

# USING COACHING TO ENHANCE THE LEADERSHIP CAPABILITY OF RETAIL EXECUTIVES

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## Abstract

Coaching has increasingly been used in organisations to develop leadership capability. However, due to a lack of empirical research, very little is actually known about what it is and how it works, resulting often in organisations experiencing difficulties and frustration when they come to use and review its effectiveness. Coaching carries many different definitions, none of which is accepted as 'universal'. This implies that the term is complex. In order to understand coaching more clearly the thesis dedicates a separate chapter to each of the following eight sub-questions:

1. What is understood by the term coaching?
2. What impact does the retail organisation have on the coachee?
3. What are the desirable characteristics of the coachee?
4. What skills does a person need to be able to coach?
5. What does the coach do?
6. What does the coachee experience during a coaching session?
7. What are the outputs from coaching for the organisation and the coachee?
8. How can the organisational sponsors control the quality and consistency of the coaching?

Qualitative research is gathered from coachees in a major UK retailer to suggest four key coaching insights. Firstly the majority of coachees experience a change in their 'self' as a result of their coaching. Secondly coaching is valued highly by coachees as the only opportunity they get to talk about themselves. Thirdly many of the potential benefits from linking coaching to broader theories and philosophies do not appear to be evidenced in this research. Fourthly there is little evidence to suggest there has been any explicit transfer of capability from the coach to the coachee.

The thesis concludes that coaching is a complex that can be used to raise awareness in the multiple elements that constitute the self. In this way

the coachee becomes more conscious of how they interpret events, more considered in choices they reflect, more precise in decisions they make, and more adept at controlling their reactions. Coaching can focus on different dimensions of the self and change in what is done accordingly. For example it can consider past events having similarities to therapy: it can consider current events with a focus on organisational performance and goals, and it can consider the coachee's future potential to influence transformational change with a focus on theories and philosophies. Although changing depending on the element and dimension of self, coaching often involves talking, listening, and reflection to increase understanding.

By focusing on deepening self-awareness, coaching has the potential to create a spiral of self-development. For this to be possible the coachee must prepare for independence from the coaches by taking responsibility for their own development. This is possible by firstly developing their own self-learning mechanisms and secondly by developing a 'life goal' or 'guiding philosophy' capable of igniting an inner drive to carry out these self-learning mechanisms on a continuous basis. The coaching stakeholders are responsible for what coaching achieves. The coach has a responsibility to make the other coaching stakeholders aware of its complexity as well as providing a profound appreciation of its potential. However the need for the coachee to be of the right mindset for coaching (i.e. willing to face themselves and commit to the rigors of intrinsic development) is a vital stakeholder characteristic if it is to be potentially successful. Coaching impacts the coachee's self-awareness, which leads to greater 'self-leadership' capability, which is likely to impact their behaviours and actions and enhance the interpretation they give to others who recognise traits that may attract their followership.

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## CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

### Introduction

Coaching is a popular intervention used extensively in many organisations around the world to develop leadership capability. Despite its extensive use, and rising popularity, very little evidence-based research exists, and as a result it is 'far from simple' (Garvey 2005, p: 1) to describe how well it works in practice. As a result the thesis uses a conceptual framework to organise an approach to understanding coaching, which is grounded in Wilber's (2001) theory of the development of the self. The conceptual framework allows specific elements of coaching to be separated and addressed individually from the different perspectives of the coaching stakeholders (i.e. the coach, the coachee and the organisational sponsors), and facilitates a broad understanding of coaching and its associated complexity. This approach has an impact on the style of the thesis, which has eight individual chapters that each addresses a separate coaching question. The individual chapters along with the sub-questions they address are listed below (fig 1.1). Each chapter begins with a literature review in relation to the sub-question, followed by the relevant empirical evidence creating individual summaries and conclusions.

Figure 1.1. Thesis chapters

- What is understood by the term 'coaching'? (chapter 4)
- What is the effect of working in a retail organisation on the coachee? (Chapter 5)
- What are the desirable characteristics of the coachee? (Chapter 6)
- What skills and competencies are needed to coach? (Chapter 7)
- What does the coach do? (Chapter 8)
- What does the coachee experience during a coaching session? (Chapter 9)
- What are the outputs from coaching for the coachee / the organisation? (Chapter 10)
- How can the organisational sponsors control the quality and consistency of coaching? (Chapter 11)

## *Organisation*

The thesis is organised in the following manner:

The research methodology is described in chapter two that discusses a pilot study to develop a coaching chain, an interview technique and a set of questions to be used during the data-gathering phase. Grounded theory is applied to gather the data, analyse it, and allow a theory about coaching to emerge from the research.

Chapter three deals with the notion of the human sense of 'self', and is divided into two sections. This is important for three key reasons; (i) much of the empirical data makes reference to their sense of self; (ii) the conceptual framework used to understand coaching is grounded in a theory relating to the self, and finally (iii) because the resulting theory relating to coaching's influence on leadership capability is related to a person's sense of self.

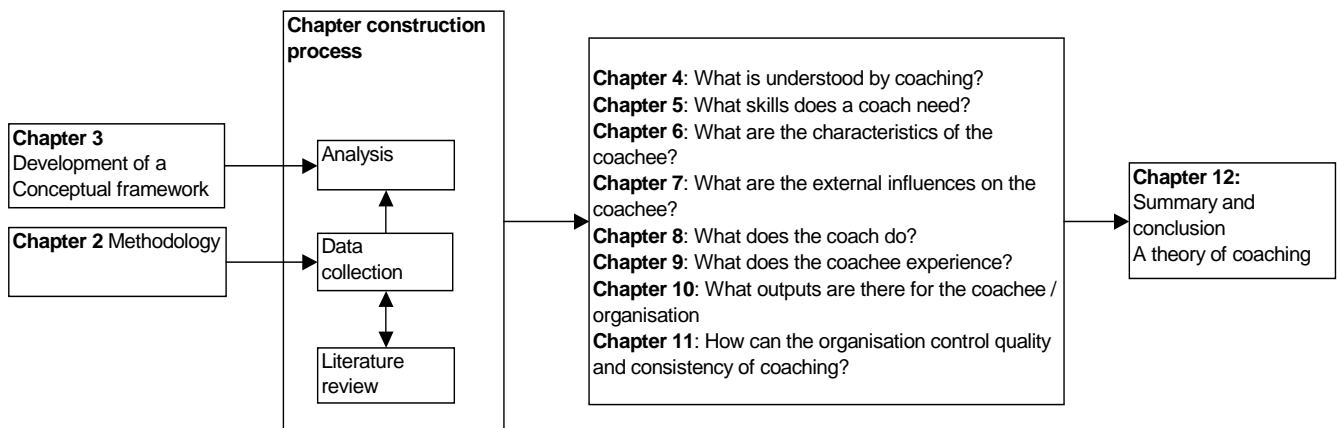
The first section discusses what is understood by the 'self' and suggests that by encouraging 'intrinsic' development (i.e. focusing on actively developing self-awareness) through a range of techniques such as coaching, then there may be an accompanying influence on a person's leadership capability.

The second section grounds each of the individual sections of the 'coaching chain' (developed during the pilot study) in Wilber's (2001) theory about the evolving self. In this way a conceptual framework of coaching is created to both structure the thesis, and provide an 'instrument' to separate complexity and analyse the qualitative data into core categories directly reflecting the thesis sub-questions, and the interests of the various coaching stakeholders. By separating the data in this fashion, the multiple interpretations and complexity associated with the term 'coaching' can be analysed separately, which allows the emergence of an understanding of coaching.

Each of the thesis sub-questions represents a separate element of coaching, which together form the conceptual coaching framework. As a result each of the eight chapters that follow (i.e. chapters four to eleven) can concentrate on different aspects of coaching in turn, considering the literature and research data that apply mostly to it. Chapter 12 forms the summary and conclusion to the thesis drawing together the results of the preceding chapters to suggest a theory of how coaching enhances the executive's leadership capability.

The thesis structure can be shown diagrammatically below in figure 1.2:

Figure 1.2 – the organisation of the thesis



*Background – the rapid growth in the use of coaching in business organisations*

Bennis and Thomas (2002a, p: 3) believe that there has been more change in the world in the last eighty years than in the last millennium, and point to the fact that those who are currently in their thirties have ‘grown up virtual, visual and digital’ (p: x). The business environment of today rarely sees the chief executive as an authoritarian decision maker operating internally, with managers simply ‘maintaining the business machine’ (Goldsmith et al 2000, p: 11). Handy, (1996, p: 23) argues that heightened competition in the global marketplace, price wars, and quality wars are forcing companies to ‘slim down’, and it is this that ‘is causing tremendous changes in the world of work’ (p: 24). Handy (1995 p: 23) quotes an article in the New York Times in 1992 that suggests ‘Microsoft’s only factory asset was the imagination of its workers’, and at the same time Tom Peters proclaims ‘the symbolic end of the industrial revolution’ (cited in Handy 1995 p: 23). Later Handy (1996, p: 24) suggests that ‘managers no longer have to observe the unities of space, time and task’, but instead have to focus on being ‘the motivator and leader of men and women’ (Goldsmith et al 2000, p: 11).

As a result of these changes Handy (1997, p: 190) argues that ‘every individual has to be capable of self-renewal’ and to do so he suggests that people must see learning as a ‘continuing part of life’, and ‘key to’ their ‘success’. Goldsmith et al (2000, p: 10) believe that in this new era ‘leadership is replacing management and learning is replacing instruction, surfacing coaching as the accessible face of strategy’.

*The growth in coaching*

Although ‘coaching has its roots in athletic and performance coaching’, (Peltier 2001, p: 170), it has recently become a ‘popular way for companies to assist and develop talent’ (Peltier 2001, p: xiii). Whitmore (2001, p: 8) suggests that the concept of coaching first started gaining popularity in Tim Gallwey’s book: ‘the inner game of Tennis’ (1986), and describes coaching as

‘unlocking a person’s potential to maximize their own performance’.....by ‘helping them to learn rather than teaching them’. Whitmore (2001, p: 8) points out that although coaching is fairly new to the world of business, and little is really known about it ‘Socrates voiced the same things some 2000 years earlier’.

Nevertheless there has been an ‘explosive growth in coaching in the UK over the last ten years’ (Hardingham 2006, p: 1) in business organisations with many believing it can be ‘extraordinarily powerful’ (Scouler and Linley 2006, p: 11), ‘yielding quantifiable positive output; improved business performance and increased competitive advantage’ (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 27). In a recent survey by the Chartered institute of Personnel and Development (Jarvis 2004 p: 3), 80% of member organisations reported that they were actively trying to build coaching cultures. As it has grown in use however, a number of people have started to question some of the assumptions associated with it, and Jarvis (2004, p: 12) reports that that opinions are now ‘diverging’. This indicative statistic emphasises that coaching is a ‘complex phenomenon’ (Gray 2004, p: 1).

### *Gaps in knowledge*

Whilst there are many literary contributions from well-informed authors and ‘experts’ in the field of coaching, most of them come from a practitioner base, where some ‘occasionally exhort more than they enlighten’ (Peltier 2001, p: xiii). After completing a review on the coaching literature Grant (2003 p: 5) cites Kilburg (1996) to suggest that there is ‘little empirical research validating the efficacy of executive and life coaching’, and makes the point that ‘whilst many thousands of articles on coaching have been published since 1937, very few are ‘academic’ (Grant 2003, p: 5). In summary Grant (2003, p: 13) states that it is clear from this overview of the academic literature that empirical research into coaching is ‘in its infancy and far more systematic and rigorous research is needed’.

This study uses empirical data on coaching from the coachees' perspective, allowing a theory to emerge that is based on the actual experience of having been coached. Obtaining data from coachees is fairly rare in practice because often access for researchers to organisations is difficult to obtain, because many organisations tend to carry out their own coaching research and then often keep their results out of the public domain (Jarvis 2006 p: 98).

### *The research*

A core population of twenty executives, who had all been coached by a variety of coaches coming from six different and unrelated coaching organisations, were interviewed in a single retail organisation case study. Using a semi-structured interview technique, qualitative data was collected and initially sorted in line with the specific areas addressed in the conceptual coaching framework, which is described fully in chapter three. In this way the following elements of coaching were separated out for individual consideration: The definition/comprehension attached to 'coaching': the skills needed to coach: the characteristics of the coachee; the effect of environmental issues on the coachee: the coach's activities during coaching and the effect that has on the coachee; the outputs derived from coaching for both the coachee and the organisation and finally the organisational controls used to manage the quality and consistency of coaching.

In addition to these twenty interviewees, a further seventeen coachees completed coaching questionnaires, and three senior line managers were interviewed for their views on coaching.

### *Definition of terms*

Awareness is described by the oxford English Dictionary as; 'to be on one's guard', to be watchful, vigilant, cautious, informed, and conscious.  
([www.oed.com](http://www.oed.com))

The 'coach' describes the person who delivers the coaching.

The 'coachee' describes the person who is being coached.



The 'organisational sponsors' refer to the people who are responsible for sourcing coaches for use within the organisation, for selecting and matching suitable coachees, for monitoring the quality of what is happening and for reviewing the return on the coaching investment.

'Feedback' is a term used to describe the process in which relevant stakeholders provide their insights on the coachee's behaviours and actions in relation to an activity they have carried out.

'Mind-talk' and 'self-talk' are terms used widely at Tesco to describe a person's inner thoughts and self-dialogue.

'Clearing' or 'verifying' are terms used widely at Tesco referring to a technique to consciously review a person's 'mind-talk' to gauge its accuracy in relation to reality.

Leadership is defined by the research organisation as 'about taking people to places they wouldn't go to on their own, it is about knowing yourself, knowing what you are there for, having a moral compass, and thinking the truth'.

Leadership capability refers to a person's ability to influence others to follow their wishes.

## Conclusions

The thesis concludes that coaching is complex. It can be a theory that explains its use, its potential, how it works, what it affects and how it relates to development. It can be a technique, describing what happens when a coach and a coachee are working together during one session. It can be a mechanism within a set of self-learning mechanisms that generate a steady stream of new information capable of continually deepening an individual's self-awareness. Coaching can have multiple forms, multiple uses and multiple interpretations. It is practiced by a wide variety of people coming from a broad variety of backgrounds that are working in a rapidly evolving and as yet, unregulated market.

The empirical section of the thesis suggests that coaching can have a therapeutic effect on coachees that impacts their sense of self, and raises levels of inner confidence and self-belief. However it is not clear how

sustainable these changes are, as there is little evidence that coachees understand the process by which these outputs are reached, implying that they would be unable to advance through similar issues without the help of their coach. Furthermore, the empirical evidence suggests that many of the core coaching elements described in the literature were very often not being employed. For example the coach's responsibility to transfer capability to the coachee; the need for the coachee to develop self-learning mechanisms; and finally the opportunity for coaching to consider theoretical and philosophical concepts to advance the depth to which a coachee can reflect on their self-development.

In summary the empirical chapters suggest that there is a consistent reference to the impact of coaching on the coachee's sense of self. The conclusion then moves on to consider how coaching can be used to develop self-awareness. It does this by focusing on some of the varying utilities coaching can have, as evidenced in the empirical data (i.e. skills coaching, therapeutic coaching and performance coaching), as well as a theoretic use for coaching (i.e. transformational). In conjunction with the literature a four dimensions of self coaching model is allowed to emerge, that suggests coaching activity varies in relation to these different dimensions of the self.

The model suggests that coaching can help an individual in different dimensions of self, so that it can focus on past events (therapeutic coaching), deal more effectively with present events (performance coaching), as well as being able to consider the coachee's future potential (transformational coaching). Within each dimension, and whatever the type of coaching that is being performed, the thesis suggests that the following core coaching activities exist to help the coachee deepen their understanding of self: Firstly it is argued the coachee needs to understand how self-development happens in order to repeat it independent of the coach: Secondly the coach needs to be careful not to direct the coachee, so that they take full responsibility for their own development: Finally the coachee needs to understand a theoretical framework that can support what is happening during their coaching, and

explains the practical relevance and importance of continually trying to deepen their self-awareness.

The section of the conclusion considers the influence of coaching on the coachee's leadership capability. It begins by emphasising that coaching helps coachees to lead themselves by developing greater depths in their self-awareness, which in turn allows the coachee to apply their knowledge more effectively. It then goes on to suggest that the potential outcomes from coaching and the sustainability of these outcomes are related to the depth of understanding the coaching stakeholders have about the coaching complex. At its most profound, the thesis argues that coaching can help the coachee take full responsibility for their own self-development, so that self-learning opportunities are seized as often as possible to continually deepen self-awareness. It argues that where there is a meaningful and rationale objective (e.g. such as a life goal, a guiding philosophy, or a personal and meaningful rationale) then the drive to learn can be self-motivated creating ever-greater self-awareness accompanied indirectly by a 'spiral' of self-development. Where this is the case, the coachee may become aware of both intrinsic changes (e.g. sense of being more in control of one's life, as well as greater self-esteem), and extrinsic changes that are interpreted by others who sense greater authenticity in the coachee/executive/leader. It is argued that as coaching deepens a person's self awareness, they become more capable to lead themselves, which in turn makes what they do, what they say, and how they behave more in harmony with their true essence. It is likely that others interpret this growth in self-leadership capability in ways that make the coachee/executive/leader more attractive to follow. The implication here is that the effect of coaching is to indirectly enhance an executive's leadership capability.

Finally the thesis stresses the role of each of the coaching stakeholders to the potential outputs that coaching can provide, whilst singling out the mindset of the coachee as being a particularly vital element, arguing that without the right levels of willingness, courage and motivation to face the challenges required for intrinsic analysis, then coaching is unlikely to be successful.

## CHAPTER TWO

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

This chapter describes the thesis methodology. It outlines the methods used to generate a source of reliable and accurate qualitative data, which is then used to develop the subsequent theory about coaching that helps to understanding how it enhances the leadership capability of retail executives.

The thesis methodology follows a grounded theory, and is divided into three sections. The first part considers how the data is gathered, beginning with an account of how a suitable retail organisation was selected for research. It then considers a previous pilot study that facilitated the emergence and visualisation of coaching as a set of separate but interlinked events along a 'chain'. The results of the pilot study was used to generate both a framework of questions to use, as well as to suggest a semi-structured interview format as the most appropriate way of generating coaching data. This section then turns to consider how the interviewer was able to empower the coachee to lead, so that key coaching issues could be surfaced openly and willingly from the interviewees' depths.

The second section considers how a framework developed from both the pilot interviews (the coaching chain) and Wilber's (2001) theory of the development of the self (see chapter three; 'Development of a conceptual framework to analyse coaching'), are used to analyse the coaching data by categorising it according to the stage the coaching is at, what is being done, and the interests of the key stakeholders at that point.

The final section considers the writing up and presentation of the data in the thesis.

## The research objective

The objective for the empirical element of the project was to obtain data on coaching from one large retail organisation that could then be used to generate a theory capable of providing a greater insight and understanding on the mechanisms and processes associated with coaching when it is used to enhance the leadership capability of a retail executive. This is an important objective because the 'academic base for coaching is thin' (e-mail correspondence from Professor Bob Garvey, Sheffield Hallam University, 2005), and because it is often only those who practice coaching who contribute to the literature base (e.g. Whitmore 2001 p: 3, Downey 2003, Peltier 2001 p:xiii, Goldsmith et al 2000, Clutterbuck 2004b). Additionally, the wish to focus on a retail organisation comes firstly because they 'continue to be in rapid structural transformation' (Dawson 2000a, p: 119) are 'unlike other more traditional forms of organisations in that they are often 'spatially disaggregated and networked' (Dawson 2001b, p:12), and amongst many operating challenges also have to 'keep systems simple, to motivate large numbers of store-level staff and .... to know what is going on at store level' (Dawson, 2000, p: 128).

The data generated from the coachee base is designed to provide an awareness of coaching 'from the inside out', which might be markedly different to the more prevalent consideration of coaching 'from the outside in' (i.e. the practitioners' perspective). The collection of data from coachees has the potential to provide insight and generate discussions in an area of coaching where much less is known or commented on in the existing literature base.

## Focus, parameters and limitations of the research

There are various different approaches to research that could have been used in the thesis, such as those described by Blaikie (2000, 100-127), namely: (i) inductive, where the aim is to establish universal generalisations; (ii)

deductive, where the aim is to test theories to eliminate false ones; (iii) retroductive, where the aim is to discover underlying mechanisms to explain observed regularities, and finally (iv) abductive, where the aim is to describe and understand social life in terms of the 'actors' motives and accounts'.

The aim of the thesis is to try to understand and make sense of what experiences the coachees have had from their coaching. To do this a conceptual framework of coaching is created to 'unpack' its complexity and allow it to be seen as a series of separate and individual elements. Empirical evidence can then be collected to ground a theory about coaching that can be used to explain what it does. As a result the 'abductive' strategy is best suited because it can provide a 'social scientific account and the potential for a grounded explanation' (Blaikie 2000, p: 100).

