Chinn, James Richmond, and John Bennett discuss survey data from 206 target organisations, coaches in their network, and their coaching clients. Specifically, they determine whether using shared professional and industry experience to match coaches and clients by coaches, clients, HR partners and third-party coach-client matching services, maximises goal achievement.

Susie Linder-Pelz and James Lawley report on 'Using Clean Language to explore the subjectivity of coachees' experience and outcomes'. Employing a Clean Language phenomenological approach their thematic analyses reveals both favourable and unfavourable evaluations and several implications for coaching psychologists related to pacing and timing of coaching sessions.

In the next paper, Tatiana Bachkirova, Linet Arthur and Emma Reading illustrate an independently conducted research study to develop appropriate measures and evaluate the coaching/mentoring programme that had been running for over five years. They also explore specific challenges in the evaluation of a large-scale coaching programme and to suggest new solutions. They argue for the development of additional methods in outcome research on coaching programmes that are aligned with the main principles and philosophy of coaching as a practice.

In our last paper the researchers, Margaret Barr and Christian van Nieuwerburgh, use an interpretative phenomenological analysis to explore five teachers' experiences of an introductory coaching training workshop in Scotland. In the study the participants reported that collaborating with others and having time for reflection enhanced their learning. It is interesting to note that in Scotland new professional update procedures require school leaders to use coaching skills.

As usual we finish with reports from the BPS SGCP Chair and APS IGCP Convenor.

With my colleagues in the UK and Australia, I (SP) have been co-editing the *International Coaching Psychology Review (ICPR)* for 10 years. In other words, 10 volumes. Recently it occurred to me that this seems like an ideal time to step down from the role as the UK Co-ordinating Editor. When the BPS Special Group in Coaching Psychology was launched in 2004, we had aspirational goals, although some of them could be more accurately described as fuzzy goals. But we all knew that we wanted to develop the new discipline and profession of coaching psychology. And this leads me to my next point. Research is of paramount importance in developing a new scientific field, yet back in 2004, we lacked suitable journals to publish coaching-related research papers. With the go-ahead and support of both the BPS SGCP and APS IGCP committees, we set up the *ICPR*, the first international peer-reviewed publication for coaching psychology. Over the past decade we have seen a rise in the quality of the papers and research areas investigated. I thank my Co-Editors, Anthony Grant, Travis Kemp, David Lane, Alex Linley and Alison Whybrow for their hard work on the publication since 2006 and in particular, the Australian Co-ordinating Editors, Michael Cavanagh and more recently, Sandy Gordon. However, the *ICPR* would not exist if it was not for the authors and also the reviewers. During this period, Martin Reeves in the BPS office has patiently typeset so many articles on our behalf, and Tracy White, our editorial assistant, has supported us on a day-to-day basis. This month, Alex is also stepping down as an *ICPR* Co-Editor.

To conclude, my thanks goes to everybody who has been involved in ensuring *ICPR* gets published. I look forward to seeing SGCP and IGCP colleagues at the next SGCP 5th European Coaching Psychology Conference 2015 in December. The theme is 'Breaking New Ground'. A great way to end the year.

As several colleagues have already acknowledged Stephen has made an indelible mark on the development of the coaching psychology industry. For many years his passion and leadership have been evident both locally and internationally and I'm sure will continue. I (SG) wish to take this opportunity to formally thank him personally for his kind support and assistance with co-ordinating editorial business and I promise, on behalf of *ICPR* readers, that I will ensure he remains ever active as a member of the Editorial Board.

Correspondence

Stephen Palmer
Coaching Psychology Unit,
Department of Psychology,
City University London,
Northampton Square,
London, UK.
Email: s.palmer-1@city.ac.uk

Sandy Gordon
The University of Western Australia,
Perth, Australia.
Email: sandy.gordon@uwa.edu.au

Websites
SGCP 5th European Coaching Psychology Conference 2015:
www.sgcp.eu

The International Congress of Coaching Psychology events:
www.coachingpsychologycongress.org

Who sees change after leadership coaching? An analysis of impact by rater level and self-other alignment on multi-source feedback

Doug MacKie

Objectives: *The objective of this research was to investigate the use of multi-source feedback in assessing the effectiveness of a strength-based coaching methodology in enhancing elements of the full range leadership model. It also investigated the effects of self-other rater alignment on leadership outcomes after coaching.*
Design: *A between-subject non-equivalent control group design was used to explore the impact of strength-based coaching on transformational leadership behaviours measured in a 360-degree feedback process. Thirty-one executives and senior managers from a large not-for-profit organisation were non-randomly assigned to either a coaching or waitlist cohort.*
Methods: *The coaching cohort received six sessions of leadership coaching involving feedback on leadership and strengths, goal setting and strengths development. After six sessions of coaching over three months, cohorts then switched roles.*
Results: *The results showed that participants experienced statistically significant increases in their transformational leadership behaviour after coaching and this difference was perceived differentially at all levels within the organisation but not by the participants themselves. Raters at higher levels in the organisation were the most sensitive to change. The results also showed that self-other rater alignment was a significant factor in self-ratings of change over time with those participants who initially over-rated themselves, reducing their ratings over time as a consequence.*
Conclusion: *The results suggest that changes in coachee transformational leadership behaviour after leadership coaching are perceived differentially by rater level within an organisation and that self-other rater alignment is an important moderator of self-ratings over time.*
Keywords: *leadership coaching; strength-based; rater level; multi-source feedback; self-other alignment.*

EVIDENCE IS GROWING for the effectiveness of executive coaching in organisations and yet much of the research shows an over-reliance of self-report measures rather than investigating the impact more broadly on managers, peers and direct reports within the organisation, (MacKie, 2014; Page & de Haan, 2014). Multi-source feedback (MSF) or 360-degree feedback provides the opportunity to examine the impact of executive coaching more broadly in the organisation and to extend the analysis of impact beyond the level of self-report. Multi-source feedback or 360 methodologies are near ubiquitous in leadership development programmemes including coaching approaches and yet they are primarily used for assessment and awareness raising purposes rather than as formative outcome criteria to assess change after leadership development interventions (Kochanowski, Seifert & Yukl, 2010; Nowack & Mashihi, 2012).

There are several reasons why MSF within a leadership framework are desirable dependent variables in leadership coaching outcome studies. Self-reports are an unreliable indicator of change, especially when the rater is least skilled in that area, (Kruger & Dunning, 1999) and are prone to leniency bias (Fleenor, Smither, Atwater et al., 2010). Secondly leadership coaching by definition, requires an impact beyond the self-report of the coachee as the purpose of modifying their behaviour is to have a more transformative impact on those around them in an organisation (Kochanowski, Seifert & Yukl, 2010). Indeed there is significant evidence linking perceived changes in leader behaviour with enhanced engagement and discretionary effort in followers, resulting in enhanced business-unit outcomes, (Avolio, 2011; Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2002). Prior research has also found that significant changes in transformational leadership after coaching have been perceived by other raters with the same organisation but these studies have not reported changes by rater level, (Cerni, Curtis & Colmar, 2010; O'Connor & Cavanagh, 2013). Transformational leadership is one of the most researched leadership theories over the last 30 years and has established significant correlations between increases in transformational leadership and objective performance outcomes including financial performance, job satisfaction, follower satisfaction, and organisational commitment (Avolio, 2011).

Finally, multi-source leadership ratings can provide a reliable and valid outcome measure that can be compared across studies, a key criterion if different coaching methodologies are to be compared and contrasted, (MacKie, 2014). Evidence for the validity of other-ratings has been demonstrated in prior research. Atkins and Wood (2002) used assessment centre ratings as the objective and independent performance criteria and found that other-raters derived from MSF significantly predicted performance on the assessment centre, as did line manager ratings alone. However, it is important to remember that in leadership assessment, as in so many job performance criteria, there is no 'objective' measure of performance primarily due to criterion deficiency, that is aspects of job performance like team work are not easily amenable to objective measurement, (Murphy, 2008).

It is important to recognise that even without subsequent leadership coaching, MSF is an intervention in itself, especially if formally debriefed with the participant (Neiminen et al., 2013). In a meta-analysis of 24 longitudinal studies, small but significant effect sizes in performance were found after MSF as observed by supervisors and the participant's direct reports (d=0.15), peers (d=0.05) but not self-ratings (d=–0.04), (Smither, London & Reilly, 2005). There is also some evidence to suggest that raters at different levels focus on different aspects of the leader with supervisor ratings being more closely correlated with external performance criteria (Atkins & Wood, 2002) whilst direct reports (those reporting directly into the participant), focus on more interpersonal and relational criteria (Nowack, 2009).

Another critical issue in the application of MSF to the evaluation of leadership coaching interventions is the issue of self-other agreement (SOA) (Fleenor et al., 2010). Given the challenges of self-report data, it is not surprising to find that there are typically modest correlations between self and other ratings in the existing literature, (Fleenor et al., 2010, Nowack & Mashihi, 2012). However, within these discrepancies, there are a variety of interesting sub-groups. Individuals who overrate themselves compared to other raters are seen to be potentially at risk of derailing (ie. failing to reach their career apogee) and may be less receptive to feedback, (Woo et al., 2008) but the gap between self and others can also act as a motivator to change, (Atwater & Brett, 2005). Individuals who under-rate themselves when compared to others are potentially self-critical and perfectionistic and can be demotivated by the realisation that others perceive them to be more effective than they see themselves, (Nowack & Mashihi, 2012). These somewhat contradictory findings in the SOA literature suggest the impact of misalignment of self-other ratings on coaching outcomes would be a useful hypothesis to explore further.

Finally there is a developing body evidence of that has specifically examined perceived changes in MSF after coaching interventions. Luthans and Petersen (2003) investigated the effects of feedback plus coaching on a group of 27 managers and 67 employees. The study specifically aimed to reduce the self-other discrepancies in MSF. At Time 1 there were significant differences in the self-other ratings (with self being higher) on behavioural and interpersonal competency and personal responsibility. However, these discrepancies had all disappeared at Time 2 after the coaching process. Interestingly the self-ratings had not diminished over time but the other ratings had caught up at Time 2. Unfortunately all other raters were combined into one category so it was not possible to ascertain the differences by organisational level. The results also suggested an improvement in manager and employee satisfaction and commitment at Time 2.

Smither et al. (2003) examined whether coaching could improve the effect of 360-degree feedback in enhancing performance. Of 1202 senior managers who received 360-degree feedback, 404 were selected for subsequent coaching. Those who participated in coaching were reported to set more specific goals, solicit more ideas and improve more in terms of others' ratings. However despite some positive changes in goal setting and performance (Effect size, d=0.17) as measured by supervisor and direct report ratings (self reports were not analysed and peer ratings were not significant) in a repeat 360 feedback process, only 30 per cent of the original participants participated in the coaching and the selection criteria for their inclusion was mixed (some were required to participate by their managers) making the results prone to selection effects and difficult to generalise.

Kochanowski, Seifert and Yukl (2010) investigated the effective of a feedback workshop plus coaching on the influencing skills of managers. Thirty managers were randomly assigned to either workshop alone or workshop plus telephone coaching. Feedback was based on the manager's boss and at least three direct reports. The results showed that the coaching group demonstrated a significant increase on the control group in only one of the four influencing tactics assessed (collaboration). However only the subordinate data was used in the comparative analysis so the impact on different raters levels (e.g. boss, peer or self) remained unknown. In a study of 469 middle managers, Neiman et al. (2013) used a quasi-experimental design to compare the impact of MSF alone and MSF plus five sessions of executive coaching. The results suggested that while both groups improved equally when rated by direct reports, peers and supervisors, only managers who had received the coaching improved on self-ratings of leadership behaviour and effectiveness.

In conclusion, whilst there is growing evidence for the effectiveness of executive coaching in organisations, the level of that impact remains unclear. MSF provides an opportunity to extend the evaluation of executive coaching beyond the reliance on self-report and assess its broader impact in the organisation. In addition the issue of self-other alignment has potentially significant implications for coaching evaluation given that positive discrepancies may suppress the coaching effect as the coachees adjust their ratings to align more with other raters. Multi-rater assessment based on reliable and valid leadership constructs provides the opportunity to track the impact of executive coaching as its effects cascade through the organisation.

Rationale and aims

The limited number of studies that have examined the impact of leadership coaching interventions by level and considered the impact of SOA have demonstrated inconsistent results and drawn different inferences making conclusions about effectiveness difficult to generalise. This study aims to address these issues in coaching research by specifically investigating the impact of perceived coaching outcomes by the level of raters within an organisation and investigating the impact on outcomes of self-other alignment (SOA).

The dependent variable used to assess outcomes was the full range leadership model (FRLM) that includes transformational, transactional and laissez-faire elements of leadership. This leadership outcome provides 360-degree feedback on changes in leadership behaviour throughout the organisation and moves the assessment of coaching outcomes beyond the reliance on self-report measures. By focusing on a specific strength-based coaching methodology, using a reliable and valid measure of transactional and transformational leadership as the dependent variable and assessing outcomes by way of a 360-degree feedback methodology, this study aims investigate the level at which change in leadership behaviours after coaching is perceived within the organisation and the impact of SOA on leadership outcome ratings after coaching.

Hypotheses

The following specific research questions will be addressed in an attempt to address the aims of the study.

1. Changes in transformational leadership behaviour observed after participation in a coaching process will be perceived differentially throughout the organisation. The perception of change in leadership behaviours will vary by the level of the rater with line managers and direct reports reporting most change followed by peers and self-reports.
2. Self-other agreement at Time 1 will impact subsequent self-ratings of transformational leadership. Participants who over-estimate their MSF ratings as compared to all others will show a tendency to reduce their ratings over time. Participants who underestimate their ratings compared to all others will increase their ratings over time.

Method

Participants

A total of 31 senior managers (14 male, 17 female) were recruited from the same organisation in the not-for-profit (NFP) sector. They were all senior managers and leaders in the Australian arm of a multi-national not-for-profit (NFP) organisation. The average age was 45 years (range 31 to 62 years). This represented all available senior mangers from the top two levels in the organisation and included the executive director and the leadership team. A total of 37 individuals were invited to participate but six were unable to participate due to overseas postings and maternity leave. Having managerial responsibility for a number of direct reports was a prerequisite of participating in the study. The participants were then divided into two groups – the coaching first group (Cohort 1), and the waitlist first group (Cohort 2). The process of group allocation was not random as it depended on the availability of the participants and the preferences of the organisation. All participants gave their written informed consent to participate in the study.

Raters

Raters were all drawn from the same organisation as the participants. They were a mixture of line managers, peers, direct reports and others in the organisation who did not fit into the first three categories. Each participant had an average of 9.8, 9.7 and 9.6 raters at the three time points respectively. Rater consistency across time was high with 92.5 per cent and 88.8 per cent of the original raters also responding at Time 2 and Time 3. There was no significant difference between the ratings of original and original plus new raters at Time 2 and 3 on transformational leadership, hence the full compliment of raters was used in the analysis. (See MacKie, 2014, for a full description of the rater consistency data.)

Research design

The study utilised a non-equivalent control group design with two cohorts; a Coaching first group (Cohort 1) and a Waitlist first group (Cohort 2). While cohort 1 was engaged in the coaching, Cohort 2 acted as the control group. Cohorts then switch roles at the mid-point (Time 2). However, because Cohort 1 had had the coaching intervention at this stage, it was not able to act as an independent control group for Cohort 2. Each participant received six sessions (nine hours) of strength-based leadership coaching. The dependent variable was the multi-source feedback on participant's transformational leadership behaviour provided by the MLQ 360. Each participant had an average of 9.8 raters from above, peer, direct report and other levels within the organisation.

Coaches

A total of 11 coaches provided their services pro-bono for the research. They were highly experienced practitioners who were mainly recruited from the local executive education department of a prestigious business school and had been preselected for both psychological mindedness and business acumen. All coaches were self-employed practitioners who earned a significant part of their income from providing executive coaching services to corporate entities. On average they had 12 years of experience providing executive coaching in organisations and had been working in organisations for an average of 28 years. The majority (70 per cent) were qualified at Masters level or above and were registered practising psychologists. Each coach was trained in the author's strength-based methodology by way of a half-day training programmeme. This process described the underlying rationale for strength-based approaches to leadership and provided a structured strength-based coaching manual for the coach to follow. The induction particularly focused on the identification of strengths through interview data, MLQ 360-degree feedback and the Realise 2 inventory (Linely & Stoker, 2012). The Realise 2 four quadrant model was also used to give the coaches a format for setting strength-based development goals. The induction also provided the format for strengths development through the sessional rating of strengths awareness, alignment, pairing and utilisation. Each coach provided leadership coaching to between one to two participants per cohort.

Procedure

Strength-based protocol. Each coachee received six 90-minute coaching sessions that followed a format articulated in their coaching manual. Initially coaches began with a strength-based interview followed by feedback for the coachee on their MLQ 360 report (Bass & Avolio, 1997) and Realise 2 Inventory (Linley, Willars & Biswas-Diener, 2010). The strength-based interview focused on their peak experiences and what energised them about their work. The Realise 2 questionnaire provided feedback on what energised them, where they felt competent and where they had the opportunity to apply their strengths. This led to structured feedback on their realised strengths (those that were known and utilised), unrealised strengths (those that were known but under-utilised), learned behaviours (those that were competent but not energising) and weaknesses (where both competence and energy were low). The MLQ 360 provided qualitative and quantitative multi-rater feedback on their scores on the full range leadership model (FRLM) that included transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles. Coachees were then required to select three goals they would like to focus on during the coaching; a realised strength, an unrealised strength and a learned behaviour or weakness. These goals were focused on issues that the coachee was motivated in addressing and also that had relevance for the business. Coachees then tracked their progress on these goals for the remaining five sessions and committed to actions designed to help their goal attainment. Coachees also tracked their progress on a sessional basis by reflecting on and rating their strength awareness, alignment, pairing and utilisation in their coaching manual. This study also utilised a measure of protocol and manual adherence to investigate the link between adherence to the strength-based approach and subsequent changes in transformational leadership behaviour. (See MacKie, 2014 for further elaboration.)

Measures

Each participant received the *Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire*. The MLQ 360 (Bass & Avolio, 1997) is a 49-item questionnaire that measures nine elements of the full range leadership model (FRLM) namely idealised influence attributes (e.g. Display a sense of power and confidence), idealised influence behaviour (e.g. Talk about my most important values and beliefs), inspirational motivation (e.g. Articulate a compelling vision of the future), intellectual stimulation (e.g. Seek different perspectives when solving problems), individualised consideration (e.g. Help others to develop their strengths), contingent reward (e.g. Provide others with assistance in exchange for their efforts), management by exception active (e.g. Keep track of all mistakes), management by exception passive (e.g. Fail to interfere until things become serious) and laissez-faire (e.g. Avoid making decisions). The inventory also has three measures of leadership outcomes; extra effort (e.g. Heighten others' desire to succeed), effectiveness (e.g. Lead a group that is effective) and satisfaction (e.g. Work with others in a satisfactory way) (Bass & Avolio, 1997). The MLQ360 measures all items on a five-point Likert scale from 'not at all' to 'frequently if not always'. Cronbach's alpha for the main transformational leadership factor has been reported as 0.85 (Antonakis et al., 2003) and criterion validities vary for satisfaction (0.71), effectiveness (0.64) and performance (0.27) (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Data analysis

Repeated measures ANOVAs (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) were calculated using SPSS that allowed analysis of both within-subject changes in the dependent variable (DV) over time and between group differences in terms of rate of change on the DV. The five transformational leadership sub-scales as measured by all raters, were aggregated into one combined transformational leadership score, the MLQ 5I (Bass & Avolio, 1997) to provide an overall index of change. These ratings were then divided into mean self-ratings for average transformational leadership and mean other-ratings for composite transformational leadership scores by time to examine the impact of SOA on outcomes.

Results

Hypothesis 1: Changes in transformational leadership behaviour observed after participation in a coaching process will be perceived differentially throughout the organisation. The perception of change in leadership behaviours will vary by the level of the rater with line managers and direct reports reporting most change followed by peers and self-reports.

There were no significant differences between the two groups at Time 1 on the MLQ 5I composite score at any rater level. The key component of this hypothesis was that changes in transformational leadership would be observed differentially beyond the level of self-report. Consequently an analysis by level of rater was conducted to see who observes the changes in participant leadership behaviour and whether the organisational level of the observing rater is a significant factor in observing changes in leadership behaviour.

A repeated measures ANOVA was performed to examine the impact on coaching on mean transformational leadership scores over time by rater level. Table 1 clearly illustrates that in both cohorts the greatest significant change and effect size was achieved by the higher-level raters. This suggests that those raters working above the participant in the organisation, for example, their line manager, were seeing the greatest change in the participants in terms of transformational leadership behaviour after their leadership coaching. For both cohorts, the peer and direct report level perceived significant change in participant's transformational leadership behaviour at the $p<0.05$ level. For the lower level, both groups reported significantly higher ratings on transformational leadership after participant coaching (Table 1).

It is important to note that there were no significant positive changes over time in the participants own perceptions of their transformational leadership behaviour although there was a positive but non-significant trend in Cohort 2. In Cohort 1 the self-ratings actually declined over time despite all other-raters reporting a positive increase in transformational leadership behaviour. This may be due to the lack of SOA at T1 for Cohort 1, a hypothesis more fully explored in the next section. An analysis of the five individual components of transformational leadership revealed that the only significant decline in self-ratings was in inspirational motivation (IM) in Cohort 1 ($F(1,29)=4.781$, $p=0.040$, partial $\eta^2=0.179$).

Hypothesis 2: Self-other agreement at Time 1 will impact subsequent self-ratings of transformational leadership. Participants who over-estimate their MSF ratings as compared to all others will show a tendency to reduce their ratings over time. Participants who underestimate their ratings compared to all others will increase their rating over time.

In order to examine the impact of self-other alignment on outcomes, a mean other rater composite score was calculated. The results in Table 2 demonstrate that for C1, there was a significant difference in self-other ratings at Time 1 with participants significantly over-rating themselves compared to all other raters. This discrepancy then disappeared at T2 when they appeared much more aligned and then reappeared in the other direction at Time 3 with participants continuing to decrease their self-ratings even after the coaching intervention. For Cohort 2, there was no initial misalignment between self-other ratings and both ratings showed good alignment over the three time points.

Figure 1 shows that C1 participants began with a significantly higher rating than the combined all other rater group. This discrepancy then reduces at Time 2 possibly as a function of increased awareness of the discrepancy during the feedback process. This may explain why the participant scores have decreased after coaching while all other raters level scores have increased. This elevated self-rating was only apparent in Cohort 1 and was not apparent in Cohort 2. Receiving the feedback at Time 1 that all other raters view their MLQ scores at a lower level, appears to have driven down the subsequent MLQ self–ratings even during the coaching process where all other rater levels are reporting an increase in transformational leadership behaviour. At Time 3, the Self-other discrepancy for Cohort 1 has gone the other way with participants significantly underestimating their transformational leadership scores when compared to all other raters.

Figure 1 shows that in contrast to Cohort1, Cohort 2 began with participant MLQ ratings much more aligned to all other raters. Their ratings do not significantly change between T1 and T2 as they have not yet had the MLQ feedback that is embedded in the coaching. At Time 3 after the completion of the coaching, their mean MLQ5I transformational leadership scores remain aligned with all other raters. The results from Cohort 2 suggest that beginning the coaching process with a strong SOA is crucial in maintaining this over time. Despite this alignment, however, the self-ratings in Cohort 2 did not show significant change over time unlike the combined all-other transformational leadership ratings.

Discussion

The results demonstrated three significant findings in the utlilisation of MSF to evaluate outcomes in leadership coaching. Firstly there was no significant change in the participants' ratings of transformational leadership after the coaching intervention. Secondly the change in other-ratings of

Table 1: Changes in Mean Transformational MLQ rater scores for Cohort 1 and 2 across Time 1 and Time 3 by rater level.

	Time 1		Time 3					
MLQ rater level	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*df*	*p*	*Partial* η^2
Cohort 1 Coaching First								
Self (*N*=14)	2.92	0.37	2.72	0.41	1.503	1,24	.233	.064
Higher (*N*=16)	2.64	0.72	3.17	0.60	4.694	1,30	.039	.144
Peer (*N*=49)	2.55	0.66	2.92	0.63	5.666	1,76	.020	.071
Lower (*N*=56)	2.61	0.75	2.97	0.48	6.452	1,90	.013	.068
Other (*N*=9)	2.69	0.94	2.80	0.61	0.165	1,17	.795	.005
Cohort 2 Waitlist First								
Self (*N*=17)	2.90	0.46	3.05	0.46	0.761	1,31	.390	.026
Higher (*N*=22)	2.81	0.55	3.35	0.54	8.685	1,37	.006	.199
Peer (*N*=51)	2.70	0.62	3.10	0.47	12.937	1,100	.001	.117
Lower (*N*=67)	2.80	0.78	3.11	0.54	5.691	1,117	.019	.047
Other (*N*=12)	2.57	0.93	2.87		0.094	1,13	.765	.008

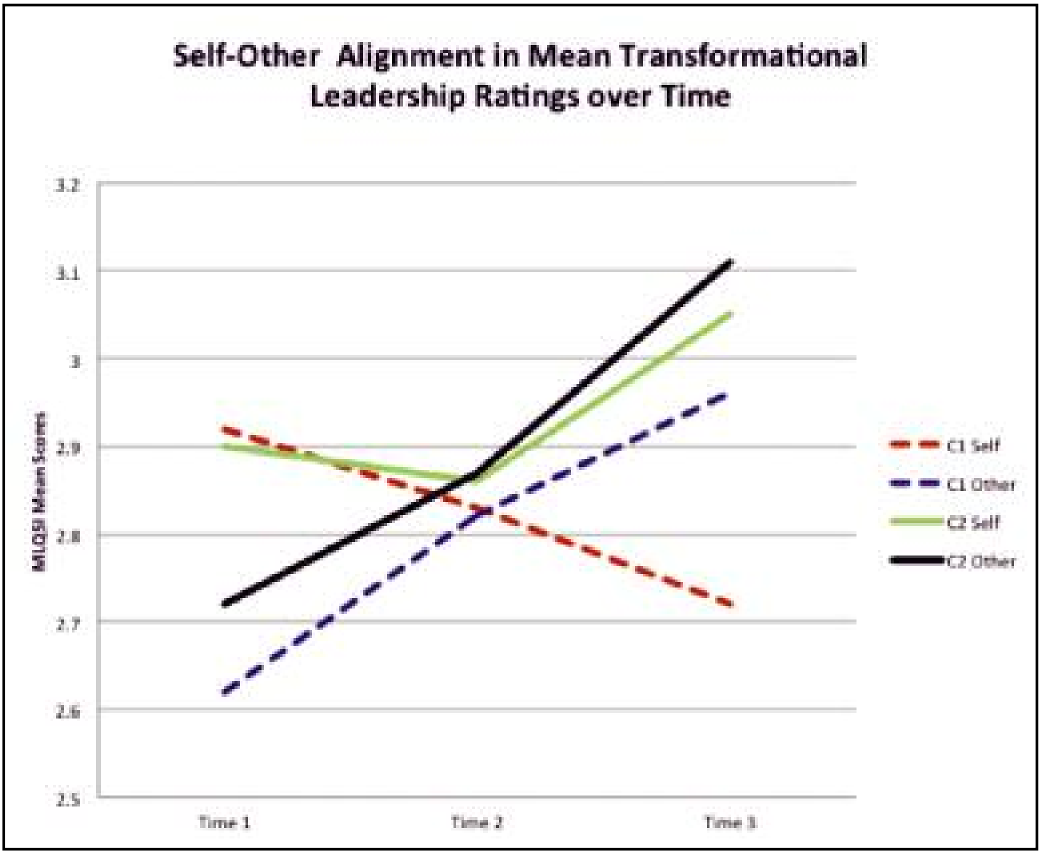
Note: Repeated Measures ANOVA Within Group Comparison of MLQ5I means between Waitlist first group and Coaching first group at Time 1 and Time 3 by rater level. Higher=line manager and lower=direct reports.

Table 2: Self-Other Alignment in Mean Transformational MLQ rater scores for Cohort 1 and 2 across three time points.

	Self		Other					
MLQ rater level	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*df*	*p*	*Partial* η^2
Cohort 1 Coaching First								
Time 1	2.93	0.38	2.60	0.30	15.30	1,14	.002	.541
Time 2	2.83	0.43	2.82	0.32	0.02	1,13	.883	.002
Time 3	2.72	0.41	2.98	0.25	10.66	1,10	.010	.542
Cohort 2 Waitlist First								
Time 1	2.90	0.47	2.75	0.37	1.17	1,17	.294	.069
Time 2	2.86	0.51	2.87	0.43	1.283	1,16	.941	.000
Time 3	3.05	0.46	3.12	0.26	0.33	1,13	.135	.025

Note: Repeated Measures ANOVA Within Group Comparison of MLQ5I means between Waitlist first group and Coaching first group at Time 1, Time 2 and Time 3 by rater level. Self=participant, other=all other raters combined.

Figure 1: Self-Other Alignment in Mean MLQ5I Transformational Leadership scores over time for Cohorts 1 and 2.



transformational leadership scores after leadership are differentially perceived with those higher in the organisation being most sensitive to change. Finally participants who initially overestimate their leadership scores when compared to all other raters, appear to subsequently reduce their scores in an attempt to realign with other raters. This effect may be partially responsible for the lack of significant difference in the self-ratings of participants over time.

The lack of changes in self-ratings of leadership behaviour after leadership coaching is unusual and at odds with many of the previous findings in this area (Grant et al., 2010; Theeboom et al., 2014). There was a non-significant decline in scores over time for Cohort 1 and a small non-significant increase in time for Cohort 2. Their self-ratings on transformational leadership remained very consistent between time one and two while they were acting as the control group for Cohort 1. After the coaching had been received at Time 3, their self-ratings did increase in line with all other levels rating their behaviour. Given that the majority of outcome studies employ only self-report measures, it is interesting to speculate how many studies may have shown a significant other-rating change had that data been available. This finding also confirms that self-ratings alone may be an unreliable indicator of change (Kruger & Dunning, 1993) and prone to under-estimation (Fleenor et al., 2010). There is related evidence to suggest that 360 feedback can have the effect of lowering subsequent levels of self-rating as the participant's awareness is raised about how others view them but only if participants initially overrate their leadership abilities (Atwater et al., 2000). Other researchers have confirmed that when individuals overrate their leadership behaviour, subsequent ratings can decrease as a function of greater insight and feedback (Luthans & Petersen, 2003). This suggests that the other-rater alignment effect is more powerful that the self-perceived changes after coaching.

However, there were significant differences in how raters at different levels viewed the changes in coachee leadership behaviour over time. There were also some between cohort differences of note that are worth exploring. Cohort 1 (Coaching first) began with a higher self-rating compared with their manager, peers, direct reports and other raters. As outlined above, the self-ratings of transformational leadership behaviour came down after the coaching whilst all other levels of raters increased their ratings. The other finding of note in Cohort 1 was that the change in rater's responses over time was differentially perceived with change most apparent within raters at the higher organisational level. Both peers and direct reports saw significant positive changes over time in the levels of participant transformational leadership but the effect size was lower than in the higher level. This is an unusual finding as previous research has suggested that direct reports are the most sensitive to change both for their proximity to the participant and because their data is based on multiple rather than single observations (Atkins & Wood, 2002). An alternative explanation is that different rater levels are rating different qualities in the participant with higher raters rating performance criteria whilst direct reports are rating relational factors (Nowack, 2009).

The second cohort (waitlist first) did not have such an obvious discrepancy between self and other raters on the MLQ at Time 1. Their self-ratings on transformational leadership remained very consistent between time one and two while they were acting as the control group for Cohort 1. Again in Cohort 2, the line manager raters showed the greatest effect size in their ratings of changes in transformational leadership in the participants over time. Given that both Cohorts demonstrated that the line manger raters saw the greatest amount of change over time, this seems to be a reliable finding. As almost all the managers were also participants in the coaching research, they could be especially attuned to the type of changes in transformational leadership behaviour that the participants were being rated on. Peers and direct reports also reported significant levels of change in transformational leadership but again the effect size was not as great as that of the higher group. Given that self-ratings are prone to a variety of self-serving biases that can both promote an inflated sense of self-performance and restrict access to corrective feedback (Dunning et al., 2003), this further emphasises the importance of the trends in the other rater data.