Other research approaches were ruled out because the thesis does not aim to 'produce generalisations' (inductive), 'deduce hypotheses' (deductive) or 'construct a hypothetical model of a mechanism' (Blaikie 2000, p: 101). A phenomenological approach would have been unsuitable as it would not be possible to 'measure objectively any aspect of human behaviour', nor would it be possible to 'produce factual data' that could then be used towards producing or checking 'causal explanations' (Haralambas et al 2000, p: 18).

The research strategy is constrained by two key resources, firstly finding and then being granted access to a large enough retail organisation, with a suitable population of senior managers and directors who have had exposure to coaching; and secondly the researcher's own limitations of time and financial capability to travel throughout the country to conduct interviews, and collect the data. As a direct result the empirical data is gathered from coachees working in a single large retail organisation.

### Grounded theory

Strauss and Corbin, (1998, pps: 10-11) describe qualitative research as a technique 'that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or

other means of quantification'. As a 'non-mathematic process of interpretation' (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p:11), it is a very suitable form of research to investigate coaching because it helps the researcher to 'understand behaviour patterns' (Gordon and Langmaid, 1988, p: 6) that relate to 'phenomena such as feelings, thought processes and emotions that are difficult to extract or learn about through more conventional research methods' (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p:11).

Glaser and Strauss (1967, p: 2) suggest that grounded theory can be used by a qualitative researcher as an approach which allows the 'discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research'. They go on to argue (p: 4) that 'theory based on data can usually not be completely refuted by more data or replaced by another theory'. As a result 'it is too intimately linked to data, (and) it is destined to last despite its inevitable modification and reformulation'. In other words, grounded theory is a method where data collection and analysis then allow the eventual emergence of a theory 'inductively from a corpus of data' (Borgatti 1996, p: 1), which can be used to 'offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide to action' (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p:12).

One of the main advantages associated with grounded theory is its simplicity, such that the researcher does not have to be a 'genius' (Glaser, 1967, p: 11), to follow a set of steps whose careful execution is thought to "guarantee" a good theory as the outcome (Borgatti, 1996, p: 1). However Strauss and Corbin, (1998, p:11-12) do argue that there are three major components associated with the use of grounded theory as an approach to qualitative research, each of which will be discussed in turn with reference to the research project:

1. Gathering the data (which can come from various sources such as interviews, observations, documents, records, and films),
2. Analysing the data (which considers the processes used by the researcher to organise and interpret the data, for example 'coding' the data to group together common themes and concepts)

3. Writing up the analysis for example in scientific journals.

### *Gathering the data*

Data for this research came from a single retail organisation case study, using semi-structured interviews as a collection method. The following section considers the research design before moving to the data-gathering phase.

#### *Research design*

The following is a description outlining how the research approach was designed and considers the following issues: how a suitable organisation was sourced; how the topics for the interview questions were reached; the emergence of a 'coaching chain' highlighting separate coaching stages relevant to different stakeholder accountabilities; the development of categories of coaching questions and the use of a semi-structured interview technique.

*Sourcing an organisation.* In order to find a suitable single case study, and interview a representative population of coachees, a range of large UK retailers were written to such as The House of Fraser, Boots the Chemist, Arcadia, Iceland, Alpha retail, Marks and Spencer and the West Bromwich building society, although in the majority of cases, responses received '*regretted that there were insufficient resources available*' to enable the necessary supervision of a research project.

Previous contact with Tesco past and present main board directors including David Malpas (past Managing Director), Mike Wemms (past Retail Director) and David Reid (past Finance Director, now the current Chairman) facilitated an initial contact with this Company. David Reid, Chairman of Tesco Plc (see appendix 1) in early 2005, recommended the research project to the Group Personnel Director, Clare Chapman, and from then, a fairly lengthy process involving numerous interviews, phone-calls, project proposals (see appendix 2) and meetings followed. After almost nine months, permission was granted to interview up to a maximum of twenty-five retail executives ranging in



seniority<sup>1</sup>, function, and global location. When permission was granted I set about communicating with the prospective interviewees to arrange interview dates and times (see appendix 3).

Tesco represents an ideal research organisation for the following reasons; firstly that it is a globally dispersed retail organisation, which is in ascendency; secondly it employs a wide variety of coaching organisations (e.g. MROI, YSC, Full Potential, Trilogy and 'Executive coach'), which provided a rich variety of different coaching approaches and techniques and; thirdly it has been using coaching for a number of years, and has built up a sufficiency of coachees at senior level, and in various parts of the organisation who have a view on coaching; and finally it is an organisation that the researcher has an internal knowledge of culture, operation and personnel, having worked there for ten years between 1986 and 1996. (This 'insider experience' allowed the interviewer to quickly generate rapport and to empathise with interviewees, rapidly grasp complexities associated with the organisation's culture, business operations, personalities and language, and appeal to the interviewees to willingly surface coaching related issues, confident that they would be understood, appreciated, and importantly, kept in confidence).

*Designing interview questions.* A previous work assignment in which the researcher had had involvement in occurred between 2001 and 2003 with the UK retailer Marks and Spencer. During 2005, whilst waiting for Tesco to clarify the access procedures for interviews on its personnel, a group of Marks and Spencer coachees were approached in order to 'test out' a set of coaching questions (see figure 2.1 below) and a questionnaire using Lickert type scales, designed to gather strength of feeling related to some key coaching variables. During six months of 2005 twenty semi-structured interviews were conducted, each lasting approximately one hour, which were recorded and then transcribed. This resulted in the emergence of a 'coaching chain' (see figure 2.2), which brought around an appreciation that 'coaching' embodied a series of stages, all of which had a potential impact on outcomes,

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<sup>1</sup> The research population within Tesco ranged from executives in work level 3' (senior managers) to 'work level 5' (senior Directors).

and each of which had a separate set of stakeholder responsibilities and accountabilities. With this awareness, a new and more comprehensive set of interview questions was designed to target each of these stages (see figure 2.3). Finally the decision was taken to dispense with the questionnaire (detailed in figure 2.1 below) as it was felt to restrict and limit coachee responses and be an ineffective tool to develop an in-depth understanding of coaching.

Figure 2.1: Marks and Spencer semi-structured interview approach

<p><b><u>Before the coaching begins</u></b>            Did you ask to be coached?            What was your / other stakeholders level of involvement?            Were you involved in the sourcing of your coach?            What expectations did you have at the outset?</p>	<p><b><u>During the coaching</u></b>            What has been the value of the coaching?            How would you describe successful coaching?            How can you measure it?            Who's benefiting?            What happens during the coaching?            What makes a good coach?</p>	<p><b><u>After the coaching</u></b>            What was the value?            Who benefits?            What can a coach talk about to the line manager?            What advice would you give someone about to be coached Is there anything I haven't asked you that you'd like to tell me about?</p>
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Figure 2.1 (continued)

TOPIC	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<i>Culture:</i> Coaching is seen positively Coaching should be earned not given My boss should have been coached themselves					
<b>Matching</b> Coaches should be external I should be involved in the selection process An internal 'mentor' would be just as effective					
<i>Skills:</i> The coach should have training in psychoanalysis The coach should have done a similar job to me The coach needs to have worked in my industry					
<i>Location;</i> Coaching should be done privately in a place without interruption Coaching can be done remotely					
<i>Measurement:</i> Coaching can be easily measured					
<i>Duration</i> The number of sessions I had was perfect Each coaching session should be a maximum of two hours Limited to six sessions Should be as many as needed					
<i>Communication</i> Line manager / HRM has a right to regular updates from coach					
<i>Client</i> The coachee is the client The coachee's line manger is the client					

The Marks and Spencer executives interviewed were not inhibited in providing feedback following their 'interviews' due to already having developed an in-depth professional relationship with the researcher. However, as a result of this, it was not felt appropriate that any specific data generated from this exercise could be used directly in the empirical sample, but it was able to provide insight and guidance relating to the approach adopted in subsequent interviews at Tesco.

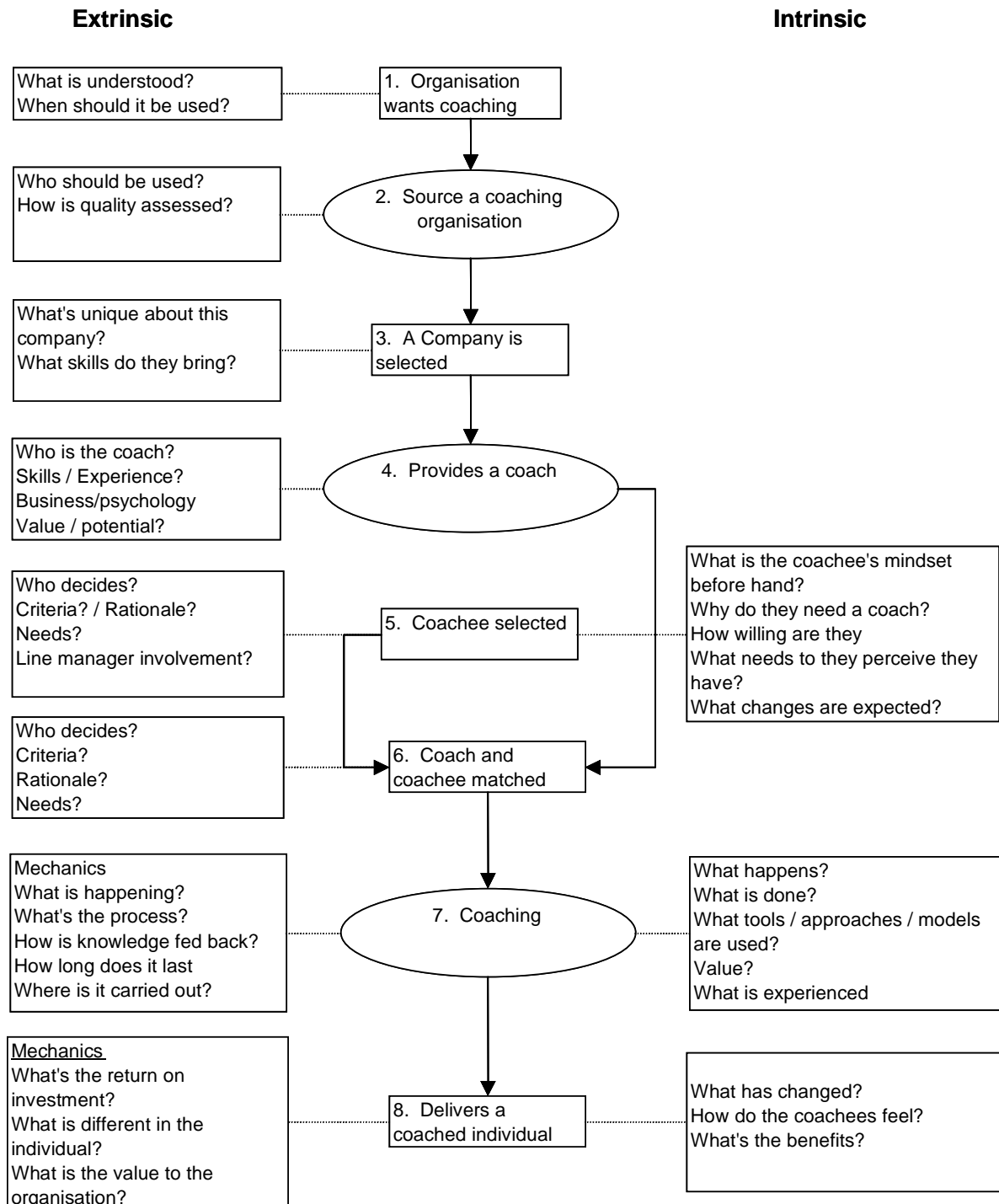
*The emergence of the 'coaching chain'.* The Marks and Spencer pilot interviews were very useful and provided two key insights. Firstly, a 'coaching chain' (shown diagrammatically in figure 2.2 below) emerged to show that coaching was made up of a set of separate but interlinked events with different coaching stakeholder interests and accountabilities. As a result of the coaching chain, it became clear that the original set of questions were limited and restricting. This was firstly because they tended to concentrate too heavily on the coach and the business sponsor, and secondly because they did not allow the coachee to express their views and then to have those views subsequently probed.

The coaching chain (figure 2.2) depicts a series of decisions that run consecutively through eight stages. For example the beginning stage considers all the decisions that might lead to a coaching session occurring. As a result, the key stakeholders involved are likely to be the organisational sponsors and the coaching company representatives, considering 'start up' questions (e.g. what can coaching do for us? Who should be coached? Which coaching company should be used? Etc). Implicit to the chain metaphor is that each decision is only as good as the quality of the preceding decision-making that has already taken place.

The coaching chain suggests that many of the questions relating to coaching focus on external 'mechanical' considerations (such as which coaching company will be used, how many sessions will be provided, where those sessions will occur etc) as well as 'internal' considerations that relate primarily

to how the coachee is feeling at each stage of the process, and what is done during a coaching session.

Figure 2.2: The coaching chain



*Developing categories of coaching questions.* The coaching chain highlights the different views between different coaching stakeholders. As a result it serves as an 'aide memoire' during interviews so that data generated is more representative, and takes these views into consideration.

Figure 2.3 below, groups possible interview questions together that relate to eight separate but interlinked stages that emerge from the coaching chain, prompting the researcher to consider the views and interests of different coaching stakeholders at different points in time.

Figure 2.3. Possible coaching questions relating to eight stages of coaching.

1. Understanding of coaching

- What do you understand by the term coaching?
- What is it supposed to do?
- How does it work?

2. The coach

- What background characteristics should a coach have?
- When you met your coach what were your first impressions?
- What impressed you most / least?
- What gave them credibility?
- What skills and background did your coach have?
- What skills and background should a coach have?
- What criteria are important for your coach to be successful?

3. The coachee

- What were your thoughts about getting coaching?
- How did you feel on the first morning just before your first coaching session?
- Why did you think you needed a coach?
- At the outset how willing were you to be coached?

#### 4. What the coach does

- What were your expectations of what the coach would do?
- What did the coaching set out to do?
- What distinguished their approach?
- How did the coaching work?
- What was the use of tools and models?
- What use of goal setting occurred?
- What criteria are important in order for coaching to be successful?

#### 5. The coachee's experience of coaching (intangible senses)

- Can you give me an example of the sort of issues you might have discussed with your coach, and then what happened? What was the conclusion?
- What did you find most valuable?
- What happened to you?
- Could you describe how you felt at the end of each coaching session?
- Is there anything else you think I should know?

#### 6. Outputs for the coachee

- In summary what was the value of the coaching?
- How has the coaching affected you?
- What have you learnt?
- Now that the coach is gone, what do you do when you have a problem/issue?
- Would you recommend it?
- Do you still keep in touch with your coach?

#### 7. Outputs for the organisation

- What's the value of coaching for the organisation?

#### 8. Organisational issues

- What are the benefits of having a coach?
- How involved should you be in coach selection and matching?
- Where should coaching take place? (Workplace, office, off site, by phone / e-mail, combination?)
- How long should a coaching session / assignment last?
- What should the organisational sponsors / line manager be told about your coaching?
- What criteria are important for coaching to be successful?

The questions in figure 2.3 above are examples of those that could be used in an interview, and emerge as a result of considering the views of various coaching stakeholders at different points in time during a coaching assignment.

*Semi-structured interviews.* Previously, prior to the pilot interviews, the researcher had considered combining both a qualitative and quantitative section (see figure 2.1 above) to provide a rich body of data for analysis purposes. However leading with a set of questions at the start of the interview and then following up with a questionnaire at the end that required interviewees to indicate their strength of feeling to certain comments about coaching, often 'closed out' the coachee's willingness to talk candidly about their coaching experiences, and created the impression that the interviewer was 'expert'. This became clear when interviewees were asked for their feedback on their interview, as often they suggested there was always a preconceived agenda that controlled the content and direction of what they said during the interview.



Later pilot interviews were more semi-structured in format, and worked best when the interviewer began very informally, allowing the interviewee to take the lead from the start, and empowering them to suggest the coaching-related areas that they wanted to talk about. In this way the interviewer was released from the self-imposed position of having to lead the interviews and allowed to listen actively, follow concepts, regularly check understanding, question and probe for greater depth on issues reported by the interviewees. By the end of the pilot phase, interviews were deliberately allowed to 'unfold' and evolve dependent on the interviewee's own agenda. The difference here is that the interviewer would refer only to the categories of coaching (relating to the different stages) near the end of the interview, using it more as a 'checklist' rather than a rigid plan to follow through the course of the interview.

Pilot interviews conducted at Marks and Spencer suggested that a semi-structured interview format would be the most appropriate data gathering technique as it could provide the interviewer with both a framework of areas to be explored, whilst providing the opportunity for the interviewee to take the lead in an interview, moving discussions to areas of their own choosing, and potentially revealing issues that may have remained hidden otherwise.

#### *Data gathering at Tesco*

Authorisation was agreed in November 2005, to proceed with the interviews on the Tesco executives, as soon as Christmas and New Year had passed, in the early part of 2006.

*Interviews.* Interviews were conducted with 20 employees between Tesco 'work level three' and 'work level five'<sup>2</sup>. The interviewees' job roles differed, ranging from buying, project management, personnel, store operations, and estate maintenance, as well as their location between Tesco's two main offices at Cheshunt and Welwyn Garden City and then throughout some of their UK wide store base.

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<sup>2</sup> Tesco have a common 'ranking' language to describe a person's seniority within the company. For example work level 3 is equivalent to a senior manager, work level 4 is commonly a first appointment Director role, and work level 5 is a senior Director, one position below Main Board participation.

Most of the interviewees had received coaching within the previous two years, and as a result their experience of coaching differed considerably, ranging from just two sessions for one person, to another senior interviewee who had had various coaching every six to eight weeks for the previous four years.

Coachees had been exposed to a range of different coaches, coming from a core base of five external companies (MROI, YSC, Full potential, Trilogy and Executive coach), as well as some coachees who had had one of three 'internal'<sup>3</sup> Tesco coaches.

On average interviews lasted approximately one hour. Attempts were made to conduct interviews in a quiet and private area to encourage openness, and enable clearer recordings to be made for transcription purposes, although on occasions this was not always possible. A maximum of two interviews were carried out per day, so that the interviewer could be as attentive and focused as possible, to allow conversations to be encouraged in areas that could provide greatest depth and understanding, to encourage interviewees to be open and to ensure that they lead the discussions.

Each interview began with an outline of the independence of the interviewer, as a researcher at Edinburgh University, explaining the thesis objective to construct an empirically based study into the role of coaching, and to explain that there was a lack of evidence based knowledge in this area in relation to a burgeoning supply of practitioner based knowledge.

It was made clear that all interviews would be recorded, transcribed, and then independent quotes maybe used in a PhD thesis, where identities would be withheld from potential readers (for more detail, see appendix 5 for a full list of interviewees' job titles along with their assigned interviewee number that appears in the empirical sections later). Permission was sought from each interviewee prior to the interview starting, as well as offering up the

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<sup>3</sup> These are people who are specifically trained by Tesco to work in part as coaches to organisational personnel.

opportunity to ask any relevant questions. The interviewer's university card was then provided so that any potential contact that the interviewee wanted could be made subsequently.

Interviews were begun openly by asking the interviewee for their thoughts on their experience of coaching. This allowed the interviewee to take immediate control of the interview, relax, and talk freely about any aspect of coaching that they felt was important and relevant. By regularly summarising what was being said, the interviewees felt that they were being listened to, as well as helping them to reflect on what they had said. The interviewer attempted to allow the interviewee to choose topics of conversation and then to describe their experiences as deeply as they felt comfortable to do. This was achieved often by the use of 'open' style questions that sought to continually reveal a greater understanding of what was being described. This style of questioning encouraged the interviewee to pause and think before responding. In this way, the interviewee was encouraged to continually lead throughout the whole interview. The interviewer's role would occasionally note which parts of the coaching chain the interviewee had addressed.

By allowing the interviewee to lead the interviews, by encouraging an open dialogue, and by being able to quickly acknowledge not just the subject matter being discussed, but also to show an appreciation of the inner knowledge of the organisation, its leadership hierarchy, personalities, environments, business needs and market activity, the interviewer was most often able to rapidly develop rapport and empathy with the interviewee. As a result of this, interviewees were often able to open up quickly and share confidences associated with their coaching, talking about what had happened during sessions, what had been discussed, and often providing specific examples to exemplify issues that had been resolved.

On average the one-hour interview was able to produce a great deal of data relating to a variety of issues in the different areas highlighted on the coaching chain. The key point here, is that by encouraging the coachee to take the lead during the interview, subjects raised were random, but still enabled the

interviewer to check for any omissions by reviewing them against the coaching chain directly during the last few minutes of the interview. In general, these omissions most often referred to the categories of questions relating to the external stakeholders (e.g. decisions relating to sourcing the coaching organisations used etc), which were very unlikely to be mentioned without direct prompting from the interviewer at the end.

*Reflections.* The semi-structured interview process using probing and open questions allowed information relating to coaching to ‘unfold’ gradually, with ever-more profound insights evolving throughout the one-hour session. Through the use of reflection following interviews it became clear that a willingness within the interviewee to divulge confidential coaching experiences was made easier where the interviewer had experience of retail organisations and more specifically possessed a strong working knowledge of the Tesco culture and senior personalities. On reflection the interview technique closely resembled a coaching session because core-coaching skills (e.g. active listening, summarising and asking open questions) were used extensively to encourage the interviewee to talk freely about themselves and about their experiences, whilst at the same time building trust, openness and rapport

*Questionnaires.* In addition to the twenty in-depth semi-structured interviews that were carried out in the Spring of 2006, a further 29 questionnaires were received in the Autumn of 2006. These questionnaires (that are detailed in appendix 4), were directed at the same population that had been interviewed as well as seventeen other individuals at similar work levels.

The questionnaires were created in conjunction with Tesco coaching sponsors in the learning and leadership department, and were as a result focused primarily on attempting to understand business benefits and value from the investment in coaching using Lickert type scales that could then convert easily to a graphical analysis. Additionally there was opportunity made to allow coachees to write responses to open questions referring to

what they thought of their coaching, the overall experience, and the value it added.

### *Analysis using grounded theory*

Strauss and Corbin, (1998, p:13) describes the analysis stage as an 'interplay between researchers and data', arguing that it can be 'both a science and art'. They argue that it is science in the sense that it maintains 'a certain degree of rigor' where the analysis is 'grounded in the data', and it is art, because 'creativity manifests itself in the ability of researchers to aptly name categories, ask stimulating questions, make comparisons, and extract an innovative integrated realistic scheme from masses of unorganised raw data'.

Mason (1996, p; 162) suggests that 'the analysis of qualitative data is not an easy task, and the construction of explanations needs to be done with rigour, with care, and with a great deal of intellectual and strategic thinking'. Allan and Skinner (1991. p:181) suggest that the researcher must 'remain receptive to the new issues and undercurrents emerging in the study'. They go on to suggest (p: 185) that there is 'surprisingly very little information on how to analyse qualitative data', arguing the data is 'more fluid and less clearly delineated than is usual in quantitative work'.

Borgatti (1996, pps: 1-2) argues that the basic idea of the grounded theory approach is 'to read (and re-read) a textual database (such as a corpus of field notes) and "discover" or label variables (called categories, concepts and properties) and their interrelationships'. Borgatti (1996 pps: 1-2) goes on to suggest that by labelling variables (often known as 'coding'), grounded theorists are trying to make 'implicit belief systems explicit'. Coding allows the researcher a way of 'identifying, naming, categorizing and describing phenomena found in the text' (Borgatti 1996, p: 2), so that each section from different texts can be grouped together, allowing new meanings to emerge and be understood.

It has already been shown that the questions used during the semi-structured interviews relate to the coaching chain. As a result, a primary stage in the analysis process begins by assigning interviewee responses within the categories of the questions being asked. For example when an interviewee talks about the number of coaching sessions they had, the answer automatically is placed in the 'organisational controls' section and so on. Further secondary analysis is then required after this initial categorisation to the position within the coaching chain. Where possible 'particular episodes of action/speech' are 'stripped' out and put 'into their essential component elements' (Allan and Skinner 1991 p: 186), which includes items such as thoughts, feelings, experiences, observations etc.

After transcribing interviews, Microsoft 'word' is used firstly to classify responses into their primary categories, related to the coaching chain, and then to place similar 'component elements' together, using the copy and paste facility, so that a picture begins to emerge of how strongly different concepts, experiences, views etc are shared amongst the interviewee population, where overlaps appear, or where new understandings begin to emerge.

#### *Reliability and accuracy*

Mason (1996, p: 145) argues that 'conventional measures of reliability are more comfortably associated with quantitative research where standardised 'research instruments' are used than they are with qualitative research'. As a result Mason (1996, p: 146) suggests that data coming from qualitative research needs to be 'thorough, careful, honest and accurate'. Where the data source can reliably be shown to reflect the phenomenon that is to be investigated, then the reliability and accuracy of the generated data and subsequent analysis relies on the 'research instrument' used. For qualitative data gathering that uses interviews, the research tool could refer to the interviewer, the interview technique and to the questions asked.

Allan and Skinner, (1991 p: 182) warn that 'the perspective a researcher brings to the research' can have an influence on 'the resultant 'findings''. Kvale (1996, p: 33) suggests that the interviewer should be careful not to have

'preformulated questions and ready-made categories for analysis', so that they remain alert and 'open to new and unexpected phenomena'. To do this Kvale (1996, p: 33) suggests that the interviewer should be 'critically conscious' of their own 'presuppositions', so that they 'lead the subject toward certain themes, but not to certain opinions about those themes' (p: 34). Hertz (1997, p: xi) suggests that it is a 'struggle' to work out how to present the author's self while simultaneously writing the respondents' accounts and representing their selves'. It is argued that the voice 'has multiple dimensions', in that there is the author's own voice, then there are the 'voices of one's respondents', and potentially a third dimension when 'the self is the subject of the inquiry'. Rubin and Rubin (1995, p: 166) suggest that 'periodic self-evaluation is useful', not only to catch any mistakes that the interviewer is making, but also to focus on the things that are being done well. Lee (1993, p: 117) advocates the use of an interview diary for the interviewer to fill in to 'become aware of their behaviour' during the interview, so that they can reflect after the interview is completed, and make changes if necessary. In summary Arksey and Knight (1999, p: 40) suggest that the interviewer who is 'self aware' is more likely to 'do the job well'.

It has already been shown that a set of coaching questions has evolved from a pilot study and a coaching chain, reflecting the viewpoints of coaching stakeholders at eight different stages. These eight stages of coaching are further grounded in the theory of the development of the self (Wilber 2001) which is discussed in the following chapter: 'chapter 3; development of a conceptual framework to analyse coaching', so that a conceptual framework is created to enable firstly a focus for questions to be used during the semi-structured interviews and secondly to organise the resulting data, to analyse it and to structure the writing up of the thesis.

#### *Explanation of the structure and progression of the thesis*

The writing up phase differs markedly to other traditional forms of thesis, in that there are eight individual chapters considering each of the separate stages within the coaching chain (see figure 2.4. below). Each of these

chapters begins with a literature review, and then considers the empirical evidence before finishing with summaries and conclusions.

Figure 2.4: The titles of each of the eight chapters that reflect the separate stages within the coaching chain.

Figure 2.4. Thesis chapters

- What is understood by the term 'coaching'? (Chapter 4)
- What is the effect of working in a retail organisation on the coachee? (Chapter 5)
- What are the desirable characteristics of a coachee? (Chapter 6)
- What skills and competencies are needed to coach? (Chapter 7)
- What does the coach do during a coaching assignment? (Chapter 8)
- What does the coachee experience during a coaching assignment? (Chapter 9)
- What are the outputs from coaching for the coachee / the organisation? (Chapter 10)
- How can the organisational sponsors control the quality and consistency of coaching? (Chapter 11)

Prior to these literature and empirical chapters the thesis includes a chapter on the human self (chapter three). This chapter discusses what is understood by the 'self', suggesting it is a complex subject, but that it may be possible and advantageous to seek to develop it. This discussion is necessary for three key reasons; firstly because section two of this chapter goes on to use Wilber's (2001) theory of development of the self to ground the coaching chain: secondly because the empirical data reviewed in chapters four to eleven consistently refer to the self and finally because the concluding theory that emerges following the analysis of the empirical data suggests there is a



relationship between the development of self and a rise in leadership capability.

This chapter has described a pilot process leading to the emergence of the eight different stages of coaching and the role of different stakeholders highlighted in the coaching chain. It has then argued in favour of using a semi-structured interview technique to empower the interviewee to lead the discussions, and to enable the interviewer to probe, listen, question and understand a depth that would be less likely to access during a more structured interview.

## CHAPTER THREE

### UNDERSTANDING THE 'SELF' TO GROUND THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

#### Introduction

This chapter focuses on the concept of the human 'self'. Understanding this concept is important for the following three reasons: (1) The 'self' is frequently referred to in the empirical data; (2) a theory relating to the developing self is used to ground the conceptual framework of coaching (developed in the previous chapter), and (3) the resulting coaching theory that emerges from the empirical data has at its core the concept of developing awareness of the self.

This chapter is split into two sections. The first section discusses what is understood about the self, concluding that it can have multiple elements and dimensions that have the potential to 'develop' throughout a lifetime. The section concludes that although the concept of the human 'self' is complex, it may be desirable for individuals in leadership positions to actively seek to understand their selves more consciously. This is because the greater their level of self awareness, the more control they have on how they behave in response to events they experience (e.g. in terms of consciously considering their decision making processes, emotions, choices etc). The second section focuses on Wilber's (2001) theory of the developing self to ground the conceptual coaching framework developed in the previous chapter.

#### Section one: A discussion of the 'self'

The following section discusses what is understood by the self and then considers how developing self-awareness may impact a person's leadership capability.

### *What is the 'self'?*

Ferrucci (1982, p: 60) argues that the self is 'the factor differentiating each one of us from other human beings....providing us with a sense of 'I-ness' and therefore allowing each to become an individual'. However Tolle (2005b, p: 27) points out that whilst 'the word 'I'' (meaning my 'self') is 'one of the most frequently used words in the English language', it is 'also one of the most misleading'. The English dictionary describes the self as a 'set of someone's characteristics, such as 'personality' and 'ability', which are not physical and make that person different from other people'<sup>4</sup>. This definition suggests that there could be multiple 'elements' that make up the self even though until relatively recently it was supposed that thinking alone was all that made up the self, and absolute proof of being, as encapsulated in Descartes' famous dictum 'I think, therefore I am' (cited in Tolle 2005b, p: 54). Tolle (2005b, p: 55) goes on to highlight that it was the existentialist philosopher, Jean-Paul Sartre who challenged this assumption, suggesting that 'the consciousness that says 'I am' is not the consciousness that thinks'. The author explains that 'when you are aware that you are thinking, that awareness is not part of thinking, arguing that it is 'a different dimension of consciousness' (p: 55). Similarly Einstein (cited in Tolle 2005b, p: 28) refers to this when he suggested that the ego (i.e. conscious thoughts) was just 'an optical illusion of consciousness' implying that there are perhaps many other elements that make up a person's sense of self.

#### *Nature or nurture?*

Handy (2006, p: 7) questions 'whether we have a core identity that is sitting there in our inner self, waiting to be revealed, or whether our true identity only evolves over time'. He continues to question whether leaders are born or made, concluding 'the truth, as in most things, is probably a bit of both'. Some elements of self then, such as those outlined above may relate more to the 'core identity sitting there in the inner self'. However, it might be that as a

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<sup>4</sup> <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/define.asp?key=71329&dict=CALD>

person 'evolves over time' then the experiences they have and the lessons they learn may add to that person's sense of self.

### *Multiple elements of the self*

These elements that make up the self could include thoughts, emotions, mind, feelings, values, beliefs, strengths, weaknesses, ego, goals, aims, purpose, potential etc. Some of these elements may be conscious to the individual, whereas other elements may not be. The key point here is that taken together they make up a person's specific identity, and it is through this that a person interprets and responds to the majority of events in their lives. Some of these elements of the self are examined below to demonstrate this point.

#### *The Mind*

Tolle (2005a, p: 84) suggests that 'most humans are still in the grip of the egoic mode of consciousness; identified with their mind and run by their mind'. Tolle (2005b, p: 129) argues that the mind often has 'a life of its own', and as a result most people are 'possessed by thought', even though 'thinking is no more than a tiny aspect of the totality of consciousness' (p: 130). Fine (2006, p: 27) recommends that the brain should 'never' be trusted because it can 'manipulate' perception. She argues that this is done to 'protect' the ego from reality (p: 22), arguing that if any information challenges the mind's self esteem, it is subjected to 'close, critical and almost inevitably dismissive scrutiny' (p; 90). Fine suggests that often 'biases' can 'lead us astray to a surprising degree' (p: 61), and argues that the 'unconscious' has a power over an individual that can never be fully revealed (p: 137). In summary Fine (2006, p: 165) suggests that the mind can 'unobtrusively mastermind our behaviour and sense of being'.

Csikszentmihalyi (2002, p: 169) argues that the mind can revert to a state of negative 'entropy' if un-tasked, which means that it automatically defaults to 'negative thoughts' when there is no focus elsewhere, which can eventually influence a person's mood, actions and behaviours. Tolle (2005a, p: 75) suggests that the mind may be prone to 'delve into the past' and if it does will

find that 'it becomes a bottomless pit' to the detriment of the present'. Goleman (2005, p: 227) suggests that traumatic experiences from the past can have 'enduring and pervasive effects in adulthood', and can 'intrude on awareness' (p: 201). Reflecting on past issues can induce a range of emotions mirroring the event being remembered such as guilt, regret, resentment, grievance, sadness, and bitterness, all of which can influence mood, actions, behaviours etc.

Tolle (2005a, p: 49) suggests that 'the mind creates an obsession with the future as an escape from the unsatisfactory present'. He argues that some people believe that by acquiring more they will become 'fulfilled', and so focus on 'becoming, achieving and attaining'. Gallwey (1986, p: 125) argues that this is a paradox, as the mind is choosing to divert conscious energy away from the present, which he describes as the 'only time when any action can occur'.

### *Feelings and Emotions*

Stone and Dillehunt (1978, p: 5) argue that a person's sense of self extends beyond just 'thoughts', that 'feelings and actions' are just as important. Similarly Goleman (2005, p: 8) suggests that human beings have two minds, 'one that thinks and one that feels'. He goes on to suggest that the 'emotional areas are intertwined via myriad connecting circuits to all parts of the neocortex' (p: 12), and stresses the 'immense power to influence the functioning of the rest of the brain' (p: 12). Goleman (2005, p: 6) argues that emotions (described as 'impulses to act') provide human beings with 'instant plans for handling life', so that when events happen; often the reaction is triggered by an emotionally led response. Justifying this he argues that the emotional brain has been a feature of human evolution for a long time and can 'overpower, or even paralyse the thinking brain' (p: 78). For example Fine (2006, p: 39) suggests that emotions can create 'instant gut feelings' that can 'add a gloss of their own, colouring and confusing our opinions' (Fine, 2006, p: 165). Similarly Goleman (2005, p: 79) argues emotions can often 'sabotage attempts to pay attention to what ever other task is at hand'. In short 'our emotions enjoy an impressive mastery of us' (Fine 2006, p: 33).

'Fine (2006, p: 165) highlights the fact that emotions can often operate in the subconscious 'concealing from us many of the true influences on our thoughts and deeds'. Tolle (2005b, p: 136) suggests that some negative emotions have the power to 'disrupt the energy flow through the body (e.g. affecting the heart, the immune system, digestion etc). Downey (2003, p: 42) suggests that many people have a sense of inner 'fear and doubt' relating to many issues, all of which can 'become self-fulfilling prophecies', capable of 'propelling' people 'toward the very disaster they predict' (Goleman, 2005, p: 84), often making them 'confused' or even 'hysterical' (Ferrucci, 1982, p: 96) in the process.

Emotions can 'impede the intellect' (Goleman 2005, p: 86), and 'overwhelm all other thought' (Goleman, 2005, p: 79). Ferrucci (1982, p: 43) argues that to 'encourage growth' a person needs to 'investigate' their 'unconscious', that he describes as 'that part of us which is not immediately accessible to our awareness' (p: 36). He goes on to argue (p: 43) that if people are not aware of their 'unconscious part' then it can remain 'a source of trouble, storing up repressed energy, controlling our actions and robbing us of our freedom'. Similarly, Goleman (2005, p: 43) argues that people need to be able to understand their emotions so that they can manage them, or they will be 'at their mercy'. This is important for the leader who often has to 'set the emotional standard' and 'moulds others' emotional reactions' (Goleman et al 2002, p: 9). There is nothing new about managing emotions. Plato (cited in Goleman 2005, p: 56) talked about 'withstanding the emotional storms': the ancient Greeks valued a 'tempered balance and wisdom' (termed 'Sophrosyne'): and the Romans valued 'the restraining of emotional excess' (termed 'temperantia'). Goleman (2005, p: 259) argues that the 'ingredients of emotional intelligence' are 'self-awareness; identifying, expressing and managing feelings; impulse control, delaying gratification and handling stress and anxiety'. Goleman et al (2002, p: 33), argue that when a person's 'emotional centre' is understood then they can be 'accepted' (Ferrucci 1982, p: 115), and can be 'depersonalised' so that they 'no longer occupy the forefront of' ones 'consciousness' (Tolle, 2005b, p: 117).

### *The Ego*

The ego is a person's sense of self at an early stage of development. A person who is 'egocentric' is likely to 'think selfishly only' about themselves (Wilber 2001, p: 165). When a person has a sense of self at an early stage of development then they are likely to demonstrate certain characteristics. Fine (2006, p: 166) suggests that the ego 'is 'ever-changing, fluidly adapting itself to our circumstances and moods and the petulant demands of self-esteem'. Tolle (2005b, p: 45) argues that the ego 'tends to equate having with being', 'lives through comparison' so that 'its sense of self-worth is in most cases bound up with the worth you have in the eyes of others'. This may make it difficult for the ego to 'open up', particularly about traumatic experiences, where often 'unconscious defences remain' that keep someone's 'guard up' (Peck 1987, p: 67), even though paradoxically they would feel an 'immense' 'sense of relief and freedom' if they did so (Drummond, 2005, p:15). Tolle (2005a, p: 37) suggests that the ego is a 'derived sense of self' that 'needs to identify with external things' such as 'possessions, the work that one does, social status and recognition, knowledge and education, physical appearance, special abilities, relationships, personal and family history etc'. The ego's needs are 'endless' (p: 39) and have an 'endless preoccupation with past and future and an unwillingness to acknowledge the present' (p: 40). As a result, Tolle (2005a, p: 40) suggests the ego is 'trapped in time' where living is 'almost exclusively through memory and anticipation'. Tolle (2005a, p: 41) makes the point that the 'more you are focused on time – past and future – the more you miss the now'.

### *Values, beliefs, strengths, weaknesses, etc*

Other elements of self include their values, beliefs, strengths and weaknesses, all of which may be at various levels of consciousness. Peck (1987, p: 95) suggests that 'we humans seldom go into any situation without preconceptions' and as a result it is 'seldom' possible to have 'an open (and empty) mind'. Preconceptions he argues are often more 'unconscious than conscious', and manifest as 'judgements we make about people without any experience of them' (p: 96).

Stone and Dillehunt (1978, p: xiii) imply that these various elements of the self are likely to impact one another suggesting for example that 'there is no thinking without feeling and no feeling without thinking'. Goleman (2005, p: 90) suggests that how people think about themselves can have an influence on outcomes, and cites research suggesting that 'peoples' beliefs about their abilities have a profound effect on those abilities'.

The key point of this discussion is to emphasise that both unconscious and conscious elements of a person's self may influence their interpretation and subsequent reaction to everyday events. Where elements of the self are acting unconsciously, then the individual is unable to prevent the influence that is exerted.

### *Multiple dimensions of the self*

The above discussion emphasises the layers of complexity to the elements of the self and the interrelationship they all have with one another. Considering the Johari windows model can provide a useful technique to categorise this complexity into different 'boxes'. The model is in the form of a matrix describing different areas of the self by comparing what one person knows about their own self against what other people know about them. In this way the model allows a different dimension of the self to be conceptualised in each box as shown below in figure 3.1:



Figure 3.1. The Johari Windows

	We know this about you	We don't know this about you
I know this about myself	1.	2.
I don't know this about myself	3.	4.

Box number	Description
Box 1.	<p><i>'I know this about myself &amp; we know this about you'</i></p> <p>This dimension of the self includes all the conscious knowledge that the individual has that they are prepared to share openly in the public domain. The greater the level of knowledge in this box in relation to the knowledge held in the other boxes, the greater the individual's self awareness.</p>
Box 2.	<p><i>'I know this about myself &amp; we don't know this about you'</i></p> <p>This box suggests there are times when the individual is thinking one thing but not letting it be known in the public domain (e.g. failing to raise an important issue at a meeting). It implies that in this case there is a difference between the public self and the private self.</p>

Box 3.	<p><i>'I don't know this about me and we know this about you'</i></p> <p>This dimension of the self is how others perceive the individual, as judged in reference to their actions, emotions, behaviours etc that they exhibit to others. Asking stakeholders for 'feedback' can provide knowledge that allows the individual to consider how their intentions were actually perceived, which helps to correct and confirm how the individual perceives him or herself.</p>
Box 4.	<p><i>'I don't know this about me and we don't know this about you'</i></p> <p>The aspects of the self that are contained in box 4 are all of the 'unknown possibilities' associated with a person's untapped potential. To gain self-knowledge here implies that a person must move out of their 'comfort zones', take some 'risks' and test themselves in new, varied and different environments. Plato (cited in Peck 1987, p: 66) urges people to do this, arguing that: 'the life which is unexamined is not worth living'.</p>

### *Developing the self*

The Johari windows imply that the conscious elements of the self (box 1) can be rise as an individual becomes more self aware. Similarly Wilber's theory of the development of self (2001), suggests that the human self is an 'evolution of consciousness' (p: 125) that develops from the moment of birth, with the potential to rise through a set of stages ranging from 'matter to body to mind to soul to spirit' (p: 125). Wilber (2001, p: 135) emphasises that the development process is a 'very fluid and flowing affair' that can slow down at any point (p: 140) or even stop (p: 136). Conceptualising the self as having multiple dimensions through the Johari Windows suggests that in support of Wilber's (2001) theory, it may be possible to take actions to grow or develop

the self. (This theory is expanded and discussed in section two of this chapter to ground the conceptual framework).