The third critical finding is that self-other misalignment in ratings at Time 1 (in this case overestimation in Cohort 1) appears to trigger an attempt by the participant to realign their scores with all others. This effect seems more powerful than the coaching effect and has the impact of driving down self-ratings over time. This is consistent with a general trend in multi-source feedback that participant self-ratings become more accurate (that is more aligned with the ratings of others) over time as their awareness of the ratings of others increases, (Atwater et al., 2000; Atwater, Brett & Charles, 2007). However, in this case for Cohort 1 they are most aligned with other raters at Time 2 and then diverge in the opposite direction at Time 3 as they continue to underestimate their scores when compared to all others, possibly due to overcompensating for their initial over-estimation at Time 1.

Practical implications

There are a number of practical implications that can be derived from this study. Firstly it again questions the veracity of self-report and strongly suggests future coaching outcome studies should employ a multi-rater format to assess change. Secondly it suggests that change is perceived differentially by level within the organisation with those higher in the organisation being especially sensitive to change, particularly if those raters are also participants in the coaching programme This again confirms the importance of line manager support and awareness of the coaching process and the goals therein. Finally this study suggests that the impact of overestimating self-scores when compared to all others may have the consequence of driving down scores over time and this effect may mask the impact of the coaching process that is perceived by other raters.

Limitation of the study

The study employed a non-equivalent between-subjects controlled design that utilised a control group to assess the impact of a leadership coaching intervention on transformational leadership behaviours. It was not possible to randomly assign subjects to each cohort as the availability of participants as the logistical needs of the organisation took precedence. Despite this non-randomisation, however, there was no significant difference between the two cohorts at Time 1 suggesting the allocation of participants did not unduly influence the study. However, the between-subjects design only allowed the first Cohort to be fully controlled as at Time 2 when the two cohorts crossed over, cohort one had already had the intervention and could no longer function as an independent control group.

Secondly, the participant sample size was relatively small and the loss of 15 per cent of the participants who dropped out during the course of the study, could reduce the generalisability of the study. A larger participant sample size would help to address this issue and permit further investigation of the influence of coachee variables in coaching outcomes. However, it is worth noting that the total number of other raters for Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 were 131 and 152 respectively. Thirdly, the absence of a definitive analytical technique in the literature to assess the impact of SOA, (Fleenor et al., 2010) may have limited further analysis of the impact of this discrepancy on Cohort 1. Finally the fact that the coaching was provided pro bono, could have impacted negatively on the commitment of the coaches to the coaching process. These effect sizes may, therefor,e be an underestimate of the potential changes possible. However, this issue may be counteracted by possible positive effects of the coaches' participation in the author's strength-based coaching methodology induction programme. The fact that this study was conducted in a NFP organisation may limit its generalisability but the organisation did have a standard corporate structure and HR processes and despite being an NFP, there was a very strong focus on financial accountability and evaluating return on investment.

Conclusion

MSF is increasingly utilised in the evaluation of leadership and executive coaching. This study confirms its validity as a critical outcome measure by illustrating that self-report may not always be sensitive to change, change is perceived differentially within the host organisation with different stakeholder groups reporting different perceptions of change over time and that misaligned SOA can subsequently inhibit leadership self-ratings especially in the case of those who initially over-estimate their leadership capacity. It confirms the need for coaching outcome research to focus beyond self-report to include the level at which others perceive change (Barling, 2014). Future coaching research needs to routinely incorporate MSF as an outcome criterion and analyse results by level within the organisation to confirm the novel finding that higher raters are more sensitive to change. The issue of SOA could be further explored with the incorporation of a performance criteria independent of the multi-rater data to test the effects of poor SOA on participant performance.

The Author
Dr Doug MacKie
CSA Consulting,
320 Adelaide Street,
Brisbane, Australia.

Correspondence
Dr Doug MacKie
Email Doug@csaconsulting.biz

References

Antonakis, J., Avolio, B.J. & Sivasubramaniam, N. (2003). Context and leadership: An examination of the nine-factor full-range leadership theory using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. *The Leadership Quarterly, 14*, 261–295.

Atkins, P.W. & Wood, R.E. (2002). Self-versus others' ratings as predictors of assessment center ratings: Validation evidence for 360-degree feedback programmes. *Personnel Psychology, 55*, 871–904.

Atwater, L.E., Brett, J.F. & Charles, A.C. (2007). Multisource feedback: Lessons learned and implications for practice. *Human Resource Management, 46*(2), 285–307.

Atwater, L.E. & Brett, J.F. (2005). Antecedents and consequences of reactions to developmental 360-feedback. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour, 66*(3), 532–548.

Atwater, L.E., Waldman, D.A., Atwater, D. & Cartier, P. (2000). An upward feedback field experiment: Supervisors' cynicism, reactions, and commitment to subordinates. *Personnel Psychology, 53*, 275–297.

Avolio, B.J. (2011) *Full range leadership development* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Barling, J. (2014). *The science of leadership: Lessons from research for organisational leaders.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bass, B.M. & Avolio, B.J. (1997). *Full range leadership development: Manual for the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.* Palo Alto, CA: Mind Garden Inc.

Dunning, D., Johnson, K., Ehrlinger, J. & Kruger, J. (2003). Why people fail to recognise their own incompetence. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 12*, 83–87.

Fleenor, J.W., Smither, J.W., Atwater, L.E., Braddy, P.W. & Sturm, R.E. (2010). Self-other rating agreement in leadership: A review. *The Leadership Quarterly, 21*(6), 1005–1034.

Grant, A.M., Passmore, J., Cavanagh, M.J. & Parker, H.M. (2010). The state of play in coaching today: A comprehensive review of the field. *International Review of Industrial and Organisational Psychology, 25*, 125–167.

Harter, J.K., Schmidt, F.L. & Hayes, T.L. (2002). Business-unit-level relationship between employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and business outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*(2), 268.

Judge, T.A. & Piccolo, R.F. (2004). Transformational and transactional leadership: A meta-analytic test of their relative validity. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 89*, 755–767.

Kochanowski, S., Seifert, C.F. & Yukl, G. (2010). Using coaching to enhance the effects of behavioural feedback to managers. *Journal of Leadership & Organisational Studies, 17*(4), 363–369.

Kruger, J. & Dunning, D. (1999). Unskilled and unaware of it: How difficulties in recognising one's own incompetence lead to inflated self–assessments. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 77*, 1121–1134.

Linley, A., Willars, J. & Biswas-Diener, R. (2010). *The strengths book.* Coventry: CAPP Press.

Linley, A. & Stoker, H. (2012). *Technical manual and statistical properties for Realise2.* Coventry: Centre of Applied Positive Psychology.

Luthans, F. & Peterson, S.J. (2003). 360-degree feedback with systematic coaching: Empirical analysis suggests a winning combination. *Human Resource Management, 42*, 243–256.

MacKie, D.J. (2014). The effectiveness of strength-based executive coaching in enhancing full range leadership development. A controlled study. *Consulting Psychology Journal. Practice and Research, 66*, 118–137.

Murphy, K.R. (2008). Explaining the weak relationship between job performance and ratings of job performance. *Industrial and Organisational Psychology, 1*(2), 148–160.

Nieminen, L.R., Smerek, R., Kotrba, L. & Denison, D. (2013). What does an executive coaching intervention add beyond facilitated multi-source feedback? Effects on leader self-ratings and perceived effectiveness. *Human Resource Development Quarterly, 24*(2), 145–176.

Nowack, K.M. & Mashihi, S. (2012). Evidence-based answers to 15 questions about leveraging 360-degree feedback. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 64*(3), 157.

Nowack, K.M. (2009). Leveraging multi-rater feedback to facilitate successful behavioural change. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 61*(4), 280.

Page, N. & de Haan, E. (2014). Does executive coaching work? *The Psychologist, 27*(8), 582–586.

Smither, J.W., London, M., Flautt, R., Vargas, Y. & Kucine, I. (2003). Can working with an executive coach improve multi-source feedback ratings over time? A quasi-experimental field study. *Personnel Psychology, 56*, 23.

Smither, J.W., London, M. & Reilly, R.R. (2005). Does performance improve following multi-source feedback? A theoretical model, meta-analysis, and review of empirical findings. *Personnel Psychology, 58*(1), 33–66.

Tabachnick, B.G. & Fidell, L.S. (2007). *Using multivariate statistics* (6th ed.). London: Pearson.

Theeboom, T., Beersma, B. & van Vianen, A.E. (2014). Does coaching work? A meta-analysis on the effects of coaching on individual level outcomes in an organisational context. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 9*(1), 1–18.

Woo, S.E., Woo, S.E., Sims, C.S., Rupp, D.E. & Gibbons, A.M. (2008). Development engagement within and following developmental assessment centers: Considering feedback favorability and self-assessor agreement. *Personnel Psychology, 61*(4), 727–759.

Authentic Leaders are... Conscious, Competent, Confident, and Congruent: A Grounded Theory of Group Coaching and Authentic Leadership Development

Tony Fusco, Siobhain O'Riordan & Stephen Palmer

Introduction: *This paper explores and merges two important fields of coaching; Group Coaching and Authentic Leadership Development (ALD). It develops a theory of group coaching and builds this into a conceptual and evidence-based method of ALD.*
Design: *Four authentic leadership coaching groups were conducted over an 18-month period. Each group consisted of five or six senior leaders and were run once a month over a three-month period. After a three-month gap, recorded semi-structured interviews were conducted with all participants to capture the learning and behaviour change that these leaders had experienced as a result of the group-coaching programme.*
Results: *A Grounded Theory approach was applied to the analysis of monthly diary and final interview data which resulted in a two-part theory. Firstly, how the process of a group-coaching approach to ALD works, and secondly, what the output of this approach is in terms of individual leadership. A model was developed comprising four core concepts of authentic leadership along with seven sub-categories of key leadership skills.*
Conclusion: *This research brings together the two key areas of group coaching and leadership development and contributes to the field of leadership coaching by offering both a* model *and a* method *of ALD. It offers an underpinning theory of each and introduces a model of authentic leadership based on the core concepts of conscious, competent, confident and congruent leadership.*
Keywords: *leadership coaching; group coaching; coaching psychology; leadership development; authentic leadership; executive coaching; grounded theory.*

Why the need for Authentic Leadership in the 21st century?

EACH ERA has its own leadership theory that develops in response to the needs of the time and the interests of both practitioners and researchers, and the leadership theory of our epoch is Authentic Leadership (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014). To get some sense of why this may be, we need only to briefly review some 21st century business governance so far.

The high profile corporate scandals started in 2001 with Enron's joint CEO's taking the corporation to bankruptcy with a shareholder loss of $74bn. Their accounting firm Arthur Anderson was also found guilty of misrepresentation which led to the loss of 85,000 of their own jobs. A year later the telecoms giant WorldCom inflated company assets leading to 30,000 job losses and an $180bn loss. The following year saw the Tyco scandal and more recently, in 2008, the financial services firm Lehman Brothers went bankrupt after hiding $50bn of toxic loans. Once again aided by their auditors Ernst Young, this resulted in the biggest bankruptcy in US history (www.accounting-degree.org). These high profile examples of corporate management may well have contributed to the keen interest now being taken in Authentic Leadership, by both practitioners (George & Simms, 2007) and researchers (Avolio, Luthans & Walumbwa, 2004).

This interest has led to scientific development of the construct of Authenticity (Kernis & Goldman, 2006, and Avolio et al., 2004) but as yet there has been no research into understanding how leaders develop authenticity or authentic leadership. That was the aim of the research reported here. Firstly, we set out to develop a theory of how authentic leadership is developed, and secondly, to understand in what way that translated into leadership skill. Firstly, let us consider the roots of the concept of authenticity and how this relates to authentic leadership.

Authenticity

The word itself *authentes* or *authento* translates into variations around the theme of being *self-made* reflected in the definition given to it by various Western philosophers. Kierkegaard (1846), for example, talked about being the *true-self one was meant to be* and not following the lead of the crowd. Heidegger (1927) of not living immersed in the *'They'* and Sartre (1966) described it as the absence of self-deception. More recently, Brumbaugh (1971) describes authenticity as the ability to make individual choices and to take responsibility for them and Harter (2002) as owning one's own experience of thoughts, emotions and beliefs. Here one can see the seeds of the definition by Kernis (2003) that paved the way for the recent scholarly work on authenticity, and who describes it as *'the unobstructed operation of one's true or core self'* (p.1). It was Kernis and Goldman (2006) who developed a multi-component construct of Authenticity which in turn laid the foundation for the models of Authentic Leadership we discuss later. They argue that authenticity is made up of four related but separate components: *awareness; unbiased processing; behaviour;* and *relational orientation. Awareness* – relating to the self-knowledge of one's own emotions, cognitions, beliefs and motives. *Unbiased processing* – meaning accuracy and objectivity with regards positive and negative self-relevant information. *Behaviour* – based on the previous two and, therefore, genuinely self-congruent, and a *Relational orientation* – characterised by openness, honesty and sincerity in one's relations with others. This framework laid the conceptual foundation for the scientifically developed and validated models of Authentic Leadership that were to come, and today many of the current definitions of Authentic Leadership have their roots in this work.

Authentic Leadership?

Avolio, Luthans and Walumbwa (2004) describe Authentic Leaders as *'individuals who know who they are and what they think and are perceived by others as being aware of their own values, moral perspective, knowledge and strengths'* (p.4). Walumbwa et al. (2008) define authentic leadership as *'a pattern of leader behaviour… of greater self-awareness, an internalised moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency'* (p.94). This second definition builds on the Kernis model of Authenticity described above and was developed by Walumbwa and associates (2008) as a four-component model of Authentic Leadership as a higher-order, multidimensional construct. This was then validated and operationalised through their Authentic Leadership Questionnaire.

The need for a research-based approach to the development of Authentic Leadership

There is a growing body of research clearly demonstrating the organisational benefits of Authentic Leadership (Table 1). Ratings of Authentic Leadership have been shown to positively relate to a broad range of vital business factors, for example organisational climate and commitment, communication and knowledge sharing, job-satisfaction and work engagement, even individual, team and overall company performance and productivity. This growing research evidence underscores the importance of understanding how we develop Authentic Leadership and indicate the importance of providing an evidence-based method of Authentic Leadership Development (ALD). This research represents one such attempt. But before discussing a scientific approach to ALD specifically, let us consider the science of the leadership development market more generally.

Table 1: Authentic Leadership outcome research.

Authors	Focus of Research
Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang & Avey (2009)	Trust in leadership
Wong & Cummings (2009)	Trust in leadership
Walumbwa, Hartnell & Christensen (2011)	Communication climate and knowledge sharing
Jensen & Luthans (2006)	Follower job-satisfaction and organisational commitment
Giallonardo, Wong & Iwasiw (2010)	Follower citizenship and work engagement
Wong, Laschnger & Cummings (2010)	Follower citizenship and work engagement
Wong & Cummings (2009)	Follower job performance
Walumbwa, Luthans, Avey & Oke (2011b)	Group creativity
Hannah, Walumbwa & Fry (2011)	Team productivity
Toor & Ofori (2009)	Psychological well-being
Hmieleski, Cole & Baron (2011)	Overall company performance

It is estimated the US spend over $10bn a year on leadership development (O'Leonard, 2010). However, there exists very little research into the field of leadership development (Avoilio & Luthans, 2006; Day, 2009) and even less into ALD specifically (Avolio, 2014). Day, Harrison and Hapin (2000) note that most leadership development research does not actually investigate whether the leader changes in terms of their thinking about leadership or their style of leadership. Yukl (2006) also criticises the field for a lack of interventions actually based on a theory-led process of leadership development. It is curious that such a large market has grown historically on such little theoretical or empirical evidence.

Avolio (2009) believes this area to be one of the most important frontiers in both the science and practice of leadership. He says *'the way we are currently developing leaders in most organisations is typically accidental, by luck and happenstance'* (p.722). He calls for scientists involved in the field of leadership development to work with leaders to help them become more practitioner-scientists. That is, to understand what constitutes research-driven and evidenced-based practice, allowing them to make more discerning choices when investing in their own leadership development. He also considers however, that leadership development being one of the least researched areas within the science of leadership, actually offers the field an opportunity *'…this omission is a huge opportunity for creating and validating what we have called authentic leadership development models and methods'* (p.722). Concluding that leadership development interventions based on well-validated models and methods will provide a more authentic basis for developing authentic leaders.

We believe the research presented in this paper offers such an authentic basis for leadership development in that it represents the first attempt to develop an evidence-based and empirically supported model and method of ALD.

Method

The research method used in this study was Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) which was chosen because the aim of the research was to develop a conceptual model of ALD. Glaser and Strauss developed Grounded Theory as an approach to generate new theory as opposed to the more typical scientific approach designed to test existing theory. Although a qualitative method of research, the original method of Grounded Theory developed by Glaser and Strauss rests firmly on a positivist epistemology. The assumption is that sociological and psychological relationships exist objectively in the world and are waiting to be discovered through the systematic investigation of data. An investigation that involves the systematic coding and categorising of the data and identifying causal relationships between them, allowing new theories to emerge directly from that data rather than trying to force extant theory onto it. There is currently very little evidence base in the literature about either group coaching or actual methods of ALD so the aim of this research was to bring the two together in a systematic manner and to try and understand both the process and the outcome of this form of ALD. It was for this reason that the Grounded Theory method was deemed appropriate for this research. It should be noted however, that where data was clearly and consistently pointing towards an existing concept or idea we included this to help with theoretical coding, for example, the ideas of Group Cohesion (Yalom, 1995) and Psychological Safety (Schein, 1993). This is a technique endorsed by Glaser (2005) at the advanced coding stage as it can add explanatory power and assist in theoretical integration (Birks & Mills, 2011).

Procedure

The coaching approach used in this research was a group coaching format where selected senior leaders came together to form an Authentic Leadership Coaching Group facilitated by the author. The format of the coaching was as follows.

Day 1: The Past

After introductions and group contracting each participant is asked to draw an in-depth lifeline detailing the significant events that they believe formed and informed their lives to date. They are asked to share how they believed these events had shaped their values and beliefs and how these in turn translate into their leadership principles and philosophy. After presenting their 'story' they are then asked questions by each group member in turn who have been given rudimentary tuition in the principle of coaching, that is, open questions, challenges, observations and feedback being permissible but not advice-giving. The role of the group is to help deepen the individuals thinking about their leadership career to date and the lessons they have derived from it.

Day 2: The Present

Between the first and second day each individual receives a personality profile that gives them an insight into their Temperament and how this informs their leadership approach; Tactical, Logistical, Strategic or Diplomatic (Keirsey, 1998). They present a synopsis of their reports to the group sharing examples from their leadership practice. Once again the coaching by the group is designed to help the individual reflect on their leadership through this conceptual lens and raise their awareness of their strengths, weaknesses, blind-spots, etc.

Day 3: The Future

Before day three each person is asked to undertake a behavioural task or experiment that will help their growth as a leader based on the discoveries of day one and two. Once again they are coached through this experience by the group. Finally they are asked to synthesis everything they have learnt and are asked to consider how they want the future of their leadership to look, what they want to achieve and what legacy they want to build.

The groups convened one day a month over a three-month period and the data presented in this report is based on the output of four groups run over an 18 month period, with a total of 21 participants. The data comes from two sources. Firstly, a monthly Reflective Log that was sent to each participant within one week of day one, two and three respectively. These were unstructured and participants were asked to record their personal experience of each day. Secondly, recorded interviews took place three months after the last session. These were semi-structured interviews based on three levels of evaluation often used in corporate Management and Leadership development interventions: 1 – Learning; 2 – Behaviour Change; and 3 – Performance Improvement (Kirkpatrick, 1975).

Participants

Purpose sampling was used to select potential participants, all of whom were interviewed by the author prior to being invited to join a group. Inclusion criteria for participation in a group included:

- A motivation to explore themselves and their personal approach to leadership.
- The ability to access and articulate their own inner thoughts and emotions.
- The ability to offer others sensitive and constructive feedback.
- The ability to accept feedback from others constructively.

The sample population were all senior leaders from within private and public organisations and they had all worked with the author previously as either a coaching client or a leadership training delegate. On this basis they were assessed and deemed appropriate candidates for the intense nature of the work that small group coaching entails. A wide variety of sectors and industries were represented including; Energy, Manufacturing, Finance, Professional Services, Health and Social Care. Typical leadership roles held by participants included; Chief Executive, Managing Director, Head of Engineering, Head of Safety, Head of Quality, Head of Commercial Services, IT Director, HR Director, Area Manager and Business Manager. *N*=21: Male=12, Female=9. Age: 37 to 56.

All of these were robust and healthy individuals who were given a full briefing as to what to expect in a group coaching format, which had the requisite British Psychological Society ethical approval, and the fundamental differences they were to expect from the more usual forms of leadership development they may have experienced during their careers.

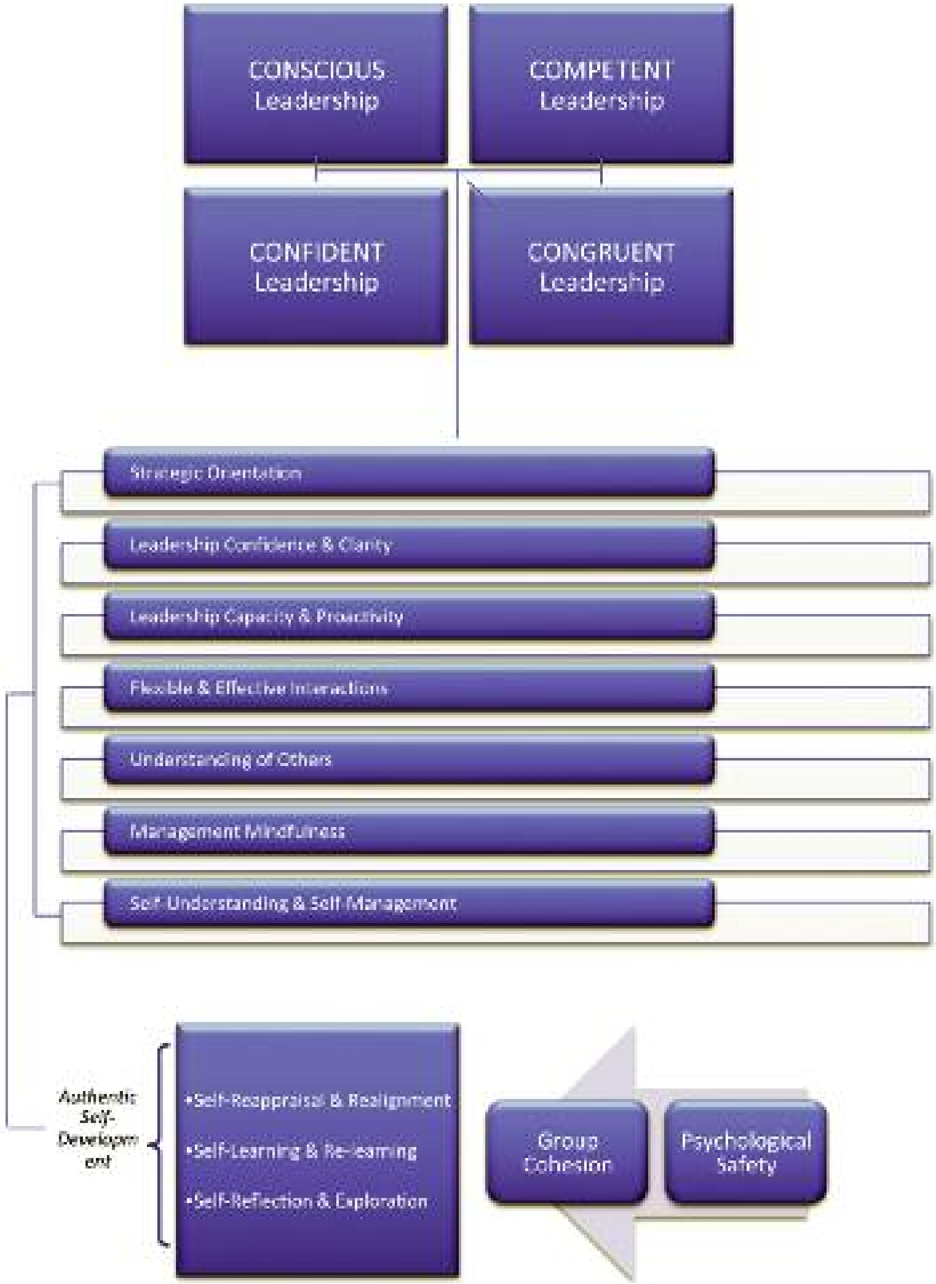
Results

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual model that emerged from this research. The model is split into two sections, the *process* and the *outcome*, and data analysis from each will be looked at in turn as it came from different sources, the Reflective Logs and the recorded interviews.

The process

The Reflective Logs were analysed as soon as they were received a week after each session. Log instructions were kept unstructured so as not to lead the participants reporting in any particular direction, that is, they were asked simply to report on any personal insights or observations they made during the session. As each line was then coded it became apparent these real-time logs were producing an on-going narrative of how the group work was evolving for the participants. What the key factors were for them and how they were reacting to them. For example, it became apparent very early on that the social structure of the group was a positive thing as illustrated by emerging codes such as, *positive anticipation* and the *witnessing of self and others.* These were in turn abstracted into a category of – Group Cohesion. This cohesion in turn led to a feeling of personal security that enabled participants to actively engage in the process, as demonstrated by the emergent codes of *emotional support* and *normalising*, which contributed to a second process category of – Psychological Safety. These conditions then allowed participants to undertake the self-exploration and learning that was key to the group coaching and illustrated by such codes as: *exploring motivations*; *emotional exploration*; *unexpected self-learning*; *expanding awareness*; *taking stock*; and *taking control.* These codes then became the categories of; Self-Reflection and Self-Exploration; Self-Learning and Re-Learning; Self-Reappraisal and Realignment.

Figure 1: Model of Authentic Leadership Development.



The process of change

The active processes involved in change within the group coaching process appeared to be split into two categories of: *Group Conditions*; and *Group Process*. Group Conditions in turn consist of two sub-categories; Group Cohesion and Psychological Safety, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Group Cohesion

Properties: *Positive Anticipation/Positive Experience/Being Witnessed/Witnessing Others*

Group Cohesion seemed to be the bedrock upon which all further individual and group work was to take place. This has already been recognised as an important component of successful group-psychotherapy (Burlingame, Fuhriman & Johnson 2001; Drescher, Burlingame & Fuhriman, 2012; Yalom, 1995). It seems likely that this condition was successfully and consistently fostered by the use of purposive sampling. In almost complete contrast to Randomised Sampling, this method selects participants on quite explicit inclusion criteria explained in the Procedure section above. What might be considered as an inherent bias in this method of subject selection actually contributes to its efficiency (Tongco, 2007), with the result that each group gelled very quickly which was imperative in this time limited intervention. Most important of all, this sense of cohesion facilitated the next key step in the overall process, and our next category of Psychological Safety.

In-vivo examples:

P3 – *'The easy going format generated good team spirit from the outset. The highly participative sessions worked well and enabled people to 'bed in' to the event.'*

P2 – *'Yet again, the group session was incredibly supportive, enlightening and very encouraging. This, in itself, is one of the tremendous features of the programme.'*

P11 – *'Great to meet, gain understanding of, build a level of trust and achieve a degree of camaraderie within the group.'*

Psychological Safety

Properties: *Emotional Support/Feeling Safe/ Normalising*

If cohesion is the group's bedrock then psychological safety is the individuals. Again, this phenomena is already accepted as an important factor within group therapy (Rogers, 1951), but we are now also coming to understand its potential importance in

Figure 2: Group Conditions.

group coaching as well (Fusco, O'Riordan & Palmer, 2014). From the examples below we get a sense of what this actually means to participants.

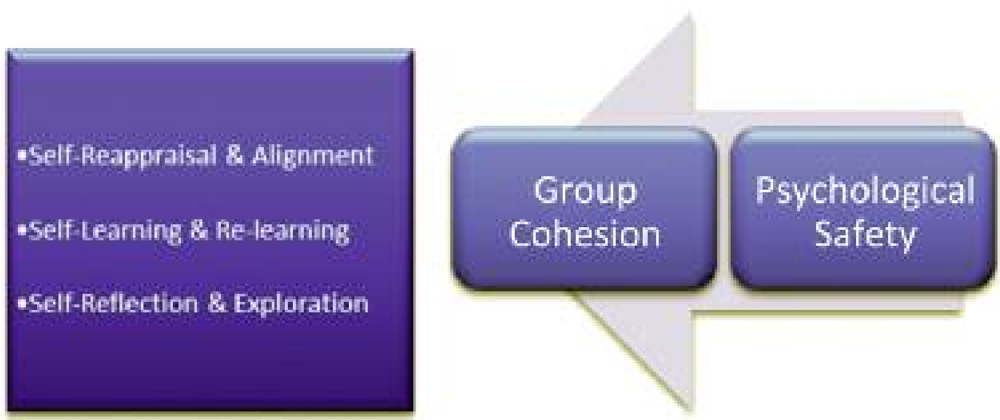
In-vivo examples:
P9 – *'Felt 'safe' in divulging my life story. I soon realised we were all in the same boat and quickly felt comfortable and easily able to be open.'*
P17 – *'I felt that the participants worked well together and we soon felt happy sharing our thoughts and views.'*
P4 – *'I think the group itself gelled very well and, therefore, it gives, for me, a comfortable environment to be honest and explore.'*

The Group Process
Strictly speaking this is the sum of the participant's individual process, so we abstract it out and talk of it as an overarching group-process. These three properties of the group process are all interlinked and appear to represent a hierarchical process as described below and outlined in Figure 3.

Self-Reflection and Self-Exploration
Properties: *Questioning oneself/Exploring Motivation/Emotional Exploration*
The first stage of the group process is that it facilitates an individual's introspection. If group-cohesion and psychological safety have been successfully established it appears the individuals are then prepared, willing and able, to undertake deep reflective thinking. This is best illustrated by some in-vivo data.

In-vivo examples:
P8 – *'On reflection I find myself asking the question 'Who am I?'This is drawing upon my new found self-awareness and looking inwards and searching for values, meaning and self-identity.'*
P22 – *'I look forward very much to the next session as a way of thinking a bit deeper about some of my past professional and personal experiences.'*
P19 – *'Had a strong but very positive sense of being in uncharted territory.'*

Figure 3: Group Process and Group Conditions.



Self-Learning and Re-Learning

Properties: *Self-Understanding/Unexpected Self-learning/Expanding Awareness*

Following reflection and exploration come varying degrees of furthered self-insight and learning. This can take many forms including intra-personal learning, both cognitive and emotional, and inter-personal learning, both behavioural and relational. Some of these insights appear genuinely new to an individual and some appear as if they are being re-learnt having been once forgotten or otherwise put from everyday conscious thought. Again, we get an insight into this learning from in-vivo data.

In-vivo examples:

P5 – *'A strange but clear realisation that either, I've changed or been trying to fit into a style that perhaps wasn't really me. Very enlightening to realise how comfortable your own authentic style can be. Feels a bit like re-learning a language you once knew.'*

P14 – *'After the first day I had a long think about me as a person not just as a manager. However it did make me realise that how I am as a manager is very much also mirrored in how I am as a person.'*

Self-Reappraisal and Realignment

Properties: *Self-Management/Taking Stock/Taking Control*

The final group process and one that seems predicated upon the previous two is a significant internal shift that seems to represent a 'self-recalibration'. This takes place first internally as an adjustment to how individuals see the world and themselves within it, which is then invariably followed by external and overt changes. These cover a broad spectrum of behavioural and relational changes but they represent a natural change based upon the reflection and learning that has taken place prior to this stage. So what individuals appear to achieve is significant and enduring psychological, emotional and behavioural development that remains long after the group-intervention has concluded.