### *Developing self-awareness*

The Johari Windows model highlights that some areas of self are conscious and other areas of self are unconscious. The following section considers the advantages associated with developing consciousness of self, and considers some of the techniques that can be used to do this.

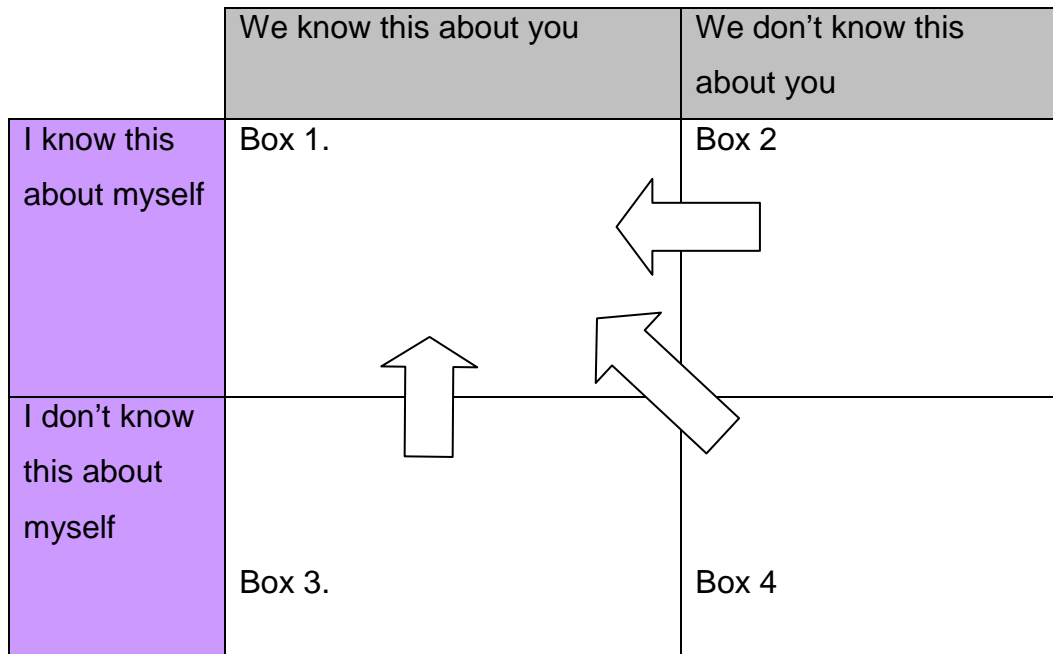
Wilber (2001, p: 84) argues that 'surfaces can be seen' whereas 'depths must be interpreted', and that it is important to understand this so that by doing so 'the less it will baffle...perplex or pain' the individual'. Wilber (2001) argues that a person's sense of self grows in line with the evolution of their consciousness, and that as the process 'unfolds' at each level of awareness (p: 132), the individual's views change and they are accompanied by 'a different view of self and of others' (p: 132). Tolle (2005b, p: 193) argues that 'knowing yourself is being yourself' and Peck (1987, p: 68) suggests that when 'you are free to be you', the individual can 'discard defences, masks, disguises' and 'free to become your whole'. Goleman (2005, p: 120) argues that some people have a 'capacity to be true, as the saying has it, 'to thine own self''. When the individual acts from within, they will accept the outcome 'whatever is the consequence of their actions, no matter what the social consequences', others will describe that individual as having 'integrity' (Wilber, 2001, p: 101), and followers will recognise 'authenticity' (Morgan et al, 2005, p: 90). Wilber (2001, p: 101) suggests that others will get the sense 'that the person wont lie' to them, 'because they haven't lied to themselves'. Duane Raymond (cited in McConnell (2001, p: 152) suggests being true to oneself 'helps maintain purpose and dignity, aligns work with one's values, clarifies what ones stands for and helps maintain self-confidence'. Drummond (2005, p: 67) suggests that the 'safest thing to be is yourself', emphasising that the 'open and honest course of pinning your colours to the mast is always the most satisfying and successful one'. Tolle (2005b, p: 108) emphasises that a people are at their 'most powerful, most effective', when they are 'completely' themselves. He argues that when someone is not playing roles

there 'is no self (ego) in what is done. There is no secondary agenda; protection or strengthening of the self', and as a result the individual can be 'totally focused on the situation'. Csikszentmihalyi (2002, p: 19) suggests that people should learn 'to become independent from the dictates of the body' and learn 'to take charge of what happens in the mind'. Gallwey (1986, p: 126) reasons that as everyone experiences life through one's consciousness, it stands to reason that 'every heightening of consciousness enables one to appreciate more fully the experiences which life offers'.

Peck (1987, p: 53) highlights that most psychologists and theologians agree that everyone must discover 'the uniqueness of their individuality' arguing that it is 'the goal of human development' to 'become fully ourselves'. Carl Jung (cited in Peck, 1987, p: 54), describes this process as 'individuation' suggesting that those who fail to individuate can never fully 'separate' from family, tribe or caste', arguing that even in old age 'most' are still figuratively 'tied to the apron strings' of their 'parents and culture'. As a result 'we go with the crowd....we never truly learn to think for ourselves, or dare to be out of step with the stereotypes'. In summary Peck (1987, p: 54) argues that failing to individuate is a 'failure to grow up', and that people should 'attempt, as best they can, to be captains of their ships' if not 'masters of their destiny'. Ferrucci (1982, p: 108) suggests that people who individuate 'away from conformity' often find that it is accompanied by 'an increase in mental freedom and power'. Similarly Peck, (1987, p: 74) suggests that often as a person's awareness of self grows, it is accompanied by a sense of inner 'peace', which Ferrucci (1982, p: 164) likens to the feeling of 'joy' which he suggests could just indicate a person is fulfilling their 'ideal purpose at any given moment'.

It may be possible to reflect this process of individuation by using the Johari Windows model as shown in the diagram 3.2 below. Here, efforts are taken to develop consciousness in each of the boxes (2 – 4) shown by the use of arrows indicating that as this happens, box 1 grows and the others shrink.

Figure 3.2. – Growing consciousness to ‘individuate’ within the Johari Windows:

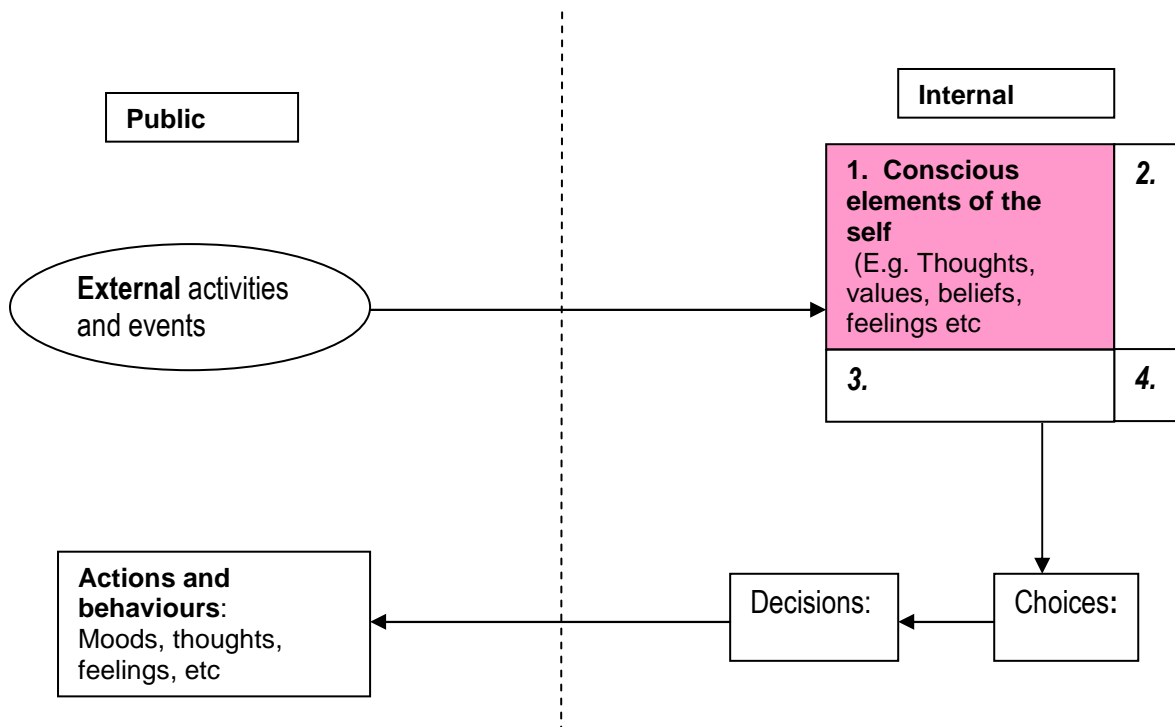


This discussion suggests that each element of self has the power to influence the interpretation and subsequent reaction to everyday events and experiences that occur. The more these elements of self perform this role without the individual being conscious of them, the less control that individual has firstly to the moods, thoughts, feelings etc that influence decisions in the ‘internal domain of the self’, and secondly the actions and behaviours that manifest as their reaction to those events in the ‘external domain’. Whitmore (2001, p: 28) summarises this arguing; ‘I am able to control only that which I am aware of. That which I am unaware of controls me. Awareness empowers me.’

Figure 3.3 below shows this diagrammatically, suggesting that events in the public domain are interpreted by the person’s sense of self, (shown as a Johari window matrix in the internal domain). The person’s sense of self then

influences the choices and decisions taken and the resulting actions and behaviours exhibited back in the public domain.

Figure 3.3: The central role of the internal self, depicted as the Johari Windows, in interpreting and reacting to events



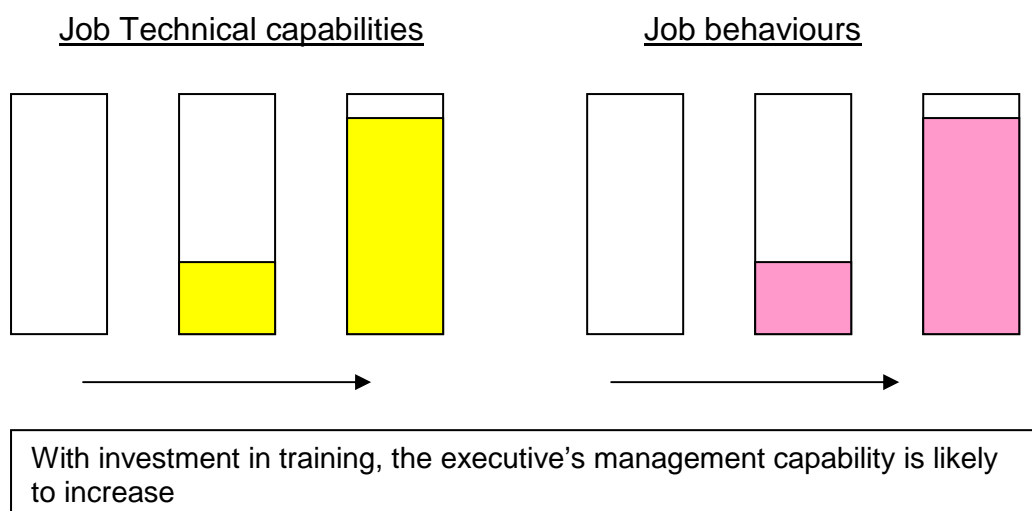
Once again, the key point to note here is that the more conscious the individual is of their self, (as represented by box 1 in the Johari window), the more likely it is that the individual can generate more choices in relation to an event, with the result that the responding decision will be more considered, and carry the potential to be more precise. This implies that it may be desirable to focus on creating greater self-awareness in retail executives, through intrinsic examination, i.e. to consider what is going on in the executives head in relation to their external environment and organisational objectives.

*The case for developing self awareness in retail executives*

Shim, Lusch et al (2002, p: 186) suggest that retail executives must be 'competent not only in technical and managerial skills but also in dealing with human resources and leadership issues'. The following section considers the rationale behind why intrinsic development may be desirable at some point in the executive's developmental journey. It begins by arguing that there is a finite limit to how much extrinsically derived development an executive can take before they reach a theoretical 'saturation' point (see paragraph below). It is at this point that the executive can consider intrinsic development that seeks to enhance how they apply the extrinsically derived knowledge that they have been given.

*Moving from an extrinsic to an intrinsic focus on development.* It is likely that for most newly recruited executives a range of the associated behavioural and technical job components can be taught or given to that person from an extrinsic source. What is given to the executive reflects the needs of their role and responsibility in the organisation. As a result, over time their behavioural and technical capability levels rise in line with the flow of this new knowledge and are shown in diagram 3.4 below:

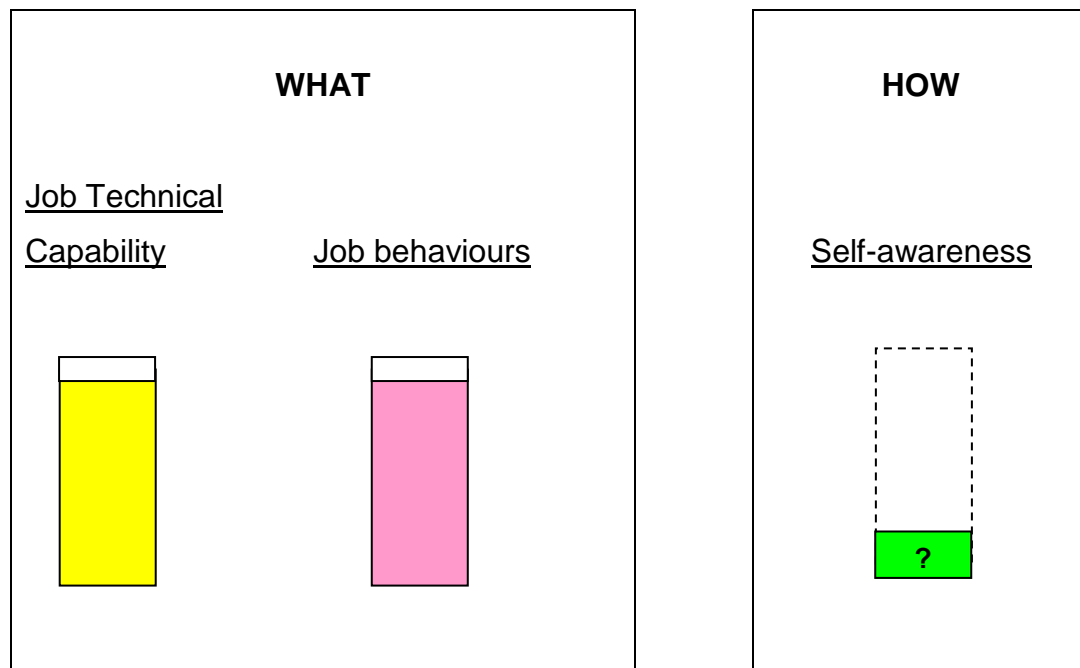
Figure 3.4: Reaching externally lead development 'saturation point'.



The diagram suggests that as extrinsically derived knowledge associated with the job role increases, then eventually there comes a point where there is little more that can be given (i.e. extrinsically sourced) that can impact performance markedly. Bennis (1997 pps: 149-150) argues that there are ways to 'generate intellectual capital' that 'releases the brainpower of organisations' but that this is not through traditional teaching (Bennis 1999, p: 133). Handy (2006, p: 64) acknowledges that at some point the 'difficulty lies in applying the ideas, not in the ideas themselves.' Csikszentmihalyi (2002, pps: 141-142) suggests that 'ideally the end of extrinsically applied education should be the start of an education that is motivated intrinsically'. He goes on to argue that people should stop studying to 'make the grade' but focus on trying to 'understand what is happening around one'. He cites Plato so suggest that 'the young man who has drunk for the first time from that spring is as happy as if he had found a treasure of wisdom' (p: 142). Figure 3.5 below suggests that it may be possible to focus on intrinsic development, so that the individual begins to consider how the behavioural and technical management capability that has been acquired can be applied to best effect. Handy (2006 p: 41 and Handy 1997, p: 217) suggests that 'warehoused learning doesn't stick', arguing that unless the 'lesson and the experience are tied together, the learning evaporates' (p: 41). Handy (2006) goes on to suggest that much of 'formal education can be wasted' (p: 41), and argues in favour of 'experience plus reflection' to create 'learning that lasts' (p: 43).



Figure 3.5: Considering intrinsic development when externally lead development approaches saturation point.



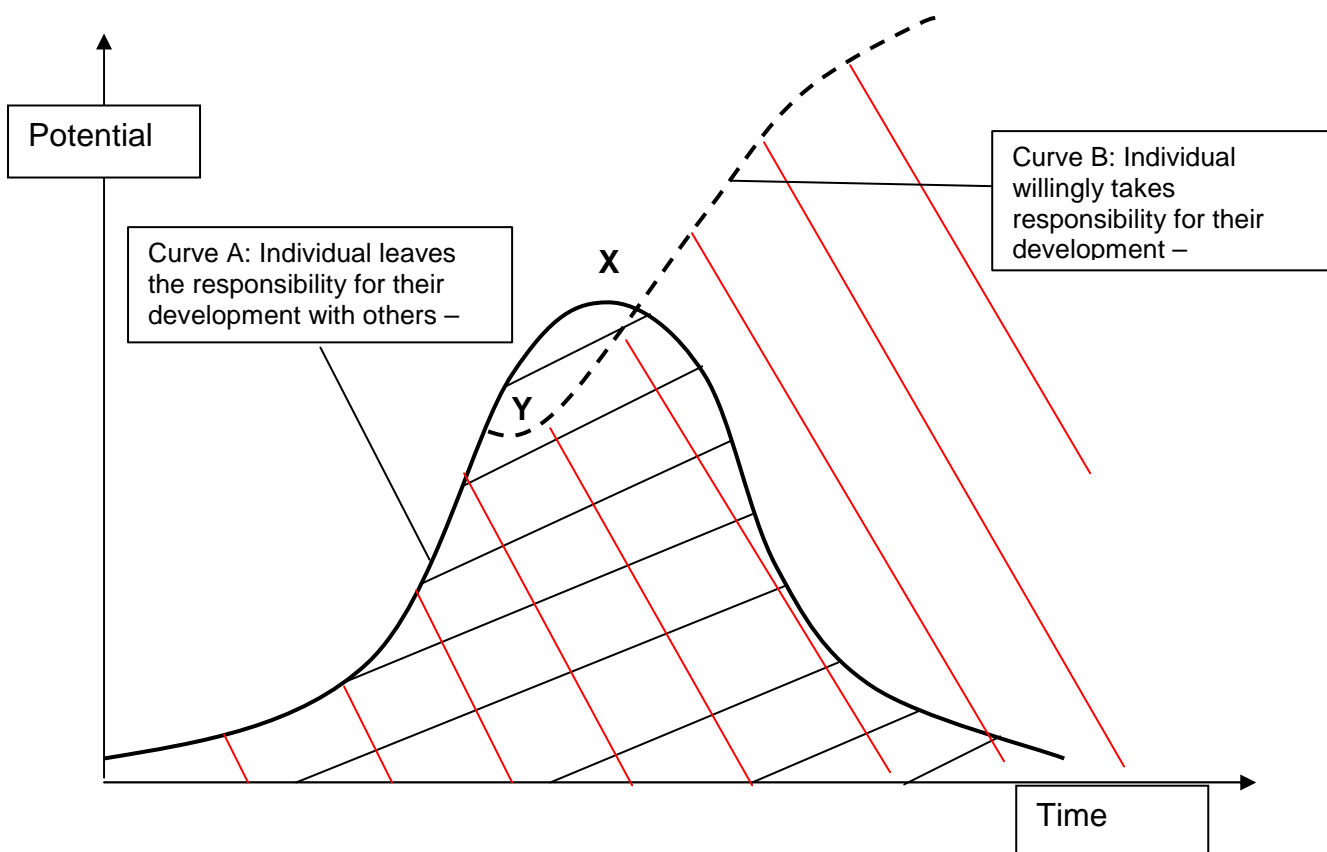
The diagram above suggests that the individual's ability to apply what they have learnt may be enhanced by growing their self-awareness, shown in the dotted box to emphasise that there are no theoretical limits to the development of the self.

To further emphasise the theoretical limitlessness of the development of self, the following diagram (figure 3.6) plots two curves detailing an individual's potential against their capability.

Curve A shows the effect of giving an employee externally sourced development, suggesting that capability increases in line with potential until a point 'X', where potential starts to decline in relation to further increases in externally sourced development. The implication being that from point X, a person is no longer realising the same proportion of potential for the effort being put in by the external provider. This represents the 'saturation' point, after which efforts to augment capability through external sources diminish in relation to the individual's potential.

Curve B represents the potential growth in capability from internally derived development. Initially development slows in relation to external development at point 'Y' as the individual begins to understand how investments in intrinsically lead development can add capability. However, following this point the individual becomes aware of the potential for further development through growing their self-awareness. With the will to pursue greater self-knowledge then the potential for further growth in capability in line with their potential remains possible.

Figure 3.6. Curves to show the unlimited potential from intrinsic development in relation to the extrinsic development



*Techniques to develop self awareness*

Juvenal (cited in Handy 2006, p: 209) points out that the desire to understand self is not new highlighting that the instruction to 'know yourself' is 'inscribed on the temple of Apollo in Delphi in Ancient Greece'. Linley and Harrington

(2006, p: 41) suggest that 'it is a large part of coaching and coaching psychology to strive to re-engage the individual with their natural self, to help them to identify, value and celebrate their inner capacities and strengths....to discover the power within them that coaching so often sets out to release'. Fine (2006, p: 166-167) suggests that when 'determined efforts are made to see the world accurately' then the 'mental events' that had the power to 'manipulate' (e.g. emotions, moods, schemas and stereotypes) and distort interpretation can be revealed and be consciously guarded against.

The following section considers some of the techniques that can be used for intrinsic development to increase levels of self-awareness. The majority focus on talking, listening and reflecting in order that an individual deepens their understanding of events and experiences, so that a continuous stream of new knowledge can be generated.

*Reflection and learning.* Handy (2006, pp: 42-43) argues that 'only in technical matters does the expert know better'. Management he argues (p: 79) 'will always be largely a matter of acquired common sense and each individual will have to discover what approach will work best for them'. He goes on to argue that many people 'go through life accumulating a bundle of private learning', although 'much of the time' they don't know that they have it' (p: 63). It is possible for anyone to learn for themselves, provided that they take the time to reflect on their experiences' (p: 41). By doing this the individual is better equipped to 'deal with the problems that lie ahead' (p: 43). Bennis and Thomas (2002a, p: 164) suggest that when someone stops themselves in midsentence to question something they have just said, resulting in 'mid-course corrections', then this can be described as 'responsive leadership and of learning in action'.

*Working with others.* Stone and Dillehunt (1978, p: 9) suggest that it might be better to learn with others, that 'most individuals need help in identifying and understanding' themselves. Similarly Peck (1987, p: 55) argues that there 'is a point beyond which our sense of self-determination not only becomes inaccurate and prideful but increasingly self-defeating', and that

for further growth, working together in 'community' can be an answer. Wilber (2001, p: 99) promotes working with another individual who is trained in interpretation, arguing that there is 'no other way' of understanding someone's interior except through 'talk, dialogue and interpretation'. Only in this way can 'depth psychology' be used to 'recontact lower holons and expose them to consciousness' (Wilber 2001, p: 142). Handy (2006, p: 25) however argues that value can be added by simply asking someone the question 'why?' repeatedly 'three or four times, and you will eventually get to the bottom of someone's often unconscious motivations'.

Goleman (2005, p: 144) suggests that 'calming down' after an 'emotional peak' is 'an immensely constructive step, without which there can be no further progress in settling what's at issue'. To help with this process Goleman (2005, p: 268) suggests that people should focus on their emotions while talking through their experiences, and highlights the usefulness of self-science courses (see Stone and Dillehunt 1978), to 'recognise their own feelings, build a vocabulary for them, recognise the links between thoughts, feelings and reactions; be able to know if thoughts or feelings are ruling decisions and then discern the consequences of alternative choices.'

Handy (2006) stresses that it 'will always be useful to reflect upon those trials, and particularly those errors' (p: 79), and that 'sometimes reflection can best be done in the company of strangers in secluded surroundings with the assistance of trained interpreters' (p: 79).

Nelson-Jones (2006, p: 6) suggests that self talk can be 'destructive' and 'negative', and that coaches need to help their clients 'discover and practice' a way to manage it, so that they can 'self-calm'. Goleman (2005, p: 144) suggests that to 'detoxify self talk' (i.e. to reduce the level of negative thoughts a person has) it is necessary to 'catch these thoughts and challenge them, rather than simply being enraged or hurt by them'. Nelson-Jones (2006, p: 6) describes this process as 'self-affirmation'. Drummond (2005, p: 13) implies this is only possible if the individual is 'willing' to listen and be 'painfully

honest' with oneself. Nelson-Jones (2006, p: 6) suggests that being able to manage self-talk accurately can result in an inner sense of 'calm'.

In summary working with others can be very effective at teasing 'out ones basic assumptions and the true reasons for what we do or want to do' (Handy, 2006, p: 26), and 'tie together' lessons and experiences (p: 41) that makes the learning more permanent.

*Using feedback.* Goleman (2005, p: 150) emphasises the importance of giving and receiving of feedback to 'let people know if the job they are doing is going well or needs to be fine-tuned, up-graded, or redirected entirely. Gallwey (2002, p: 182) suggests simply that all that is needed to raise anyone's self-awareness is for someone else to 'hold a mirror up....so they can see their own thinking process'. Flaherty (1999, p: 4) implies that feedback is one technique that people can use to continually 'self-generate' and 'improve' themselves. Similarly Drucker (2000, p: 164) argues that the only way to understand one's strengths is 'the feedback analysis', which he suggests will always surprise the person who does it. Feedback not only tells people their strengths, it also can 'show them what they do or fail to do that deprives them of the full yield from their strengths...where they are not particularly competent...and where they have no strengths and where they cannot perform' (p: 165). However, Ludeman and Erlandson (2004 p: 66) warn that if feedback is interpreted as 'criticism' then it is likely that the individual will react to it with 'defensiveness and resistance'.

*'Shadowing' in the work arena.* Goldsmith et al (2000, p: 13) suggests that whilst technical knowledge may be learnt 'off-site', 'leadership skills are best learned in the workplace and on the job', arguing that 'learning must be applied immediately, responding to issues of the moment'. Peltier (2001, p:12), supports this view suggesting that the best way to get a comprehensive and accurate sense of your clients is to 'shadow' (i.e. follow someone around whilst they perform their work function) them. In this way events can be recorded as they happen, so that at a later point they can be used to reflect on, draw out self-learning and develop greater understanding'.

*Moving away from 'comfort zones'*. All of the previous activities have considered developing self-awareness on activities that have taken place, or which are happening. This activity requires the individual to make an experience happen which they have not experienced before. It requires the individual to move away from the familiarity of their comfort zones. With reference to the Johari Windows box four, Handy (2006, p: 10) suggests that people should be 'constantly peeping into that fourth hidden pane and pulling more of it into the daylight', arguing that when they 'cease exploring' (p: 11), or once a person stops learning, then they 'might as well stop living' (Handy 2006, p: 212).

In summary section one suggests that the self has multiple elements such as the mind, emotions and feelings, values, beliefs, strengths and weaknesses. Theoretically Wilber (2001) argues that the self is capable of unlimited evolvment, and the Johari windows suggest that the self can have multiple dimensions. Notwithstanding the inherent complexity associated with the self, this discussion suggests that where development is focused on 'how' the retail executive does their job (rather than on 'what' they do), then the source of that development moves from being extrinsically focused (where others tell the executive what to do) to intrinsically focused (where the executive develops self awareness to understand 'how' they are doing their job). As the individual actively develops greater levels of self-awareness, then they can be more conscious of 'how' they are carrying out their job functions. Where the job function involves influencing others, then the techniques that deepen self awareness such as coaching may have an impact on the executives' leadership capability.

The following section now explores Wilber's (2001) theory of the development of the self to ground the conceptual coaching framework prior to the analysis of the empirical data in chapters four to eleven.

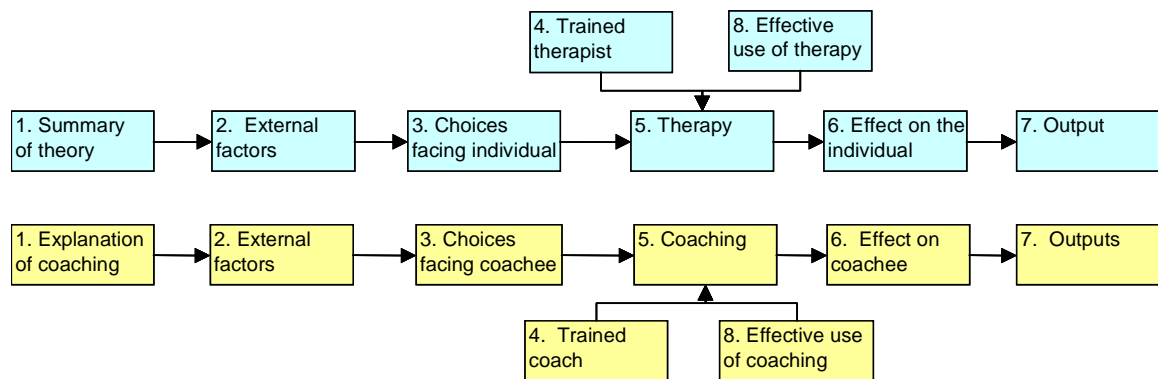
## Section two: Grounding the conceptual framework in a theory of the developing self

The following section considers Wilber's (2001) theory of the evolution of consciousness, (also known as the theory of the development of the self), by focusing on the following eight elements:

1. A summary of the theory
2. External factors that can slow down or stop development.
3. The choices facing the individual when development stalls
4. The need for a trained therapist to help development
5. Therapy used to enable development
6. The effect of therapy on the individual during the session
7. The output from the therapy
8. The effective use of therapy

It is argued that the coaching chain shares many similarities with these eight sections of Wilber's theory. This chapter considers each of these elements in turn and then suggests that for each there is a corresponding element of coaching, that can be taken from the coaching chain which emerged in the previous chapter (see figure 2.2, chapter two; 'Methodology'). Figure 3.7 below begins by showing where the eight separate parts of Wilber's (2001) theory (highlighted in blue), mirror eight corresponding elements of the coaching chain (highlighted in yellow)

Figure 3.7. Elements of the theory of self with corresponding elements from the coaching chain



These similarities can then be used to create a conceptual framework of coaching, grounded both in the theory of the development of self, and the coaching chain, that can be used as a research instrument in the interviews, to analyse the resulting empirical data, and finally to structure the layout of the thesis as indicated in figure 3.8 below:



Figure 3.8: Grounding a conceptual framework of coaching in the theory of the development of self and corresponding stages in the coaching chain

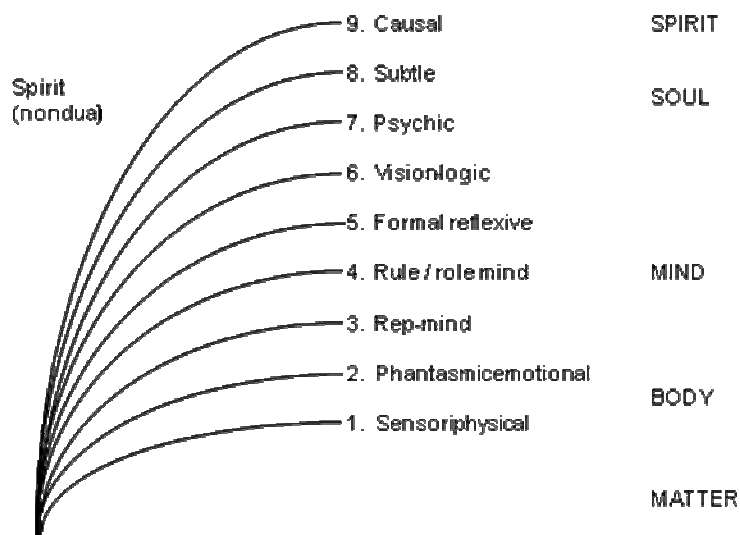
<b>The theory of the Evolution of Consciousness</b>	<b>Coaching stage</b>	<b>Conceptual framework to analyse coaching</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Summary of the theory</li> <li>2. External factors that can slow down or stop development.</li> <li>3. The choices facing the individual</li> <li>4. The need for a trained therapist</li> <li>5. Therapy used to enable development</li> <li>6. The effect of therapy on the individual during the session</li> <li>7. The output from the therapy</li> <li>8. The effective use of therapy</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explanation of coaching</li> <li>2. External factors affecting a person's development.</li> <li>3. Choices facing the coachee.</li> <li>4. Trained coach.</li> <li>5. Coaching.</li> <li>6. Effect on the coachee.</li> <li>7. Outputs.</li> <li>8. Effective use of coaching.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is understood by the term coaching?</li> <li>2. What's the effect of working in a retail organisation on the coachee?</li> <li>3. What are the desirable characteristics of the coachee?</li> <li>4. What skills and competencies are needed to coach?</li> <li>5. What does the coach do?</li> <li>6. What does the coachee experience during a coaching session?</li> <li>7. What are the outputs for the coachee/organisation</li> <li>8. How can organisational sponsors control the quality and consistency of coaching?</li> </ol>

The following discussion summarises each of the eight elements of Wilber's (2001) theory of the development of self, listed in the first column in figure 3.8 above, to ground each element of the conceptual framework.

### The theory of the Evolution of Consciousness

The following section provides an overview of Wilber's (2001, p: 125) theory of 'the evolution of consciousness' that argues that each stage of human development 'unfolds and then enfolds its predecessors in a nested fashion' (p: 128) and that by successfully navigating each of these stages, it is possible to first develop a healthy sense of individuality and then progress to 'the almost unlimited potentials of your own being and becoming' (p:xvii). Wilber (2001, p:125) argues that the evolutionary process of consciousness (also known as the development of self and the development of the human psyche) stretches from 'matter to body to mind to soul and to spirit', and he represents each of these elements in a nine stage (often called 'fulcrums' and 'spheres') model as reproduced in figure 3.9 below:

Figure 3.9: The basic levels or spheres of consciousness



(Source: Wilber, 2001, p: 127)

With reference to figure 3.9 above, the focus of the following discussion considers what might happen to a person whose development of self is

between 'level four' ('conformist' / 'socio-centric') and 'level five' ('post conformist' / 'world-centric').

### 1. An explanation of the theory

Figure 3.9 shows the development of a human being's consciousness through a series of stages, which starts immediately after birth, where an infant has a basic 'physiocentric sense of self' (Wilber 2001, p: 147). Wilber describes it in this way to make the point that the infant self is 'fused with the material dimension' in and around it

By around four months of age the infant begins to 'differentiate between physical sensations in its body and those in the environment (for example the infant bites a blanket and it does not hurt, whereas when it bites its thumb it does hurt). This stage has been described as the 'hatching' of the 'physical self' (Mahler cited in Wilber 2001, pps: 147-148), where the infant has established the boundaries of its physical self, and begins to establish the boundaries of its emotional self. Here the infant becomes able to differentiate its 'emotional self from the emotional environment' so that it is no longer 'fused or identified with those around it particularly the mother' (p: 148), a stage which is known as 'phantasmic-emotional' (p: 149).

The following subsequent 'fulcrums' continue to describe the various developmental stages associated with the growth of the self. Level three is described as 'representational mind' (p: 153), because here the mind consists of 'images, symbols and concepts' (p: 153). Wilber (2001, p: 153) argues that 'concepts dominate a child's mind between the ages of 4 and 7 years', and as a result a conceptual self begins to emerge. Level four is known as the 'rule/role' mind (p: 158), emerging at around 6-7 years of age and dominating until 11-14<sup>5</sup>. Here the mind forms mental rules and takes mental roles formed by others. It becomes 'crucially important' for the self to fit in with its social

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<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that whilst Wilber suggests approximate ages that individuals might reach certain levels there is no guarantee that a person will evolve to any of these levels as their development may 'stall' or slow down at any point.

roles, group, peer group, country, state and people (pps 165 – 166). As a result, a self that is at level four becomes 'sociocentric' from 'egocentric'. It is 'ushered into a world of roles and rules', and with it comes 'all sorts of scripts, or learned roles, which it will have to play out' (p: 166). Wilber argues that the self is 'identified with them, merged with them and thus utterly at their mercy, a true conformist' (p:170). Level five is described as 'formal reflexive', because 'the mind does not just think about the world, it thinks about thinking' (p: 169) and the individual is able to grasp different possible outcomes to any given situation. "What ifs' and 'as ifs' can be grasped', 'all sorts of idealistic possibilities open up' and 'true introspection becomes possible' (p: 169). The key point here is that because the individual can think about thinking, then they are able to judge the roles and rules, which at level 4 they simply 'swallowed without thinking' (p: 170). Wilber maintains that at level five the individual's 'moral stance moves from conventional to post conventional'. Level six is the 'last major 'orthodox' stage, or the highest stage most conventional researchers tend to recognise' (p: 173) and is labelled 'vision logic' because it is a 'type of synthesising and integrating awareness' (p: 174). John Broughton (cited in Wilber 2001, p: 174) suggests that at this stage, 'mind and body are both experiences of an integrated self'. Levels seven to nine ('Psychic', 'Subtle' and 'Causal') represent the 'domains' or 'realms' of the 'superconscious' (Wilber 2001, pps: 179-217), where the self as observer is also referred to as 'pure presence', or 'pure awareness' (p: 179). The belief here is that from level six, consciousness evolution can continue on to greater and greater levels such that the discussion moves to one of 'God, Spirit, and the Devine, to the ultimate depths of ones own awareness where the individual 'intersects infinity' (p: 179). Ferrucci (1982, p: 44) describes the 'superconscious' as the epitome of 'all that we still can reach in the course of our evolution'.

However Tolle (2005b, p: 25) makes the point that any discussion on the subject of the evolution of consciousness is highly theoretical because the subject has 'unfathomable depth', and is 'ultimately unknowable'.

Nevertheless Wilber (2001 p: 132) asserts that the stages he refers to are based on the work of 'perhaps sixty or seventy theorists, East and West'.

### *Supporting theories*

To exemplify this Wilber (2001, pps: 133-136) relates the stages in the development of the self to works by: Abraham Maslow, Jane Loevinger, and Lawrence Kohlberg, whose theories are outlined briefly below and summarised in figure 3.10.

*The theory of the development of moral stages (Levels of Consciousness).* Kohlberg (cited in Wilber, 2001, p: 15) suggests that there is 'general and ample agreement that human moral development goes through at least three stages'. The beginning stage is 'pre-conventional' (for example a child who has not yet socialised into any sort of community system). The second stage is 'conventional', where the human being lives to a 'general moral scheme that represents the basic values of the society' (Wilber 2001, p:15). Finally the last stage of evolution is termed 'post-conventional' by Kohlberg, and is used to describe individuals that 'reflect' on their society to 'gain a capacity to criticise or reform it' (Wilber 2001, p:16).

*Self sense model* -. Wilber (2001, p:133 - 134) uses Loevinger's self sense model to once again support the theory that the development of self happens in stages. In this theory the potential development of the self occurs in three distinct stages, starting with 'autistic' / 'symbiotic' at birth, through conformist to the post conformist stages described as 'individualistic', 'autonomous' or 'integrated'.

*The Hierarchy of needs model - Maslow.* Finally Wilber cites Maslow (p:134 – 135) to argue that human beings have a set of 'needs' that require fulfilling throughout life. They begin with basic physiological needs (e.g. survival needs such as satisfying thirst and hunger), which lead to other more complicated needs such as love, self esteem and ultimately self actualisation. As each need is satisfied, the individual feels a new drive to satisfy new higher order needs.

To understand the similarity between these different theories relating to the development of the self, Wilber (2001, p: 134) gives the example of an individual who has a 'self sense' evolved to stage four, (i.e. the 'rule/role mind'). The author argues that since childhood they have realised that they are 'a social self among other social selves and so need to fit into a set of socio cultural roles. At this point the self is a 'rule/role' self, behaving as a 'conformist' (Loevinger), with a 'basic need' of 'belongingness' (Maslow), and a moral stance that focuses on the 'conventional approval of others' (Kohlberg).

#### *Ladder climber view*

Wilber (2001) describes the evolution of consciousness through the nine fulcrums described above using the metaphor of a climber that represents the person's sense of 'self' (p: 130) on a ladder that represents their 'holarchy of awareness' (p: 130). Each step up the ladder represents the evolvement of consciousness to a higher level or 'fulcrum' (p: 132), which in turn affords the 'climber' with a different view of the world 'as consciousness evolves' (p: 132). Wilber (2001, p: 135) stresses however that the overall ascent up the ladder, as depicted in figure 3.10 below is not fixed or linear but rather a 'fluid and flowing affair'.

Figure 3.10: Some examples of 'ladder, climber view'.