In-vivo examples:

P20 – *'Being part of this Group is proving to be very inspiring and motivating. It's influencing the way I approach, not just leadership but many aspects of my life.'*

P10 – *'The process of investigating my own values, personality traits and temperament, and then directly linking these to a personal reference for authentic behaviour, has had a deeply motivating influence on me.'*

P6 – *'It encourages you to focus on your own authenticity and gives you courage and confidence to think and do things in your own way. It's having a profound and constant effect on my everyday thoughts and approach to life.'*

Authentic Self-Development

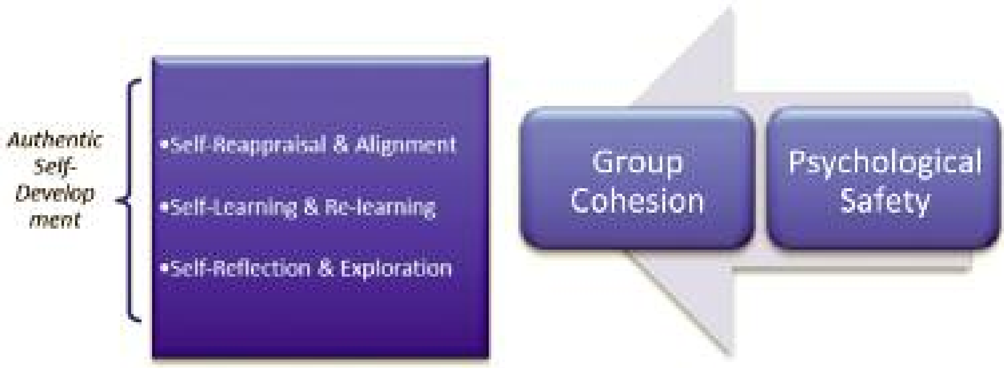
This research seems to demonstrate that Authentic Self-Development is either a necessary precursor or an integral element of Authentic Leadership Development. This would seem to make sense as to be true to oneself in the pursuit of leadership, would of course mean having a genuine understanding of that true self. The road to such understanding can take many forms but the group coaching described here seems to be one particularly potent approach. This is possibly because identity is often considered to be something that we find reflected back to us from others, or that we find in comparison and contrast to others. This is something we explore further in the Discussion.

The outcome of change

The second part to the model focusses on seven key outcomes that emerged and the four Core Concepts of our proposed model of Authentic Leadership that encapsulates them.

Recorded semi-structured interviews were undertaken with each participant three months after the last group session to assess the outcome of the group coaching. The interviews were based around three levels of evaluation typically used in corporate learning and development that evaluate; Learning, Behaviour Change and Performance Improvement. The rationale for using this as

Figure 4: Authentic Self-Development.



a form of evaluation is that it focusses the interviewee on linking their learning from the group coaching to actual behaviour change and linking this in turn to improved performance or business benefit. Within each of these three categories interviewees reported on anything they considered relevant. Transcription and coding of the interviews generated seven categories that are presented and defined below. We have chosen to give each category a definition based on its main properties to make them more descriptive and theoretically dense.

Category 1 – Self-Understanding and Self-Management – *self-awareness that fosters greater self-control and mastery.* This category indicates increased cognitive, emotional and motivational awareness. It also includes an increase in the effective self-regulation in each of these domains that such understanding can engender, for example, gaining greater insight into established behaviour patterns or potential alternatives.

P12 – *'I think there have been some significant changes really which I don't think will change because it hit deeper. It feels very personal and it showed me something personal about me and how I lead.'*

P3 – *'I think I feel more confident about my own ability and more calm. I can't really think of a better word to describe it, but less worried and more in control I guess.'*

Category 2 – Management Mindfulness – *considered and deliberate execution of management duties.* This category indicates a more thoughtful approach to the functional task of management. One example might be thinking more carefully about a task of delegation. Not just what to delegate, but to who and why and how?

P18 – *'I've created an atmosphere and a situation where I'm able to do a much better quality of thinking and delivering that part of my job. So the fundamental quality of thought process and output is just better.'*

P8 – *'I'm not sure how much my behaviour has changed yet but certainly how I go about things in my head has changed, so I would hope in the coming months and years people will be able to see this in improved performance.'*

Category 3 – Understanding of Others – *appreciation and understanding of the styles and behaviours of others.* This category indicates a greater understanding of a leader's interpersonal domain. This may include colleagues and clients but is particularly pertinent to the people they lead.

P13 – *'It dawned on me that there is a place for all of those different styles and that one is not necessarily better than the other. I guess in the past I made the assumption that everyone functions in a pretty similar way.'*

P22 – *'I now recognise that a breadth of humanity can be successful in managing information or*

Figure 5: Sub-Categories.

delivering outcomes. I knew this hypothetically but to be confronted with it with other people was another thing altogether.'

Category 4 – Flexible and Effective Interactions with Others – *ability to adapt to the styles and behaviours of others.* This category is the operationalising of the previous category. It is when an individual takes new understanding of their interpersonal domain and uses this to inform new and more effective ways of communicating and relating to others.
P15 – *'I'm trying to change the way I interact with people, a bit less phone and a bit more going out. I'm trying to invite people to talk to me on an emotional level if that's what's important to them.'*
P8 – *'I now understand that relationships are the glue that holds people together and are instrumental in creating a shared purpose.'*

Category 5 – Leadership Capacity & Proactivity – *active and resilient approach to leadership responsibilities.* This category indicates an increase in an individual's ability to manage their workload and also an increase in resilience as they do so. Without actually teaching new management skills as such, it appears the process of deep self-reflection removes intrinsic blockers that in turn enables an individual to engage more fully and effectively in their work.
P9 – *'Looking back I thought I was doing a phenomenal job before but I think this has now taken things to a completely different level and has been hugely beneficial for me and those around me.'*
P1 – *'My boss has talked about me being her successor and actually, now from a behavioural change point of view, I kind of see that as a distinct possibility. I still think there's a number of hurdles that would have to be overcome but I don't see them now as absolute blockers. Actually, now I see them just as hurdles that can be got over by my own performance.'*

Category 6 – Leadership Confidence and Clarity – *confident and focussed leadership.* This category indicates a more purposeful approach to the role of leadership itself, when individuals are beginning to look less at the technical management aspects of their role and more assuredly at the point and purpose of their own leadership.

P16 – *'I'm much clearer of why I'm doing what I'm doing. I am much, much clearer on what I need to do to be successful in the leadership role I'm doing, both in terms of my own team and also in terms of support to my own leadership team.'*
P12 – *'I'm much clearer on personal leadership and responsibility than I ever was before which makes it much easier to enjoy the positive and more challenging aspects of the day's work.'*

Category 7 – Strategic Orientation – *broad and long-term focus on strategic leadership goals.* This category indicates an increased capacity to turn the previous category into strategic action. It is taking an increase in leadership confidence and clarity of purpose and translating it into important long-term goals. The group coaching offers no training in strategic thinking or planning but, as with the others categories this is one that emerges clearly and consistently.
P14 – *'I think how I manage my staff now is better… which means I have a lot more time to do the corporate stuff that I avoided a bit. It all frees me up to do the strategic stuff, spending time doing the looking-up stuff rather than the organising-down stuff.'*
P6 – *'I started to form the new team of which I am a member and said – let's really get the strategy right in terms of what we are here to do. Let's get the programme and schedule of activities right so we know what steps we're going to take to deliver that strategy and then let's put in place the right machinery, behaviours and culture to deliver those activities to drive that strategy.'*

Developing and synthesising the above categories it became apparent that they relate to each other in various ways. For example, an increased understanding of others can help an individual interact more effectively with them. An increase in leadership clarity and confidence can in turn improve strategic leadership. On this basis we propose a further level of abstraction to just four core concepts within Authentic Leadership, presented in Figure 6. For example, a Conscious approach to leadership we suggest would include both sub-categories of Self-understanding and Management Mindfulness. Competent leadership would involve Effective Interactions with Others and Leadership Capacity and Proactivity. Congruent leadership would include Self-understanding and Self-management and Confident leadership would include Leadership Confidence and Clarity but also Strategic Leadership. These can be summarised as a: Competent leader that is skilled and abled; a Confident leader that is assertive and self-assured; a Conscious leader that is deliberate and intentional; and a Congruent leader that is clear and consistent.

Discussion

The theory of ALD group coaching described above offer us two main areas for discussion. Firstly, we will discuss the process of change facilitated by the group coaching and secondly the output of change achieved by this coaching format.

The process of change

In conducting this research with four groups over 18 months it is our view that the effectiveness of the group coaching approach to ALD is due, in large part, to the opportunity it affords participants to work on the development of an authentic *self* within a social context. Firstly, we argue that if an individual's goal is to be an authentic leader it is safe to presume this must be predicated upon an authentic *self.* Secondly, if this *self* is formed in *contrast and comparison* to others, as argued in social psychology, it is its social structure that makes the group coaching process unique. This is certainly an aspect the participants appear to value according to such feedback as – *'you learn about yourself from others'*, *'there's a significant impact from learning about others impressions of you'*, *'I felt validated by the other participants'* and *'others made me believe I was worthy as a leader'.*

The scientific study of the *'self'* began with James (1890) who introduced two key different aspects of the *self*, both as subject and object, *self-as-knower* and *self-as-known.* This refers to the unique human capacity for

Figure 6: Core Concepts of Authentic Leadership.

reflexive thinking allowing a person to take their own *self* as the object of conscious thought and attention. This may be something fundamental to the success of almost any form of self-development, but the apparent efficacy of the group coaching approach to authentic self-development suggests there is something in it that adds to this process of self-reflection. Something that is an added feature or facet present within the group format over and above the more usual dyad coaching. One possible theory we propose is that this form of coaching affords participants the opportunity to work in parallel with both their *intra-personal self* and their *inter-personal self.*

A contemporary and emerging explanation of the concept of *self,* one that seems to be generating some consensus, is that the *self* operates at two simultaneous levels and is both *an organised dynamic cognitive-affective-action system* and an *interpersonal self-construction system* (Mischel & Morf, 2003, p.23). This would support the idea that it is the group participant's ability to operate in both of these domains, interchangeably and simultaneously, that represent its unique active ingredient. If it is the case that self-construction is wholly or partially rooted within interpersonal processes (Hoyle, 1999; Markus & Cross 1990), then it would follow that the self-reappraisal and realignment that takes place within ALD group coaching is also facilitated by this interpersonal context. Mischel and Morf (2003) suggest that construction of the self-system takes place as a person interacts with their social world and that during this life-long process *'…identity, self-relevant goals, values…are built, maintained, promoted and protected'* (p.29). Such identity, goals and values are, of course, all key elements in the development of both an authentic *self* and an authentic leader.

Along with James other Social theorists have introduced ideas that may provide further insight into the social functioning of the coaching group. For example, the theory of Symbolic Interactionism (George Mead 1934), argues *'…it is at the level of human interaction and interpersonal relationships that the fabrication of the self arises'* (Elliot, 2008, p.29). The idea is that the self is fluid not fixed and is a project that the individual actively builds and develops throughout their *biographical trajectory* in the social and interpersonal context in which it is embedded. If the self is not fixed and is actively constructed within a social context, then the coaching group may be a particularly fertile environment for such personal change and development to occur, where an authentic sense of self can be explored, reappraised and realigned.

Another idea of potential use is the concept of the *reflected-self* introduced by Cooley (1902), who coined the term 'the looking-glass self'. Cooley also believed that the self develops in the social environment in which it is embedded. He argued that the whole concept of *self* cannot be separated from social influences and that the *self* is actually built by assimilating and reflecting the appraisals of others. In Cooley's view, a person incorporates into their own self-concept, the observations they make of other peoples view of them, and they develop a self that is congruent with those views. Should this be the case, then this would further explain why the social and interpersonal nature of the coaching-group helps participants re-evaluate and re-calibrate their self-concepts.

The structure and format of the group coaching encourages a breadth and depth of personal feedback absent from most leadership development training including one-to-one coaching. As Yalom (1995) asserts about group psychotherapy, it is one thing to try and deny the group leaders feedback, as they are the 'hired help', but it is very difficult to deny direct feedback from a group of peers that have no other agenda than to help you increase your own self-learning and awareness. In Cooley's terms, it must be extremely difficult to sit opposite five other looking glasses and deny their reflections, particularly if they are coherent and consistent.

Consistent feedback on the process clearly indicates that group participants greatly value the opportunity to sit down and discuss, on a deeply personal level, matters that have a relevance and resonance with them as individual leaders. It is an opportunity rarely afforded in most leadership development interventions. To reflect on and discuss, their past, present and future domains in a focussed and facilitated environment often has profound impact. This may well also be the case in a two-way conversation with a companion, colleague or coach, but if we do indeed find ourselves, even partially, in comparison and contrast to others, then to have these discussions in the presence of others can be quite literally *self*-changing.

The outcome of change

The tangible performance-based output generated by the group coaching is categorised under our four proposed core concepts of Authentic Leadership; Conscious, Competent, Confident and Congruent. Within each of these are seven categories which we shall review here. The first consistent and emergent category we look at is Strategic Orientation which reflects the increased capacity for strategic leadership reported by many participants. This, despite the fact that at no point in the process, were participants exposed to any teachings in strategy or strategic thinking. We have observed that, rather than skill development, it seems that the group coaching effectiveness lies in its ability to remove obstacles to actual skill deployment. This supports the fundamental coaching tenet that insights, skills and solutions very much reside in the individual and it is a case of helping them access these resources. This is also witnessed in the next category of *Leadership Capacity and Proactivity*. The process seems somehow to increase an individual's reserves and resilience. Many participants report taking on much more work yet feeling even more positive and in control at the same time. We suggest that this category is predicated on the category of *Leadership Confidence and Clarity*. Participants report considerable surges in confidence as a result of the group work. They feel confident to take on increased responsibilities and appear to do so with a much greater clarity of the purpose of their leadership role. This is related to the category of *Management Mindfulness* in that it appears to engender a more focussed and deliberate approach to their management duties generally. The process also seems to achieve change that positively impacts on how individuals work with their colleagues, in terms of *Increased Effective and Flexible Interactions* and an Improved *Understanding of Others.* They report having much greater understanding of colleague's behaviours and motives which in turn gives them more tolerance and flexibility in dealing with them. Finally, we come to the category of *Self-Understanding and Self-Management* that perhaps underpins all of the above and bring us back to the ancient admonition suggested to guide Authentic Leadership Development – 'know thyself'. This reflects the depth of self-relevant work described above and the increases in effective self-regulation which this allows. All of these categories manifest in different constellations and to different degree within each individual. However, the seven categories account for all of the behaviour change and performance improvement that resulted in the 21 leaders participating in the group coaching and can be encapsulated in our proposed over-arching model of Authentic Leadership, that is; Conscious, Competent, Confident and Congruent leadership.

Assumptions, limitations and recommendations

If what you discover depends very much on what you are looking for (Dey, 1999), it is important in the name of researcher reflexivity to make explicit some of the assumptions that guided this research. A first assumption is that Authentic Leadership is indeed a noble goal. That a leader, who has a clearer understanding of their inner self, will lead more effectively. They will have increased clarity and conviction which will positively influence their leadership. Secondly, and in agreement with Erikson (1959), we believe that personal authenticity is relative and not absolute and, therefore, assume it is something that can be developed. Thirdly, we assumed that coaching, and specifically group coaching, might be one possible way to achieve this growth in personal and authentic leadership. Although the research was designed and undertaken with all of these assumptions in the background, it is important to state that the work in the foreground was clear of assumptions on what may be found. Indeed, this is why a Grounded Theory approach was chosen, to discover only theory that both emerged from and was *grounded* in the data (Willig, 2008). There was no idea *if* group coaching would actually help develop authentic leaders and *if* it did, there was no idea of *how* it would, but we believed from a positivist stance that if it did, Grounded Theory would uncover both the *what*, and the *how*.

Two limitations that could be addressed are the use of sampling and generalisability. The intense nature of small group coaching means it is not a suitable method of development for everyone. In large classroom style leadership programmes a delegate can participate as much or as little as they wish. This is not the case in small group coaching where each participant has to engage in the process in a full and frank manner. If one individual refuses to participate, this would inevitably have an adverse impact on the work the rest of the group can do and the whole process would break down. This means participants have to be chosen in a careful and considered manner which in turn makes generalisability all but impossible. However, this does mean the group's eventual composition creates the two fundamental group conditions that form the foundation of our entire model – Psychological Safety and Group Cohesion. However, one recommendation for future studies might be to attempt a randomised control study, to assess the impact of an open group format versus an invite-only format. This would help identify and better understand the contra-indicators to inclusion in a group and the impact these have. Another recommendation for future research may be to investigate further any hierarchical relationship or mediating factors between the seven categories of performance improvement. This may help both individual leaders and sponsoring organisations make better informed decisions about participation.

Conclusion

The research presented here we believe represents the first attempt at an evidenced based approach to ALD, offering both a model and a method of ALD and an explanatory theory of both. As such, we think it represents a valuable contribution to both the field of leadership coaching and group coaching. Through Grounded Theory we were able to understand better the group coaching process and develop four overarching concepts of Authentic Leadership; Conscious, Competent, Confident and Congruent. We suggest it is possibly the parallel process that holds the key to the effectiveness of the group format, enabling the participants to work at both the *intra* and *inter* personal levels of experience, exploring and developing their self-concept in the social context that is unique to this form of coaching. Finally, by introducing social theory, such as the concept of the social-self and the reflected-self, we are better able to understand how this relatively new form of coaching is uniquely placed to develop Authentic Leadership.

The Authors

Tony Fusco, Siobhain O'Riordan & Stephen Palmer
Coaching Psychology Unit,
City University,
London.

Correspondence

Tony Fusco
2 The Tudor,
Wells Road,
Great Malvern,
Worcestershire, WR14 4RH.
Email: tony@3dleadership.co.uk

References

Avolio, B.J. (2010). Pursuing authentic leadership development. In N. Nohria & R. Khurana, (Eds.), *Handbook of leadership theory and practice* (pp.739–768). Cambridge: Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation,

Avolio, B.J., Luthans. F. & Walumbwa, F.O. (2004). *Authentic Leadership: Theory building for veritable and sustained performance.* Lincoln, NE: Gallup Leadership Institute.

Avolio, B.J. & Luthans. F. (2006). *High impact leader: Moments matter in authentic leadership development.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Avolio, B.J. & Walumbwa, F.O. (2014). Authentic leadership theory, research and practise: Steps taken and steps that remain. In D.V. Day (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of leadership & organisations.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Birks, M. & Mills, J. (2001). *Grounded theory: A practical guide.* London: Sage.

Brumbaugh, R.B. (1971). Authenticity and theories of administrative behaviour. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 16*, 108–112.

Burlingame, G., Fuhriman, A. & Johnson, J. (2001). Cohesion in group psychotherapy. *Psychotherapy, 38*(4), 373–379.

Clapp-Smith, R., Vogelgesand, G.R. & Avey, J. B. (2009). Authentic leadership and positive psychological capital: The mediating role of trust at the group level of analysis. *Journal of Leadership & Organisational Studies, 15*, 227–240.

Cooley, C.H. (1902). *Human nature and the social order.* New York: Scribner's.

Day, D.V. (2000). Leadership development: A review in context. *Leadership Quarterly, 11*, 581–613.

Day, D.V., Harrison, M.M. & Hapin, S.M. (2009). *Integrative approach to leader development: Connecting adult development, identity and expertise.* New York: Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.

Dey, I. (1999). *Grounding grounded theory: Guidelines for qualitative inquiry.* London: Academic Press.

Drescher, S., Burlingame, G. & Fuhriman, A. (2012). Cohesion: An odyssey in empirical understanding. *Small Group Research Journal, 43*, 4.

Elliot, A. (2010). *Concepts of the self.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Erikson, E.H. (1956). The problem of ego identity. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association, 4*, 56–121.

Fusco, T., O'Riordan, S. & Palmer, S. (2014). Humanistic authentic leadership development. *Coaching Psychology International, 7*(1), 11–16.

George, W. (2003). *Authentic leadership: Rediscovering the secrets to creating lasting value.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

George, W. & Simms, P. (2007). *True North: Discover your authentic leadership.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Giallonardo, L.M., Wong, C.A. & Iwasiw, C.L. (2010). Authentic leadership of preceptors: Predictor of new graduate nurses' work engagement and job satisfaction. *Journal of Nursing Management, 18*, 993–1003.

Glaser, B.G. & Strauss, A.L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research.* New York: Aldine.

Glaser, B.G. (2005). *The grounded theory perspective III: Theoretical coding.* Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Hannah, S.T., Walumbwa, F.O. & Fry, J. (2011). Leadership in action teams: Team leader and members authenticity, authenticity strength and performance outcomes. *Personnel Psychology, 64*, 771–801.

Harter, J.K., Schmidt, F.L. & Hayes, T.L. (2002). Business-unit-level relationship between employee satisfaction, employee engagement and business outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*, 268–279.

Heidegger, M. (1927). *Being and time.* Translation of J. Macquarrie & E.S. Robinson (1962), *Sein und Zeit.* New York: Harper & Row.

Hmieleski, K.M., Cole, M.S. & Baron, R.A. (2011). Shared authentic leadership and new venture performance. *Journal of Management, 38*, 1476–1499.

Hoyle, R.H., Kernis, M.H., Leary, M.R. & Baldwin, M.W. (1990). *Selfhood: Identity, esteem, regulation.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

James, W. (1890). *The principles of psychology.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Jensen, S.M. & Luthans, F. (2006). Entrepreneurs as authentic leaders: Impact on employees' attitudes. *Leadership & Organisation Development Journal, 27*(8), 646–666.

Keirsey, D. (1998). *Please understand me II: Temperament, character, intelligence.* Del Mar, CA: Prometheus Nemesis Book Company.

Kierkegaard, S. (1946). The present age (trans. A. Dru, 1962). New York: Harper & Row.

Kirkpatrick, D.L. (1975). *Evaluating training programs.* San Francisco Tata: Tata McGraw-Hill Education.

Kernis, M. H. (2003). Towards a conceptualisation of optimal self-esteem. *Psychological Inquiry, 14*, 1–26.

Kernis, M.H. & Goldman, B.M. (2006). A multicomponent conceptualisation of authenticity: Theory and research. In M.P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 38*, 283–357. San Diego: Academic Press.

Luthans, F. & Avolio, B.J. (2003). Authentic leadership development. In K.S. Cameron, J.E. Dutton & R.E. Quinn (Eds.), *Positive organisational scholarship* (pp.241–258). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Markus, H. & Cross, S. (1990). The interpersonal self. In L.A. Pervin (Ed.), *Handbook of personality: Theory and research.* New York: Guilford Press.

Mead, G.H. (1934). *Mind, self and society: From the standpoint of a social behaviourist.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mischel, W. & Morf, C.C. (2003). The self as a psychosocial dynamic processing system: A metaperspective on a century of the self in psychology. In M.R. Leary & J.P. Tangney (Eds.), *Handbook of self and identity* (p.23). New York: Guilford Press.

O'Leonard, K. (2010). *The corporate learning factbook 2009: Benchmarks, trends and analysis of the US training market.* Oaklands, CA: Bersin & Associates.

Rogers, C. (1951). *Client-centred therapy.* London: Constable & Co. Ltd.

Satre, J.P. (1966). *The age of reason.* New York: A.A. Knopf.

Schein, E.H. (1993). How can organisations learn faster? The challenge of entering the green room. *Sloan Management Review, 34*(2), 85–92.

Tice, D.M. & Wallace, H.M. (2003). The reflected self: Creating yourself as (you think) others see you. In M.R. Leary & J.P. Tangney (Eds.), *Handbook of self and identity* (p.91). New York: Guilford Press.

Toor, S.-u.-R., Ofori, G. & Arain, F.M. (2009). Authentic leadership style and its implications in project management. *Business Review, 2*(1), 31–55.

Walumbwa, F.O., Avolio, B.J., Gardener, W.L., Wernsing, T.S. & Peterson, S.J. (2008). Authentic leadership: Development and validation of a theory based measure? *Journal of Management*, 34–89.

Walumbwa, F.O., Hartnell, A.L., Ayree, S. & Christensen, C.A. (2011). *Fostering creativity in work groups: Authentic leadership, communication climate, and knowledge sharing.* Paper presented at the Academy of Management Annual Meetings. San Antonio, TX.

Walumbwa, F.O., Luthans, F., Avey, J. & Oke, A. (2011b). Authentically leading groups: The mediating role of positivity and trust. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour, 32*, 24–43.

Willig, C. (2008). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology.* New York: McGraw Hill, Open University Press.

Wong, C.A. & Cummings, G.G. (2009). The influence of authentic leadership behaviours on trust and work outcomes of health care staff. *Journal of Leadership Studies, 3*, 6–23.

Wong, C.A., Laschnger, H.K.S. & Cummings, G.G. (2010). Authentic leadership and nurses' voice behaviour and perceptions of care quality. *Journal of Nursing Management, 18*, 889–900.

Yalom, I.D. (1995). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy.* New York: Basic Books.

Walking a mile in an executive's shoes: The influence of shared client-coach experience on goal achievement

Alex T. Chinn, James P. Richmond & John L. Bennett

Objectives: *To evaluate the relationship between shared industry or professional experience and client goal achievement.*

Design: *An exploratory, quantitative approach was taken to survey the degree to which shared experience influenced the client's coach selection decision and the impact on client goal achievement.*

Results: *Findings suggest no correlation between the coach's professional or industry experience as client selection factors and the degree of client goal achievement.*

Conclusions: *Matching based upon shared subject matter expertise may prematurely eliminate coaches who might have been an ideal fit.*

Keywords: *coaching; client; matching; goal achievement; professional experience; industry experience; selection criteria.*

EXECUTIVE COACHING is an emerging profession, and quickly growing as a big business. The International Coaching Federation (ICF) (2012) reported that corporations are, in fact, investing almost $2 billion a year in coaching services globally. An increasing number of businesses are using coaches to help in areas that include talent management, leadership, executive presence and transition development.

Since coaching services typically require a significant investment, organisations now spend significantly more time matching their executive clients with coaches based on various selection criteria. These organisations believe that getting the appropriate coach-client match at the beginning of the coaching engagement increases the likelihood of achieving client goals. Corporate Human Resources (HR) partners are tasked with developing standardised coach-client matching criteria to select the best coaches for their clients based on criteria they consider important for success. These HR partners may or may not be coaches themselves, and their coaching experience and training varies. Typically executives in the organisations approach HR partners with specific coaching needs. The HR partners then select coaches they believe will be a good match. They often set the selection criteria and manage the appropriation of coaching services for an organisation by selecting three or four prospective coaches and presenting them to their executive client for a final selection. Executives commonly select coaches by considering factors such as executive experience, gender, nationality, credentials, certification, referrals, industry or professional experience, academic accreditation and subject matter expertise (Blake-Beard et al., 2011; Gray, Ekinci & Goregaokar, 2011a, 2011b).

Numerous research studies on executive coaching consider the selection criteria used to match coaches to their clients (Baron & Morin, 2009; Gray et al., 2011a, 2011b; Stewart et al., 2008). Matching executives to coaches is intrinsically difficult, since there are so many variables to consider when selecting a coach for a specific need. Matching appropriately and establishing a meaningful relationship between client and coach-practitioner is critical to achieving successful outcomes. Interestingly, these existing studies appear to contain deficiencies or do not consider the impact various selection criteria have on a client's goal achievement. There appears to be a lack of research pointing to why various selection criteria are chosen and ultimately how the effectiveness of those criteria is assessed against outcomes, if assessed at all.

We believe that coaching consumers' beliefs of how to match executives with coaches differ based on where they land on a continuum. At one end of the continuum is the *non-subject-matter-expertise* position, and at the other end is the *subject-matter-expertise* position. To define these two terms, the non-subject-matter-expertise position holds that competent coaches can help clients achieve their goals regardless of the coach's background, gender, credentials, and professional or industry affiliation. On the opposite end of the spectrum, someone taking the subject-matter-expertise position believes that to effectively help a client, the coach must have direct knowledge of a particular subject pertaining to the client's field of expertise. The validity of holding a position on either end of the continuum remains largely unknown because of the lack of empirical studies.

According to Underhill et al. (2013), the primary coach-client selection criteria organisations currently use to match coaches and clients include the coaches' experience and skills, ability to build rapport and trust, experience with specific leadership challenges, congruence with the company's culture and business experience. Studies such as this one help clarify criteria clients use to select coaches. In addition, the study raises questions about the relationship between selection criteria and goal achievement. The existing literature has a paucity of empirical data regarding the actual relationship between specific coach-client selection criteria and goal achievement. We sought to better understand the impact professional and industry experience as selection criteria had on goal achievement, if any.

This research study is presented in five sections. The first section introduces the context, purpose and significance of the study. The second section presents the literature review of over 35 peer-reviewed periodicals and several texts informing the three frameworks that emerged to enlighten this study. These frameworks included: (a) Coaching Distinctions and Definitions; (b) Non-Subject Matter Expertise and Subject Matter Expertise Continuum; and (c) Goal Achievement Predictors. The third section presents the methodology, including selection of participants, instrumentation, data collection and analysis. The fourth and fifth sections present the study's findings and the discussions of those findings, including implications for further research and conclusions.

Literature review

Corporate coaching practice leaders believe that if they optimally match their executives with coaches, their efforts will generate successful outcomes. A systematic approach to the literature review was taken, utilising a snowballing approach (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2005). First, keywords were identified to use as search terms to query the relevant journal publication databases. Once a publication germane to the study's central themes was discovered, it was included in the literature review and further research was conducted using the publication's references until the theme was exhausted. The timeframe examined ranged from 2000 to present. Three frameworks emerged from the literature review: (a) Coaching Distinctions and Definitions; (b) Non-Subject Matter Expertise and Subject Matter Expertise Continuum; and (c) Goal Achievement Predictors.

Coaching Distinctions and Definitions

Clients who say they want coaching and select coaches to help them achieve their goals may, in fact, want consulting or a combination of coaching and consulting. A number of authors have provided 'notable definitions on executive coaching' (Bennett & Bush, 2014, p.14). The definitions of coaching vary greatly based upon the source. According to the ICF, there is a clear distinction among coaching, consulting, mentoring and counseling (ICF, 2008). Some coaching definitions lean more towards the coach's adopting a subject-matter-expertise-oriented stance, whereas other coaching definitions lean more towards a non-directive, non-subject-matter expertise approach. The definition of *coaching* for this research utilises the ICF's (2008) concept of 'partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximise their personal and professional potential' (p.1). The definition of *consulting* for this research utilises Bennett and Bush's (2014) definition of consulting: 'A helping relationship that can be formal or informal and is established for the purpose of providing expertise, skills, and/or a process for the client' (p.367). The definition for *coach-client* match is the pairing of a coach to client for the purposes of a coaching engagement. The definition for *professional experience* is specific and unique experience that pertains only to a group of individuals who make a living plying the same trade or craft, for example, attorneys, doctors, Certified Public Accountants. In contrast, the definition of *industry experience* is broader, which refers to experience pertaining to a group of individuals in the same general area of work, for example, health care, education, banking and finance.

Some researchers suggest that coaching skills are not enough and that certain non-coaching experience is necessary to thrive in coaching today. McLean (2012) defined a coach as 'a trusted role model, advisor, wise person, friend, mensch, steward or guide who works with emerging human and organisational forces to tap new energy purpose, shape new visions and plans and to generate desired results' (p.4). McLean (2012) suggests coaches may also need subject matter expertise, familiarity with the client's industry and systems thinking. Stern (2004) described coaching as a method that entails working with executives one-on-one 'to help them learn how to manage and lead and to assist them to establish, structure, plan for, and lead the executives' organisation' (p.154). The coach must be experienced in the client's business in order to successfully coach the client. As this position sees executive coaching as merely a component within a larger, consultative intervention and that a coach must lead, Stern's concept of coaching also falls on the subject-matter-expertise end of the continuum.

Yet other researchers suggest that coaching skills alone are enough to meaningfully impact outcomes. Ellinger, Hamlin and Beattie (2008) conducted a meta-analysis of 36 definitions of coaching to ultimately evolve a unified definition that defined coaching as a helping, non-directive, facilitative or collaborative process. Witherspoon and White (1996) described coaching as 'facilitating (literally, 'to make easy') more than to instruct' (p.125). Witherspoon does not appear to suggest that subject matter expertise a necessary or desirable attribute.

The Non-Subject Matter Expertise and Subject Matter Expertise Continuum

As noted earlier, we believe that coaching consumers differ in their beliefs of how to match executives with coaches based on where they land on a continuum between *non-subject-matter-expertise* and *subject-matter-expertise* positions. On one end of the continuum, the non-subject-matter-expertise position is a purist perspective that maintains that coaches do not need to share their client's subject knowledge expertise to facilitate goal achievement. Although central to consulting, the non-subject-matter-expertise position posits that direct experience in that same discipline, field or industry is unlikely to be a necessary requirement for a coach to be effective. This position may even suggest that similar experience may at times be counterproductive. Jarvis (2004) argued that it is not necessary for coaches to have the same subject matter expertise as the client: 'While the coach should have a sound knowledge of business, their real contribution is their ability to help individuals learn and develop' (p.33). Jarvis (2004) further stated that some commentators think hiring a coach with specific experience can be counterproductive, because the client loses the advantage of having someone who is neutral and objective. Grant (2005) suggested that 'although the coach needs expertise in facilitating learning through coaching, the coach does not necessarily need a high degree of personal experience in the client's chosen area of learning' (p.2). Grant emphasised coaching is about helping clients create change so they can reach their potential. Riddle, Zan and Kuzmycz (2009) suggested that to be effective, coaches do not need to have walked in the same shoes as the executives. By having done so, coaches could be tempted to use a more directive approach in providing a solution based upon previous experience rather than facilitating clients in devising their own solutions. Riddle et al. (2009) argued that 'there is still no evidence showing that a coach's background and experience are substantially related to that coach's effectiveness' (p.21).