LADDER	CLIMBER	VIEW		
		Maslow (self needs)	Loevinger (self-sense)	Kohlberg (moral sense)
<i>Basic Level</i>				
sensoriophysical	F-1	(physiological)	autistic	(premoral)
phantasmic-emotional	F-2		symbiotic	
rep-mind	F-3	safety	beginning impulsive	I. Preconventional
rule/role mind	F-4	belongingness	impulsive	II. Conventional
formal-reflexive	F-5	self esteem	self protective	III. postconventional
vision logic	F-6	self-actualisation	conformist	
psychic	F-7	self-transcendence	conscientious-conformist	
subtle	F-8	self transcendence	conscientious	
causal	F-9	self transcendence	individualistic	
			autonomous	
			integrated	
				0. Magic wish
				1. Punishment/obedience
				2. Naïve hedonism
				3. Approval of others
				4. Law and order
				5. Individual rights
				6. Individual principles of conscience
				Kohlberg has suggested a higher, seventh stage;
				7. Universal-spiritual

(Source: Wilber 2001, p: 133)

Wilber (2001) points out that the climber's progress 'up the ladder' may be interrupted at any point, potentially resulting in the self getting 'very badly hurt' (p: 131). Wilber (2001, p: 136) suggests that when the development of the self is interrupted, part of it may 'split off' and will not 'continue to grow and develop' (p: 136), leaving the rest of the self to climb on independently. This 'internal conflict' he suggests is a 'pathology' (p: 136). He warns that often this will cause development to 'limp along', however in the most severe cases, it may even bring self-development to a 'screeching halt' (p: 136). Wilber (2001, p: 146) describes these developmental interruptions as 'sub-phase malformations', arguing that they can occur at any level, and 'like a grain of sand caught in a developing pearl, the malformation crinkles all subsequent layers, tilts and twists and distorts them'. Wilber (2001, p: 99) suggests that there may be many causes that lead to this: such as 'intense environmental traumas', or just something 'learnt from one's parents', or something stemming from 'a defence mechanism against an even more painful truth'. Ferrucci (1982, p: 156) supports the theory that the self may not grow continuously and levelly throughout a life, by giving the example of a child that from birth meets every event in life 'in an innocent and totally open way,

without reservations or defences' until some point when 'their innocence and openness' is 'ridiculed....sensitivity hurt....and faith betrayed'. As a consequence their 'openness' may become consciously reserved as a way of self-protection against future events. Whatever the cause, Wilber (2001 p: 147) suggests that 'sub-phase malformations' may act as a 'drain' and a 'dead weight' capable of 'sabotaging further growth and development'. For example he suggests (p: 136) that the 'injured' part of the self may sometimes be the cause of a person exhibiting less developed characteristics (e.g. 'pre-conformist' behaviours such as impulsiveness). In this case the injured part momentarily takes over the self with 'neurotic or even psychotic symptoms' such as 'repression, dissociation and alienation' (Wilber 2001, p: 130) that psychiatrists suggest can have a 'devastating' (p: 136) effect on the individual. In summary Wilber (2001, p: 136) suggests that when this happens it 'is not an external conflict; it is civil war'.

#### *The false self*

Wilber (2001, p: 147) suggests that a sub-phase malformation is often the cause of an actual self-system that tries to repress aspects of itself, and by doing so inadvertently creates a 'a false self system (i.e. 'basically being untruthful about what is running around your psyche'), which can begin to 'grow over the actual self'. Wilber suggests that suppressing aspects of self only allows the 'unconscious' to begin its 'career' as 'the locus of the self's lie'. He argues that it is the sub-conscious that then begins 'eating up energy and awareness', and acts as a 'drain' and a 'dead weight' to further growth and development (p: 147).

This section has summarised some of the main elements in the theory of the development of the self, suggesting that development is limitless, but that often, due to many different reasons it can be interrupted, slow down or even stopped, leading to the possible development of a false self.

Similar to the preceding discussion that attempts to explain the theory of the evolution of consciousness, it is perhaps necessary to explain coaching as a theory linked to development, prior to its application in any developmental



intervention, to explain and clarify what it does, so that others can understand its potential. As a result, chapter four asks ‘what is understood by the term coaching?’

## *2. External elements affecting development*

The preceding discussion suggests that an individual’s development can be interrupted at any point potentially resulting in a sub-phase malformation, which may then lead to the creation of a false self that can act as a drain to further growth and development. Before considering what Wilber recommends can be done to recommence development of the self, the following section considers what might cause these ‘sub-phase malformations to happen in the first place’, concluding that it is often societal pressures and the resulting self-imposed expectations that people have which makes them act in ways that they believe should, rather than in the ways they would actually truly like to.

Dr David Hamburg (cited in Goleman 2005, p: 274) suggests that a ‘child’s sense of self-worth depends substantially on his or her ability to achieve in school’. Gallwey (1986, pps: 106-107) suggests that this relationship between performance and self worth continues through into adult life manifesting as a need to prove oneself continually in order to reinforce their ‘self image’. Gallwey (1986, p: 107) argues that those who follow the ‘cultural pattern which tends to value only the winner’, may get ‘trapped in the compulsion to succeed’. As a result they not only neglect ‘the development of many other human potentialities’ but are likely to get drawn into the ‘I want it and I want it now societies’ (Drummond 2005, p: 59). Peck (1987, p: 59) suggests that today’s world is characterised by ‘rugged individualism – in which we generally feel we dare not be honest about ourselves’. As a result, often people ‘won’t share freely the things they have in common’ (p: 58), remaining ‘sad’, ‘lonely’ and cut off from others. Ferrucci (1982, p: 111) suggests that these people may feel ‘intimidated by conformity’, unable to find ‘intellectual independence’ and Peck (1987, p: 95) argues that they are not able to free themselves of their self-limiting ‘preconceptions’. Csikszentmihalyi, (2002, p:

141) argues that without the ability to think independently people are forced to adopt thinking 'directed by the opinions of neighbours, by the editorials in the papers, by the appeals of television', and generally 'be at the mercy of 'experts''. Similarly Ferrucci (1982, p: 108) warns that without developing the ability to think independently people may remain vulnerable to the 'prejudice and rampant irrationality, of opinion manipulation, and standardised attitudes of ideological indoctrination and occult persuasion' that can be prevalent within society.

Tolle (2005b, p:45) suggests that as a result of capitalism, some people are 'condemned to chasing after things for the rest of their lives'. This is now a condition recognised as 'affluenza' (e.g. James 2007, de Graaf et al 2005), described as 'a painful, contagious, socially transmitted condition of overload, debt, anxiety and waste resulting from the dogged pursuit of more' (De Graaf et al 2005, p: 2). James (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Affluenza>) suggests that higher rates of mental disorders are the consequence of excessive wealth seeking in consumerist nations, and describes 'capitalism' as 'selfish', because of the high correlation people in these societies have of emotional distress (e.g. depression, anxiety, substance abuse and personality disorders) (The Independent newspaper. 4.1.08. 'How to have a sane new year'). Csikszentmihalyi (2002, p: 99) supports this view arguing that there is no correlation between wealth and the attainment of happiness. Similarly Ferrucci (1982, p: 213) suggests that people can get 'hypnotized by everyday events and feelings', so that 'whatever is unimportant becomes dreadfully serious'. Csikszentmihalyi (2002, p: 63) warns that a prolonged focus on external activities 'consumes psychic energy', and Gallwey (1986, p: 121) suggests this may cause a person to lose a sense of who they really are. Ferrucci (1982, p: 62) suggests that identifying with anything other than one's own 'self' can be 'equated with a loss, a dream or an illusion....that inevitably leads to a death of some kind'.

This can result in a number of negative outcomes that may impact the self: Csikszentmihalyi (2002, p: 3) warns that people may feel that their 'fate is primarily ordained by outside agencies', and Tolle (2005b, p: 47) suggests this may lead to inner feelings of 'unease, restlessness, anxiety, and

dissatisfaction'. Drummond (2005, p: 208) suggests people need to ask themselves whether they are 'living a life according to the prescriptions and proscriptions of others' and if they are stopping their 'inner reality' from being expressed. Peck (1987, p: 95) suggests that people often do things that are incongruent with who they are because they feel under pressure to conform, and because most are 'terrified of the emptiness of the unknown'.

The preceding discussion suggests that there are many external influences that may cause a person's development of self to slow down or be halted. Similarly, coaching as a theory of development may be susceptible to external influences that could impact its potential to help someone develop. As a result, chapter five considers the effect of the external environment on the coachee's development.

This chapter now returns to Wilber's theory to consider what options exist for a person to recommence the development of their self, when it has been 'interrupted' or 'halted'.

### *3. Development choices facing the individual*

Wilber (2001, p: 141) suggests that as the climber sustains more and more 'injuries' to the developing self, then 'by the time the self reaches adulthood, it might have lost 40 percent of its potential as split off selves' that remain at 'the level of development they had when they were split off' (p: 141). He goes on to suggest that the individual may not be conscious of this, although they may be aware of 'an internal commotion', which can manifest as 'depression, obsession, anxiety or any number of neurotic symptoms that are completely baffling' (Wilber 2001, p: 141). This section considers the choices someone has at fulcrum four to deal with this situation.

Wilber (2001, p: 170) notes that moving between levels four and five is 'a very difficult transformation' (p: 170) and although theoretically possible around the age of 11 – 15 years (p: 169), it is 'fairly rare' (p: 171). He emphasises this

point by making reference to a survey that finds approximately 'only 10% of the American population actually reach this highly developed stage' (p: 172).

Wilber (2001, p: 159) describes the individual at level four as 'highly conformist' with 'the capacity to form mental rules and to take mental roles' (p: 158). They need to feel 'belongingness' and 'approval from others' (p:133), and so it is crucial that they fit into 'roles' and 'groups' (p: 166), described as 'socio-centric' (p: 170). They are very focused on what is expected of them, and how others perceive them, and subconsciously there are 'all sorts of scripts, learned roles and rules which they feel they have to play out' (p: 166).

Wilber (2001, p: 166) argues that 'most of these scripts are useful and absolutely necessary', but warns some may be 'distorted' (p: 167), 'maladaptive' and capable of creating a 'false' self when played out. Tolle (2005b, p: 260) suggests that 'living up to an image that you have of yourself or that others have of you' (e.g. a societal script), is 'inauthentic living'. Even Handy (2006, p: 120) admitted that as an organisational employee there were times when he felt like 'an actor in some bizarre play', always watching 'what I said in case it went against the interests of my organisation'. Wilber (2001, p: 99) suggests that whilst it may be possible to deceive others by deliberately trying to hide aspects of ones personality, (even to oneself), it is not possible to live like this, arguing that the 'locust of the lie' moves into the realm of the subconscious, where it is kept 'alive'. Often the individuals cannot be truthful with themselves as this might 'involve great pain' (p; 100). Potentially 'the self hides from itself, lies to itself, becomes opaque to itself' (p: 149), and Wilber (2001, p: 155) warns that over time the 'false self' can 'collapse under its own suffocating weight' as a 'breakdown'. Goleman's (2005, p: 240) research suggests that since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, 'each successive generation has lived with a higher risk than their parents of suffering a major depression, not just sadness, but a paralysing listlessness, dejection and self pity and an over whelming hopelessness.....with childhood depression.....emerging as a fixture of the modern scene'.

A person who experiences either a negative inner commotion, for example or suffers a breakdown may experience it difficult to find a solution in society. Frankl (2004, p: 111) argues that recently the 'traditions which buttressed behaviour are now rapidly diminishing'. He goes on to suggest that people often have 'no instinct' to tell them 'what to do', and no 'tradition' to tell them 'what they ought to do'. Ray (1986, cited in Clark et al 1994, p:358) suggests that 'ties to community and church have weakened and people's affiliatory needs are not being met'. With this there has been a loss of 'meaning in individuals' lives' and as a result people may do what others do (conformism) or they may do 'what other people tell them to do (totalitarianism). Alternatively others may consider an intrinsic solution, although Peck (1987, p: 19) cites Carl Jung to suggest that many people exhibit a 'refusal to meet the shadow', implying that often there are aspects of their self that they would prefer to 'sweep under the rug of consciousness'. Wilber (2001, p: 100) emphasises the importance of being able to 'interpret ones depth' arguing that it is only in this way that a person can interpret others. He then goes on to argue (p: 100 – 101) that those who decide they want to pursue an intrinsically focused development must be prepared to 'relax resistances and sink into their interior depths', so that they can 'learn to report those depths more truthfully both to others' and to oneself.

#### *Extrinsically sourced solutions*

The onset of a breakdown may encourage people to consider whether they should try to 'understand their own depths' (Wilber 2001, p: 85), although many may be unwilling to do this, preferring to search for solutions by exploring 'exterior approaches' (p: 85) such as 'purely biological psychiatry' (p: 84). For example some may decide to visit the doctor and conclude after a consultation that anti-depressants such as 'prozac alone will suit' (Wilber 2001, p: 85). This is likely to result in any inner commotion being 'drugged out of awareness' (Wilber 2001, p: 156), and the chance to explore inner depths and bring a clearer understanding or meaning to them will be lost. Another 'solution' may be to simply 'rest and recover and then resume the same 'false-self trajectory' (Wilber, 2001, p: 156). Csikszentmihalyi (2002, p: 165) suggests that if people ignore these symptoms, then they can quickly grow

'depressed'. Ferrucci (1982, p; 115) warns however that 'acceptance becomes the quickest and most practical way to free oneself from a difficult situation' and that any 'rebellion inexorably tightens the knot'.

### *Intrinsically sourced solutions*

However, some may decide to seek help with a competent person to try and understand what is causing them to feel as they do, by focusing on their interior depths. By talking through what they are thinking and feeling, they can attempt to understand both their conscious and unconscious selves, enabling them to expose any 'lies' that may be at the core of a false self (Wilber (2001, p: 156). Gallwey (1986, p: 115) appears to support intrinsic exploration, describing it as the 'inner game, played against internal mental and emotional obstacles for the reward of increasing self-realization – that is knowledge of one's true potential'. Wilber (2001, p: 169) argues that true introspection only becomes possible when a person 'opens up ' their 'interior world' before the 'mind's eye' so that 'psychological space becomes a new and exciting terrain'. Csikszentmihalyi (2002, p:141) argues that in this way the person can put a stop to being 'at the mercy of 'experts"' and can begin to 'develop a personally meaningful sense of what one's experience is all about' (p: 142). The key point here is put forward by Wilber (2001, p: 170) who argues that 'because you can think about thinking, you can start to judge the roles and the rules' which, previously were 'swallowed unreflexively.'

*Traits of the intrinsically motivated.* Some writers suggest there are traits that characterise those individuals who are prepared to focus intrinsically on their own development. Ferrucci (1982, p: 156) believes they must be 'daring' to leave their 'comfort zones' and it may not be 'pleasurable', but Gallwey (1986, p: 104) argues that it is necessary to overcome the 'inner obstacle...that plagues them...and win the inner game'. Drummond (2005, p: 125) suggests that people must 'be true' to themselves, and live the beliefs and values which have personal meaning. Tolle (2005b, p: 66) stresses that to do this, people first need to become 'aware' of their thoughts by being 'honest' with themselves, trying not to be 'judgmental' (Gallwey 1986, p: 25),

so that they can 'take things in hand personally' (Csikszentmihalyi 2002, p: 16).

This section uses Wilber's theory to suggest that when a person realises they have an 'internal commotion' or breakdown they are faced with a choice to seek a solution either from an extrinsic source, or to attempt to find their own solution through 'intrinsic' examination. Wilber (2001, p: 83) argues that the more 'adequately' a person 'interprets' their depth, then the more their 'painful' symptoms will ease. Those that do select an intrinsically focused solution are likely to display a range of associated characteristics, such as courage, openness, willingness, honesty, and determination. The key point is that a person's disposition to an intrinsic solution depends on their mindset and on the characteristics they outwardly display. Similarly, a person's willingness to be coached (and by implication get the most from it) may depend on their mindset and the characteristics they outwardly display. As a result, chapter six considers the desirable characteristics for the coachee.

#### *4. Who should carry out the therapy?*

Wilber (2001, p: 156) suggests that working with another person can help them understand their inner depths more clearly, and recommends (p: 84) that the person to provide help of this nature should be a psychoanalyst, who can apply 'talking therapies, from aspects of cognitive therapy to interpersonal therapy to Jungian therapy to Gestalt therapy to transactional analysis' which are all 'based on a single principle, namely the attempt to find a more adequate interpretation for the other person's interior depth'. The key point here, is that Wilber recommends the use of a 'therapist' (p: 156) to 'take up an investigation' to help 'interpret interior intentions more truthfully'. As a result of this, chapter seven considers what skills a person might need to enable them to coach.

### 5. *What does the therapist do during a therapy session?*

Wilber (2001, pps: 165 – 168) argues that at level four, the developing self tries to fit in with social roles and peer groups, by playing out 'scripts' and adhering to those 'rules'. However, sometimes the individual may be playing out a false script, which in turn can create a false self. Aron Beck (cited in Wilber 2001, p: 167) suggests that this is often the cause of peoples' depressions.

Wilber (2001, p: 84) suggests that whilst a 'person's surfaces can be seen', their 'depths must be interpreted'. Wilber (2001, p: 99) suggests that the only way to get at someone's 'interior' is 'in talk and dialogue and interpretation'. However he goes on to stress that there is no guarantee that the individual talking about their interior is doing so truthfully (p: 99). Lying can be done both intentionally or unconsciously, because often the 'locus' of 'the insincerity' is in the unconscious (Wilber 2001, p: 99). By working with a therapist, any 'distorting scripts' creating a false self 'built on myths and deceptions' that may have 'taken charge' in ones 'life' (p: 168) can be 'uprooted' (p: 168), by 'interpretive therapies' (e.g. Freudian to Jungian, to Gestalt to cognitive) that 'attack the lie' (p: 147) and 'replace it with a more realistic interpretation' so that 'the false self can give way to the actual self'. Tolle (2005a, p: 75) suggests that by talking through any issue a person can begin to understand more deeply how 'it manifests at this moment as a thought, an emotion, a desire, a reaction, or an external event that happens to you'. Ferrucci (1982, p: 214) believes that through this process people 'notice something they hadn't noticed before' and 'realise they had been worrying needlessly', such that issues that had been troubling, are often diffused.

In summary the dominant activity of the interpretive psychologist appears to be in encouraging the patient to talk through their issues, and be on the look out for any 'distorted' scripts. Correspondingly, to understand more clearly the coach's role during a coaching session, chapter eight considers what a coach does during a session.



## *6. What does the individual experience as a result of the therapy?*

Wilber (2001, p: 156) argues that when the therapist has helped the person to interpret their interior intentions more truthfully, 'the concealed pain and terror and anguish disclose themselves', and the effect on the individual is a deep sense of 'intrinsic joy'. Wilber (2001, p: 168) suggests that as the myths that created the false self disappear so too do the symptoms, and any associated 'depression will lift' (p: 83). He sums it up with the idea that if someone 'thinks differently' then they will 'start to feel differently' (p: 168). The ability to 'think about thinking' means that the individual can start to 'judge the roles and the rules' (p: 170) that previously were adhered to unconsciously. The conformist that begins to question these rules and roles begins to move to an area of 'post conformity', and this may be accompanied by an inner-sense of being set free, as their actual self 'awakes' and is 'liberated' (p: xx).

The key point here is that as the individual becomes more aware of their internal thinking processes, their inner sense of self may be affected positively. Correspondingly to understand what happens during a coaching session, chapter nine considers what the coachee experiences.

## *7. What are the outputs?*

Wilber (2001, p: 142) argues that during therapy the therapist will attempt to contact 'lower holons and expose them to consciousness, so that they can be released from their fixation and dissociation and rejoin the ongoing flow of consciousness evolution. They can get with the program as it were, and cease this backward, reactionary anti evolutionary pull from the basement of awareness'. The suggestion here is that the key output for the individual derived from gaining a more truthful interpretation of their depths is the recommencement of the development of their consciousness.

For the individual who has become stuck at a 'socio-centric' (Wilber 2001, p: 170) level four, then recommencing their development allows them to

progress towards a 'world-centric' (p: 170), 'post-conventional' level five. Wilber (p: 101) also makes the point that when inner depths are reported more truthfully both to self and to others, then the person's 'depth' will 'begin to match...(their)...behaviour', where 'words and actions....match up' and the individual will be able to 'walk...(their)... talk'. Wilber (p: 171) suggests that any advancement for the climber up the ladder represents an 'irreversible shift', such that 'once you see the world in global perspectives, you cannot prevent yourself from doing so. You can never go back'. In other words development of self is sustainable. As a result of this, chapter ten considers what outputs could be expected from coaching for both the coachee and the organisation.

#### *8. What is needed for effective therapy?*

Wilber (2001, p: 156) argues that for the individual to 'begin to tell the truth about his or her interior' then the therapist must try to make sure the environment is 'safe', so that the person they are helping feels 'surrounded by empathy, congruence, and acceptance.....without fear of retribution' for telling the truth'. Peck (1987, p: 67) argues that 'seldom, if ever' have most people ever 'felt completely free to be' themselves, to feel 'wholly accepted and acceptable'. He goes on to suggest that even in 'new group situations' people tend to go in 'with their guard up'. As a result any attempt by one 'courageous' person to 'open up' and admit their 'vulnerability' is likely to be 'met with fear, hostility, or simplistic attempts to heal or convert' that person (Peck 1987, p: 67).