At the other end of the continuum, the subject-matter-expertise position maintains that a coach needs to have subject knowledge similar to the client's to facilitate goal achievement. Many researchers value the coach's having significant expertise in the client's industry. Kombarakaran et al. (2008) reported that clients considered their 'coaches were highly knowledgeable about the company culture and business (86 per cent)', and indicated the clients were pleased with their coaches, in part, due to this factor (p.87). However, no mention was made as to what impact this factor had on goal achievement. According to Underhill et al. (2013), one of the top 10 most important criteria in selecting a coach was experience in the client's industry. According to Kauffmann and Coutu (2009), some coaches believe 'experience working in a similar setting' and 'experience coaching in a similar setting' are important when purchasing coaching services (p.19). Finally, Stevens (2005) proposed that coaches need to have some conceptual understanding of the clients' industries and professional context to be effective in helping clients achieve their goals.

Researchers on each end of the continuum have strong opinions as to whether or not subject matter expertise is needed in coaching to successfully achieve outcomes. However, the debate will continue and additional research will be needed.

Goal Achievement Predictors

The literature examines a number of factors currently used in an attempt to predict coaching success. De Haan et al. (2013) identified 'active ingredients' in predicting coaching effectiveness, suggesting the overall working alliance, client self-efficacy, coaching techniques and the strength of the coaching relationship. Grant (2014) found that the most powerful predictor of coaching success was a 'goal-focused coach-client relationship' followed by 'autonomy support', and the extent to which the coaching relationship was similar to an 'ideal coach-client relationship' (pp.26–27).

Results show that when the coach-client matching criteria is based on 'professional background, including education and professional training', the relationship does not mediate superior client outcomes (Boyce, Jackson & Neal, 2010, p.6). Boyce et al. (2010) did not elaborate as to what is meant by past work experience and professional training, and it is unclear if they are operationally defining those items to include professional and industry experience.

McGovern et al. (2001) identified several factors impacting coaching effectiveness: the quality of the coach-client relationship, 'the structure of the process', 'regularly scheduled meetings', the 'flexibility of meetings', role playing, off-site meetings, 'quality of feedback', 'quality of assessment', 'participant's commitment', manager support and the coach's sitting in on the client's staff meetings (pp.4–6). However, how the coach's subject matter expertise, or lack thereof, affected coaching outcomes was absent.

Scoular and Linley (2006) used personality to predict goal achievement, reporting that different coach-client Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) temperaments produced a statistically significant higher outcome score for the coaching client, that is, the coach's temperament profile (SP, SJ, NJ or NT) differed from the client's. Stewart et al. (2008) used the Five Factor Model to explore the relationship between personality and the application of learning from coaching to the workplace. They found that 'despite being significant, the magnitude of the observed correlations between personality and coaching success were relatively low' (p.39). Stewart et al. (2008) suggested that factors other than personality, such as the client, coach, and work environment factors, may play a greater role in coaching success. Stewart et al. (2008) also suggested that personality may play a moderating role on these factors and cautioned against matching based upon personality until further research is conducted. However, this position conflicts with the findings of Thompson et al. (2008); 'Matching the right coach to the right client is associated with higher success rates. Matching people according to expertise and personality seem to be both the best and most commonly used strategies' (p.24).

Apart from personality, in the closely related field of mentoring, other researchers examined the impact of shared race between client and coach. Blake-Beard et al. (2011) examined the impact that shared mentor and protégé race and gender had on academic outcomes and found that these factors did not affect academic outcomes.

As shown, there is a great deal of literature related to selection criteria as a predictor of successful coaching outcomes. However, none directly linked shared coach-client professional or industry experience to goal achievement.

Methodology

This quantitative study examined the relationship between the coach's professional experience and the coach's industry experience, as selection factors, and the degree of client goal achievement. Also examined was the extent to which clients consider coaches' professional and industry expertise when making a decision as to who should coach them, as well as whether expertise affected coaching outcomes.

This study included a continuum in which the non-subject-matter-expertise position maintains that a coach does not need to share the client's professional or industry experience in order to facilitate client goal achievement. Conversely, the subject-matter-expertise position maintains that a coach does need to share the client's professional or industry experience in order to facilitate client goal achievement. In this study, we explore two hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: Professional experience

H0: There is no correlation between the coach's professional experience, as a client selection factor, and the degree of client goal achievement.

H1: There is a correlation between the coach's professional experience, as a client selection factor, and the degree of client goal achievement.

Hypothesis 2: Industry experience

H0: There is no correlation between the coach's industry experience, as a client selection factor, and the degree of client goal achievement.

H1: There is a correlation between the coach's industry experience, as a client selection factor, and the degree of client goal achievement.

We created a cross-sectional instrument compromised of 14 survey questions, based upon our hypotheses and demographic criteria. The survey included three continuous questions (Likert scale of 5 to 1) and 11 categorical (multiple-choice, radio button and Y/N) questions, which was piloted to ensure face validity. Since we believed coaches would be biased towards the non-subject-matter-expertise position, a question was included to differentiate coaches from non-coaches in order to test this assumption. Goal achievement was not specifically defined, as we were more concerned with whether or not a link between selection criteria and goal achievement existed, rather than what types of goals were achieved. The survey population comprised respondents aged 21 or older who were recipients of coaching, or coaches who had received coaching. Each respondent was required to have achieved goals as a result of the coaching.

We sent invitational emails to target organisations, to coaches in our network, and to our coaching clients. Subsequently, the target organisations sent invitations on our behalf to their coaches, who in turn invited their clients to participate. The invitation included a link to SurveyMonkey® allowing participants to respond anonymously.

The survey generated 215 responses during a three-week collection period in 2014, with 206 responses meeting all the study criteria. We analysed the data using Microsoft Excel and Minitab. Cronbach's Alpha was calculated to determine internal consistency of the survey. Following this calculation, the research hypotheses were tested using correlation analyses, and then we performed Effect Size analyses based upon industry demographics.

Findings

A literature review of relevant research into coach-client matching and selection factors identified a gap. This quantitative research study investigated the relationship between the coach's professional experience and the coach's industry experience, as client selection factors, and the degree of client goal achievement. A summary of the pertinent demographic survey results can be found in Table 1. Caucasian males and females over the age of 41 were the dominant respondents in the survey results. A majority of the respondents selected their coach as opposed to being assigned a coach, chose to work with an external coach, and had previously worked with a coach. Slightly more emphasis was placed on shared professional experience (56 per cent) as selection criteria as opposed to industry experience (33 per cent).

This survey found that 84 per cent of the respondents had worked with an external coach. When working with an external coach, the assumption is that a client must make selection criteria decisions to find the best match. Eighty-two per cent of the respondents selected their coaches as opposed to having coaches assigned to them. By selecting their coaches, the clients had to entertain selection criteria, whether at a conscious or subconscious level. Bluckert (2006) suggests an important Gestalt concept known as Creative Adjustment, in which a person tries to do her best, no matter what the circumstances, to meet her needs, overcome challenges and reach her objectives. Clients choose their coaches based upon their definition of coaching, their agenda and where they fall on the Non-Subject Matter Expertise and Subject Matter Expertise Continuum.

Respondents were asked if professional or industry experience were selection factors, and to what degree, to provide flexibility in instances where professional or industry experience was not a significant factor. This approach allowed for the possibility that a client purposely selected a coach, largely due to that coach *not* sharing the same professional/industry experience.The findings show there was no correlation between the degree to which the coach's professional experience influenced the client's decision to work with the coach and client goal achievement. Twenty per cent of the respondents answered that the coach's professional experience was not a factor in their decision to select that coach; however, in terms of goal achievement, the responses ranged from 'to some degree' to 'to a very large degree'. In contrast, 18 per cent of the respondents answered that their coach's professional experience influenced their decision to work with that coach 'to some degree', and their goal achievement ranged

Table 1: Demographic responses to survey.

Question	Response 1	Response 2	Response 3	Response 4	Response 5	Response 6
Last time received coaching?	3 months or less (37%)	3 to 6 months (9%)	6 months to a year (11%)	1 to 3 years (26%)	>3 years (17%)	
First time working with a coach?	Not first time working with a coach (62%)	First time working with a coach (38%)				
External vs. Internal Coach?	External Coach (84%)	Internal Coach (16%)				
Selected Coach or Assigned a coach?	Selected their coach (82%)	Coach assigned (18%)				
Professional experience a factor in selection decision?	Professional experience a factor (56%)	Professional experience not a factor (44%)				
Degree Professional experience factored into coach selection decision?	To no degree (21%)	To a little degree (4%)	To some degree (20%)	To a large degree (32%)	To a very large degree (12%)	
Industry experience a factor in selection decision?	Industry experience a factor (33%)	Industry experience not a factor (67%)				
Degree Industry experience factored into coach selection decision?	To no degree (41%)	To a little degree (9%)	To some degree (20%)	To a large degree (18%)	To a very large degree (12%)	
Degree coaching goals achieved?	To no degree (1%)	To a little degree (3%)	To some degree (24%)	To a large degree (47%)	To no degree (1%)	
Top 5 industries	Health care (9%)	Education (10%)	Banking and Finance (12%)	Other (16%)	Consulting (23%)	
Gender	Male (48%)	Female (51%)	Chose not to answer 1%)			
Age	21–30 (4%)	31–40 (18%)	41–50 (33%)	51–60 (29%)	61–70 (14%)	>70 (1%)
Race	Chose not to answer (2%)	Hispanic (2%)	Asian (3%)	Black or African American (6%)	White (86%)	
Are you a coach?	Yes (47%)	No (53%)				

from 'to some degree' to 'to a very large degree'. Further, a combined 29 per cent answered that the coach's professional experience influenced their decision to work with that coach either 'to a large degree' or 'to a very large degree', and their responses to goal achievement ranged from 'to some degree' to 'to a very large degree'. Refer to Table 2. The results are no different for both professional and industry experience. A similar result was found when Chi-square tests were performed. Results showed there was no relationship between the degree the coach's professional experience as a factor in selecting the coach and the degree of goal achievement (p=0.671). The second

Chi-square test showed there was no relationship between the degree the coach's industry experience as a factor in selecting the coach and the degree of goal achievement (p=0.349). The results in Table 2 would suggest that regardless of the degree to which the coach's shared professional experience was a factor in the client's coach selection decision, the client achieved her goals. At a macro level, there appears to be no correlation between the degree to which the coach's professional experience influenced the client's decision to work with the coach and client goal achievement. However, by stratifying the data into subsets, the data would suggest that in some cases, to some clients, the coach's professional experience did influence the client in selecting the coach. This finding suggests there could be some connection to goal achievement.

To determine Cronbach's Alpha, multi-item scale questions 6, 8, and 9 were used, with the 5 item multi-item scale ranging from '1 – To no degree', '2 – To a little degree', '3 – To a small degree', '4 – To a large degree', and '5 – To a very large degree'. Cronbach's Alpha, a measure of internal consistency and reliability, was found to be 0.95, indicating a high degree of reliability.

Correlation analyses

Testing Hypothesis 1: Professional experience

Hypothesis number one was not supported. At a significance level 0.05, the Pearson Correlation was –0.038 and p=.603, failing to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, there was no statistically significant correlation between the degree to which the coach's professional experience influenced the client's decision to work with the coach and client's goal achievement.

Testing Hypothesis 2: Industry experience

Hypothesis number two was not supported. At a significance level 0.05, the Pearson Correlation was –0.020 and p=.791, failing to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, there was no statistically significant correlation between the degree to which the coach's industry experience influenced the client's decision to work with the coach and client's goal achievement.

A stratification of the data was performed for shared professional experience. For respondents who answered 'yes' their coach's professional experience was a factor in their coach selection decisions, a correlation analysis was performed, regressing the degree shared professional experience influ-

Table 2: Percentage breakdown of goal achievement.

	To what degree did you achieve your coaching goals?					
If your coach's professional experience was a factor in your decision to select your coach, to what degree did that experience influence your decision to work with your coach?	1 – To no degree	2 – To a little degree	3 – To some degree	4 – To a large degree	5 – To a very large degree	Grand Total
1 – To no degree	0.0%	0.05%	3.9%	8.2%	7.2%	19.9%
2 – To a little degree	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	2.4%	0.5%	3.9%
3 – To some degree	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	11.1%	2.9%	18.4%
4 – To a large degree	0.0%	1.0%	8.2%	14.5%	5.3%	29.0%
5 – To a very large degree	0.0%	1.0%	3.4%	7.7%	7.7%	19.8%
(Blank)	0.5%	0.5%	3.4%	2.9%	1.9%	9.2%
Grand Total	0.5%	2.9%	24.2%	46.9%	25.6%	100%

enced the client's selection decision against the degree of goal achievement. At a significance level of 0.05, the Pearson correlation was –0.0003 with p=.98. There was no statistically significant correlation between the degree to which the coach's professional experience influenced the client's decision to work with the coach and client's goal achievement. Refer to Table 3.

In addition, a further stratification of the data for shared industry experience was performed. For respondents who answered 'yes' their coach's industry experience was a factor in their coach selection decision, a correlation analysis was performed, regressing the degree shared industry experience influenced the client's selection decision against the degree of goal achievement. At a significance level of 0.05, the Pearson Correlation was 0.017 with p=.892. There was no statistically significant correlation between the degree to which the coach's industry experience influenced the client's decision to work with the coach and client's goal achievement.

Results

A review of relevant research into coach-client matching and selection factors identified a gap. This quantitative research study investigated the relationship between the coach's professional experience and the coach's industry experience, as client selection factors, and the degree of client goal achievement.

The study's findings present potentially far reaching implications. The correlation analysis revealed that there was no correlation between: (1) the coach's professional experience as a client selection factor and the degree of client goal achievement; and (2) the coach's industry experience as a client selection factor and the degree of client goal achievement. The fact that no correlations were found seemingly supports the non-subject-matter-expertise position that a coach does not need to share the client's professional or industry experience in order to facilitate client goal achievement. These findings challenge the subject-matter-expertise position that a coach does need to share the client's professional or industry experience in order to facilitate client goal achievement. Consequently, advocates of the subject-matter-expertise position might needlessly invest resources in the client-coach matching process by trying to match their clients with coaches who share professional or industry experience. If companies exclude or include coaches based upon professional or industry experience, these companies may make a matching error by not allowing clients to make an informed choice. This process may prematurely eliminate coaches who might have been an ideal fit for the client. Perhaps the issue is not as dichotomous as the correlation results would indicate; maybe it is not a question of either one or the other, but rather a question of both. One of the limitations with a simple regression analysis is the lack of visibility into the frequency of occurrences for specific combinations of responses.

For industry experience versus goal achievement, a similar pattern emerges. Thirty-five per cent of the respondents answered that the coach's industry experience was not a factor in their coach selection; however, in terms of goal achievement, the responses ranged from 'to some degree'

Table: 3 Results of hypothesis tests.

Hypothesis	Level of Significance	R-Squared	*p* value
1	0.05	–0.038	0.603
2	0.05	–0.020	0.791

to 'to a very large degree'. In contrast, 17 per cent of the respondents answered that the coach's professional experience influenced their decision to work with that coach 'to some degree', and their goal achievement ranged from 'to some degree' to 'to a very large degree'. Further, a combined 26 per cent answered that the coach's industry experience influenced their decision to work with that coach either 'to a large degree' or 'to a very large degree', and their responses to goal achievement ranged from 'to some degree' to 'to a very large degree'. Refer to Table 4. The results in Table 4 suggest that regardless of the degree to which the coach's shared industry experience was a factor in the client's coach selection decision, the client goals were achieved. These results would suggest that shared coach-client professional or industry experience do not positively or negatively predict goal achievement. The results suggest there is no relationship between shared coach-client professional or industry experience and goal achievement.

There was a fairly even split of non-coaches (53 per cent) to coaches (47 per cent) responding to the survey. Interestingly, 74 per cent of the coaches indicated that the coach's professional experience influenced their decision to work with that coach. This result runs counter to the researchers' assumption that coaches-as-clients would adhere more to the non-subject-matter-expertise position and be less likely to be influenced by their coach's professional experience.

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study. First, due to the brief, four-month time constraint for the entire study, a deliberate trade-off decision was made to shorten the survey length in the attempt to increase the participant response rate. Had the survey been lengthier, perhaps more precise and robust results could have been obtained. Second, this research survey did not inquire about the client's coaching agenda. If the client's agenda was extraordinarily industry specific, likely the respondent would have sought out a coach with shared professional or industry experience. Conversely, if the client's agenda was more generic, for example, developing executive presence, the respondent would likely have been indifferent to selecting a coach with or without shared professional or industry experience.

Table 4: Industry experience versus goal achievement.

	To what degree did you achieve your coaching goals?					
If your coach's industry experience was a factor in your decision to select your coach, to what degree did that experience influence your decision to work with your coach?	1 – To no degree	2 – To a little degree	3 – To some degree	4 – To a large degree	5 – To a very large degree	Grand Total
1 – To no degree	0.0%	1.0%	8.2%	14.5%	11.1%	34.8%
2 – To a little degree	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	5.3%	1.4%	7.7%
3 – To some degree	0.0%	0.5%	3.9%	10.6%	2.4%	17.4%
4 – To a large degree	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	7.2%	2.9%	15.5%
5 – To a very large degree	0.0%	0.5%	1.0%	3.9%	5.3%	10.6%
(Blank)	0.0%	1.0%	4.8%	5.3%	2.4%	14.0%
Grand Total	0.0%	2.9%	24.2%	46.9%	25.6%	100%

This factor may have materially impacted the survey results. Third, due the deliberate quantitative design of the study, as opposed to a mixed methods approach, no qualitative follow-up was done that might have explained the reasons behind participants' responses. Thus, the study's findings only reveal the lack of the relationship between shared coach-client industry or professional experience and goal achievement but not the reasons as to why.

Future research

First, an additional study replicating the same findings would support the validity, reliability and repeatability of this research.Second, a mixed methods study, comprising an initial quantitative component followed by a qualitative component, would disclose why respondents answered the way they did. The purpose of this study would be to ascertain which coach selection criteria lead them to select their coach; what the client agenda was, and how the selection criteria lead to goal achievement. Additionally, it would be interesting to understand why coaches-as-clients answered in a manner consistent with the subject-matter-expertise position by responding that their coach's professional or industry experience influenced the coach selection. A third suggestion for further research would be to conduct a forced-pairing experiment to compare the goal achievement scores of clients matched with coaches who shared professional or industry experience against a group who did not share their coaches' professional or industry experience.

Conclusion

There are three major implications stemming from this study that impact executive coaches, clients, HR partners and third party coach-client matching services. First, the study produced statistically significant findings to suggest there is no correlation between the coach's professional experience or the coach's industry experience, as selection factors, and the degree of client goal achievement.

Second, by further stratifying the data by industry demographics, a few interesting phenomena regarding the effect size analysis results became clear. When comparing industries against each other in terms of effect size, the results suggested certain industries have higher goal achievement than others. Third, the results suggest that there is no relationship between shared coach-client professional or industry experience and goal achievement.

The use of shared professional and industry experience to match coaches and clients by coaches, clients, HR partners and third party coach-client matching services to maximise goal achievement is not supported by research. Continuing to use these criteria without a direct connection to goal achievement seems an expensive and limiting endeavour, perhaps even to the detriment of optimal outcomes. The continuing challenge appears to be identifying the appropriate selection criteria that will drive optimal goal achievement. The client's industry, agenda, and other unknown factors may be influential variables. The gravitas of the issue is clearly recognised by stakeholders across the board. Future research will illuminate the path and surely provide more answers on this quest for the perfect coach-client fit.

The Authors

Alex T. Chinn, James P. Richmond & John L. Bennett
McColl School of Business,
Queens University of Charlotte,
1900 Selwyn Avenue,
Charlotte, NC 28274,
United States.

Correspondence

John L. Bennett
Email: bennettj@queens.edu

References

Bluckert, P. (2006). *Psychological dimensions of executive coaching.* London: Open University Press.

Baron, L. & Morin, L. (2009). The coach-coachee relationship in executive coaching: A field study. *Human Resource Development Quarterly, 20*(1), 85–106. doi:10.1002/hrdq.20009

Bennett, J.L. & Bush, M.W. (2014). *Coaching for change.* New York: Routledge.

Blake-Beard, S., Bayne, M.L., Crosby, F.J. & Muller, C.B. (2011). Matching by race and gender in mentoring relationships: Keeping our eyes on the prize. *Journal of Social Issues, 67*(3), 622–643. doi:10.1111/j.1540-4560.2011.01717.x

Boyce, L.A., Jackson, R.J. & Neal, L.J. (2010). Building successful leadership coaching relationships: Examining impact of matching criteria in a leadership coaching programme. *Journal of Management Development, 29*, 914–931. doi:10.1108/02621711011084231

Creswell, J.W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

de Haan, E., Duckworth, A., Birch, D. & Jones, C. (2013). Executive coaching outcome research: The contribution of common factors such as relationship, personality match, and self-efficacy. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 65*, 40–57. doi:10.1037/a0031635

Ellinger, A.D., Hamlin, R.G. & Beattie, R.S. (2008). Coaching, HRD, and OD: Towards three 'silo' fields of practice or a single 'unified' profession? *Online Submission.* ERIC, EBSCOhost (accessed 2 August 2014).

Grant, A.M. (2005). What is evidence-based executive, workplace and life coaching? In A.M. Grant, M. Cavanagh & T. Kemp (Eds.), *Evidence-based coaching* (Vol. 1, pp.1–12). Bowen Hills, QLD: Australian Academic Press.

Grant, A.M. (2014). Autonomy support, relationship satisfaction and goal focus in the coach-coachee relationship: Which best predicts coaching success? *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 7*(1), 18–38. doi:10.1080/17521882.2013.850106

Gray, D.E., Ekinci, Y. & Goregaokar, H. (2011a). A five-dimensional model of attributes: Some precursors of executive coach selection. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment, 19*(4), 415–428.

Gray, D.E., Ekinci, Y. & Goregaokar, H. (2011b). Coaching SME managers: Business development or personal therapy? A mixed methods study. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 22*(4), 863–882. doi:10.1080/09585192.2011.555129

International Coaching Federation (2012). *ICF global coaching study: Executive summary.* Lexington, KY: International Coaching Federation. Retrieved from: http://icf.files.cmsplus.com/includes/media/docs/2012ICFGlobalCoachingStudy-ExecutiveSummary.pdf

Jarvis, J. (2004). *Coaching and buying coaching services.* London: CIPD.

Kauffman, C. & Coutu, D. (2009). The realities of executive coaching. *Harvard Business Review: HBR Research Report*, 1–25.

Kombarakaran, F.A., Yang, J.A., Baker, M.N. & Fernandes, P.B. (2008). Executive coaching: It works! *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 60*(1), 78–90. doi:10.1037/1065-9293.60.1.78

Maxwell, J.A. (2005). *Qualitative research design: An integrative approach* (2nd ed., Vol. 41). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

McLean, P. (2012). *The completely revised handbook of coaching. A developmental approach.* Santa Barbara, CA: Hudson Press.

McGovern, J., Lindemann, M., Vergara, M., Murphy, S., Barker, L. & Warrenfeltz, R. (2001). Maximising the impact of executive coaching. *Manchester Review, 6*(1), 2001. http://www.evolve-coaching.com/uploads/ManchesterReview_Maximising_Impactof_Exec_Coaching.pdf

Riddle, D., Zan, L. & Kuzmycz, D. (2009). Issues and observations – five myths about executive coaching. *Leadership in Action, 29*(5), 19–21.

Scoular, A. & Linley, P.A. (2006). Coaching, goal-setting and personality type: What matters? *The Coaching Psychologist, 2*, 9–11.

Stern, L. (2004). Executive coaching: A working definition. *Consulting Psychology Journal, 56*, 154–162.

Stevens, J.H. (2005). Executive coaching from the executive's perspective. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 54*, 274–285.

Stewart, L.J., Palmer, S., Wilkin, H. & Kerrin, M. (2008). The influence of character: Does personality impact coaching success? *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching & Mentoring, 6*(1), 32–42.

Thompson, H.B., Bear, D.J., Dennis, D.J., Vickers, M., London, J. & Morrison, C.L. (2008). *Coaching: A global study of successful practices.* Retrieved 29 June 2008, from: American Management Association website: http://www.amanetorg/research/pdfs/i4cp-coaching.pdf

Underhill, B., McAnally, K., Bastian, C, Desrosiers, E., Golay, L. & Tuller, M. (2013). Executive coaching industry research. *CoachSource.* Retrieved from: http://www.coachsource.com/research

Using Clean Language to explore the subjectivity of coachees' experience and outcomes

Susie Linder-Pelz & James Lawley

Objectives: *This paper aims to contribute methodologically and substantively to understanding how coachees experience and evaluate coaching. First, we explore the use of 'Clean Language' as a phenomenological approach to coaching research, including the eliciting and analysing of data into findings and insights for coaches and coach trainers (Tosey et al., 2014, p.630). Second, we explore the nature of events, effects, evaluations and outcomes reported by coachees after a single coaching session.*

Design: *Three coaches accredited in the same coaching methodology each delivered a single session to two randomly allocated coachees. The coachees were subsequently interviewed twice using Clean Language, in person two days after the coaching and by telephone two weeks later.*

Methodology: *The transcribed follow-up interviews were analysed by an expert in Clean Language (the second author), using a form of thematic analysis within a realist/essentialist paradigm (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.85).*

Findings: *The interviews elicited detailed information on many aspects of coaching without the interviewer introducing any topics. Coachees' events, effects and evaluations happened during the coaching session, between that session and the first interview, and during the two weeks between the first and second interviews. Coachees emphasised coaches' style of repeating back, pacing, setting goals and questioning, maintaining the focus of the session, confronting and challenging, as well as their responsiveness (or lack of it). Increased self-awareness was mentioned by all coachees. Outcomes occurring after the session were maintained two weeks later, at which time new outcomes were also reported.*

Conclusions: *Clean Language Interviewing supplements and extends existing methods of phenomenological interviewing and data coding. The study yielded nuanced findings on the coach behaviours that led coachees to give favourable versus unfavourable evaluations, with implications for coaching psychologists with regard in particular to coaches' ability to calibrate and respond to coachees' ongoing evaluation of the coaching, the pace of the session and how the timing of coachees' feedback affects the findings.*

Keywords: *Clean Language Interviewing; phenomenological research; coachees' experience; coaching outcomes; coach training; coaching evaluation.*

AT THE HEART OF INTERVIEWING is an interest in understanding peoples' experience and the meaning they make of it (Knox & Burkard, 2009, p.2) and the value of qualitative interviewing in coaching psychology research is widely recognised (de Haan & Nieß, 2012; Greif, 2007). While researchers may believe that their interviews are free of prejudice and presupposition, the wording of a question can inadvertently influence an interviewee's recall and response (Loftus, 1975). For example, in a study of coaching outcomes two questions were asked about the perceived benefits of the programme and 'this may have inadvertently precluded participants from identifying unhelpful aspects of the coaching programme.' (Grant, 2013, p.19).

While O'Broin and Palmer (2010) used semi-structured Repertory Grid interviews based on Personal Construct theory, their wording is drawn from existing evidence-informed literature (p.125). Many of their probe questions contain strong researcher metaphors (e.g. 'handle a rupture') and presuppositions (e.g. 'how important is the coach-client relationship to outcome?', p.143). This last statement presupposes a causal link between the relationship and the outcome; it also presupposes that the link is important. The interviewee is, therefore, more likely to answer within this specified frame – whether or not they held this belief beforehand.

Passmore (2010) used a semi-structured interview method centred around six predefined themes (p.51). Unfortunately he does not give examples of the precise wording of the additional prompts and questions asked to stimulate interviewees to respond, so we cannot know whether the interviewer introduced questions whose syntax inadvertently led or constrained the interviewee's answers. This could cast doubt on the authenticity of the data.

'The coaching psychologist … needs to be aware of the effects of different questions and the most appropriate timing for each' (Hieker & Huffington, 2006, p.48). 'Even the subtlest instantiation of a metaphor (via a single word) can have a powerful influence [and furthermore] the influence of the metaphorical framing effect is covert: people do not recognise metaphors as influential' (Thibodeau & Boroditsky, 2011, p.1). 'People' in this context includes both interviewer and interviewee.

Clean Language was developed from the clinical work of David Grove (Grove & Panzer, 1989) and extended into other areas such as management development, organisational change and education (Lawley & Tompkins, 2000). By paying careful attention to their language, researchers can minimise undesired influence and unintended bias during all stages of research – design, data gathering, analysis and reporting (Van Helsdingen & Lawley, 2012). In particular, Clean Language can refine interviewing by minimising the introduction of researchers' metaphors and constructs (Tosey et al., 2014).

The Clean Language interviewing (CLI) method fits within a phenomenological methodology (Owen, 1989; Tosey, 2011; Worth, 2012) which addresses widely recognised difficulties in the process of exploring and explicating a person's self (Greif, 2007, p.223). CLI is also grounded in NLP-based modelling (Tosey & Mathison, 2010) behind which are constructivist and systemic assumptions (Linder-Pelz, 2010, pp.81–82). The intent of Clean Language is akin to the practice of 'bracketing' in other phenomenological research; it is an attempt to suspend prior knowledge or belief about the phenomenon under study (Tosey et al., 2014, p.633; Vansickel-Peterson, 2010, p.56).

A comparison with the established phenomenological method Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is instructive. Both CLI and IPA aim to explore and understand meaning-making. With IPA the researcher is active in interpreting the participant's experiences; by contrast CLI aims to facilitate interviewees by restricting interviewer interpretation, impositions or effects especially because 'individuals may have difficulties reporting what they are thinking or/and they may not want to self-disclose' (Gyllensten & Palmer, 2007, p.170). While CLI restricts interviewer influence it does not eliminate it; the interviewer is still selecting aspects of the interviewee's description to focus on, the Clean Language questions to ask and how to ask them.

Clean Language also offers an alternative to the semi-structured interview method which explicitly centres on themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.94; Passmore 2010, p.51). By being more attuned to the individual interviewee rather than following the same path for all respondents, Clean Language can enhance rapport and mitigate against the possibility that findings may misrepresent participants' authentic responses (Tosey et al., 2014, p.641). The adherence to a strict protocol prevents the interviewer from introducing into the conversation content or leading questions such as, 'Have you ever experienced something that felt like a "critical moment" … an exciting, tense or significant moment?' (de Haan et al., 2010, p.8). This ensures that the descriptions obtained are sourced exclusively in the interviewee's personal vocabulary and experience. However, Clean Language is not appropriate where the interviewer is aiming to co-create meaning (Tosey et al., 2014, p.641).

One application of Clean Language interviewing is to facilitate interviewees to describe 'what' and 'how' they evaluate an experience (Lawley & Tompkins, 2011). It can address what Hall (2013) calls 'evaluative vagueness' where researchers often only get the 'bottom line' of a person's evaluations and do not know the criteria by which the person made those judgments. Hence CLI could be used by coaching psychologists who want to better understand how coachees evaluate coaching (de Haan et al., 2011).

Research questions

The two research questions addressed in this paper arise from the potential of CLI to explore in detail *how* coachees evaluate.

1. Does Clean Language interviewing of coachees about their experience and evaluation of coaching yield insights for coaches and trainers of coaching?
2. What events, effects and outcomes, during and after a single coaching session, do coachees use to evaluate coaching?

Methodology

This paper reports on part of a mixed method study which triangulated the views of coaches, coachees and a coach trainer/expert with regard to single coaching 'breakthrough' sessions (Lawley & Linder-Pelz, 2014). Six new/naive volunteer coachees were randomly assigned to one of three practising coaches certified in the same coaching methodology. Convenience and purposive sampling was used via a request from the lead researcher to colleagues and acquaintances. Each coachee participated in a single coaching session and two subsequent Clean Language interviews, all of which were recorded. The participants were unknown to the coaches and the interviewer.

The coaching method adopted was Meta-Coaching, a goal-oriented coaching methodology based explicitly on cognitive-behavioural psychology (Linder-Pelz & Hall, 2008). We chose this method because Meta-Coaches are trained and assessed in specific, benchmarked competencies as a requirement for certification (Hall, 2011; Linder-Pelz, 2014). There is no unanimity as to whether coaching method plays a part in effectiveness (Grant et al., 2010); neither is there unanimity regarding what specific behaviours constitute competency in coach-coachee relationship skills such as listening (Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011). Hence it is reasonable to expect that studying a single coaching method would reduce the variability compared to using coaches with different approaches and requiring different experts to assess their competencies.

Expecting within-coach variability as well as between-coach variability – and given resource constraints – we recruited three coaches and six coachees in order to explore whether or not coaching skills related to the coachees' experiences and evaluations.

We developed protocols for selecting and briefing coaches and coachees as well as for data collection and for the analysis of the Clean Language interviews. These are available at: www.cleanlanguage.co.uk/articles/articles/350/.

The coaches

The three coaches had demonstrated coaching competency, having been certified by the Meta-Coaching benchmarking system (Linder-Pelz, 2014). The core Meta-Coaching skills are listening, supporting, questioning, meta-questioning, inducing states and giving and receiving feedback (Hall, 2011). All coaches were women aged in their 30s and 40s, running their own practices with paying clients and active in Meta-Coach training and mentoring programmes. Their task was to conduct a single 90 minute Meta-Coaching session with two randomly allocated coachees.

Coachees

Given that there would be variability in ages, genders and prior experience of change work, we recruited six coachees. They comprised a convenient and purposively-selected group of volunteers who met our criteria of: (1) having no prior experience of Meta-Coaching; (2) having something meaningful they wanted to change in their life; (3) not currently seeing a coach, psychologist or psychotherapist; and (4) never having been diagnosed with a major psychological disturbance. All were aged from mid-30s to early 60s, five were women, three had had previous coaching or counselling and two had some prior experience of NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) on which Meta-Coaching is based. The topics they chose to work with included health, building a business, confidence at work, self-worth, a relationship concern and managing money. All gave informed consent to the recording and use of their interviews on the condition of anonymity. Although small, the sample size was sufficient for the purpose of investigating the value of the CLI method and exploring the resultant findings (Tosey et al., 2014, p.634).

Procedures

The coaching sessions all took place on the same day in an office setting that was not any of the coaches' work premises. The first interviews using Clean Language took place in person two days after the coaching session and lasted, after preliminaries, for between 37 and 51 minutes. The second interview, by telephone, was two weeks later and took between 10 and 22 minutes. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Coachees were informed that their coach would not be privy to anything said in the interviews.

Clean Language Interviews

Using Clean Language as an interview methodology meant that the interviewer aimed to not introduce *any* topic or content into the conversation, ensuring that the descriptions obtained were sourced exclusively in the interviewee's personal vocabulary and experience.

Analysing the interviews

The method of analysis (see Appendix) followed the stages of thematic analysis: familiarisation with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, then reviewing, defining and naming themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.87). However, a new method was employed in Stage 2, 'generating initial codes', where the analyst distinguished between items that were 'events', 'effects', 'outcomes' and 'evaluations' *from each coachee's perspective.* An 'event' is a description of what happens during the coaching session, an 'effect' is the impact on the coachee during the session, an 'outcome' is an effect that happens *after* the session and an 'evaluation' involves the coachee making a favourable or unfavourable assessment of the experience. We prefer the terms 'favourable' (expressing approval) and 'unfavourable' to 'positive' and 'negative' because the former retain the sense of being the *interviewee's* preferences rather than an external observer's assumptions. Our findings show that favourable evaluations are not necessarily tied to beneficial outcomes and unfavourable evaluations do not necessarily result in adverse outcomes.

Examples from two coachees on the same topic of 'coach neutrality' illustrate the data coding:

> I liked the way that she stayed very neutral [favourable EVALUATION of EVENT]. It was soothing, calming [favourable EVALUATION of EFFECT]. If I did drop a bomb [or] say something that was quite personal [EVENT], I couldn't see it anywhere on her face or in her speech. She wasn't moved in any way [EVENT]. I appreciated that [and] didn't feel judged [favourable EVALUATION & EFFECT].

> I admire that … she could maintain that neutrality [favourable EVALUATION of EVENT] … But I will say on the other hand … I did feel like there was a lack of rapport in that sense [unfavourable EVALUATION of EFFECT].

The coachee's evaluation – and whether it is favourable or unfavourable – can be explicit or implicit. In the first example above, 'I liked' and 'I appreciated' clearly indicate favourable evaluations, while 'soothing and calming' and 'didn't feel judged' *imply* a favourable evaluation because it is a our assumption that the coachee considers these qualities to be desirable.

The detailed analysis was undertaken by the second author and can be considered dependable (Mays & Pope, 1995, p.112) or trustworthy (Sousa, 2014, p.213; Worth, 2012, p.70) because of adherence to protocols, adequacy of data, audit trail and the repeated reflexive discussions between the analyst and the first author. The Appendix shows the systematic steps taken by the analyst, which could be replicated by someone else trained in the method.

Findings

The identified events, effects, outcomes and evaluations of the coaching were separated into five time frames, depending on when the interviewees reported they occurred: at the beginning of the session, throughout the session, towards the end of the session, in the first two days after the session (i.e. before the first interview) and in the two weeks between the first and second interviews.

The findings are presented in order of time frame and are illustrated with quotes selected from all six coachees. These findings need to be considered in the context of the interviewees' overall assessment of their coaching; we show elsewhere that all coachees evaluated their session highly and that their numerical ratings and verbal reports shed further light on how they evaluated the effects (Lawley & Linder-Pelz, 2014).

Beginnings of sessions

Four of the six coachees referred in unfavourable terms to coach behaviour occurring in the first 30 minutes of the coaching session. Words were repeated back too often, the overall pace was too fast or too slow and the manner of goal setting too direct. However, only one of these coachees said that the disliked behaviour affected the final evaluation.

Repeating back words and managing the pace of the session

These four coachees found the manner and frequency with which their words were repeated back at the beginning of the session 'irritating', 'just constant', 'distracting' or 'a bit repetitive'. However, the coachees reported that after 20 to 30 minutes their coaches did more than simply reflect what was said; the coaches were 'listening for what was going on underneath' and 'had the thread of where I was going', which received favourable evaluations.

Three of these four coachees also did not appreciate the speed of the beginning of the session. It either 'went at a very rapid pace' or was 'a little bit slow'. One coachee was thinking: 'Come on, let's move on and talk about something'. Again, the opinion of these coachees changed as the coaching session progressed.

Goal setting

Three coachees had difficulties with their coach's approach to goal setting. Being asked, 'What do you think we can achieve?' was for one coachee 'very difficult because I don't like to commit myself on a path.' Similarly, another 'didn't want to pre-empt the endpoint; I wanted to go on the journey and find out where the endpoint was.' When a third coachee was asked, 'If there was one thing that could change your life, your world, for the next year, what would that be?' the coachee thought, 'Wow, that's a big question; it set some expectations that I felt like I wasn't sure I lived up to.' However, overall, these three coachees all evaluated their sessions highly, sometimes achieving more than they had expected.

Throughout the session

There were six commonalities – occurring at varying times during the session – that coachees indicated contributed to their evaluations: their increase in self-awareness, the coaches' style, responsiveness, questioning, maintenance of focus and confronting or challenging. Five coachees mentioned all these factors while the sixth coachee mentioned five of the factors.

Self-awareness

Increased self-awareness was mentioned by all coachees and was described variously as 'greater awareness', 'realisation', 'insight', 'aha moment', 'self-discovery' and 'looking at myself in the mirror'. While the *kind* of experience appears similar, *what* coachees found revealing varied widely: 'patterns', the relevance of 'events in my life', 'why I've done things and why I haven't', 'getting a payoff from the problem behaviour', 'things that are not working for me' and 'having the experience of imagining myself without the hang-ups'.

Some recognised these moments as turning points; for others they contributed more generally. One coachee used words associated with self-awareness 31 times in the first interview while another realised in the two weeks after the session that even increased self-awareness 'can have a downside too; I was not aware of the limitations that those other people placed on my behaviour until I developed this heightened awareness'.

Coach style

The interviewees recognised the relationship-building qualities their coaches exhibited. There were numerous comments highlighting coach qualities. One from each interviewee is presented here:

> Very engaging, natural, warm, sincere;
> Saw me as a whole person;
> Made me feel extremely at ease;
> Comfortable with whatever was said;
> Neutral throughout the whole session;
> Sympathetic, not judgemental.

The effects were:

> You could be yourself;
> A sense of being listened to for what was going on underneath;
> Not embarrassed;
> Like talking to someone at a coffee shop;
> Not feeling judged;
> Trust and could bare your soul.

Even though one coachee '…really genuinely liked that style of coaching; better than the other stuff I got which was rubbish crap coaching', there was repeated concern that '… because [the coach] was being so neutral, I did feel like there was a lack of rapport. Maybe I did hold myself back… I don't know whether that would have changed the outcome.'

Coach responsiveness

All coachees commented on how the coach responded to key things that did (or did not) happen; four remarked when it worked well and all six remarked when it didn't. For example:

> It was really pertinent to me that the coach picked up that that was really important to me and chose to go with that.
>
> [The coach] highlighted certain words that I wasn't paying that much attention to. She was paying a lot more attention to the way that I framed things, which basically just led me on that path to the end.

In addition, all coachees commented on their coach's *lack* of responsiveness at one time or another and found it unhelpful.

> When I'm feeling vulnerable that I'm putting myself out there … I need other people to validate that that's ok. [It] ended up feeling a bit condescending.
>
> She was asking me questions that I would generally want to think about before I gave an answer and I didn't feel I had the opportunity to give it as much thought.

> Sometimes I got stuck in ruts … I would have liked [it] slightly more structured in certain parts.

Questioning

All six coachees mentioned the style of questioning. Most appreciated the quality of the questions and the skill in asking those questions:

> Her questions forced me to look at myself;
>
> The simplicity [of] the wording, the questions, everything was quite basic; the tone was really soothing, calming, which made me respond the same way.

However, one coachee said that at times the 'questioning was too open in style' and another found it 'a bit repetitive'.

Maintaining focus

Five coachees valued the coaches' ability to maintain the purpose or focus of the session and bring their attention back to what was important. 'I had lost the link and [the coach] brought it back'. When another coachee had 'run out of steam', the coach 'somehow managed to get it back on to track'. Another talked of how in other coaching, 'they have flitted right across my life', while this coach 'kept me really glued on the one path… I found that really awesome'.

Confronting and challenging

Coachees were clearly sensitive to the degree and style of challenging since it was directly addressed by five of them, sometimes in strong terms. The very first words of two coachees in their interviews were, 'It was quite confronting' and 'Very confronting; she challenged me on just about everything I said.' They all, however, appreciated the value of the challenge. Sometimes this happened at the moment of challenge: '[It] actually stopped me there in my tracks and I had to rethink whether my behaviour actually was giving me a payoff and that's the point in the session where there was a change'. Sometimes appreciation of the challenge happened after the session. On reflection two weeks later, an interviewee said: 'I realised perhaps the questions were framed deliberately to turn the whole process back on myself, I guess akin to looking at myself in the mirror and staring at it.'

By contrast, one coachee would have liked *more* challenge. 'I stayed in story for quite a long time. And the story was a bit safe.' The coach needed 'to butt in' and 'get me out of story'.

Ending of sessions

All six coachees had something to say about how their coach ended the session and, in particular, the setting of tasks or 'homework'. While one interviewee commented on what worked ('I left the session having developed a strategy to be able to deal with that conflict, which was extremely beneficial') most focussed on what didn't work and what they would have preferred instead. To give two examples:

> [The coach] wanted to really nail me down. But in my heart it was still like 'I may or may not do that. I'll promise you I'll do it today but in my head I don't know that I can'.
>
> [The task] didn't deal with the reality, the practicality [of life]. If we [had] talked a bit more about what obstacles might get in my way for actually doing it, I would have been more clear at the time about what else I was going to do.

This matches previous findings that coachees had mixed responses to takeaway tasks. Passmore (2010, p.55) suggests that where the task was reflective, coachees expressed value in the task; more action-orientation tasks were less valued. While Passmore links the variability to management seniority, our findings suggest there may be other, more general, factors involved.

Outcomes after the coaching

An outcome in coaching is an effect that happens after the session. Every coaching session in this study had beneficial outcomes and, at minimum, these were maintained for the next two weeks. By that time, five of the

Table 1: Some beneficial and adverse outcomes reported by interviewees as having happened after the coaching session.

Beneficial outcome	**Illustrative quote**
In sleep and dreams	The first night [after the session] I slept like a log … which is something I don't do. …I remembered the dream vividly. [It] was about a catharsis, a cleansing, an emptying – that to me was something significant.
Reduced 'negative' feelings	[The problem] doesn't send shivers through my body any more.
Increased 'positive' feelings and thoughts	Something has shifted that has allowed me to be more confident.
Taken action	Now that I've actually done some action, that helps. I'm happy.
Increased motivation	Before it was a chore, and now it was like 'Ok, I'll wake up early and I'll do this'.
Developing new strategy	I am trying to develop strategies to deal with those changes, and that's an ongoing process.
Change in attitude	I was just much more open-minded towards what the options were.
New desired outcome	Because I have that clarity from that coaching session, other things have come up and now I want more clarity.
New behaviour	I am treating [my husband] differently.
Increased awareness	I use that awareness [from the coaching session] to help me to act rather than react.
Adverse outcome	**Illustrative quote**
Concern change would not last	By the time I walked out of [the coaching session] I had no doubt in my mind that that's locked in, [but] it's floating at the moment.
Increase in 'negative' feelings	The downside is that I have become far more aware of a lot of other things which are causing frustration.

six coachees could also report *new* beneficial outcomes. Of the 38 outcomes described as occurring *after* the coaching session, 36 were reported as beneficial and two adverse. A selection is given in Table 1.

Changes in outcomes

At the first interview, two days after the coaching, four coachees reported experiencing beneficial outcomes, one reported both a beneficial and an adverse outcome, and one reported that the beneficial effect of the session had been maintained with no further outcomes noticed.

At the second follow-up interview two weeks later, three interviewees reported experiencing further beneficial outcomes and two others said that the beneficial outcomes reported two weeks earlier were maintained (although one of these had also experienced a new adverse outcome). The sixth interviewee said that there had been no change since the first interview. Table 2 summarises for each interviewee the changes in outcomes experienced after the coaching session.

Table 2 shows five different profiles of outcome changes among the six coachees. This diversity highlights the individuality of the responses coachees can experience in the two weeks following a coaching session.

Table 2: Summary of changes in outcomes reported by each interviewee after the coaching.

Coachee	Two days after coaching	Two weeks after coaching
1	Beneficial effect of session maintained with no further outcomes	Beneficial effect of session maintained with no further outcomes
2	Beneficial outcome + Adverse outcome	More beneficial outcomes
3	Beneficial outcomes	Beneficial outcomes maintained + Adverse outcome
4	Beneficial outcomes	Beneficial outcome maintained
5	Beneficial outcomes	More beneficial outcomes
6	Beneficial outcomes	More beneficial outcomes

Discussion

Interviewer as researcher

This study included processes that might have affected the outcomes (de Haan & Duckworth, 2013, p.12). Given the second author was both interviewer and analyst, he minimised 'over involvement' due to his dual roles (Allmark et al., 2009, p.7) and the possible influence on coachees' responses of being interviewed (Brannick & Coghlan, 2007; Shamai, 2003) by explaining to interviewees the purpose of the interviews and sticking closely to the Clean Language interviewing protocol. At the end of the second interview, the interviewer asked each coachee to comment on the interviews themselves. Three mentioned the extra value they received over and above the coaching: 'It gave different insight into what was going on', 'It added another layer of reinforcement about what had happened in the coaching session' and 'That is probably where I really did crystallise that idea'. Clearly we could not avoid some 'interview effect', namely, that the interview inevitably prompted some new sense-making.

Issues of rigour

To check the 'cleanness' of the interviews, we invited nine experienced Clean Language practitioners and researchers, working in teams, to give each of the interviewer's questions and statements a 'clean-ness rating' (classically clean, contextually clean, mildly leading or strongly leading). The tabulated results were used to arrive at an overall assessment for each interview. The reviewers found that, on average, the interviewer contributed 50 questions or statements in each interview, 40 of which were classically or contextually clean, eight mildly leading and two strongly leading. While this was not quite as 'clean' as other Clean Language-based research (Tosey et. al., 2014), the reviewers concluded that the interviews substantially adhered to the CLI protocol and were, therefore, fit for the purpose of this research.

The research approach and analysis were congruent with the research questions (Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011, p.80). While the aim of the study was to investigate CLI as a means to explore coachees' experiences of coaching rather than to draw generalisable conclusions, our findings may have some validity or transferability for contexts of 'proximal similarity' (Polit & Beck, 2010, p.1453), such as other goal-oriented coaching practices to which coachees bring health, career, business and relationship concerns. As a study that analyses the data according to conceptual themes, it provides some 'evidence-for-practice' despite being limited by a lack of diversity in the sample (Daly et al., 2007, p.43).

As explained earlier, the analysis and interpretation of the interviews can be considered trustworthy because of the design, protocols, adequacy of data, audit trail and repeated reflexive review of the analysis. That said, trustworthiness will be enhanced (or not) when similar studies are undertaken by other Clean Language interviewers and analysts. While longitudinal studies of three months or more may in principle be preferable, it is worth considering that the extra lapsed time may make it difficult for coachees to separate the effects of a single session from other things that happened in the meantime.

Addressing the research questions

Question 1. The first research question asked whether Clean Language interviewing of coachees about their experience and evaluation of coaching yields insights for coaches and trainers of coaching.

This paper reports many insights and demonstrates CLI is useful for understanding coaching through the subjective lens of the coachee (de Haan et al., 2011, p.25). This suggests that existing evaluation methods can be supplemented and extended through the use of CLI and the coding of first-person accounts into events, effects, outcomes and evaluations.

Question 2. The second research question asked what events, effects and outcomes – during and after a single coaching session – coachees used to evaluate coaching,

We found that coachees evaluated coaching in terms of *relational* events and effects. Many other researchers have shown that the coaching relationship is a key factor in determining how coachees perceive the outcome of coaching (de Haan & Duckworth, 2013). Relationship factors include trust, bond, engagement, collaboration and working alliance (O'Broin & Palmer, 2010, p. 139); the present study supports and fleshes out the association between working alliance and coachees' outcomes (O'Broin & Palmer, 2010, p.137). The reports by coachees in this study confirm the importance of such relationship factors. Coachees said they were *unfavourably* affected by their coaches' behaviour when:

Repeating coachee words back was overdone;
The pace of the coachee was misjudged;
Goal setting was too direct;
Responsiveness to changes in the coachee's internal state was lacking; and
Tasking was inappropriate.

In addition, our findings indicate that coachees' evaluation of the coaching was favourably influenced when coaches were able to:

Display relationship qualities;
Facilitate coachee's self-awareness and insights;
Ask high-quality questions;
Maintain the focus of the session;
Respond to what was, and was not, happening; and
Challenge and confront appropriately.

These findings confirm previous research relating to the value of increased self-awareness (Froese et al., 2011; Greif, 2007; Shamai, 2003), being challenged and the provision of reflective space (Seamons, 2006). It also supports the evidence that both challenge *and* support are needed for effective coaching (Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011, p.81).

However, we did not find a single aspect of the coaching which every interviewee evaluated the same way. There were always exceptions – *too much* or *too little* self-awareness, *too much* or *too little* challenge, *too much* or *too little* goal setting. This suggests that while these aspects are important, so is how they applied at the time to the individual coachee. Coaches need to balance being engaging *and* being neutral, putting the coachee at ease *and* challenging them, not judging *and* confronting, having a chat at a coffee shop *and* focusing on outcomes, and so on.

In all cases, the benefits accrued during the coaching sessions were maintained or added to in the following two weeks.

However, the pattern of these post-session outcomes showed no consistency (Table 2). It seems each coachee follows their own path and it would be difficult to predict, on the basis of what happened during the session, what additional changes will occur after coaching.

Implications for coach practice and training

The importance of recognising phenomena related to the beginning, middle and end stages of a coaching journey (de Haan & Nieß, 2012, p.12) also seems to apply to a single coaching conversation. Coach trainings may need to address coaches' ability to calibrate and respond to coachees' ongoing evaluation of the coaching, the pace of the session and how the timing of coachees' feedback affects the findings.

Much of the coachees' feedback seemed to be about *calibration* and *responsiveness*. O'Broin and Palmer (2009) have documented the theoretical basis for bond, task and collaboration in the coaching alliance and the cognitive-behavioural dynamics thereof. Using skills of calibration (Linder-Pelz, 2010, p.22; Tompkins & Lawley, 2011) coaches can, for example, get clues that the coachee wants less repeating back, wants the pace to change or has had an insight. Responsiveness is the ability to then act effectively. Together, calibration and responsiveness form a complex competency that involves noticing shifts in coachee behaviour and language, gauging his or her internal state and evaluations, creating questions related to those calibrations and tracking the direction of the session – all without allowing one's own internal commentary, interpretation or mind-reading to override the coachee's experience.

More time and attention could be allocated in coach trainings to the ending stage of coaching sessions, in particular to how to formulate takeaway tasks appreciated by the coachee. Time needs to be given to collaboratively designing these tasks.

Passmore (2010, p.49) asks what coaching psychologists need to learn to be effective. The present study suggests that they need to learn how coachees evaluate coaching and to calibrate coachees' in-the-moment responses so that their interventions are more informed by what their coachees regard as important. Coaches need to be aware that they can be considerably out of step with their coachees in terms of the pace at the beginning of the session, their degree of confrontation and their suggestions for takeaway tasks.

What happens *after* a session is a vital aspect of the value of the coaching. Given that most of the coachees in this study said they benefitted from the review of their evaluations during the follow-up interviews, coach training could support coaches to learn how to seek this kind of information more directly; this can be done during the first coaching session when coach and coachee do not know each other well, and in subsequent sessions.

Further research

Clean Language interviewing techniques could provide researchers with more detailed accounts of coachees' experiences of difficult-to-define aspects of coaching such as 'balancing challenge and support', 'stimulating problem-solving', 'effective communication', 'staying focused' (Passmore, 2010) and the association between 'working alliance' and coachee outcomes (O'Broin & Palmer, 2010, p.137).

A research methodology similar to the one described in this paper could be employed to establish coachee evaluations of second and subsequent coaching sessions. It could also be used in a longitudinal study to look at how coachees perceive the outcomes of coaching after a series of coaching sessions has ended.

In addition, the use of video coupled with coachee accounts of a session could shed light on the clues that a session is or is not working well for the coachee. In a similar way, coaches' experience of the coaching process could be investigated.

While further study is needed, the potential of CLI as a method for evaluating coachees' experience has been demonstrated. Ongoing qualitative studies like this will enable the coaching profession to learn from exceptions to the coaching experience as well as from averages and generalisation.

The Authors

Dr Susie Linder-Pelz
Independent researcher and director of Good Decisions, Sydney.
Email: susie@gooddecisions.com.au

James Lawley
Independent researcher and partner in The Developing Company, London
Email: james@cleanglanguage.co.uk
www.cleanlanguage.co.uk

References

Allmark, P., Boote, J., Chambers, E., Clarke, A., McDonnell, A., Thompson, A. & Tod, A.M. (2009). Ethical issues in the use of in-depth interviews: Literature review and discussion. *Research Ethics Review, 5*, 48–54.

Brannick, T. & Coghlan, D. (2007). In defense of being 'native': The case for insider academic research. *Organisational Research Methods, 10*(1), 59–74.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101.

Daly, J., Willis, K., Small, R., Green, J., Welch, N., Kealy, M. & Hughes, E. (2007). A hierarchy of evidence for assessing qualitative health research. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology, 60*(1), 43–49.

de Haan, E., Bertie, C., Day, A. & Sills, C. (2010). Critical moments of clients of coaching: Towards a 'client model' of executive coaching. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 9.4*, 1–31.

de Haan, E., Culpin, V. & Curd, J. (2011). Executive coaching in practice: What determines helpfulness for clients of coaching? *Personnel Review, 40*(1), 24–44.

de Haan, E. & Duckworth, A. (2013). Signalling a new trend in executive coaching outcome research. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 8*(1), 6–19.

de Haan, E. & Nieß, C. (2012). Critical moments in a coaching case study: Illustration of a process research model. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 64*(3), 198–224.

Froese, T., Gould, C. & Barrett, A. (2011). Reviewing from within: A commentary on first- and second-person methods in the science of consciousness. *Constructivist Foundations, 6*(2), 254–269.

Grant, A.M. (2013). The efficacy of executive coaching in times of organisational change. *Journal of Change Management* (ahead-of-print), 1–23.

Greif, S. (2007). Advances in research on coaching outcomes. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 2*(3), 222–249.

Grove, D.J. & Panzer, B.I. (1989). *Resolving traumatic memories: Metaphors and symbols in psychotherapy.* New York: Irvington Publishers Inc.

Gyllensten, K. & Palmer, S. (2007). The coaching relationship: An interpretive phenomenological analysis. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 2*(2), 168–177.

Hall, L.M. (2011). *Coaching mastery: Meta-Coaching module III, 2011 edition, certification training for ACMC credentials.* Grand Junction, CO: Neuro-Semantic Publications.

Hall, L.M. (2013). *Evaluative vagueness in the coaching context.* Message posted to E-Group for Certified Meta-Coaches, 9 January.

Hieker, C. & Huffington, C. (2006). Reflexive questions in a coaching psychology context. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 1*(2), 46–55.

Knox, S. & Burkard, A.W. (2009). Qualitative research interviews. *Psychotherapy Research, 19*(4–5), 566–575.

Lawley, J. & Linder-Pelz, S. (2014). *'Evidence-based' on what? Exploring coach, coachee and expert evaluations of coaching.* Manuscript submitted for publication.

Lawley, J. & Tompkins, P. (2000). *Metaphors in mind: Transformation through Symbolic Modelling.* London: The Developing Company Press.

Lawley, J. & Tompkins, P. (2011). *Clean Evaluative Interviewing.* Retrieved 16 November 2014, from: www.cleanlanguage.co.uk/articles/articles/317/

Linder-Pelz, S. (2010). *NLP coaching: An evidence-based approach for coaches, leaders and individuals.* London: Kogan Page Limited.

Linder-Pelz, S. (2014). Steps towards the benchmarking of coaches' skills. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring, 12*(1), 47–62.

Linder-Pelz, S. & Hall, L.M. (2008). Meta-Coaching: A methodology grounded in psychological theory. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring, 6*(1), 43–56.

Loftus, E.F. (1975). Leading questions and the eyewitness report. *Cognitive Psychology, 7*, 560–572.

Mays, N. & Pope, C. (1995). Rigour and qualitative research. *British Medical Journal, 311*, 109–112.

O'Broin, A. & Palmer, S. (2009). Co-creating an optimal coaching alliance: A cognitive behavioural coaching perspective. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 4*(2), 184–194.

O'Broin, A. & Palmer, S. (2010). Exploring key aspects in the formation of coaching relationships: Initial indicators from the perspective of the coachee and the coach. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 3*(2), 124–143.

Owen, I.R. (1989). Beyond Carl Rogers: The work of David Grove. *Journal of Interprofessional Care, 4*, 186–196.

Passmore, J. (2010). A grounded theory study of the coachee experience: The implications for training and practice in coaching psychology. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 5*(1), 48–62.

Passmore, J. & Fillery-Travis, A. (2011). A critical review of executive coaching research: A decade of progress and what's to come. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 4*(2), 70–88.

Polit, D.F. & Beck, C.T. (2010). Generalisation in quantitative and qualitative research: Myths and strategies. *International Journal of Nursing Studies, 47*, 1451–1458.

Seamons, B.L. (2006). *The most effective factors in executive coaching engagements according to the coach, the client, and the client's boss.* (PhD), Saybrook Graduate School and Research Center, California. (UMI Dissertations Publishing 3206219).

Shamai, M. (2003). Therapeutic effects of qualitative research: Reconstructing the experience of treatment as a by-product of qualitative evaluation. *The Social Service Review, 77*(3), 455–467.

Sousa, D. (2014). Validation in qualitative research: General aspects and specificities of the descriptive phenomenological method. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 11*, 211–227.

Thibodeau, P.H. & Boroditsky, L. (2011). Metaphors we think with: The role of metaphor in reasoning. *PLoS ONE, 6*(2), 16782. doi: 10.1371/Journal.

Tompkins, P. & Lawley, J. (2011). *Calibrating whether what you are doing is working – or not.* Retrieved 16 November 2014, from: www.cleanlanguage.co.uk/articles/articles/308/

Tosey, P. (2011). *'Symbolic Modelling' as an innovative phenomenological method in HRD research: The work-life balance project.* Paper presented at the 12th International Conference on HRD Practice and Research across Europe, University of Gloustershire, 25–27 May.

Tosey, P. Lawley, J. & Meese, R. (2014). Eliciting metaphor through Clean Language: An innovation in qualitative research. *British Journal of Management, 25*(3), 629–646.

Tosey, P. & Mathison, J. (2010). Exploring inner landscapes through psychophenomenology: The contribution of neuro-linguistic programming to innovations in researching first-person experience. *Qualitative Research in Organisations and Management, 5*(1), 63–82.

van Helsdingen, A. & Lawley, J. (2012). Modelling Shared Reality: Avoiding unintended influence in qualitative research. *Kwalon: Journal of the Netherlands Association for Qualitative Research, 1*(3). Retrieved 16 November 2014, from: www.cleanlanguage.co.uk/articles/articles/328/

Vansickel-Peterson, D.L. (2010). *Coaching efficacy with academic leaders: A phenomenological investigation.* Open Access Theses and Dissertations from the College of Education and Human Sciences. Paper 87. University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Retrieved 16 November 2014, from: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cehsdiss/87

Worth, S-A. (2012). *An exploration of coaching women towards authenticity in the workplace: A heuristic study with women in academia.* (DCM), Oxford Brookes University. Retrieved from: www.brookes.ac.uk/go/radar. Available from Oxford Brookes University Research Archive and Digital Asset Repository database.

Appendix

Methodology of present study compared with Braun and Clarke's phases of Thematic Analysis (2006).

Braun & Clarke's Thematic Analysis 2006, p.87	**Analysis of Clean Language Interviews**
1. Familiarise yourself with data.	For each interview: Read and re-read to get general sense of *each* interviewee's perspective. Noted how individuals expressed themselves and organised their experience, especially through metaphor.
2. Generate initial codes. Coding interesting features in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.	For each interview: Modelled the sentences of each interviewee *separately*, highlighting events, effects, outcomes and 'favourable' or 'unfavourable' evaluation statements (Tompkins and Lawley 2010, Lawley & Tompkins, 2011).
3. Search for themes. Collating codes into potential ('candidate') themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.	For each interview: a. Co-located 'data extracts' into clusters *for each interviewee* by: – repetition (same words) – restatement (same idea said in a different way) – inherent logic (e.g. cause-effect) – sequence (when what happened). b. Added remainder of examples to 'unallocated cluster'. c. Allocated 'candidate theme' names for clusters.
4a. Review Themes – Level 1 Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts	Across all data extracts: a. Co-located examples of similar themes (retain source of each quote). b. Reviewed examples in 'unallocated clusters' for new clusters or allocated to an existing cluster. c. Retained remainder of examples in global 'unallocated cluster'.
4b. Review Themes – Level 2	Across themes: a. Reviewed themes for 'internal homogeneity' – removed examples that no longer 'fit' and reallocated. b. Reviewed themes for 'external heterogeneity' – combined or split clusters that covered the same or different themes. c. Reviewed *interviews* to check original context and look for missed or misallocated data items.
5. Define and name themes: Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.	Across themes: a. Organised implicit structure inherent (e.g. the five time-frames of coachee evaluations) b. Defined 'prevalence' criteria for an 'acceptable theme' (e.g. example from at least three of the six interviewees). c. Settled on names for selected themes.
6. Produce Report	Wrote up results with reference to research questions.