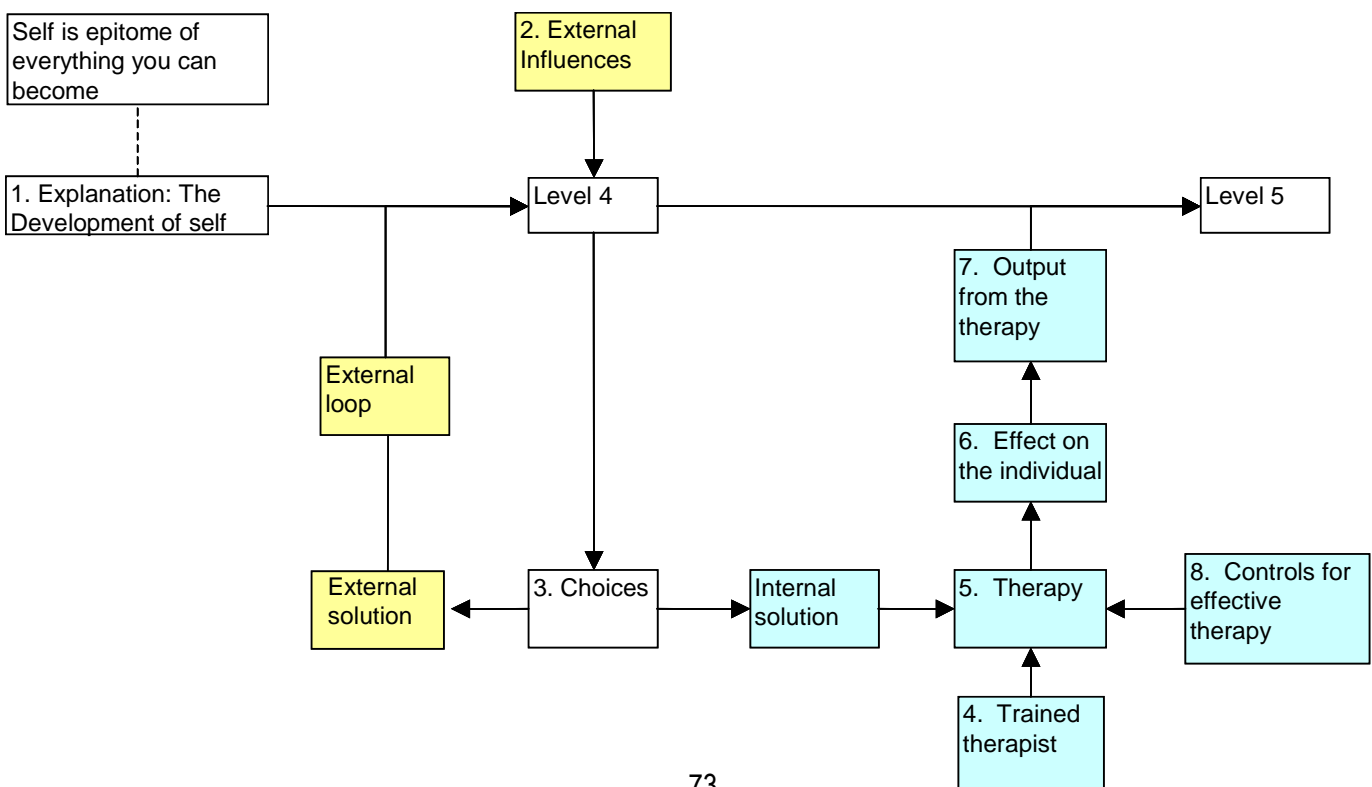
This section considers the importance of the actual environment for effective therapy to take place. As a result, chapter eleven considers how the organisation can control the quality and consistency of coaching such that it is as effective as possible for the coachee.

## Summary

Wilber's (2001) theory of the development of the self is outlined above, so that all the various elements of the coaching chain are grounded, and to allow a conceptual framework for the analysis of coaching to emerge. Key here is the inclusion of the effect of the environment on the coachee, which had not emerged during the pilot phase and emergence of the coaching chain.

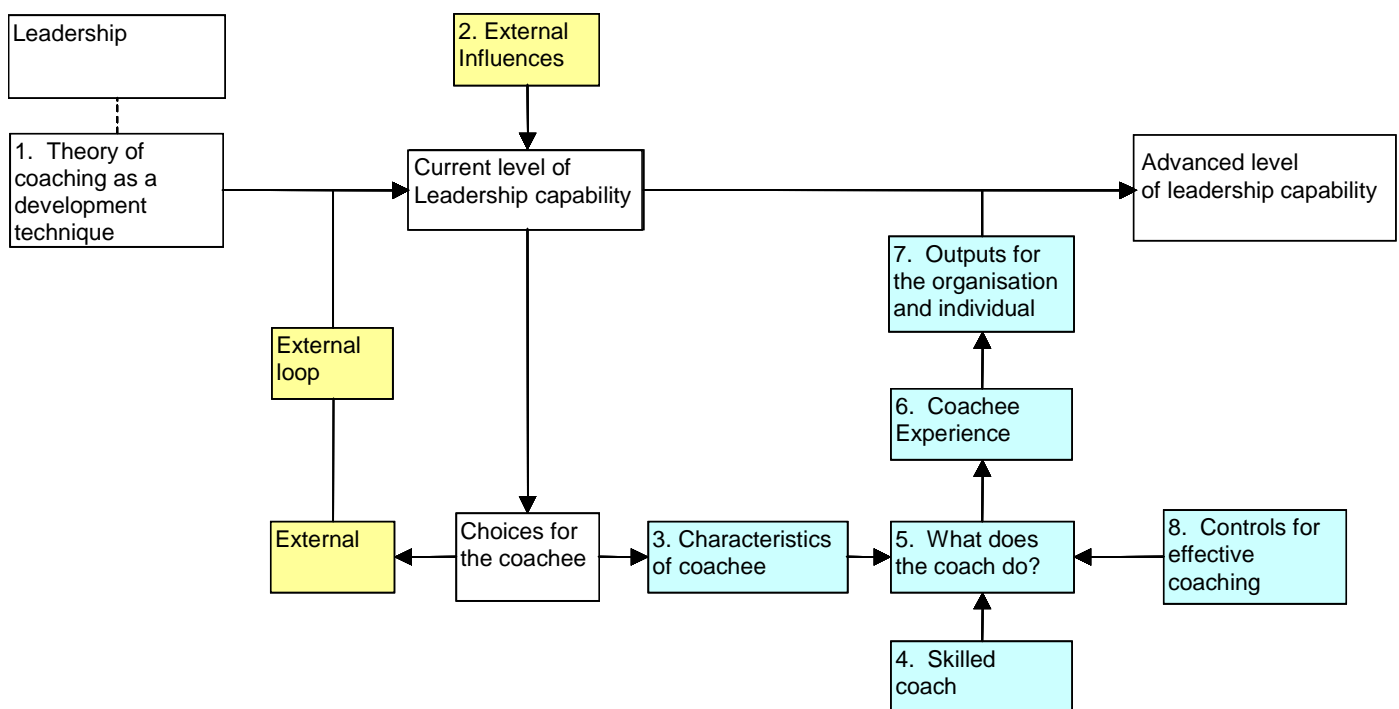
Figure (3.11) uses the theory of the development of the self to suggest that there are two options open to an individual whose self-development has slowed down or stopped at or around fulcrum four. The yellow boxes suggest that by seeking an extrinsic solution to their internal commotion, the individual is likely to end up in a loop where development of the self remains 'stalled'. The blue boxes suggest that by seeking an intrinsic solution the individual is willing to investigate their interior depths and make it possible for the development of their self to recommence, potentially creating a spiral of development. The model identifies where each of the previous eight elements of the theory discussed above is featured in the development process.

Figure 3.11. Showing two options for self-development between Wilber's level four and five:



This same flow diagram can be reproduced to ground a conceptual framework to analyse coaching in the following diagram (figure 3.12). Once again the eight corresponding elements of coaching that mirror the eight elements of the theory of the development discussed above are featured within the development process.

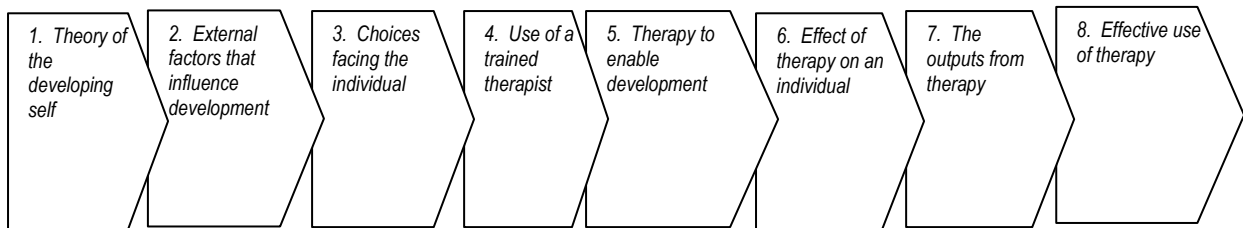
Figure 3.12. Diagram suggesting that intrinsically focused development may develop a person’s leadership capability



### Grounding a conceptual framework

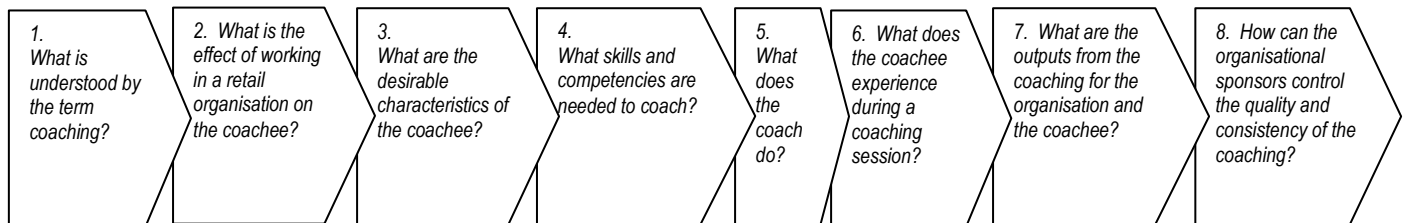
In summary, this section suggests that the theory of the development of the self can be used to ground a conceptual framework to analyse the use of coaching as a technique to enhance leadership capability in an organisation, as the two flows in figures 3.13 and 3.14 below demonstrate:

Figure 3.13: A conceptual model of the theory of the development of Self



(Source Wilber 2001)

Figure 3.14: A conceptual model of coaching grounded in the theory of the development of self



The resulting framework considers external and internal aspects of coaching by asking the following questions, each of which will be considered in the next eight chapters:

1. What is understood by the term coaching?
2. What is the effect of working in a retail organisation on the coachee?
3. What are the desirable characteristics of the coachee?
4. What skills and competencies does a person need to be able to coach?
5. What does the coach do?
6. What does the coachee experience during a coaching session?
7. What are the outputs from the coaching for the organisation and the coachee?
8. How can the organisational sponsors control the quality and consistency of the coaching?

## CHAPTER FOUR

### WHAT IS UNDERSTOOD BY THE TERM 'COACHING'?

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

##### Introduction

This chapter begins by briefly considering the background and development of the coaching phenomenon that has grown rapidly to become one of 'the most widely used executive development techniques' (McGovern et al, 2001, p: 1) as an effective way to promote learning in organisations' (Jarvis 2004, p: 8). It suggests that the origins of coaching as a development technique stems from a theory that leadership is 'distributed'. Bartlett and Ghoshal (1997, p: 95), suggest that when organisations 'decentralise' then often they have to 'empower' employees to take more leadership 'responsibility'. For example managers may be required to 'evolve from their traditional role as front line implementers to become innovative entrepreneurs'. In the case of a company that is expanding rapidly in international markets, an investment in leadership capability away from their domestic market, has the potential to create 'offshore champions' who can 'provide the young, overseas organisation with credibility, and confidence, both internally and externally' (Bartlett and Ghoshal (2000, p: 137). These 'offshore champions' have a key role to develop their leadership expertise to 'tailor the new product or strategy to the new environment' and 'influence outside their home country' (p: 137). This is particularly relevant for retail organisations, many of which are now characterised by a 'high degree of spatial disaggregation in their networks of operation' (Dawson 2001b, p: 12), sometimes operating globally from one central head office. For example 'of the largest 25 retailers in Europe ranked by sales, only four are not involved in operating stores in more than one country' (Dawson 1994, p: 278).

The literature section of this chapter highlights the inherent difficulties that exist in defining both the terms 'leadership' and 'coaching', and the resulting confusion that this causes the personnel responsible for its sourcing and application within the organisation (e.g. Jarvis 2004). The empirical element to this chapter suggests that this confusion is shared amongst the coachee population too. In summary the chapter suggests that the term 'coaching' masks hidden complexity that is often not appreciated by users, and as a result remains 'plagued' by 'scepticism (Jarvis et al, 2006, p: 9).

### Leadership review

Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999, p: 1) argue that 'from the ancient philosophers to Hobbes and Nietzsche, to current scholars, finding out what makes the visionary hero, the super human, the great man or woman, tick, has become an obsession'. Argyris (1953, p: 3) argues that there is a tremendous interest in leadership 'from people who want to be leaders, people who hire and train leaders, and people who are leaders'. Lynch (2000, p: 448) suggests that 'leadership is a vital ingredient in developing the purpose and strategy of organisations' arguing that leaders can exert 'considerable influence' over the company direction, and Meindl and Ehrlich (1987, p: 92) suggest that leadership is 'the most important topic of all within the realm of organisational behaviour'.

Warren Bennis (cited by Greene and Grant 2003, p: 6) argues that 'the post bureaucratic organisation requires a new kind of partnership between leaders and the led', highlighting that organisations are evolving into 'federations, networks, clusters, cross functional teams, temporary systems, ad hoc task forces, lattices, modules matrices – almost anything but pyramids with their obsolete top-down leadership'. Leadership is often necessary to cope with 'the inexorable forces of economics and shifts in the external world' that 'force change upon us' (Harvey-Jones (1994, p: 96). Similarly Goldsmith et al (2000, p: xv - xvi) suggests that changes caused by for example globalisation, hyper-competition, technology and communication, have resulted in 'more turbulent and stressful' environments for individuals to work in. Fine (cited in

Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 267) concludes that all these changes impact people, and 'show no sign of slowing down'. However a recent survey (CIPD 2005) suggests that two thirds of UK organisations are suffering from a 'shortage of highly effective leaders' to lead this change, and as a result they are investing in generating in-house leadership capability amongst their people so that they can 'decentralise', increase their 'flexibility' and promote more 'autonomous management' to 'adapt itself' to these 'rapid changes in the environment' (Drucker, 1955, p: 13).

The subject of leadership is a complex one, consisting of many different theories, developed from a multitude of different studies, spread over several decades and conducted globally across industries. As a result there are a varied array of definitions, explanations, theories, hypotheses and understandings on the subject. Yukl (1989, p: 253) suggests that there are books, articles and journals which detail 'several thousand empirical studies' on leadership, 'and yet most of the results are contradictory and inconclusive' Stogdill (1974, cited in Yukl 1989, p: 253 ) suggests that the four decades of research on leadership 'have produced a bewildering mass of findings... the endless accumulation of empirical data has not produced an integrated understanding of leadership'. Stogdill concludes that 'there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept' (cited in Yukl 1989, p: 252).

In conclusion Porter et al (1975, p: 434) argue that 'it is impossible for any single leader to perform all the critical leadership functions which invariably arise'. Yukl (1989, p: 252) points out that the 'numerous definitions of leadership' have 'little in common' except to say that leadership 'involves an influence process'.

### *Leadership theories*

Similarly, with reference to the examination of leadership, Grint (1995, p: 124) suggests that 'seldom in the history of human sciences has so much been written with so little effect'. The following are popular examples of some of the



leadership theories put forward over the past ninety years in an attempt to 'identify' and understand the 'superhuman' elements that generate a force that makes for 'an extraordinary impact' (Kakabadse and Kakabadse 1999, p: 1).

#### *Trait theory ('great man' theory)*

This theory was prominent between 1930 and 1950 (Duckett and Macfarlane 2003, p: 309). Here the emphasis of the research is on the personal attributes of the leader suggesting that there were certain characteristics, 'such as physical energy or friendliness that were essential for effective leadership' (Blanchard and Hersey 1969, p: 60). Bryman (1992, p: 2) explains the trait approach to leadership research that 'emphasizes the personal qualities of leaders and implies that they are born rather than made', focusing on their 'personal features' (e.g. height, weight, physique, intelligence, extroversion, dominance, self confidence etc). Jennings (cited in Blanchard and Hersey, 1969, p: 60) suggests that many 'trait' studies have been conducted over a period of fifty years, and yet they 'have failed to produce one personality trait or set of qualities that can be used to discriminate leaders and non-leaders'. The 'disillusionment' with research into leadership traits lead to 'a surge of interest in leadership styles and behaviours' (Bryman 1992, p: 3).

#### *Behaviour theory*

Here the focus turned from the leaders personal attributes (trait theory), to focus on 'the behavioural styles which characterised their leadership activities' (Porter 1975, p: 424). Stogdill and Shartle (1955) spent ten years assessing various leadership behaviours during the Ohio State studies conceptualising leadership as a 'relationship between persons rather than as a characteristic of the isolated individual' (p: v). During this research a focus was placed on both the 'external' and 'internal' factors that influence the leader's behaviours. In conclusion Stogdill and Shartle (1955, p: ix) reflect that 'the very scope of these studies suggest that the leadership problem is a complex one'.

Barriers to analysing a leader's behaviours lie in establishing agreement on which 'categories of behaviours' are 'meaningful', and then how they can be

'conceptualised and measured' (Yukl, 1989, p: 258), although he claims various theories can be integrated to generate a 'promising taxonomy', where some 'generic behaviors' may be 'applicable to all types of leaders and organizations'. However, Buchanan and Huczynski, (1997, p: 593) point out that both the trait and behaviour theories were criticised mostly because often little or no relevance had been given to the actual context in which the leader operated, arguing that a leader's behaviour in one situation might be 'wholly inappropriate in a different setting'.

### *Situation/contingency theory*

The shortcomings of the two previous categories of leadership research put an emphasis on the importance of contextual factors (e.g. leaders authority, nature of the work, attributes of subordinates, and the external environment), and how they influenced the leader's behaviour. The theory suggests that there are no universally appropriate styles of leadership (Bryman 1992, p: 11), and that particular styles may have an impact only in some situations but not in all situations, so the leader needs to have the ability to adapt their leadership to 'the most effective style for a particular situation' (Blanchard and Hersey, 1969 p: 72). Lynch (2000, p: 449) suggests that 'leaders need to be changed as the situation itself changes'. Blanchard and Hersey (1969, p: 60) suggest that 'most management writers agree that leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation'. It is argued that as a result 'leadership is a function of the leader, the follower, and the situation,  $L = f(l, f, s)$ .'

### *Charismatic leadership*

Shackleton (1995, p: 101) defines charismatic leadership as the 'capacity to make other people do extraordinary things in the face of adversity' and argues that as a concept first considered by Max Weber in the 1940s it has 'come back in favour.' This theory concentrates on the perception that the leader is 'flamboyant' is a 'powerful speaker, and can persuade others of the importance of his or her message' (Bryman 1992, p: 22). The focus here is on the leader as an individual that followers trust and respect, rather than on any type of leadership process. Charismatic leadership research is broader in

scope than other types, and draws on a leader's traits, power, behaviour and situational variables all at once. Shackleton (1995, p: 104) suggests that charismatic leaders 'relate the vision or mission to subordinates' deeply rooted values, ideals and aspirations'. There are a number of theories of charismatic leadership (Shackleton 1995, p: 102) such as the 'interactionist theory', that considers leaders traits, behaviours and the situational factors. Although there is still not much empirical research to test the few charismatic leadership theories, this is an example of research making a return to the 'trait theory' and emphasising the cyclical nature of the studies over the last century.

#### *Distributed (transformational, empowerment, dispersed) leadership*

La Verre and Kleiner (1997, p: 35 ) suggest that 'dispersed leadership is important to the vitality of a large intricately organised system'. They argue that 'the most forward looking business concerns are working in imaginative ways to devolve initiative downwards and outwards through their organisations and to develop their lower levels of leadership'. This theory implies that leadership contribution is 'distributed' and shared by a hierarchy of leaders at different levels and in different sub-units of an organisation. Distributed leadership involves the influence of a leader but the effect is to empower subordinates to participate in the process of transforming the organisation, which Oakland (2000, p: 14) suggests is only achievable by getting 'close to the employees'. Huffington et al (2004, p: 2) suggest that organisations need to have 'leadership at all levels' which is a 'requirement in new flatter hierarchies with horizontal networks'. Individuals working in these organisations need to be able to take on the responsibilities that leadership entails. Beech (2003 p: 17) suggests that 'anyone can make a leadership contribution'. Leider (cited in Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 83) suggests that the difference between success and failure relies on how well the leader can 'engage the hearts and souls of their followers' in the corporate strategic vision within all different parts of the organisation. Bennis (1999, p: 179) cites Jack Welch who argues that future leaders will be 'passionate' and 'driven' with 'enormous energy', but 'who can energize those whom they lead'. What is implied here is that individuals other than Board members are empowered

to make key decisions. It is possible that as a result of distributing leadership responsibilities within the organisation, employees affected begin to learn more rapidly and accumulate knowledge, whilst the organisation itself begins to develop a competitive advantage. La Verre and Kleiner (1997, p: 35) suggest that 'high-level leaders are made more effective in every way if the systems over which they preside' involve and draw on the potential 'creativity and motivation of lower levels of management and workers'. Goleman et al (2002, p: 36) cites Max Weber who argued that 'institutions thrive.....because they cultivate leadership throughout the system'.