Evaluating a coaching and mentoring programme: Challenges and solutions

Tatiana Bachkirova, Linet Arthur & Emma Reading

Objectives: *This paper describes an independently conducted research study to develop appropriate measures and evaluate the coaching/mentoring programme that the London Deanery had been running for over five years. It also aims to explore specific challenges in the evaluation of a large-scale coaching programme and to suggest new solutions.*

Design: *The challenges to evaluation included the need to use established but also context-relevant measures and the need for a rigorous but also pragmatic design that took into account a number of practical constraints. Overall it was a mixed method research design consisting of a within-subject quantitative study with support of a qualitative grounded theory methodology conducted in parallel.*

Method: *The selected measures for the quantitative part of the study included employee engagement, self-efficacy and self-compassion. An additional questionnaire SWRQ (Specific Work-Related Questionnaire) was developed as the result of a qualitative investigation with stakeholder representatives. It included a self-estimation by the coached clients of the extent to which they could attribute each change to the coaching received rather than any other factor. The qualitative part of the study included interviews with stakeholders and the analysis of responses to an open question in the SWRQ.*

Results: *120 (78 per cent) of matched responses pre- and post-coaching were analysed and seven stakeholders interviewed. The results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis show improvement in all chosen scales. The analysis also shows that coaching was a major contributor to these changes.*

Conclusions: *The paper argues for the development of additional methods in outcome research on coaching programmes that are aligned with the main principles and philosophy of coaching as a practice.*

Keywords: *Coaching; evaluation of coaching; outcome research.*

FOR THE LAST TWO DECADES we have been witnessing unprecedented growth of the coaching industry. Many organisations invest in coaching programmes. It seems, however, that the pace of growing evidence of the added value of coaching that should come from research, does not yet match the speed of the implementation of coaching programmes. Consequently many organisations aim to gather their own evidence about the effectiveness of these programmes to justify the return on investment. The London Deanery is one such organisation.

The London Deanery established a Coaching and Mentoring service for doctors and dentists in London in 2008. The coaches were trained by an established leadership coaching provider and their performance was assessed at the end of the training. The outcome of the service was measured by individual feedback from the service users. However, it was viewed that although this provided some data on how the service was performing, it was not sufficient to identify any performance changes in the recipients. The service was publicly funded thus it was important that it should be properly evaluated to ensure value for money. Preliminary work looking at the literature evaluating the benefits of coaching and mentoring did not reveal an established methodology for conducting such a review. The Oxford Brookes team of researchers won a bidding process for the research based on their proposals for developing novel methodologies for the evaluation of the service. The aim of the study was to establish whether the measures selected could identify changes in the performance and attitudes of doctors undergoing the coaching intervention, since ultimately the purpose of the programme is to improve the effectiveness of doctors and dentists for the benefit of the patient.

It appears that the London Deanery task is not dissimilar to questions asked by many HRD practitioners. However, as Lawrence and Whyte (2014) recently argued, these practitioners 'have not yet collectively identified a satisfactory approach to evaluating the efficacy of coaching' (2014, p.6). This is not surprising because the problem of measuring the impact of organisational intervention is not new: it has been actively discussed since Kirkpatrick's (1977) methodology for evaluating training programmes (e.g. Ely et al., 2010) but it is still debated, particularly in relation to the evaluation of training (Passmore & Joao Velez, 2014). Kirkpatrick admitted that it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to evaluate certain programmes in terms of the results (1977) because of the numerous factors influencing the outcomes. Other authors continue to echo this conclusion (de Haan & Duckworth, 2012; Ely et al., 2010). A financial addition to Kirpartick's methodology – ROI (Return on Investment) has been particularly critiqued in relation to coaching with recent conclusions that are not dissimilar to Kirpatrick's premise (de Haan & Duckworth, 2012; De Meuse, 2009; Grant, 2012, 2013; Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011; Theeboom et al., 2013).

The evaluation of coaching programmes is considered to be even more difficult than the evaluation of training programmes (de Haan & Duckworth, 2012; Ely et al., 2010; Grant, 2012). The problems are exacerbated by a number of factors, such as the diversity of outcomes of coaching compared to the relatively fixed expectations of training; the highly individual approach of the coach, which prevents more explicit knowledge of the process; the confidentiality that surrounds specific details of the goals and consequent outcomes.

On the other hand, as coaching programmes tend to be expensive there appears to be a stronger need to justify such expenditure, particularly in the public sector. Therefore, in spite of the additional costs involved in undertaking a full-scale research study on assessing the effectiveness of a coaching programme, the London Deanery chose this option. However, such evaluations face similar issues and obstacles as large-scale outcome research projects on organisational interventions (De Meuse et al., 2009; Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011; Theeboom et al., 2013), particularly the use of established paradigms. If traditional positivist methodologies are considered as the gold standard of evaluation, there is a danger that the complexity of coaching interventions may be overlooked (de Haan & Duckworth, 2012; Ely et al., 2010). This paper explores how some specific challenges of the evaluation of a large-scale coaching programme were addressed and will suggest a methodology that is more in line with the philosophy of coaching. This will be discussed together with the results of the actual evaluation.

Literature review

While recognising that there are wider debates on the evaluation of organisational interventions (for example, Passmore & Joao Velez, 2014), this literature review is only focused on the evaluation of effectiveness of coaching programmes. Typically this literature addresses three main themes: (a) issues of evaluation in principle depending on the main stakeholders; (b) most acceptable methodologies of evaluation; and (c) specific measures of evaluation.

In relation to the *general issues of evaluation* Grant (2013) suggests that we need to start with a question: 'who is interested in evaluation – and why' (2013, p.15). The first group concerned with this question is the coaches. On the one hand they wish coaching to be seen as effective for marketing purposes; on the other hand, they are interested in improving their practice. Purchasers of coaching ask the question of whether coaching works because they want to know if coaching is cost-effective. Both coaches and purchasers seem to have vested interests in the results of evaluation. In comparison, researchers and academics are well placed to explore the effectiveness of coaching using rigorous research methods and are interested in developing evidence-based practice for coaching (Briner, 2012; Fillery-Travis & Lane, 2006; Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011). However, they are probably more than others aware of many difficulties in applying scientifically respected methods to researching coaching practice (Drake, 2009; Ellam-Dyson, 2012; Ely et al., 2010; Grant, 2012).

One of the main problems is that many of these research methods require significant oversimplification of the nature of practice. Coaching is a complex intervention influenced by the interplay of different factors such as the client's attitude, coach's skill, coach/client relationship, all of which are subject to complex dynamics affected by contextual issues (de Haan & Duckworth, 2012; Ely et al., 2010). In addition if coaching is sponsored by an organisation it is difficult to establish who the main provider of information about the effectiveness of coaching should be: the client, the coach, the purchaser of the service or those on the receiving end of the changes that are made by the client. In terms of more specific issues various authors also question a typical assumption that coaches from different backgrounds, training and styles deliver the same type of coaching and whether it is possible to treat coaching as a homogeneous intervention, allowing general conclusions to be drawn about its effectiveness (Theeboom, 2013).

In terms of *acceptable methodologies of evaluation* the literature confirms again multiple issues with different methodologies. It is accepted that there are certain advantages and disadvantages in each methodology. Grant (2013) differentiates as rigorous three types of outcome studies with an indication of potential issues associated with them:

- Case studies that can provide valuable descriptive data but do not allow generalised evaluations or the comparison of results between different coaching interventions.
- Within-subject outcome research which allows comparison of the impact of coaching on a group of individuals. The group is assessed before and after the coaching interventions. This is the most commonly used study design in the literature and can provide valuable quantitative data of change, but causation cannot be attributed only to coaching.
- Between-subject and Randomised Controlled Studies, which are considered by some to be the 'gold standard' particularly in medical research. Although they can measure change and relate it to the intervention, the utility of these designs for studying coaching is contested (de Haan & Duckworth, 2012; Greif, 2009; Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011) due to problems with delineating a control group, maintaining the 'blind' condition and constructing 'placebo' interventions. Uses of self-coaching, peer-coaching or 'waiting list' are considered practical issues in terms of implementation in relation to coaching studies (Franklin & Doran, 2009; Greif, 2009; Hicks, 1998; Williams, 2010).

The traditional research literature on evaluations typically associated with a positivist paradigm, focuses on searching for general relationships between a small number of discrete variables across wide varieties of context. However, these contexts, from a constructionist's point of view, have a large impact upon these relationships (Fishman, 1999: 235). Without consideration of context the findings of such studies may lead to conclusions that are so generic that their practical value becomes questionable (de Haan & Duckworth, 2012; Grief, 2007; Orlinsky et al., 1994).

It is not surprising that some research communities resist the idea that only one notion of research is recognised as science: the one identified with modernistic positivism. It has been argued that there are other meanings of science, for example, as disciplined, critical, reflective thought that compares and contrasts evidence, arguing for alternative interpretations or explanations of a particular phenomenon (Cronin & Klimoski, 2011; Fishman, 1999). In coaching research Grant (2013) argues, 'an evidence base *per se* does not purport to prove that any specific intervention is guaranteed to be effective, nor does it require that a double-blind, randomised, controlled trial is held as being inevitably and objectively better than a qualitative case study approach' (2013, p.3). This means that the evaluations of coaching could be approached from different research paradigms (pragmatism, contextualism, interpretivism) and may benefit from mixed designs. For example, it can include retrospective questionnaires validated by traditional positivist procedures (Passmore, 2008), but also include new instruments that were developed with considerations of factors such as the type of coaching, the organisational level of the coachee, the specific objectives and context of each coaching engagement (De Meuse et al., 2009; Ely et al., 2010).

The theme of *specific measures* that could be used for evaluation of coaching is not an easy one either. According to Fillery-Travis and Lane (2006) before we can ask whether coaching works we must ask why it is being used. 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. This could be compared with therapy where it is possible to offer general indicators of the quality of service such as subjective well-being, symptom reduction and life functioning (e.g. Mental Health Index, Howard et al., 1996). In coaching, however, it is difficult to identify the outcome measures applicable to the whole range of coaching interventions (Greif, 2007, p.224). Grant (2013) providing many examples from the vast range of issues addressed in coaching, concludes that there is an almost endless list of applications. The majority of these outcomes are difficult to quantify. This is why sometimes the target outcomes are selected because they can be measured, rather than because they are appropriate for individual clients or reflect the nature of coaching (Easton & Van Laar, 2013).

Often practitioners create a battery of measures, which might reflect the context of the study, their priorities and those of their client or organisation commissioning the evaluation. A combination of measures or indicators can sometimes help to avoid over-simplification with an intention to work towards meeting a particular target that is measured (Easton & Van Laar, 2013). Greif (2007), for example, proposes general measures (degree of goal attainment and client satisfaction with coaching) and specific measures such as particular social competences; performance improvement and self-regulation. The choice of these measures has to be justified by the theories tested in the independent research or by the practical needs of the organisation commissioning the evaluation.

Overall, there is recognition in the literature that outcome research and evaluation of effectiveness of coaching face significant challenges. Therefore, there is a need for pragmatic and creative approaches to this task, which could assure rigour as the result of competent inquiry.

Methodology of the project

This project was designed as a pragmatic inquiry requiring mixed methods (Tashakkori & Teddli, 2010) with a large proportion of the data, as requested by the client, of a quantitative nature using qualitative data to construct a questionnaire and further inform the results.

The quantitative element of the study aimed to establish whether the coaching and mentoring provided by London Deanery practitioners had an impact on clients by comparing their scores from Time 1 (pre-coaching) and Time 2 (post-coaching) online measures. In this project the London Deanery was interested in two variables, which are theoretically related to the individual change process and were considered by them as relevant for the situation: employee engagement and self-esteem. To give a fair representation of the aspect of self-esteem the researchers suggested two measures: self-efficacy and self-compassion.

Selected measures

Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) describe *Employee Engagement* as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption. Research over the past ten years has shown the importance of this concept in relation to understanding key organisational outcomes, such as low turnover (Schaufeli & Bakker 2004), high organisational commitment (Demerouti et al., 2001), and customer-rated employee performance (Salanova, Agut & Peiro, 2005). This has a potential to provide an indirect relationship between the effect of coaching and 'customer-rated' employee performance as well as reduced turnover and increased organisational commitment. Employee engagement is also negatively related to burnout, which was particularly important to the London Deanery

The Oxford Brookes University team used a typical instrument for measuring employee engagement, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). This scale consists of 17 items, six of which measure Vigour, six measure Absorption and five measure Dedication. Vigour is characterised by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest efforts in one's work and persistence even in the face of difficulties. Dedication refers to being strongly involved in one's work and experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge. Absorption is characterised by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003).

The scale consists of seven points from 0=Never had this feeling, 1=almost never, a few times a year or less, 2=rarely, once a month or less, 3=sometimes, a few times a month, 4=often, once a week, 5=very often, a few times a week, to 6=always, every day. The mean scale score of the three subscales is computed by adding the scores on the particular scale and dividing the sum by the number of items of the subscales involved. A similar procedure is followed for the total score.

Perceived *Self-Efficacy* refers to beliefs about one's competence to deal with challenging encounters and the 'belief in one's capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments' (Bandura, 1997, p.3). It is clear why this concept is related to beneficial coaching and mentoring outcomes. There is now a large body of research that supports a relationship between measures of perceived self-efficacy and performance (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998).

Self-Efficacy was measured using the Generalised Self-Efficacy Scale, GSE (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). Cross-cultural research has been carried out which confirms the validity of this scale, showing consistent evidence of associations between perceived self-efficacy and other psychological constructs (e.g. health behaviours, well-being, social cognitive variables and coping strategies (Luszczynska, Scolz & Schwarzer, 2005).

The 10 items are scored using a four-point scale: 1=not at all true, 2=hardly true, 3=moderately true and 4=exactly true. Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) found that the internal consistency varied across cultures but ranged from .78 to .91 and concluded that it was very satisfactory, considering that the scale only has 10 items. Scherbaum et al. (2006) used Item Response Theory to test the GSE Scale and found that it works best for individuals with average or below average levels of GSE. The GSE Scale is less precise at above average levels of GSE.

As low self-esteem has been frequently associated with negative social comparisons and internalised self-judgments, *Self-Compassion* (Neff, 2009) was introduced as an individual measure that is also a predictor of the ability to cope effectively with adversity and good mental health. Self-compassion comprises being kind and understanding towards oneself when experiencing pain or failure as opposed to being harsh and self-critical. Research studies have consistently linked self-compassion to reduced fear of failure, enhanced perceived competence and emotionally-focused coping strategies, suggesting that this indicator is a promising one for coaching (Neff, 2009; Neff & Lamb, 2009; Neff & Vonk, 2009).

Self-compassion has three basic components: (1) extending kindness and understanding to oneself; (2) seeing one's experiences as part of the larger human experience rather than as separating and isolating; and (3) holding one's painful thoughts and feelings in balanced awareness and not over-identifying with them. (Baumesieter, Bushman & Campbell, 2000, as reported by Neff, 2003).

Self-compassion is measured with the Self-compassion Scale (SCS, Neff, 2003). The 12-item scale was used with items 2 and 6 for self-kindness, items 11 and 12 for self-judgement, items 5 and 10 for common humanity, items 4 and 8 for isolation, items 3 and 7 for mindfulness and items 1 and 9 for over-identification. Subscale scores are computed by calculating the mean of subscale item responses. To compute a total self-compassion score, reverse score the negative subscale items – self-judgement, isolation and over-identification (i.e. 1=5, 2=4, 3=4, 4=2, 5=1) – then compute a total mean. Neff (2003) found that internal consistency was above the acceptable: .75 level for overall and subscales. Test/re-test reliability of overall scale plus subscales was also found to be acceptable (.93 overall).

A bespoke questionnaire

We made the decision to develop another instrument for this evaluation for two main reasons. The first was responding to the need of the client-organisation to address the more specific contextual relationship between the coaching service provided to London Deanery clients and noticeable behavioural and attitudinal changes that might be linked to their work performance and, consequently, patient care. The second was recognising the importance of being creative when facing various issues associated with measurement. In this case our intention was to capture not just the static estimation of particular aspects of the clients' working lives but directly addressing the degree of changes that happened in relation to these aspects by the end of the coaching process.

To create this measure we interviewed appropriate stakeholders: three users of service (two consultants and one GP), two coach/mentors and two matchers, those referring clients to this service and identifying a suitable coach. A Grounded Theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) was used as the main methodology for analysis. The following themes that emerged as the result of the qualitative analysis were particularly useful in the development of the bespoke questionnaire:

1. Impact on patients
   - Improved interactions with patients.
   - Improved feedback from patients.
   - Use of coaching/mentoring techniques with patients.
   - Changes in patients' behaviour, such as reduced dependency, better use of doctors' time.
2. Impact on colleagues
   - Improved interactions and communication with colleagues.
   - Use of coaching/mentoring techniques with colleagues.
3. Impact on self
   - Improved confidence.
   - Better time management at work, leading to an improved work-life balance.
   - Improved capacity to solve problems and make decisions, including career decisions.
   - Better relationships with family members.

- Made them decide to stay within the profession after seriously considering leaving the NHS.

These questions allowed generation of contextually meaningful data for this evaluation. Although this added an important element for measuring the potential impact of coaching we had to acknowledge that in this type of study, without a control group, it was impossible to claim that changes happening to coached clients were the results of coaching rather than any other influences or combination of influences. In order to minimise this limitation we added another question to our bespoke questionnaire in which clients themselves could indicate to what degree coaching contributed to each identified change. Although this indication is a self-estimation we believe that the well-educated and self-aware clients in this study were conscious agents of their life situation and therefore had sufficient insight into the relationship between various influences in their lives. We believed in their unique position to isolate the role of the service they received from the complex array of other factors in their life and to be completely open about this under the conditions of this particular study when there was no reason for them to misrepresent their responses.

This questionnaire was piloted internally to check the questions and appropriate adjustments were made following feedback. The final questionnaire SWRQ (Specific Work-Related Questionnaire) became part of the Time 2 questionnaires.

To summarise, the Time 1 questionnaire consisted of demographic questions and three scales measuring Employee Engagement, Self-Efficacy and Self-Compassion. The demographic questions were developed to capture the respondents' age group, sex, ethnic origin, whether trained inside or outside the UK and career level. The Time 2 questionnaire included the above three scales of the Time 1 questionnaire and the SWRQ scale that aimed to identify changes in aspects of working life of the client and degree to which the client attributed each change to coaching. All the questionnaires asked for the unique registration number allocated on application in order to pair the Time 1 and Time 2 responses for each individual, whilst maintaining anonymity.

Research process

Once the potential participants of the evaluation research applied for the coaching programme online they were informed about the evaluation study and were given an option to opt out if they did not wish to take part. Once accepted, clients were sent their registration number (CLT number) and then an online link to the Time 1 Survey on Surveymonkey. The next stage was the normal process of the coaching programme as provided by the London Deanery. The participants were rung by one of a small team of matchers, all trained Deanery Coaches. A structured conversation was held with the client checking their reasons for seeking coaching, their understanding of the process and practical requirements such as venue and time. The participant was then sent an email with the description of three coaches attached for them to identify their preferred coach. Clients were offered coaches outside their specialty and outside their place of work to ensure externality to the coaching process. The coaching intervention consisted of four sessions of 60 to 90 minutes taken over a period of six months. When the coaching was completed participants were sent a link with an invitation to complete the Time 2 questionnaires. The research was conducted with consideration of good practice and strict ethical guidelines.

Results

Overall there were 189 Time 1 responses and 137 Time 2 responses. After matching responses and taking out responses where the clients had not completed the minimum number of sessions, there was a total of 120 matched Time 1 and Time 2 responses. Therefore, the final response rate was 78 per cent.

The demographic data show that 48.3 per cent of respondents were aged between 30 to 39, 20.8 per cent were aged between 20 to 29, 23.3 per cent were aged between 40 to 49 and 7.5 per cent were aged between 50 to 59. There were no respondents aged over 60 years old. The majority of respondents were female (66.7 per cent). Nearly all respondents were trained within the UK (92 per cent). The majority of respondents (46.7 per cent) were less than two years' post-qualification with a further 25.8 per cent more than two years' post-qualification and 18.3 per cent Foundation Trainees. The majority of respondents were White British followed by 18.3 per cent who were Asian or Asian British: Indian.

The results of the three selected established measures (Tables 1 and 2) indicate that clients benefited from the programme in relation to each of them.

Table 1 shows the descriptive data for both Time 1 and Time 2 for Employee Engagement, Self-Efficacy and Self-Compassion. The first line of data looks at the means and it is clear that all Time 2 means (average) are higher than the Time 1 means (average).

However, before exploring whether these differences are statistically significant, it is important to consider levels of Employee Engagement, Self-Efficacy and Self-Compassion before the coaching began. Table 2 describes the differences in results of the sample of doctors that was used in the UWES Manual. These results suggest that the clients in this study had higher levels of employee engagement before they started the coaching than the sample from the UWES manual. What is also important to point out is the minimum and maximum scores and the resulting range of scores. Whilst the average employee engagement levels are reasonably high there is a wide range of scores, with the lowest being 1.60 (which equates to ' at least once a year') and the highest being 5.80 (which equates to 'a couple of times a week or daily'). At Time 2 the range of scores is reduced, as is the Standard deviation, which measures dispersion around the average value.

Although Self-Efficacy scores had the largest effect size (Table 3) the ranges of scores and standard deviation stayed nearly the same. Like Employee Engagement, scores for Self-Compassion showed decreases in range of scores.

The results of the paired sample *t*-tests in Table 3 show a positive impact on mean scores of Employee Engagement, Self-Efficacy and Self-Compassion (at the .01 level) with a highly significant effect for mean scores on all three scales. Effect sizes were calculated based on Cohen's calculations for paired sample *t*-tests. Effect size for Employee Engagement is .32, effect size for Self-Efficacy is 0.45 and effect size for Self-Compassion is .38. This shows that the effect sizes vary from between small and medium (Employee Engagement and Self-Compassion and medium (Self-Efficacy). It is also important to highlight that there is evidence that the UWES is better at measuring lower compared to high levels of employee engagement. Therefore, it is possible that the coaching had more of an impact on coaches than these effect sizes suggest. The General Self-Efficacy scale is also better at measuring lower scores than higher ones.

This means that all three measures selected for their capacity to illustrate meaningful changes in the clients as the result of their coaching, confirm that these changes were significant. The clients reported higher levels of employee engagement, self-efficacy and self-compassion after being coached in comparison to the levels of these aspects in their lives before they engaged with the coaching programme. The results were not driven by any particular subgroup and benefit was seen across subgroups in race, gender, stage of career and age.

Another type of analysis was made available by using the SWRQ (specific work-related questionnaire developed for this study). This questionnaire was designed to explore the changes that are perceived by the clients in relation to their work.

Table 1: Descriptive data from Time 1 and Time 2 questionnaires.

	Employee Engagement Time 1	Employee Engagement Time 2	Self-Efficacy Time 1	Self-Efficacy Time 2	Self-Compassion Time 1	Self-Compassion Time 2
Mean/Standard Deviation	4.13 (0.78)	4.37 (0.71)	2.99 (0.39)	3.17 (0.39)	2.98 (0.61)	3.22 (0.63)
Median/Range of scores	4.2 (4.20)	4.4 (3.94)	3 (1.9)	3.1 (1.9)	2.92 (3.17)	3.25 (2.84)
Minimum score	1.60	1.93	2	2.1	1.25	1.58
Maximum score	5.80	5.87	3.9	4	4.42	4.42

Table 2: Comparing UWES sample and London Deanery sample.

	UWES Manual Sample	London Deanery Sample
Number	655	120
Mean	3.10	4.13
Coding	'At least a couple of times a month'	'At least once a week'
Nationality	Dutch and Finnish	English
Background	Completed career counselling questionnaire	Applied to coaching programme

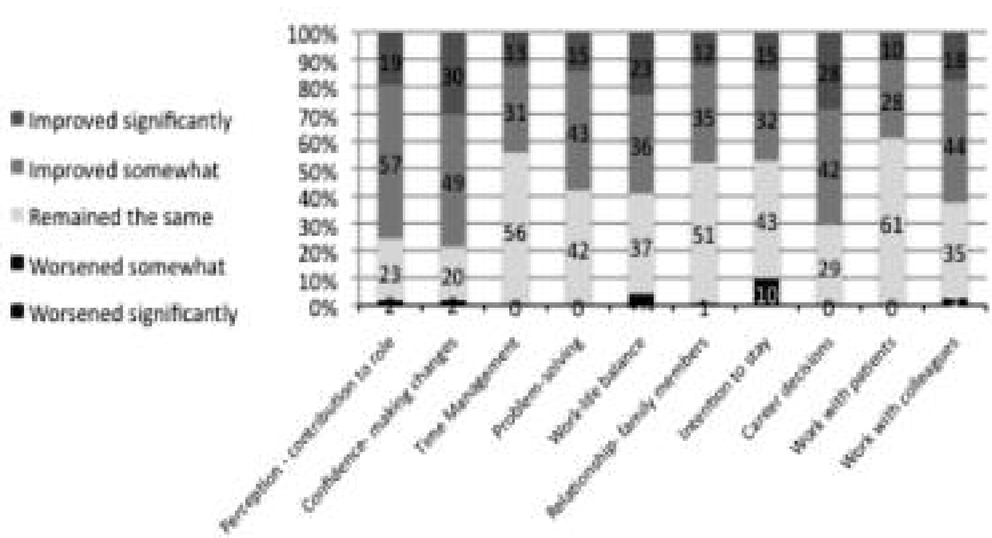
Table 3: Paired sample *t*-tests to measure whether Time 2 means are higher than Time 1 scores.

Scale	Standard Deviation	*t*	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Employee Engagement	0.66	3.968	119	0.000
Self-Efficacy	0.36	5.423	119	0.000
Self-Compassion	0.47	5.586	119	0.000

The results of this analysis are shown in the Figures 1 and 2 and in Table 4.

Figure 1 represents the results of the analysis of the participants' responses to Question 5: 'How the following aspects of your work have changed since starting coaching'. This figure illustrates how, according to clients themselves, certain aspects of their working life were changing or remained the same after the period when they undertook coaching. Different shades of grey represent the degree to which the clients perceived the changes. It is clear that the category 'worsened significantly' is not present in the figure. The result suggests that the majority of these aspects improved or improved significantly. Only a very small number of responses (21) indicated that some particular aspects of their working life 'worsened somewhat'. It is interesting to notice that ten of these responses are related to the 'Intention to stay in the current position', which could be interpreted as a positive outcome in some situations when a radical action is beneficial for both the employee and the employer.

Figure 1: Changes perceived in working life as the result of coaching.



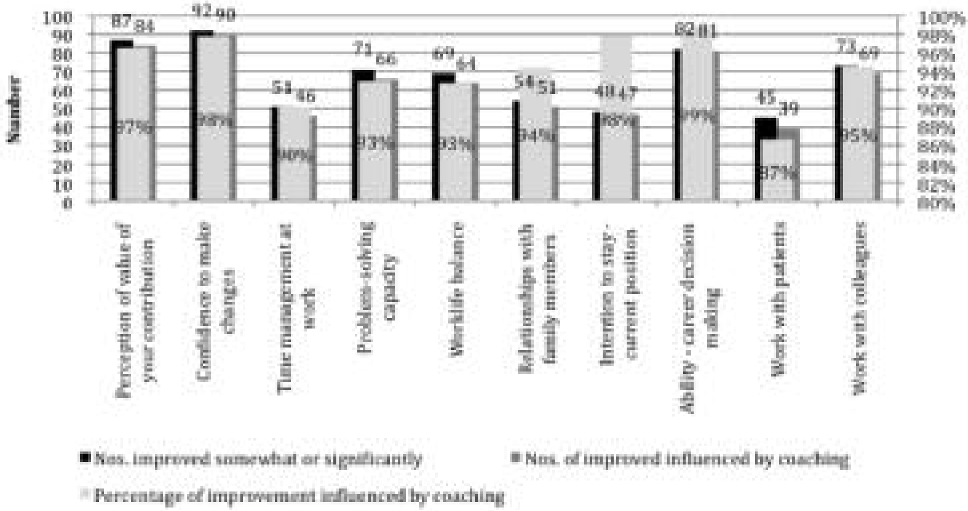
Particularly positive perceptions of changes were demonstrated in relation to Perception of values of the client contribution to their current role, Confidence to make changes in the workplace and Ability to make career decisions. In comparison to other factors it appears that the coaching programme was particularly successful in empowering the clients and improving their perception of themselves at work. This indication of changes corresponds with the data of self-efficacy and self-compassion in the Time 1 and Time 2 questionnaires.

Although the results of changes demonstrated in Table 2 and Figure 3 show significant changes in clients who undertook the coaching programme it could be argued that these changes might indicate the influence of a combination of factors other than coaching. Because we had no control group we do not know to what degree the changes that we have seen are due to the coaching that they received. In order to compensate for this issue we included question 6 in our SWRQ, which asked this question directly: 'Please indicate the extent to which coaching/mentoring contributed to this change'. In relation to each change from Question 5 the clients could indicate if the change could be attributed to coaching and the degree they believed the coaching influenced this change.

The results of analysis of responses to this question are demonstrated in Figure 2.

The black bar in Figure 2 highlights the number of respondents who felt that there had been some improvement (either somewhat or significant) in the areas highlighted in the SWRQ. The dark grey bar highlights the numbers of respondents who felt that the coaching had influenced the positive change that is highlighted by the black bar. The light grey bar sitting in front of two other bars highlights what percentage of positive improvement was attributed to the coaching. For example, as was already shown in Figure 1 the three areas of work where respondents felt there had been the most improvement were 'Perception of value of your contribution', 'Confidence to make changes at work' and 'Ability to make career decisions'. In these areas of work where there had been improvements, respondents felt that a large percentage of the improvement was due to the coaching that they had received – on average 98 per ent for these three most changed areas of life.

Figure 2: Perception of participants on how changes occurred are attributable to coaching.



The lowest change is indicated in the area of work with patients, which may indicate that although Time 2 responses reflect increased confidence and the way participants felt about themselves, it may take time to recognise such changes in action particularly with their work with patients. It is also possible that the junior doctors may be fairly remote from patient satisfaction questionnaires (this tends to happen at a departmental level) and, therefore, find it difficult to notice the effect of their internal changes on patients.

Findings from the open question in SWRQ

Question 9 in the SWRQ asked participants in a word or phrase to describe what difference the coaching and mentoring programme had made to them. All participants responded to this question. Three researchers, first independently and then together, analysed these responses and identified the following themes (see Table 4). These themes are described in the order of the number of comments considered as representing each theme (from highest to lowest).

On the whole the qualitative analysis suggests an overwhelmingly positive impact of coaching on clients and a wide variety of the benefits associated with participation in this programme. The overarching patterns of the benefits are:

- Confidence improvement and increased self-awareness.
- Specific areas of working life where there was a significant difference as the result of coaching such as career development and work-life balance.
- Acquiring a range of skills that could make participants more capable of addressing potential issues, such as the skills of problem-solving, reflection and seeing things in perspective.

It would be unusual if the effect of coaching were universally positive. A small percentage of general negative comments (4.96 per cent) illustrate that there are circumstances in which this particular type of intervention is not the best solution. There could be, of course, other explanations (e.g. not the best match between coach and client); however without further investigation these are only speculations.

Table 4: Summary of qualitative analysis.

Theme (No of comments)	Example of the comments
Confidence (32)	'Substantially increased my confidence in the workplace in the context of being a new consultant joining a well-established senior team'.
Change/problem solving (22)	'I can now confidently formulate strategies to help me achieve my goals'.
Self-awareness (17)	'…gave me insight into the tools I possess myself to change my work and personal life'.
Reflection (16)	'…taught me how to analyse my experiences objectively – reflecting, thinking about things a lot deeper than I usually would.'
Work-life balance (12)	'It has improved my perspective on what I am able to achieve at work and so improved my work-life balance significantly. I feel better able to cope as a result.'
Seeing things in perspective (8)	'…helped me to see my position, behaviour and current options in better perspective'
Career development (7)	'…focused my ideas of where I want to be in the future and how to influence and use the resources open to me now to reach these roles'.
Being listened to/sharing (6)	'I was able to safely discuss a very difficult situation at work'.
General positive (14)	'An immense difference – turned my life around.'
General negative (7)	'…not all problems have a solution'.

Discussion and conclusions

The evaluation described in the report with the support of both quantitative and qualitative methods indicate that the London Deanery coaching programme provides an effective service for their clients. Well-validated measures that were selected for this evaluation project conclusively show that employee engagement, self-efficacy and self-compassion of the participants significantly improved. It could be argued that the measures selected for this project have been sufficient for the purposes of the evaluation. They appropriately reflect the nature of this programme, which is by definition individually focused. However, as the programme is delivered and paid for by public funding the benefits for the individuals have to be meaningful in the context of the added value to the ultimate users: in this context, patients. Therefore, an additional questionnaire, the SWRQ, was developed with a focus on evaluating changes in the context specific to London Deanery coaching clients. The questionnaire allowed unique information to be elicited about the nature of changes that clients identified as the result of the programme related to their place of work and consequently showed improvements particularly to the aspect of self (confidence in their ability). We believe that this questionnaire would be useful for future evaluations and the data collected in this project can be used for developing the scale for further investigations.

In terms of the design of the evaluation needless to say that projects with features of the randomised control study would be easier to defend in the traditional scientific community. However, there are many reasons to expand this position and we propose to consider at least three of them.

The first is simply pragmatic. Considering many issues that constrain the use of RCTs in coaching research (Cavanagh & Grant, 2006; Greif, 2009; Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011), not the least the cost-effectiveness of the evaluation itself, we need to develop research designs that are possible to execute. A more positively formulated reason for creating new measures for evaluating coaching programmes relates to giving more status to the participants according to the nature of coaching itself. Coaching is about valuing the voice of the individual, empowering the person and trusting in his/her ability to make a judgment about the issues that reflect his/her life. Research that actively includes the voice of participants in judging the changes they have experienced is better aligned with coaching than research that treats participants as only capable of answering very simple questions leaving the analysis to an 'objective' researcher.

A third and probably the most important reason for being more daring and creative in searching for new approaches to evaluation is based on the acknowledgement that the outcomes we aim to assess result from the complex interaction of multiple elements in systems with emerging properties. Jones and Corner (2012) recently argued that mentoring should be seen as a case of complex adaptive system (CAS) and their arguments are more than relevant also for coaching. Seeing coaching engagement through this lens brings to the fore many issues that were very difficult to account for in this research. For example, the changes that occurred within the clients are directly and complexly related to their context and it is impossible to isolate all the influences without losing the essence of the process and the layers of meaning for each individual involved. This means that we need to look at research methods that include new ideas different from traditional science because it implies a different view of the world.

In particular we suggest wider use of qualitative methods that can enrich understanding of the effect of coaching. Some of these methods can include, for example, vignettes constructed around actual experiences, by using situations provided by participants before and after coaching. These rich descriptions of actual experiences can be seen as snapshots of the complexity reflected in one particular case without losing the link with its context. We can use the SWRQ for evaluation of coaching programmes as an addition to other methods and an alternative solution when RCT is not possible/appropriate as it includes a self-estimation by the respondents about the extent to which they can attribute each change to the received coaching also without losing the view of the systemic nature of their situations.

We also wish to advocate further building of the theoretical base of coaching by extending evaluation research from the question of effectiveness of coaching to exploring further questions such as the following:

- What elements of coaching in this programme have particularly contributed to positive outcomes?
- Are the changes identified by the clients sustained over a longer period?
- To what type of clients is this programme most suited?
- What difference does the matching process make?
- In what way can the changes identified by the client actually affect their work with patients?

Research into the effect of the coaching programme on a large scale was on the agenda for the London Deanery at the start of this project. Although this could be an important and ambitious undertaking we believe that this current project has provided a positive answer to the question about the effectiveness of the coaching programme on a reasonable scale. In light of these findings we would argue that the questions that aim at improvement of the service which are of a more precise nature, similar to the questions listed above, would be no less important and probably more pertinent for the ultimate stakeholders of the London Deanery's coaching programme.

Acknowledgements

We are deeply grateful to all participants in this study and our advisors from the London Deanery Dr Rebecca Viney and Dr Sue Morgan for constructive feedback at all stages of the project.

The Authors

Dr Tatiana Bachkirova
Faculty of Business,
Oxford Brookes University,
Wheatley Campus,
Oxford, OX33 1HX.
Email: tbachkirova@brookes.ac.uk

Dr Linet Arthur
School of Education,
Oxford Brookes University,
Harcourt Hill,
Oxford, OX2 9AT.
Email: larthur@brookes.ac.uk

Mrs Emma Reading
EROP, 22 Chapel Street,
Wellesbourne,
Warwickshire, CV35 9QU.
Email: emma@erop.co.uk

References

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control.* New York: Freeman.

Baumeister, R.F. (Ed.) (1999). *The self in social psychology.* Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.

Briner, R. (2012) Does coaching work and does anyone really care? *OP Matters, 16*, 4–12.

Cronin, M. & Klimoski, R. (2011). Broadening the view of what constitutes evidence. *Industrial and Organisational Psychology, 4*(1), 57–61.

de Haan, E. & Duckworth, A. (2012). Signalling a new trend in executing coaching outcome research. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 8*(1), 6–19.

Demerouti, E., Bakker, A.B., Janssen, P.P.M. & Schaufeli, W.B. (2001). Burnout and engagement at work as a function of demands and control. *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health, 27*, 279–286.

De Meuse, K, Dai, G. & Lee, R. (2009). Evaluating the effectiveness of executive coaching: beyond ROI? *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 2*(2), 117–134.

Drake, D. (2009). Evidence is a verb: A relational view of knowledge and mastery in coaching. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring, 7*(1), 1–2.

Easton, S. & Van Laar, D. (2013). Evaluation of outcomes and Quality of Working Life in the coaching setting. *The Coaching Psychologist, 9*(2), 71–77.

Ellam-Dyson, V. (2012). Coaching psychology research: Building the evidence, developing awareness. *OP Matters, 16*, 13–16.

Ely, K., Boyce, L., Nelson, J., Zaccaro, S., Hernez-Broome, G. & Whyman, W. (2010). Evaluating leadership coaching: A review and integrated framework. *The Leadership Quarterly, 21*, 585–599.

Fillery-Travis, A. & Lane, D. (2006). Does coaching work or are we asking the wrong question? *International Coaching Psychology Review, 1*(1), 23–36.

Franklin, J. & Doran, J. (2009). Does all coaching enhance objective performance independently evaluated by blind assessors? The importance of the coaching model and content. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 4*, 128–144.

Grant, A. (2013). The efficacy of coaching. In J. Passmore, D. Peterson & T. Freire (Eds.), *The Wiley-Blackwell handbook of the psychology of coaching and mentoring.* Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

Grant, A. (2012). ROI is a poor measure of coaching success: towards a more holistic approach using a well-being and engagement framework. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 5*(2), 74–85.

Grief, S. (2007). Advances in research on coaching outcomes. *International Coaching Psychology Review. 2*(3), 222–245.

Hicks, C. (1998). The randomised controlled trial: A critique. *Nurse Researcher, 6*(1), 19–32.

Howard, K. et al. (1996). Evaluation of psychotherapy: Efficacy, effectiveness, and patient progress. *American Psychologist, 51*, 1059–1064.

Kirkpatrick, D. (1977). Evaluating training programs: Evidence vs. proof. *Training and Development Journal, 31*(11), 9–12.

Kühnel, J., Sonnentag, S. & Westman, M. (2009). Does work engagement increase after a short respite? The role of job involvement as a double-edged sword. *Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology, 82*, 575–594.

Lane, D.A. & Corrie, S. (2006). *The modern scientist-practitioner: A guide to practice in psychology.* London: Routledge.

Lawrence, P. & Whyte, A. (2014). Return on investment in executive coaching: A practical model for measuring ROI in organisations. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 7*(1), 4–17.

Luszczynska, A., Scolz, U. & Schwarzer, R. (2005). The General Self-Efficacy Scale: Multicultural validation studies. *The Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied, 139*(5), 439–457.

Neff, K.D. (2003). Development and validation of a scale to measure self-compassion. *Self and Identity, 2*, 223–250.

Neff, K.D. (2009). The role of self-compassion in development: A healthier way to relate to oneself. *Human Development, 52*, 211–214.

Neff, K.D. & Lamb, L.M. (2009). Self-compassion. In S. Lopez (Ed.), *The encyclopedia of positive psychology.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Neff, K.D. & Vonk, R. (2009). Self-compassion versus global self-esteem: Two different ways of relating to oneself. *Journal of Personality, 77*, 23–50.

Orlinsky, D., Grawe, K. & Parks, B. (1994). Process and outcome in psychotherapy. In A. Bergin & S. Garfield (Eds.), *Handbook of psychotherapy and behavior change* (4th ed.). New York: John Wiley.

Passmore, J. & Fillery-Travis, A. (2011). A critical review of executive coaching research: a decade of progress and whats to come. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 4*(2), 70–88.

Passmore, J. (Ed.) (2008). *Psychometrics in coaching.* London: Kegan Page.

Passmore, J. & Joao Velez, M. (2014). Training evaluation. In K. Kraiger, J. Passmore, A. Dos Santos & S. Malvezzi (Eds.), *The Wiley and Blackwell handbook of the psychology of training, development and performance improvement* (pp.136–153). Chichester: Wiley & Blackwell.

Salanova, M., Agut, S. & Peiró, J.M. (2005). Linking organisational resources and work engagement to employee performance and customer loyalty: The mediation of service climate. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 90*, 1217–1227.

Schaufeli, W.B. & Bakker, A.B. (2004). Job demands, job resources and their relationship with burnout and engagement: A multi-sample study. *Journal of Organisational Behavior, 25*, 293–315.

Schaufeli, W.B., Salanova, M., Gonzalez-Romá. V. & Bakker, A.B. (2002). The measurement of engagement and burnout: A two-sample confirmatory factor analytic approach. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 3*, 71–92.

Scherbaum, C., Cohen-Charash & Kern, M. (2006). Measuring general self-efficacy: A comparison of three measures using item response theory. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 66*(6), 1047–1061.

Schwarzer, R. & Jerusalem, M. (1995). Generalised Self–Efficacy scale. In J. Weinman, S. Wright, & M. Johnston (Eds.), *Measures in health psychology: A users portfolio. Causal and control beliefs.* Windsor, UK: NFER–NELSON.

Stajkovic, A. & Luthans. F. (1998). Self-efficacy and work-related performance: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin, 124*(2), 240–261.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques.* London: Sage.

Tashakkori, A. & Teddli, C. (Eds.) (2010). *Sage handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioural research.* London: Sage.

Theeboom, T., Beersma, B. & van Vianen, A. (2013). Does coaching work? A meta-analysis on the effects of coaching on individual level outcomes in an organisational context. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 9*(1), 1–18.

Williams, B.A. (2010). Perils of evidence-based medicine. *Perspectives on Biology and Medicine, 53*(1), 106–120.

Teachers' experiences of an introductory coaching training workshop in Scotland: An interpretative phenomenological analysis

Margaret Barr & Christian van Nieuwerburgh

Objectives: *This study sought to explore teachers' experiences of a coaching psychology intervention – an introductory coaching training workshop that included a positive psychology intervention and episodes of narrative-collaborative group coaching.*
Design: *A qualitative design was applied to explore the participants' experiences. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was used to analyse the data.*
Method: *The study took place in Scotland, where new professional update procedures require school leaders to use coaching skills. The participants were five teachers who had attended the workshop. Data collection was through semi-structured interviews.*
Results: *Two main themes emerged from the analysis. The first theme, 'Learning with others – the value of collaboration', had two sub-themes: 'Working with a partner made it real' and 'Feeling part of the group'. The second theme, 'Reflection – the value of time to think' had three sub-themes: 'Myself as coach and coachee', 'Coaching and other people', and 'Making plans to start coaching and sharing'.*
Conclusions: *The participants reported that collaborating with others and having time for reflection enhanced their learning. The limitations of the study are discussed and areas for future research are proposed.*
Keywords: *coaching in education; coaching psychology; coaching training; GROW; interpretative phenomenological analysis, narrative-collaborative group coaching; positive psychology, Scotland, teacher.*

> Coaching psychologists would do well to strive to combine the needs for both high impact relevance and academic rigour in their work, thus meeting the call for more *pragmatic* science that genuinely serves the needs of researchers and practitioners while also adding to our knowledge corpus. (Linley & Harrington, 2008, p.52)

THIS STUDY strives to follow Linley and Harrington's advice by addressing the gap in our knowledge about teachers' experiences of taking part in coaching training programmes. Such knowledge is especially relevant for practitioners in Scotland, where the study took place. From August 2014, the General Teaching Council for Scotland's (GTCS) revised system of professional update for teachers (2013) has required all school leaders to use coaching and mentoring to support colleagues with professional review and development (PRD). Therefore it could serve the needs of researchers and practitioners to know more about teachers' experiences of learning how to coach. This study explores five teachers' experiences of an introductory coaching training workshop.

The topic of the study is coaching, at the non-directive end of the directive–non-directive continuum (Pask & Joy, 2007 p.246), and not mentoring which is more directive (Ives, 2008, p.100).

This paper reviews the literature on coaching in education and identifies the need for the study. The method section includes a description of the phenomenon, details of the research design, and the rationale for selecting interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) for data analysis. The results are summarised and discussed, drawing on the literature review and introducing relevant new literature. Limitations of the study are described. The paper concludes by suggesting implications for practitioners, and proposing further research.

Literature review

The review of the literature considers evidence about the benefits of coaching in education. The context of coaching in education in Scotland is then described.

Coaching in education

Coaching in education involves both educators and learners and has been defined by van Nieuwerburgh (2012) as:

> a one-to-one conversation focused on the enhancement of learning and development through increasing self-awareness and a sense of personal responsibility, where the coach facilitates the self-directed learning of the coachee through questioning, active listening, and appropriate challenge in a supportive and encouraging climate. (p.17)

This literature review looks at the coaching of educators only, and not the coaching of learners.

UK guidance on coaching has evolved from definitions of coaching and mentoring (Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education, 2005; Department for Education and Skills, 2003), to advice and resources for practitioners (Creasy & Paterson, 2005; GTCS, 2014a, 2014b; Lofthouse et al., 2010; National College for Teaching and Leadership, 2014; Scottish College for Educational Leadership, 2014). For example, Creasy and Paterson (2005) have advised school leaders 'first develop yourself' (p.23); and Suggett (2006) has commented on the importance of coaching being sponsored by senior leaders (p.13). Lofthouse et al. (2010) have acknowledged that long-term resourcing is required (p.36).

Peer-reviewed research on professional coaching for educators is somewhat limited (Grant et al., 2010, p.153) and three examples are given next. First, evidence has shown that coaching has the capacity to improve learning and teaching, the core business of schools, through peer coaching (Showers & Joyce, 1996, p.15), and through 'instructional coaching' (Knight & van Nieuwerburgh, 2012). The second example relates to a study of high school teachers who were coached using a cognitive behavioural, solution focused framework (Grant, 2003), and the coaching process GROW (Whitmore, 2009, pp.53–57). In this study, Grant et al. (2010) have found that coaching can lead to enhanced self-reported leadership and communication styles (p.162). Third, in a review of research into coaching in education Cornett and Knight (2008) have found evidence that coaching after professional development leads to improvements in implementation rates (p.209).

Increasingly, coaching approaches based on positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) are used in education. Positive education (Green et al., 2012), embracing positive psychology and coaching psychology, aims to use coaching approaches and curricular programmes to enhance resilience, positivity, engagement and meaning. Seligman et al. (2009) have described evidence of its success. Fredrickson (2001) has shown that positive emotions broaden people's thought–action repertoires (p.224), which could be of interest to coaching in education.

In line with broader leadership literature about the power of conversations (Cavanagh, 2013; Jackson & Waldman, 2011), Gross Cheliotes and Flemming Reilly (2010) observe that coaching conversations need not be formal. Referring to the solution-focused nature of coaching, they have pointed out that 'coach-like' conversations have the power to transform school cultures (p.xiii).

Coaching in Scottish education

This research study is set in Scotland, where the 'distinctiveness' of education has been noted (Arnott & Ozga, 2010; Bryce & Humes, 2008; Ozga, 2005; Raffe, 2004). Experiential learning as a form of teacher learning in Scottish schools has increased in prevalence for two reasons. First, HM Inspectorate of Education (2009) have found a reduction in the number of externally-offered professional development courses being offered, caused by budget cuts, requiring schools to find innovative approaches to teacher learning (p.18). Second, there is now an understanding that historic informal teacher learning activities such as collaboration and the 'listening ear' are powerful approaches to teacher development (Forde, 2011, p.18). Therefore, experiential methodologies such as coaching, mentoring, peer-supported learning and professional learning communities have become more widespread. One example is the Flexible Route to Headship (Education Scotland, 2014), a leadership development programme for aspirant head teachers which includes support from a coach who is also head teacher of another school. Exploring the role and experiences of these coaches, Forde et al. (2013) have described their 'multi-faceted role' of coach, mentor, tutor and assessor (p.106).

In his major review of teacher education – *Teaching Scotland's Future* – Donaldson (2010) has recognised the value of flexible approaches to professional learning (p.96). Among its recommendations, the review has established the necessity of a refreshed system of professional review and development (PRD) based on self-evaluation against standards, where it is a professional requirement and an entitlement to engage in career-long learning. The Scottish model of PRD is not a performance review, and is not related to competence and discipline matters. The reviewer (school leader) and the reviewee (teacher) meet to discuss the impact of the teacher's professional learning experiences during the previous year, then plan learning for the next year, building on the teacher's self-evaluation and taking account of their learning aspirations and the priorities of the school improvement plan. From August 2014, the system of Professional Update (GTCS, 2013) requires the reviewer to use coaching and mentoring approaches in this meeting, consistent with the revised Standards for Leadership and Management (GTCS, 2012, pp.12–20). In addition, teachers are required to confirm every five years that they regularly self-evaluate their practice against the professional standards, and engage in ongoing professional learning.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this review of the literature has found an upward trend in the use of coaching in education, and evidence of its benefits. In Scotland, a coaching approach to leadership and management has been embedded in professional standards and professional update, which is likely to lead to an increase in teacher demand for coaching training. However, this review has not found any literature about the individual experiences of teachers who are learning how to coach.

Method

The study is a phenomenological inquiry into five teachers' personal experiences of an introductory coaching training workshop. This section describes the workshop and the sample. The rationale for using IPA for the study is explained. The process for collecting and analysing data is given, and reflexivity is explored.

The phenomenon

The phenomenon was a two-hour introductory coaching training workshop for teachers, covering basic coaching skills and the GROW model (Whitmore, 2009, pp.53–57). In September 2013 the workshop took place seven times to accommodate teachers (both school leaders and unpromoted teachers in mixed groups) taking part in the area's pilot programme for revised PRD procedures, as described in the literature review. Group size ranged from five to 26 people. The workshop facilitator was the researcher.

Stelter et al. (2011) have suggested that narrative-collaborative group coaching could be used by teachers to reflect on professional challenges. The group coaching design of the workshop aimed to encourage collaborative meaning-making about coaching, recognising that the presenter did not have a monopoly on knowledge (Stelter, 2013). Written by the researcher and peer-reviewed by an experienced former colleague, the content included:

- icebreaker to generate positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001);
- coaching definitions and evidence of impact;
- how coaching can be used in PRD meetings;
- a short unrehearsed demonstration, where the facilitator used GROW to coach a volunteer from the group on a real issue;
- practising coaching with a partner;
- planning next steps; and
- invitation to participate in the research project related to this study.

The participants

Eight workshop participants expressed an interest in taking part in the research and were given a letter of invitation and consent form, and the opportunity to ask questions. Of those eight, three chose not to proceed, and five were recruited as participants for the study. Table 1 gives a profile of each participant.

Table 1: The participants in the study.

Participant	Post	Teaching Experience	Promoted Post Experience	Ethnicity	Gender	Coaching Experience
P1	Primary teacher	2 years	–	White Scottish	Female	None
P2	Primary teacher	6 years	–	White Scottish	Female	None
P3	Secondary teacher	6 years	–	White Scottish	Female	None
P4	Primary head teacher	19 years	14 years	White Scottish	Female	Had been coached
P5	Primary head teacher	29 years	18 years	White Scottish	Female	Had used solution–focused approaches in previous school

The choice of IPA for data analysis

IPA aims to explore and understand the meaning of an experience from the participant's point of view (Smith & Osborn, 2004). This matches the intention of the study – to gain a rich idiographic account of the participants' individual experiences. Although social constructionism is relevant – participants were influenced by interactions with others, as they engaged with the group coaching approach – the overriding epistemological position for the research is phenomenological, acknowledging that each participant had a unique and valid perception of the workshop.

First, a qualitative approach was chosen over quantitative. Qualitative research aims to access the participants' world and meanings, while quantitative research takes a realist epistemological position (Coyle, 2007, p.12).

Second, IPA was chosen over other qualitative approaches. Braun and Clarke (2006) note similarities between thematic analysis and IPA (p.83). However, while thematic analysis is descriptive, IPA is highly interpretative. Therefore IPA is more suitable for gaining deep insights into participants' experiences, for example in the studies by Bramley and Eatough (2005); Gyllensten and Palmer (2006); Gyllensten et al. (2010); Timotijevic and Breakwell (2000); and van Nieuwerburgh and Tong (2013). In addition, the study did not intend to direct the analysis towards theory development, as required in grounded theory (Holloway & Todres, 2003).

IPA recognises hermeneutics (Smith et al., 2009, pp.21–29), the skill of interpreting the participant's words and behaviour during the interview. There is a double hermeneutic because, while the participant is interpreting their own experience and putting it into words, the researcher is making their own meaning of the participant's words while attempting to resist influence from their own experiences. To address the risk of bias, emerging themes were repeatedly checked to ensure they were represented in the transcript (Jarman et al., 1997).

Data collection

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data. The researcher met each participant individually, with interview length ranging from 59 minutes to one hour 44 minutes.

In order to give participants the opportunity to tell their own story in their own words (Brocki & Weardon, 2006, pp.90–91), retrieval cues were selected to help them access their episodic memory of their experiences (Tulving & Pearlstone, 1966). They were invited to look at the presentation slides again individually. For each slide they were asked the main question in the interview schedule: *What were you thinking and feeling at that time?*, then given time to think (Kline, 1999) and to reply. There was a potential risk that this set of cues would not help participants' recall, especially if they had encoded the information in a different way (Watkins & Tulving, 1975), for example, through the sights, sounds and smells of the workshop venue. However, since it was not possible to return to the venue, the presentation slides were offered, and participants were given a choice about using them.

After each interview, notes were taken in a journal, reflecting on initial impressions of interaction with the participant (Smith et al., 2009, p.73).

The researcher transcribed each interview, adding non-verbal data about pauses and laughter. The transcript included start and stop times for each interviewee comment, line numbers and page numbers, and wide margins for exploratory comments and thoughts about emergent themes.

Analysis

Analysis – reflective journal. Throughout the analysis, reflective notes were made in a journal. The notes evolved throughout the process, covering the researcher's reaction to thoughts about themes which might be emerging.

Analysis – exploratory comments. While being read and re-read, each transcript was analysed individually (Smith et al., 2009, p.82). Exploratory comments were added on three levels – descriptive comments, linguistic comments, and conceptual coding which was often interrogative (Smith et al., 2009, p.84, p.88).

Analysis – emergent themes. The exploratory comments for the first transcript were reviewed and patterns were explored to compile a list of emergent themes, which were noted on post-it notes on a board to be clustered into provisional superordinate themes and sub-themes. These emergent themes and related quotations were also collated in a spreadsheet, with further reflections. As recommended by Bainger (2011) the script was re-read to ensure that the themes were represented in the transcript, and not a result of the researcher's bias (p.37). Relevant missed quotations or themes were added. Braun and Clarke (2006) advise that themes should 'capture something important in relation to the overall research question' (p.82), so themes were not necessarily dependent on prevalence. A concept map of the participant's provisional superordinate themes and sub-themes was compiled. The above process was repeated for each of the transcripts individually. Cross-references and clusters of themes were sought by examining the five concept maps, the display board and the spreadsheets of quotations, until two superordinate themes and their sub-themes were identified.

The results. Quotations were selected to illustrate the results. The analysis continued during the writing phase (Smith, 1995, p.24).

Ethical principles
Throughout the study, the British Psychological Society's *Code of Ethics and Conduct* (2009) was followed. Ethical approval was granted by the Research Ethics Committee at the University of East London.

Reflexivity
Creswell (2003) stated, 'One cannot escape the personal interpretations brought to qualitative analysis' (p.182). The researcher had previously been a school leader, had written and facilitated the workshop, and would also conduct the interviews. Therefore it was essential to take actions to minimise the effect of bias, congruent with Corrie's (2013) observation that evidence-based practice is most helpful when understood as 'a context for learning and discovery, rather than justification'.

According to the 'simultaneity principle' of appreciative coaching, the act of asking a question effects a change (Clancy & Binkert, 2010, p.15). Therefore, interview questions were neutral. Throughout the study, reflection on conscious and unconscious construction of the data was supported through the use of a reflexive journal, and regular discussions with the researcher's supervisor, checking that analysis was well-founded on the transcripts. After completion of the study, individual meetings with participants confirmed that the findings reflected their experiences. Acknowledging the difficulty of total bracketing of bias, the reflexive journal was maintained until the report was complete.

Results
The results are presented through the themes shown in Table 2.

1. Learning with others – the value of collaboration
All participants commented on the significance of collaborating with other people to make meaning, for example sharing narratives, practising with a partner and learning as a group.

Learning: Working with a partner made it real. All participants reported that working with a partner helped their understanding and consolidated their learning.

> I remember feeling, kind of accomplished after it. …I think until you do

> something, you don't really understand how it's gonna *[sic]* work. (P3: 1403–1465)
>
> Seeing it, you learn about it. But actually doing it yourself, it kind of cements that for you. (P2: 1504–1505)

When practising, participants realised that listening and non-directive questioning give responsibility to the coachee. They saw the coachee accept responsibility and feel confident about the outcome.

> Actually I didn't do anything. I just asked the questions that were there and she did it all. It was quite good to help her to help herself. …She seemed really confident about it after*[wards]*. (P1: 961–964)

Four of the participants reported noticing difficulty with listening attentively to their partner.

> It was really hard being quiet… it was a bit of an eye opener. (P2: 410–412)

One participant experienced a 'critical moment' (de Haan, 2008, p.92) while working with a partner who displayed good listening skills.

> I thought, 'You are not listening!' …So yeah, that made me think. (P5: 1044–1056)
>
> When we changed places… she was very good at listening… didn't interrupt… sort of encouraged me with her body language, but didn't intervene. And I thought, '…I'm learning from you'. (P5: 1064–1071)

Two participants observed that being in a coaching conversation had given them confidence that equality would be respected in PRD conversations with their reviewer. Although previously being doubtful, they found the practice coaching conversation convincing.

> *[before practice session]* I remember being quite doubtful….. Sometimes you feel if it is your boss, they are…more expert than you. (P3: 922–924)
>
> *[after practice session]* Both people in the conversation being equal – I believed that… by then. I didn't really believe it before. Having done it, and experienced the conversation.' (P3: 1587–1598)

Learning: Feeling part of the group. Four of the participants reported enjoying learning as part of a group sharing a goal.

> Because we were… there for the same goal… it was quite nice. (P3: 364–365)

One participant was explicit about the value of collaborating with people from other schools.

> The opportunity to engage with colleagues. And I did like the fact that I didn't know these people. (P4: 1524–1525)

When being interviewed, participants used language illustrating that they had felt part of the group. For example, one participant spoke about the group sharing an insight while they all watched the demonstration.

Table 2: The themes in the coaches' experiences.

Superordinate Theme	Sub-theme
1. Learning with others – the value of collaboration	Learning: Working with a partner made it real Learning: Feeling part of the group
2. Reflection – the value of having time to think	Reflection: Myself as a coach, and myself as a coachee Reflection: Coaching and other people Reflection: Making plans to start coaching and sharing

> Everybody was like 'Ah!'… Once we saw it, we were all… 'I get it now'. (P1: 885–890)

2. Reflection – the value of having time to think

Throughout the workshop, participants thought about what it would be like in future to be a coach, and to be coached. They also began to plan next steps.

Reflection: Myself as coach and coachee. While reflecting during the workshop, participants compared their own behaviour with the coaching skills and processes being discussed. Reflecting on their role as coach, they became aware of their desire to listen more, and to be less directive when working with colleagues and learners.

> What I got out of that night was I actually don't listen. I look as if I'm listening. (P5: 1063–1064).
>
> It also made me a bit more aware of maybe times where I have been more directive in the school, and I maybe shouldn't have been. (P2: 792–795)

Reflecting on their role as coachee, they recognised that they too would benefit from the thinking time they afforded to learners.

> We give the kids thinking time, but we don't give ourselves it. So I think it makes you question it yourself. (P3: 976–978)

When thinking about non-directive questioning using the GROW model, one participant noticed that being given responsibility for the outcome could challenge the coachee.

> When I look at these questions there's no hiding really. It puts a lot of responsibility on you. (P1: 727–729)

However, participants were enthusiastic about having responsibility, and felt encouraged by the non-judgemental approach to concepts of right or wrong.

> But it seemed as if there was no right or wrong answer. It was just what you thought. (P2: 290–291)

One participant noticed the 'fit' between coaching and her own values. Comparing the practice coaching conversation with her experience of previous non-coaching PRD meetings, she experienced an insight about both people in a coaching conversation being equal.

> This fits better with the way I kind of see the world…. We should treat other people the way we would want to be treated. (P2: 533–535).
>
> This idea that what I brought to the conversation was just as important, was really enlightening to me. (P2: 1104–1113)

Reflection: Coaching and other people. During the workshop, participants reflected on links between coaching and other people in school. They related the workshop content to real situations with colleagues and children.

> I couldn't help but relate what you were saying to the situations that I was dealing with in school. (P5: 676–677).
>
> I've been so busy leading, directing and fixing in this school that I haven't used the coaching model at all. (P5: 966–967)

They began to think that goal-setting and non-directive questioning could benefit teachers and learners alike.

> Being allowed to set our own goals… we do that with the children… If you dictate to the children… they are not going to be as motivated. (P4: 864–868)
>
> It started to get me thinking about how this wasn't just for staff…. It's for staff to pupil, or pupil to pupil. (P1: 507–512)

In particular, they identified with the concept that people could use coaching skills and GROW to help one another, reporting that coaching was more supportive and nurturing than the previous model of PRD.

> Coaching's a bit more nurturing. (P2: 217–218).
>
> It was more of a supportive environment than… the previous model. (P3: 1243–1244)

The discussion about using coaching as a support led to participants reflecting more widely about helping others. One participant had mixed feelings, speaking initially about the benefits of collegiality, then later about the difficulty of obtaining support from others.

> Reminded me that we can have a collegiate approach to things. (P3: 441).
>
> Sometimes I thought, actually, it's more quick *[sic]* if you're on your own. (P3: 532)

The concern about accessing support was echoed by another participant who was worried about relying on her line manager's coaching skills.

> Just the worry that, em, the success of this might land on the ability of the other person… (P2: 690–691)

Reflection: Making plans to start coaching and sharing. Participants thought about how they could use coaching skills beyond PRD conversations, for example when target-setting with learners.

> Made me think about the target-setting I do every month with the kids. …the wording that I could use, to make it… more encouraging for them to speak. (P3: 791–796)

They also reflected on how they could introduce coaching when working with current and future colleagues.

> I do have a student *[student teacher]* coming… so I've been thinking about it… in terms of how I can help her. (P1: 1082–1084)

One participant reported feeling an urgency to resume using coaching.

> It's quite a strong tool… one you'd have to practise. That's what I was thinking. 'I need to get back into this, I need to use this.' (P5: 721–723)

Participants with line management responsibilities considered how they could engage with teachers in school, and how coaching skills and GROW could be used with colleagues, parents, and children.

> I remember thinking: this actually would be a good approach to share with the whole staff. So that even if they were working with parents, or a student, *[teacher]*, or having to have possibly an uncomfortable or difficult conversation with someone, …not the least bit confrontational, …win-win situation. (P5: 608–610)

Although overall the participants felt optimistic about their next steps, one participant reported feelings of anxiety about how she would do this.

> By the end of the session I was really positive, really motivated about going back to school… A bit anxious in some respects, if I'm honest…. At the end of it I thought, '…I know it's a learning curve for everybody.' (P4: 1475–1492)

One participant reported that she had started implementing her plans the day after the workshop. She recalled that using GROW with a colleague had resolved a long-standing problem.

> Came in the very next day. Put it in place. Used the GROW model, and it happened. And I'd been struggling with that for months… Because you had demonstrated the GROW model. And I thought, 'Right, I'm doing that tomorrow!' *[laughing]*. (P5: 291–306)

Discussion

The study set out to enable teachers to explain from their own perspective, their experience of an introductory coaching training workshop, where they learned basic coaching skills and GROW, and explored their role as a coach and as a coachee. This discussion compares the findings with the literature review, and introduces further relevant literature. The limitations of the research are identified, and proposals for future research are made.

Because the literature review on coaching in education did not find any literature about teachers' experiences of undertaking a coaching training programme, the results of this study are explored with reference to the research into coaching in education in general.

Definition of coaching. Participants' experiences concur with van Nieuwerburgh's (2012) definition of coaching (p.17). They reported enhanced learning and self-awareness as a result of the one-to-one conversation when practising coaching (P2: '…more aware of… times where I have been…directive in the school, and I maybe shouldn't have been'). They felt supported and challenged by the open questioning and active listening (P3: 'It was more of a supportive environment than… the previous model'; P5: 'She was very good at listening'; P1: 'When I look at these questions there's no hiding really').

GROW for leadership development. Other findings in the study are consistent with the literature described. For example, one participant reported success when using GROW for a colleague's leadership development the day after the workshop (Grant et al., 2010, p.162).

First develop yourself. Creasy and Paterson's (2005) advice to school leaders 'first develop yourself' (p.23) was not followed. Instead, the actions of all participants, whether teachers or school leaders, were congruent with the principles of coaching; they showed interest in *pulling not pushing* coaching through the school (Whybrow & O'Riordan, 2012, p.216). They were keen to move quickly so that the whole school community could learn together (P5: 'a good approach to share with the whole staff'), and could begin embedding 'coach-like' conversations in school (Gross Cheliotes & Flemming Reilly, 2010). The participants who were unpromoted teachers displayed enthusiasm for putting their new knowledge and skills into practice with colleagues and children (P1: 'I do have a student *[student teacher]* coming… so I've been thinking about… how I can help her'), and did not plan to wait until their line managers became skilled. It was clear that the participants who were head teachers would be advocates for coaching, in line with Suggett's (2006) recommendation that coaching is 'sponsored' by senior leaders.

Implementation of coaching. In the workshop section *What action should I take now?* participants were encouraged to coach one another after the workshop ('co-coaching') to work on their plans for coaching, and to increase the chance of implementation (Cornett & Knight, 2008, p.209). The workshop did not devote time to the arrangements. When being interviewed up to four weeks later, none of the participants reported that they had set up a formal arrangement. This raises a question about whether participants would have set up the co-coaching arrangement if this section of the workshop, instead of simple encouragement had used a coaching model that included a maintenance stage, for example GROWTH (Growth Coaching International, n.d.), or Skiffington and Zeus' (2003) four-stage model. Cornett and Knight (2008) state that 'one-shot professional development without coaching follow-up does not lead to wide implementation' (p.209). The participants did say that they planned to continue practising coaching, and they did not express concern about taking small steps. This concurs with Amabile and Kramer's (2011) research into workplace motivation, in which they highlight the importance of small movements towards a goal. Arnold (2014) reports that these 'microresolutions' build confidence because they are more doable, so more likely to be implemented.

Positive psychology, critical moments and insights. The workshop began with a listening exercise intended to illustrate Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (2001, p.219). The findings do not include an explicit link to positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), but we could speculate a link between the positive emotions exercise and participants' later experience of the workshop. During coaching practice, participants experienced 'critical moments' (P5: 'I thought, 'You are not listening!"), defined by de Haan (2008, p.92), as an 'exciting, tense or significant moment' in a coaching conversation. While reflecting outwith the practice coaching session, they also experienced insights (P2: 'This idea… was really enlightening to me'). Colloquially called 'Aha! moments', insights are sudden comprehensions that can result in a new interpretation of a situation and can point to the solution to a problem (Kounios & Beeman, 2009, p.210; Sternberg & Davidson, 1995; van Nieuwerburgh, 2014, p.160). In a study measuring brain activity, Subramaniam et al. (2009) found that participants were more likely to solve problems with insight if they were in a positive mood, than if they were in a neutral or negative mood.

A coaching approach to professional review and development (PRD). The participants responded positively (both as coach and as coachee) to the requirement that school leaders use coaching skills to support professional review and development (GTCS, 2013). They looked forward to the coaching conversation giving them more responsibility for their own learning (P2: 'I loved this idea of equality'). However, they recognised the responsibility (P1: 'When I look at these questions, there's no hiding really'), and they also reported disquiet that their experience of PRD relied on the coaching skills of the reviewer (P2: 'Just the worry that, em, the success of this might land on the ability of the other person'). This concurs with Donaldson's (2010) vision of teachers having a professional requirement to engage in career-long learning, as well as an entitlement.

Wider uses for coaching. The participants also reflected on wider uses for coaching with colleagues or learners (P3: 'Made me think about the target-setting I do every month with the kids… the wording I could use'). Participants did not report thoughts about using coaching to work with colleagues directly for improving teaching and learning, for example instructional coaching (Knight & van Nieuwerburgh, 2012), which had not been covered in the workshop.

Fixer or Multiplier. Throughout the workshop, participants experienced both 'reflection-in-action' (while they completed an action) and 'reflection-on-action' (evaluating past action) (Schön, 1987). When reflecting-on-action, thinking about her behaviour with others in school, one participant became aware of a feature of her behaviour with colleagues; she had chosen to keep 'fixing' and had no time to coach (P5: 'I've been so busy leading, directing and fixing in this school'). Like Reeves' (2010) Fixer, she had stopped giving people the opportunity to struggle with challenging problems (p.52). The workshop led her to believe that a non-directive coaching approach to leadership and management gives responsibility to colleagues who then develop their own problem-solving and analytical skills. To use Reeves' (2010) term, she wanted to revert to being a Multiplier.

Limitations of this study

The study has several limitations and they should be taken into account when interpreting the findings. The researcher designed and facilitated the workshop, designed the interview schedule, invited participation in the study, interviewed the participants, and conducted the analysis. The researcher is also a former head teacher and committed to coaching. First, it is possible that the participants may have consciously or unconsciously emphasised positive experiences over negative because of the positive relationship built up during the workshop. Second, the participants were all volunteers interested in talking about their experience of the workshop, so they may have been unconsciously biased. It is possible that non-volunteers interviewed by a third party would have given different answers. Third, there is a risk that bias affected the collection and analysis of the data, despite attempts to conduct the study scrupulously, including supervisor discussions and reflective journaling. Fourth, the study could not be replicated in exactly the same context. The workshops took place in September 2013 as part of a pilot programme, when teachers were preparing for the introduction of new procedures in August 2014. If the workshop were repeated in Scotland, the new procedures would already be in place.

A further consideration relates to the use of IPA. It was appropriate for interpreting the idiographic accounts of the participants' experiences, which are of interest in themselves, and it does not permit generalisation. Hefferon and Gil-Rodriguez, (2011, p.758) advise that, rather than generalising IPA findings, we consider possible transferability of findings from group to group. However further research is needed.

Implications for practice and for future research

The findings of the study act as a foundation for further research on teachers' experiences of coaching training. The study could also help construct one or more hypotheses for quantitative testing.

Four suggestions are now made which could extend our knowledge. First, a hypothesis could be tested quantitatively – it is hypothesised that participants will experience more insights if the workshop begins with an activity to generate positive emotions. Second, a longitudinal study could look at the extent of implementation following introductory training workshops. The study could compare settings with and without formally-arranged follow-up co-coaching, relating closely to Cornett and Knight's (2008) findings that coaching after professional development led to improved implementation rates. The third suggestion might be of interest to educators attempting to increase access to coaching training for teachers who find attendance at face-to-face workshops difficult because of scarcity of finance or supply teachers. If the workshop were delivered through an alternative model, for example online video conferencing and interactive forums, which helped participants feel they were interacting with other people (Okita et al., 2007), the educators may be interested to know if participants' experiences followed the same themes as those in this study. A mixed method or qualitative study would also reveal any additional experiences that were not manifested in the face-to-face workshop. The fourth suggestion relates to the matter of line manager coaching in the PRD process, which is outwith the scope of this study. Teachers' experiences of coaching training could be explored with specific reference to their context – either as a reviewee who will be coached by their line manager, or as the line manager coach who will conduct the review.

Conclusion

> I remember feeling, kind of accomplished after it. …I think until you do something, you don't really understand how it's gonna *[sic]* work. (P3: 1403–1465)

The study aspired to respond to Linley and Harrington's (2008, p.52) call for more pragmatic science that genuinely serves the needs of researchers and practitioners. It has presented five individuals' experiences of an introductory coaching training workshop. Participants noticed that collaborating with others through practice and shared meaning-making enhanced their learning, which was further enriched by time for reflection. They experienced coaching from both sides of the conversation, and as an observer. Reflecting on their own skills and behaviours, they began to plan their next steps. Further research is needed to build on the findings of this study.

The Authors

Margaret Barr
MSc Coaching Psychology student
at the University of East London.

Dr Christian van Nieuwerburgh
Senior Lecturer in School of Psychology
at the University of East London.

Correspondence

Margaret Barr
Email:
margaretbarr2014@btopenworld.com

References

Amabile, T. & Kramer, S. (2011). *The progress principle: Using small wins to ignite joy, engagement, and creativity at work.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business School.

Arnold, C.L. (2014). *Small move, big change: Using micro-resolutions to transform your life permanently.* New York: Penguin.

Arnott, M.A. & Ozga, J. (2010). Education and nationalism: The discourse of education policy in Scotland. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 31*(3), 335–350.

Bainger, L. (2011). Giving teachers a voice: Using interpretative phenomenological analysis in music education research. *Music Education Research and Innovation, 14*(1), 32–38.

Bramley, N. & Eatough, V. (2005). The experience of living with Parkinson's disease: An interpretative phenomenological analysis case study. *Psychology and Health, 20*(2), 223–235.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101.

British Psychological Society (BPS) (2009). *Code of ethics and conduct: Guidance published by the Ethics Committee of the British Psychological Society.* Leicester: BPS.

Brocki, J.J.M. & Wearden, A.J. (2006). A critical evaluation of the use of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) in health psychology. *Psychology and Health, 21*(1), 87–108.

Bryce, T. & Humes, W. (Eds.) (2008). *Scottish education beyond devolution.* (3rd ed.). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Cavanagh, M. (2013). The coaching engagement in the 21st century: New paradigms for complex times. In S. David, D. Clutterbuck & D. Megginson (Eds.), *Beyond goals: Effective strategies for coaching and mentoring* (pp.151–184). London: Gower Publishing.

Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE) (2005). *National framework for coaching.* London: CUREE.

Clancy, A.L. & Binkert, J. (2010). Appreciative coaching: Pathway to flourishing. In J. Passmore (Ed.), *Excellence in coaching: The industry guide* (2nd ed., pp.147–156). London: Kogan Page.

Cornett, J. & Knight, J. (2008). Research on coaching. In J. Knight (Ed.), *Coaching: Approaches and perspectives* (pp.192–216). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Corrie, S. (2013). *Developing coaching psychology as an evidence-based discipline: Challenges, opportunities and seeking new horizons.* Presentation at 4th European Coaching Psychology Conference in Edinburgh, December. London: Special Group in Coaching Psychology.

Coyle, A. (2007). Introduction to qualitative psychological research. In E. Lyons & A. Coyle (Eds.), *Analysing qualitative data in psychology* (pp.98–115). London: Sage.

Creasy, J. & Paterson, F. (2005). *Leading coaching in schools.* Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

Creswell, J. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative quantitative and mixed methods approaches.* London: Sage.

de Haan, E. (2008). I doubt therefore I coach: Critical moments in coaching practice. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 60*(1), 91–105.

Department for Education and Skills (DfES) (2003). *Sustaining improvement: A suite of modules on coaching, running networks and building capacity.* Nottingham: DfES.

Donaldson, G. (2010). *Teaching Scotland's future: Report of a review of teacher education in Scotland.* Edinburgh: The Scottish Government.

Education Scotland (2014). *Flexible route to Headship Programme.* Retrieved 10 July 2014, from: www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/FRH8_Leaflet_Final_tcm4-826313.pdf

Forde, C. (2011). Approaches to professional learning: Coaching, mentoring and building collaboration. In C. Forde & J. O'Brian (Eds.), *Coaching and mentoring: Developing teachers and leaders.* Edinburgh: Dunedin Academic Press

Forde, C., McMahon, M., Gronn, P. & Martin, M. (2013). Being a leadership development coach: A multi-faceted role. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 41*, 105.

Fredrickson, B.L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology: The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. *American Psychologist, 56*, 218–226.

General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland) (2012). *Revised professional standards.* Edinburgh: GTC Scotland. Retrieved 15 July 2014, from: www.gtcs.org.uk/standards/standards.aspx

General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland) (2013). *Professional update.* Edinburgh: GTC Scotland. Retrieved 15 July 2014, from: www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-development/professional-update.aspx

General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland) (2014a). *Coaching and mentoring.* Edinburgh: GTC Scotland. Retrieved 14 August 2014, from: www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update/coaching-and-mentoring.aspx

General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland) (2014b). *Sharing practice in professional update for employers.* Edinburgh: GTC Scotland. Retrieved 6 August 2014, from: www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update/sharing-practice-in-professional-update.aspx

Grant, A.M., Green, L.S. & Rynsaardt, J. (2010). Developmental coaching for high school teachers: Executive coaching goes to school. *Consulting Psychology Journal, Practice and Research, 62*(3), 151–168.

Green, L.S., Oades, L.G. & Robinson, P. (2012). Positive psychology and coaching psychology. In C.J. van Nieuwerburgh (Ed.), *Coaching in education: Getting better results for students, educators and parents* (pp.115–132). London: Karnac.

Gross Cheliotes, L. & Flemming Reilly, M. (2010). *Coaching conversations: Transforming your school one conversation at a time.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Growth Coaching International (n.d.) *The GROWTH Approach.* Retrieved 18 August 2014, from: www.growthcoaching.com.au/Default.aspx?PageID=3385088&A=SearchResult&SearchID=6376417&ObjectID=3385088&ObjectType=1.

Gyllensten, K. & Palmer, S. (2006). Experiences of coaching and stress in the workplace: An interpretative phenomenological analysis. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 1*(1), 86–98.

Gyllensten, K., Palmer, S., Nilsson, El, Regner, A. M. & Frodi, A. (2010). Experiences of cognitive coaching: A qualitative study. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 5*(2), 98–108.

Hefferon, K. & Gil-Rodriguez, E. (2011). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. *The Psychologist, 24*(10), 754–759.

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) (2009). *Learning together: Improving teaching, improving learning. The roles of continuing professional development, collegiality and chartered teachers in implementing curriculum for excellence.* Livingston, UK: HMIE.

Holloway, I. & Todres, L. (2003). The status of method: Flexibility, consistency and coherence. *Qualitative Research, 3*, 345–357.

Ives, Y. (2008). What is 'coaching'? An exploration of conflicting paradigms. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring, 6*(2), 100–113.

Jackson, P. & Waldman, J. (2011). *Positively speaking: The art of constructive conversation with a solutions focus.* St Albans: The Solutions Focus.

Jarman, M., Smith, J.A. & Walsh, S. (1997). The psychological battle for control: A qualitative study of health care professionals' understandings of the treatment of anorexia nervosa. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology, 7*, 137–152

Kline, N. (1999). *Time to think: listening to ignite the human mind.* London: Cassell.

Knight, J. & van Nieuwerburgh, C.J. (2012). Instructional coaching: A focus on practice. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 5*(2), 1–13.

Kounios, J. & Beeman, M. (2009). The aha! moment: The cognitive neuroscience of insight. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 18*(4), 210–216.

Linley, P.A. & Harrington, S. (2008). Integrating positive psychology and coaching psychology: Shared assumptions and aspirations? In S. Palmer & A. Whybrow (Eds.), *Handbook of coaching psychology: A guide for practitioners.* Hove: Routledge.

Lofthouse, R., Leat, D. & Towler, C. (2010). *Coaching for teaching and learning: A practical guide for schools.* Nottingham: CfBT Education Trust.

National College for Teaching & Leadership (NCT&L) (2014). *Coaching.* Nottingham: NCT&L. Retrieved 14 August 2014, from: www.nationalcollege.org.uk/index/resources/leadingschools/developing-leadership-in-your-school/coaching

Okita, S.Y., Bailenson, J. & Schwartz, D.L. (2007). The mere belief of social interaction improves learning. In D.S. McNamara & J.G. Trafton (Eds.), *The proceedings of the 29th meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (pp.1355–1360). Nashville, Tennessee.

Ozga, J. (2005). Modernising the education workforce: A perspective from Scotland. *Educational Review, 57*(2), 207–219.

Pask, R. & Joy, B. (2007). *Mentoring-coaching: A handbook for education professionals.* Maidenhead: Open University Press/McGraw Hill Education.

Raffe, D. (2004). How distinctive is Scottish education? Five perspectives on distinctiveness. *Scottish Affairs, 49*, 50–72.

Reeves, D.B. (2010). Fixer or Multiplier? *American School Board Journal*, September 2010, 52–53. Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association.

Schön, D.A. (1987). Teaching artistry through reflection-in-action. In *Educating the reflective practitioner: Toward a new design for teaching and learning in the professions* (pp.22–40). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) (2014). *Resources.* Glasgow: SCEL. Retrieved 17 August 2014, from: www.scelscotland.org.uk/professionallearning/resources.asp

Seligman, M.E.P. & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive psychology: An introduction. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 5-14.

Seligman, M.E.P., Ernst, R.M., Gillham, J., Reivich, K. & Linkins, M. (2009). Positive education: Positive psychology and classroom interventions. *Oxford Review of Education, 35*(3), 293–311.

Showers, B. & Joyce, B. (1996). The evolution of peer coaching. *Educational Leadership, 53*(6), 12–16.

Skiffington, S. & Zeus, P. (2003). *Behavioural coaching: How to build sustainable personal and organisational strength.* North Ryde, NSW: McGraw-Hill.

Smith, J.A. (1995). Semi-structured interviewing and qualitative analysis. In J.A. Smith, R. Harre & L. Van Langenhove (Eds.), *Rethinking methods in psychology* (pp.9–26). London: Sage.

Smith, J.A., Flowers, P. & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research.* London: Sage.

Smith, J.A. & Osborn, M. (2004). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In G.M. Breakwell (Ed.), *Doing social psychology research* (pp.229–254). Oxford: BPS Blackwell.

Stelter, R. (2013). *Third generation coaching.* Presentation at 4th European Coaching Psychology Conference in Edinburgh, December. London: Special Group in Coaching Psychology.

Stelter, R., Nielsen, G. & Wikman, J. (2011). Narrative-collaborative group coaching develops social capital – a randomised control trial and further implications of the social impact of the intervention. *Coaching: An International Journal of theory, Research and Practice, 4*(2), 123–137.

Sternberg, R.J. & Davidson, J.E. (Eds.) (1995). *The nature of insight.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Subramaniam, K., Kounios, J., Parrish, T.B. & Jung-Beeman, M. (2009). A brain mechanism for facilitation of insight by positive affect. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience, 21*, 415–432.

Suggett, N. (2006). *Time for coaching.* Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

Timotijevic, L. & Breakwell, G.M. (2000). Migration and threat to identity. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 10*, 355–372.

Tulving, E. & Pearlstone, Z. (1966). Availability versus accessibility of information in memory for words. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior, 5*, 381 391.

van Nieuwerburgh, C.J. (Ed.) (2012). *Coaching in education: Getting better results for students, educators, and parents.* London: Karnac.

van Nieuwerburgh, C.J. (2014). *An introduction to coaching skills: A practical guide.* London: Sage.

van Nieuwerburgh, C.J. & Tong, C. (2013). Exploring the benefits of being a student coach in educational settings: A mixed-method study. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Practice and Research, 6*(1), 5–24.

Watkins, M.J. & Tulving, E. (1975). Episodic memory: When recognition fails. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, 104*, 5–29.

Whitmore, J. (2009). *Coaching for performance: GROWing human potential and purpose: The principles and practice of coaching and leadership* (4th ed.). London: Nicholas Brealey.

Whybrow, A. & O'Riordan, S. (2012). Developing a coaching culture at work. In M. Neenan & S. Palmer (Eds.), *Cognitive behavioural coaching in practice: An evidence-based approach* (pp.203–236). London: Routledge.

Willig, C. (2008). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology: Adventures in theory and method* (2nd ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Report

Special Group in Coaching Psychology News

Dasha Grajfoner

AS WE ARE ENTERING the second half of the year, we have been busy with a variety of activities. Two surveys – one at the last conference in 2014 and one sent out recently – have clearly indicated what you, our members, are expecting from your Special Group. Your views in combination with the British Psychological Society's Strategic Plan have shaped both the strategic plan of the SGCP and our current projects, which include CPD events, developing our Coaching Psychology Research Network, exploring Training and Accreditation routes for Coaching Psychologists and of course organising the 5th European Coaching Psychology Conference.

To begin with I must mention our lineup of CPD events. At the time of publishing this issue of *ICPR*, our 2015 CPD programme is well underway with three workshops having already been delivered in London. The 'Positive psychology and authentic well-being' workshop was presented by Dr Sue Roffey on 30 March, and was a joint offering from the SGCP, the Division of Health Psychology, the Community Psychology Section, and the Social Psychology Section. The 'Essential neuro-linguistic skills for coaching psychologists' workshop was an SGCP offering delivered by Dr Rene Bosman on the 27 May.

The 'Self Composing: A new approach in Leadership coaching', was presented by Dr Ton Voogt on 26 June. Our events team, led by Andy Colville, reports that all workshops up to date were fully attended and were a great success.

The next CPD event coming up is an SGCP and Division of Occupational Psychology shared workshop called 'Overcoming resistance to change using process consultation'. This will be delivered by Chartered Psychologists Hannah Azizollah and Kajal Ruparell on 8 September.

Our final CPD event this year will be the SGCP professional practice workshop on the 26 October, entitled 'Psychological Interventions for a Variety of Contexts: Issues of Design and Implementation' presented by Dr Aneta Tunariu and Professor Rachel Tribe.

These events are open to non-SGCP members and the general public.

An exclusive additional CPD event – a full-day Masterclass – will be run by Dr Suzy Green on positive psychology coaching. The event will take place in December just before the European Conference (for more details and registration please check the sgcp.eu website).

Submissions for our 2016 CPD programme have been received, and our events team are working with the Society's Professional Development Centre to select the workshops representing topics requested by you, our members.

The second activity I would like to highlight is the development of The Coaching Psychology Research Network, which was inaugurated at the 4th International Congress of Coaching Psychology in December last year. The development of the Research Network is important on a number of levels and is consistent with the strategic objectives of the SGCP and the Society more broadly.

The aims of the Research Network are to enable excellence in coaching psychology research through facilitating dialogue and debate; promoting and enhancing awareness of coaching psychology research and practice through the dissemination of results and establishing a community of coaching psychology researchers and practitioners that will stimulate new research interests and ventures. The Research Network also aims to connect people across specialisms and areas of interest, both nationally and internationally, for the purposes of research collaboration.

We are actively recruiting members who have an interest in research matters and strengthening the evidence-base of coaching psychology, so if you would like to be involved in research collaborations please contact our Research Officer, Professor Sarah Corrie, at sarah.corrie@pdf.net.

Following the success of our 10th anniversary conference last year, plans are well afoot for this year's event, entitled 5th European Coaching Psychology Conference: 'Breaking New Ground'. The event will be held over 10–11 December 2015 at the Holiday Inn, Bloomsbury, in London, as the venue proved such a success with our delegates previously. We are inviting submissions of abstracts via our conference website: http://www.sgcp.eu and are particularly interested in submissions that support our conference theme, 'Breaking New Ground'. In addition, we can announce that the streams running across the two days of the conference will be: 'Leadership, Executive and Business Coaching', 'Positive Psychology Coaching (including Resilience)', Tools and Techniques in Coaching Psychology (including CPD and Peer Practice)' and 'Coaching Psychology Research Network (including international collaborations and developments, collaborations between practice and research, and new emerging research and evidence-based practice)'. Conference Co-Chairs David Tee and Michael Webster have managed to organise an exciting line-up of keynote speakers. The information is available on our conference website, so please do visit us, submit your abstract or register for attending the event.

Last but not least, I would like to say thank you to Professor Stephen Palmer, who will be stepping down following 10 volumes as the UK Co-ordinating Editor of *ICPR* after this September 2015 issue.

Stephen has done a stellar job as the Founder and Editor of the *ICPR*. The publication has become highly influential in the field of coaching psychology under his leadership.

The SGCP Committee and I look forward very much to meeting you at our CPD events or in December for what is always a popular, friendly and informative occasion and one of the highlights of the Coaching Psychology calendar.

Dr Dasha Grajfoner
Chair of the Special Group in
Coaching Psychology
Email: sgcpchair@bps.org.uk

Report

Interest Group in Coaching Psychology News

Nic Eddy

IN PREVIOUS REPORTS, I have discussed the Coaching Psychology Interest Group's evolving strategic marketing efforts – moving away from an earlier emphasis on the merits of coaching psychologists and coaching psychology to one of exploring the contribution of psychology to best practice coaching. This inclusive emphasis has allowed us to address more readily the professional development needs of those coaches – psychologists or not – who aspire to best practice coaching, as well as to the needs of those HR practitioners and purchasers of coaching who seek to improve the utility of their coaching programs both in initial coach engagement as well as post-assignment evaluation.

Our most significant activity over the last year has been the International Congress on Coaching Psychology (4th ICCP) held in Melbourne in November 2014. I have previously discussed (see *ICPR* Vol. 10 No. 1 March 2015 pp.111–112) some of our early evaluation of both qualitative feedback and quantitative data collected from the November Congress in exploring whether we had been successful in meeting our more strategic aspirations. Whilst considering how we might improve a next Congress, we also took a moment to pause and notice the professional satisfaction that arises when core processes and factors align:

determining participant needs, design, implementation and evaluation.

The recent APS Industrial and Organisational Psychology (IOP) Conference held in July 2015, Melbourne offered an unexpected opportunity to reflect on how factors such as the Congress underlying purpose, participant needs, program design, and presenter selection and presentation coaching affect the experience and satisfaction of Congress participants as well as presenters.

- By comparison with the relatively focused emphasis on coaching at the 4th ICCP, the IOP Conference was attempting to do justice to a plethora of topics that fall under the umbrella of organisational psychology.
- All presenters at the 4th ICCP were invited and then briefed/coached on presenting effectively to an audience of experienced practitioners. With the IOP Conference, with the exception of keynote presenters, the more common psychology conference approach was adopted with the IOP Conference Scientific Committee seeking submissions from presenters for inclusion in the Conference programme.
- Appealing to a relatively narrow band of coaches who aspire to best practice implies training, maturity and experience. Not surprisingly, it appeared to me that the majority of 4th ICCP participants reflected this experience and were on average, notably older than the far more

diverse IOP participant age range and hence a far greater diversity of individual professional development needs.

Two conferences with differing underlying factors that require very different approaches to conference design.

Can we say which conference design is more effective? As the previous points I think make clear, this is a misleading question without a clear understanding of the particular conference purpose and participant needs.

Considering the challenges facing the IOP Conference Organising Committee provided an excellent lens to reflect that the success of the 4th ICCP was determined easily as much by its particular and necessary organising design as by the subsequent performance of presenters on the day. In appealing to those coaches, those practitioners, seeking to explore the contribution of psychology to best practice coaching then the Congress organisers' approach of inviting all presenters – not just keynote presenters – and briefing them effectively on the specific needs of an audience of experienced practitioners resulted in an excellent platform to deliver the outcome we sought.

A different approach for 2016

The Coaching Psychology Interest Group has conducted a Symposium, or in later years, a Congress every two years since 2004. However, we will be adopting a different approach for 2016. In September next year, the APS will be hosting its 50th Annual Conference and in honour of its half-century, has requested Colleges and Interest Groups not run separate conferences during the year but rather contribute to a mega-conference celebrating psychology in all its forms and applications.

The Coaching Psychology Interest Group National Committee is exploring how we can make a substantial contribution at the APS Annual Conference, and will be adding to this with a series of national 'road shows' in the first seven months of the year. These road shows will add to the ongoing professional development events organised by respective State Committees.

Which leaves me with an excellent opportunity to thank the continuing efforts of my colleagues in Perth, Adelaide, Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane as well as my colleagues on the National Committee.

Cheers.

Nic Eddy
National Convener
Interest Group on Coaching Psychology
Australian Psychological Society
Email: niced@bigpond.net.au

The Docklands Waterfront, Melbourne.

International Coaching Psychology Review – Volume index 2015

Volume 10, No. 1, March 2015

Volume 10, No. 2, September 2015

Notes

4. Online submission process

(1) All manuscripts must be submitted to a Co-ordinating Editor by email to:
Stephen Palmer (UK): s.palmer-1@city.ac.uk
Sandy Gordon (Australia): sandy.gordon@uwa.edu.au

(2) The submission must include the following as separate files:

- Title page consisting of manuscript title, authors' full names and affiliations, name and address for corresponding author.
- Abstract.
- Full manuscript omitting authors' names and affiliations. Figures and tables can be attached separately if necessary.

5. Manuscript requirements

- Contributions must be typed in double spacing with wide margins. All sheets must be numbered.
- Tables should be typed in double spacing, each on a separate page with a self-explanatory title. Tables should be comprehensible without reference to the text. They should be placed at the end of the manuscript with their approximate locations indicated in the text.
- Figures can be included at the end of the document or attached as separate files, carefully labelled in initial capital/lower case lettering with symbols in a form consistent with text use. Unnecessary background patterns, lines and shading should be avoided. Captions should be listed on a separate page. The resolution of digital images must be at least 300 dpi.
- For articles containing original scientific research, a structured abstract of up to 250 words should be included with the headings: Objectives, Design, Methods, Results, Conclusions. Review articles should use these headings: Purpose, Methods, Results, Conclusions.
- Overall, the presentation of papers should conform to the British Psychological Society's Style Guide (available at www.bps.org.uk/publications/publications_home.cfm in PDF format). Non-discriminatory language should be used throughout. Spelling should be Anglicised when appropriate. Text should be concise and written for an international readership of applied psychologists. Sensationalist and unsubstantiated views are discouraged. Abbreviations, acronyms and unfamiliar specialist terms should be explained in the text on first use.
- Particular care should be taken to ensure that references are accurate and complete. Give all journal titles in full. Referencing should follow BPS formats. For example:

  Billington, T. (2000). *Separating, losing and excluding children: Narratives of difference*. London: Routledge/Falmer.

  Elliott, J.G. (2000). Dynamic assessment in educational contexts: Purpose and promise. In C. Lidz & J.G. Elliott (Eds.), *Dynamic assessment: Prevailing models and applications* (pp.713–740). New York: J.A.I. Press.

  Palmer, S. & Whybrow, A. (2006). The coaching psychology movement and its development within the British Psychological Society. *International Coaching Psychology Review 1*(1), 5–11.
- SI units must be used for all measurements, rounded off to practical values if appropriate, with the Imperial equivalent in parentheses.
- In normal circumstances, effect size should be incorporated.
- Authors are requested to avoid the use of sexist language.
- Authors are responsible for acquiring written permission to publish lengthy quotations, illustrations, etc. for which they do not own copyright.

6. Brief reports

These should be limited to 1000 words and may include research studies and theoretical, critical or review comments whose essential contribution can be made briefly. A summary of not more than 50 words should be provided.

7. Publication ethics

BPS Code of Conduct – Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles and Guidelines.
Principles of Publishing – Principle of Publishing.

8. Supplementary data

Supplementary data too extensive for publication may be deposited with the British Library Document Supply Centre. Such material includes numerical data, computer programs, fuller details of case studies and experimental techniques. The material should be submitted to the Editor together with the article, for simultaneous refereeing.

9. Post acceptance

PDF page proofs are sent to authors via email for correction of typesetting but not for rewriting or the introduction of new material. Corrections at this stage in production due to errors made by an author may incur a fee payable by the author or their institution.

10. Copyright

To protect authors and publications against unauthorised reproduction of articles, The British Psychological Society requires copyright to be assigned to itself as publisher, on the express condition that authors may use their own material at any time without permission. On acceptance of a paper, authors will be requested to sign an appropriate assignment of copyright form.

11. Checklist of requirements

- Abstract (100–200 words).
- Title page (include title, authors' names, affiliations, full contact details).
- Full article text (double-spaced with numbered pages and anonymised).
- References (see above). Authors are responsible for bibliographic accuracy and must check every reference in the manuscript and proofread again in the page proofs.
- Tables, figures, captions placed at the end of the article or attached as separate files.

Contents

St Andrews House, 48 Princess Road East, Leicester LE1 7DR, UK
Tel 0116 254 9568 Fax 0116 227 1314 E-mail mail@bps.org.uk www.bps.org.uk

ISSN 1750-2764