### *Strategic leadership*

Some leadership theories simply state key characteristics associated with the leader. For example John Adair (cited in Buchanan and Huczynski 1997, p: 604 – 605) who suggests that the strategic leader has the following three key characteristics:. Firstly they direct followers with their vision; secondly they have a strong capability to build teams around them (incorporating objective setting and communication) and thirdly they are creative and innovative.

### *Integrating conceptual frameworks*

More recently a number of studies have attempted to join together more than one leadership approach, so that 'sets of variables from different approaches are viewed as part of a larger network of interacting variables', which Yukl (1989, p: 274) suggests 'appear to be interrelated in a meaningful way'.

This discussion on leadership theories and research suggests that whilst it has been a key area of focus for many decades, there is still limited knowledge associated with it. In most cases conclusions are complex and often 'hampered by the romantic view' (Meindl and Ehrlich 1987, p: 92) that the notion of leadership often implies. There are many definitions, theories and approaches, and little universal agreement on what it is. Yukl (1989, p: 279) argues that there is a growing 'awareness that leadership concepts and theories... are subjective efforts to interpret ambiguous events in a meaningful way, not precise descriptions of real events and immutable natural laws'. In

conclusion Biggart and Hamilton, (1987, p: 432) suggest that the study of leadership as a phenomenon may remain 'theoretically elusive'.

The theory of distributed leadership is appropriate for many organisations that function in today's fast-moving markets because managers who work away from the centre may frequently need to react and adjust to situations rapidly. Drucker (2000, p: 135) concludes that whilst in the twentieth century 'production equipment' was a company's most 'valuable asset.....the most valuable asset of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century institution, whether business or non-business, will be its knowledge workers and their productivity'. Bennis (1997, p: 149, and 1999, p: 73) argues that the key challenge is then 'to release the brainpower'. To make his point he suggests that 'when you ask people in organisations how much of their brainpower they think they are currently using on the job, the standard response is about 20 percent' (Bennis 1997, p: 149). Goleman (2000) recognises that a coaching approach is a leadership style emulating from emotional intelligence, and Bennis (1999, p: 133) argues that in order to 'facilitate' leadership capability, 'coaching is the rub'. Goldsmith et al (2000 p: 11) argues that 'coaching is evolving as a natural form of leadership', which is 'rooted in conversations', with the potential to 'unlock the latent leadership potential in managers and reinforce leadership where it already exists' (p: 15).

## Coaching

Downey, (2003, p: vii) makes the point that 'what is interesting about the beginning of any new profession is that agreed upon definitions, practices, and boundaries do not exist'. The first part of this section looks at the definition of the term 'coaching', suggesting that similar to the term 'leadership', it carries 'many different meanings in business circles' (Witherspoon, cited in Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 166), although, unlike leadership, because it is a relatively new phenomenon it does not have a long history of empirically based research behind it. Garvey (2004, p: 6) feels 'concern for anyone starting to explore' coaching because of the 'sheer confusion over the terminology'. In support Downey, (2003, p: vii) makes the

point that ‘the distinctions between coaching and its siblings (e.g. managing, consulting, leadership, training, counselling, mentoring and teaching) are anything but crisp’.

Grant (2005, p: 1) argues that ‘the use of coaching in the workplace or organisational settings to enhance work performance, executive development or life experience is increasing in popularity’. Whitmore (2001 p: 1) suggests that as a result of the huge increase in the use of coaching as a development tool, coaching has become a ‘buzzword’, for many writers who all produce their own definition and version of what it is. This lack of a universal definition (Goldsmith et al 2000 p: xviii, Vaughan, 2005 p: 1) is unsurprising because ‘as with most definitions of complex phenomena, the more generic they are, the vaguer they tend to be’ (Clutterbuck 2004a, p: 12). Garvey (2004, p: 6) acknowledges that there is a ‘lively debate among academics and practitioners.....to learn and develop what is meant by the terms mentoring, coaching and counselling’. Garvey (2004, p: 6) suggests that the only similarity they all share is that they all involve ‘one to one helping’. To emphasise the variation in definitions for the word ‘coaching’ the following table (4.1 below) provides a random sample coming from the literature.

<b>TABLE 4.1 DEFINITIONS OF COACHING</b>	<b>SOURCE</b>
Coaching is unlocking a person’s potential to maximize their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them.	Whitmore, 2001, p: 8
Coaching is a participative partnership designed to develop an individual to their full potential. It is a one to one process which typically focuses on personal development and problem solving whereby the coach and individual agree on the issues involved and jointly consider solutions.	Bolt, 2000, p: 4
Developing a person’s skills and knowledge so that their job performance improves, hopefully leading to the achievement of organisational objectives. It targets high performance and	Jarvis 2004 (from Jarvis et al, 2006, p: 183)

improvement at work, although it may also have an impact on an individual's private life. It usually lasts for a short period and focuses on specific skills and goals.	
To tutor, train, give hints to, prime with facts	The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1999
Giving advice or feedback that may improve the performance of the recipient while maintaining her or his self-esteem.	Bennis, 1999, p: 133
Coaching is a way of working with people that leaves them more competent and more fulfilled so that they are more able to contribute to their organizations and find meaning in what they are doing.	Flaherty, 1999 p: 3
Coaching is about believing in someone and then taking action to help that person be his or her very best.	Blanchard and Shula, 2002 p: 114
The facilitation of mobility. It is the art of creating an environment, through conversation and a way of being, that facilitates the process by which a person can move toward desired goals in a fulfilling manner. It requires one essential ingredient that cannot be taught; caring not only for external results but for the person being coached.	Gallwey, 2002, p: 177
A collaborative partnership between a business coach/manager and their client/team member and a system which identifies perceived obstacles, generates new solutions, sets objectives and implements agreed actions based on holding the client / team member accountable to themselves.	Weafer, 2001, p: 8
A commonly used change-assisting intervention....where the coach observes and reviews individual performance, listens to the client, provides feedback on problems or behavioural patterns that hinder operating effectiveness and inhibit change, and helps the individual to gain self confidence, acquire new knowledge and skills and behave in a way required by the changing nature of the job and the organisation.	Kubr 1996, p: 95
Coaching is a behavioural approach of mutual benefit to individuals and the organisations in which they work or	Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: xviii

network. It is not merely a technique or a one-time event; it is a strategic process that adds value both to the people being coached and also to the bottom line of the organisation	
Coaching is a collaborative, solution-focused, result-orientated and systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of work performance, life experience, self-directed learning and personal growth of individuals from normal (i.e. non-clinical) populations.	Greene and Grant, 2003, p: introduction
Someone from outside an organisation uses psychological skills to help a person develop into a more effective leader. These skills are applied to specific present-moment work problems in a way that enables this person to incorporate them into his or her permanent management or leadership repertoire.	Peltier, 2001 p: xx
The overall purpose of coach-mentoring is to provide help and support for people in an increasingly competitive and pressurised world in order to help them; Develop their skills; improve their performance; maximise their potential; and to become the person they want to be.	McGurk (2008, p:12)
Coaching is the art of facilitating the development, learning and enhanced performance of another. This operates on a very large scale ranging from a non-directive (pull) to a directive (push) approach. It is always proactive and as a coach you do not always need any knowledge of the subject being coached. You do, however, need a degree of competence in the field of coaching.	Hill, 2004 pps: 9-10
Coaching is an on-going, one-on-one learning process enabling people to enhance their job performance	Harris, 1999 p: 1
Coaching aims to enhance the performance and learning ability of others. It involves giving feedback, but it also includes other techniques such as motivation and effective questioning. And for a manager coach it includes recognising the coachee's readiness to undertake a particular task, in terms of both their	Landsberg, 2003, p: xii



will and skill. Overall the coach is aiming for the coachee to help her – or himself. And it is a dynamic interaction – it does not rely on a one-way flow telling or instruction	
Teaching and practice focused on taking action, with celebration when things go well and supportive redirection when things go wrong, while all the time creating excitement and challenge for those being coached	Blanchard and Bowles, 1998 p: 159
Executive coaching is a precision tool for optimizing the abilities of leaders	Morgan et al, 2005, p:23
A helping relationship between a client (who has managerial authority and responsibility) and a coach who uses a wide variety of behavioural techniques and methods to help the client achieve a mutually identified set of goals to improve his or her professional performance and personal satisfaction and consequently to improve the effectiveness of the client's organisation within a formally defined coaching agreement.	Kilburg, 1996, (cited by Rider 2002 p: 233)

### *Types of coaching*

Nielson and Eisenbach (2003, pps: 1-2) cite Drucker (1993) to argue that 'knowledge is the only meaningful resource in today's economy' and that the knowledge worker can bring a firm 'competitive advantage'. Braddick (2003b, p: 6) suggests that coaching is 'an effective means of developing executives' knowledge. Flaherty (1999 p: 13) points out that the coach 'is free to create any form for the work', as there is no one 'answer' that can be applied 'to every coaching situation'. Possibly because of this Jarvis et al (2006, p: 182) suggest that it 'makes sense for organisations to seek their own definitions of coaching that work for their specific context'.

Morgan et al (2005, p: 5) attempt to make distinctions in what coaching is and what it does by suggesting that there are a variety of different types of coaching such as: Behavioural coaching, (This type of coaching is described as helping leaders to make 'positive long term changes in interpersonal

behaviour' (p: 5)); Career/Life coaching, (This type of coaching is described as working on 'personal growth, career development and life issues' (p: 5)): Coaching for Leadership Development, (referring to coaches that help organisations develop leaders (p: 6)): Coaching for Organisational Change (coaching that helps bring about organisational change (p: 6)) and Strategy Coaching (Where coaches work at senior level to 'set the tone for the long term direction of the organisation' (p: 6)). Morgan et al (2005, p: 5) point out, that although these classifications are likely to change as knowledge in the field of coaching grows, they serve to reflect that coaching is capable of covering many issues ranging from a 'micro' to a 'macro' level. Libri (2004, p: 1) in contrast, suggests that now that there are 'coaches for every conceivable situation' (e.g. 'fitness coaches, life coaches, relationship coaches, dream coaches, executive coaches, career coaches, parenting coaches etc), rather than clarifying what the practitioner does with coaching, the affixations only serve to make the concept more complex and confusing.

### *Mentoring*

Clutterbuck (2004a, p: 23) argues that often confusion exists on the differences between mentoring and coaching. Whitmore (2001, p: 10) explains that the former originates from Greek mythology, in which it is reported that Odysseus, when setting out for Troy, entrusted his house and the education of Telemachus to his friend Mentor, instructing him to 'tell him all you know'. Often the mentor will impart wisdom to the mentee (Clutterbuck 2004a, p: 23) implying that they are older and oversee the career of the mentee providing guidance and advice where necessary.

### *The use of Coaching in the business organisation*

Hardingham (2006, p: 1) argues that due to the 'explosive growth in coaching in the UK over the last ten years', there has been 'tremendous diversity in what is offered and brought under the general heading of coaching', which some commentators believe has been 'extraordinarily powerful' (Scoular and Linley 2006, p: 11). For example Goldsmith et al (2000, p: 27) argue that it can 'yield quantifiable, positive output; improved business performance and

increase competitive advantage'. However Passmore and Gibbes (2007, p: 117) point out that up until 2004, 'evidence that executive coaching could transform individual performance at work was scant'. Jarvis et al (2006, p: 15) suggest too that 'rigorous research data is surprisingly hard to find, and specific literature on coaching in organisational settings particularly sparse'. Passmore and Gibbes, (2007, p: 117) argue that since 2004 'much of the coaching research from the US is postgraduate in nature and largely unpublished', and criticise what there is because of the use of small sample sizes, and a lack of control groups.

### *Demand for coaching*

It is not clear how much the global market in coaching is worth. In 2003, the Economist (23.11.03) suggested it to be US\$1billion, and doubling every 18 months (cited in Scoular and Linley, 2006, p: 9), although Fillery-Travis & Lane (2006, p: 23) suggest that this figure is nearer \$2 billion per annum.

Recent surveys (Jarvis, 2004, p: 5, CIPD 2006) of member organisations by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) highlight the huge up-take of coaching as a leadership development intervention, with 79% of member organisations now using it. Of them, 92% believe that it could deliver a positive impact on the bottom line (p: 8). However, 81% (p: 12) felt that there was still a great deal of confusion around what it meant, with exactly half admitting they did not understand the difference between all the types of coaching. Nevertheless the use of coaching has risen dramatically in the United Kingdom. This is evidenced in the results of a recent survey (CIPD 2006) with '93% of respondents using coaching believing that a coaching culture is important to the success of their organisation' (Jarvis et al, 2006, p: 11).

### *Who gets coached?*

Morgan et al, (2005, p: 25) argue that individuals singled out for coaching are often 'top performers whose leadership and growth potential are highly valued by the organisation'. However 'the inherent looseness within the coaching discipline can create confusion and dissatisfaction among consumers' (p: 24).

For example, there is confusion on whether coaching is about 'achieving business objectives', or focused on 'personal satisfaction' or 'individual performance' or 'team performance' etc (p:23). Morgan et al (2005, p:24) argue that a 'spectrum definitely exists' wherein coaching could be used, but it is not clear where the boundary of that spectrum lies.

### *Supply of coaching*

New entrants to the coaching market have found virtually no barriers to setting up and practicing as coaches (Jarvis 2004, p: 14). Whitmore (2001 p: 2) suggests that some organisations are rapidly being set up to feed the hunger for coaching, resulting in 'hastily and inadequately trained managers, or so called coaches, failing to meet businesses' expectations and of those they are coaching'. The supply of coaching-related firms has grown in response to the demand. For example in December 2006 an on-line Google search of the word 'coaching' limited to just UK websites produced 1.63 million options. As a result the market is sometimes likened to the 'wild west' (Leary-Joyce, 2008), with many of the coaches operating being likened to 'cowboys' (Jarvis et al, 2006, p: 14).

Jarvis (2004, p: 12) suggests that the growth in coaching companies has been derived from a broad base. For example coaches could emulate from the following: business advisers and consultants who have 'reinvented themselves as coaches': coaching companies that have recruited people with a track record in business and then trained them as 'in-house- coaches; people coming from a base in qualified occupational, or clinical psychologists, or from 'the relatively new field of coaching psychology'; coaches coming from the sporting world marketing themselves as performance coaches; and finally, coaches coming from large human resource management, outplacement and recruitment consultancies who are adding coaching services to their portfolios, aiming to secure large multinational contracts. Jarvis (2004, p: 12) suggests that all this variety is creating 'confusion' for those seeking to source coaching services within their organisations.

### *Professionalism*

Jarvis et al (2006, p: 8) argue that 'the complexity of the coaching market place and its rapid pace of development is a 'nightmare' for HR practitioners navigating through it'. As a consequence of this there have been efforts made to 'professionalise' the coaching market, by introducing regulations to control and standardise quality. Professional bodies, such as The Association for Coaching (AC); The Coaching Psychology Forum (CPF); The European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC); The International Coach Federation (ICF): and The Chartered institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) have been working to improve coaching standards, practices and services, and are made up of coaches who are pushing from the supply side for higher standards and quality. Jarvis (2004, p; 14) suggests that their combined role is to 'weed out practitioners who operate unethically'. The existence and growth of this group reflects the fact that coaching is a broad and complex field, where 'one body is simply not able to fulfil the needs of such a diverse group', (Jarvis 2004, p; 13).

Current activity is jointly focused on regulating how coaches operate, and as a result is considering the following four main areas;

*Developing standards and competencies for coaching:* Each of the professional bodies are conducting focus groups of coaches to establish what best practices can be taken and incorporated into a set of competencies for universal coaching activity.

*Developing coach qualifications.* Coaches must invest in their continuous personal development (Weifer 2001, p: 99). Flaherty (1999, p: 12) argues that unless coaches constantly 'question' their 'assumptions, abandon' their 'techniques, and vigilantly correct from the outcomes' produced, then they will soon 'fail as coaches'. Peter Hawkins, chairman of the Bath consultancy Group believes that learning should never stop because the moment a coach thinks they are fully trained, 'then they are at their most dangerous' (2007, Coaching at Work. Volume 2. Issue 4, p: 13). There are now many different organisations offering coaching qualifications from a one

day coaching qualification (e.g. the Chartered Institute of Personnel development, Clutterbuck Associates, and the I-Coach Academy) to those offering qualifications up to Masters and Ph.D level (e.g. Oxford Brookes, Sheffield Hallam etc). Carr, (2004, p: 1) points out that in 2004, there were 65 distinct coaching credentials that could be obtained in North America and the United Kingdom, with many different paths to 'qualify'. He notes that some 'are competency based, some require attaining hours of course work, others require supervision by someone who has already attained the credential, some rely on self assessment, some can be obtained without ever coaching a client; and some are just based on self-proclamation' (Carr, 2004, p: 1).

*Return on investment.* All the professional bodies are attempting to find ways to quantify the coaching return on investment .

*Coach Supervision.* Finally these professional bodies are considering how coaches themselves can be effectively supervised<sup>6</sup>. Many commentators (e.g. Jarvis et al 2006 p: 48, Goldsmith et al 2000, p: 75, O'Neill 2000, p: 207 and Downey 2003, pps: 209-210) widely believe that good coaches should try to understand how they are coaching by being regularly supervised, primarily because it is 'well established in many of the people professions such as psychology, social work and counselling' (Hawkins and Schwenk, 2006 p: 2). Clutterbuck and Megginson (1999, p: 154) go further, arguing that supervision is 'essential'. As a result it is being 'advocated by nearly all the professional bodies' (Hawkins and Schwenk, 2006 p: 2, Fillery-Travis and Lane 2006, p: 26), as a 'necessity' (2005, Coaching at Work, launch issue, p: 11). It is believed widely that 'supervision is and will continue to become an important element in coaching' (Carroll 2006, p: 8), because it 'can help to increase the credibility and image of the coaching industry' (Hawkins and Schwenk, 2006, p: 2). Even now it is becoming apparent that many business organisations

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<sup>6</sup> A universally agreed standard for coaching is that coaches should frequently be supervised themselves; to ensure that what they are doing during their coaching is of the highest quality. However it is not clear who should supervise, nor what they should do to supervise during this process.

are asking for this type of evidence from the coach before their services are used (2007, *Coaching at work*, Volume 2, issue 1, p: 14).

### Summary

Coaching is a 'complex phenomenon' (Gray 2004, p: 1) 'used with a wide range of populations and issues' (Grant 2003 p: 5). The term does not have a universal definition because few people can agree on what coaching actually is (Grant, 2003 p: 5 and currently there appears to be little confidence that in the future 'there will ever be a definition everyone can agree with' (Stokes, 2007, *Coaching at work*, Volume 2, Issue 1, p: 17). As a result business organisations frequently find it 'difficult to get a clear picture of what coaching is taking place and how effective it is' (Jarvis et al 2006, p: 49).

With little empirical evidence, the application of coaching as a technique to develop leadership capability in business organisations is founded on little more than a belief that it will help people and bring a competitive advantage to the firm. For example following a review of coaching, Grant (2003 p: 5) concludes that 'although the coach-specific academic press dates back to 1937, and many thousands of articles about coaching have been published in newspapers, magazines and professional and trade journals, there is little academic literature specifically on coaching'. Likierman (2007, *Coaching at Work*, volume 2. Issue 1. p: 46) warns that coaching evaluation is critical for establishing management credibility', and implies that without it, coaching risks being cut from organisational investment.

It seems likely that in the near future 'coaches may require a licence to practise as part of government moves to regulate 'talking therapies'' (Hall, 2007, *Coaching at Work*. Volume 2. Issue 2, p: 12). Whilst most commentators agree that the industry needs to work together 'to agree competencies and standards in coaching supervision' (Hall, 2008, *Coaching at Work*, volume 3, issue1, p: 7), the continuous process of standardising has also been criticised as potentially 'stifling flare' (Soriano, 2008, *Coaching at Work*, volume 3 issue 1, p: 8), and creating confusion for potential coaches,

who must decide which qualification to work for, which professional membership to take, and who should supervise any prospective coaching they undertake. Carr (2004, p: 17) emphasises that 'certification, licensing, registration and accreditation in coaching all require more thoughtful attention and a change in practice to help build consumer confidence, public trust, and coach credibility' although he argues that there is 'no model currently in existence...that can guarantee quality'. In response perhaps, the various professional bodies are now 'beginning to collaborate in an impressive way' (Whitmore, 2006, Coaching at work Volume 1, Issue 6, p: 35), by 'trying to improve the quality of coaching overall.'



## CHAPTER FOUR

### WHAT IS UNDERSTOOD BY THE TERM 'COACHING'?

#### EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

##### Introduction

The following section considers the empirical evidence to consider what the coachees understood about coaching, how it was interpreted, and in what circumstances it can be used. The results suggest firstly that in this case, there was no common and explicit understanding of what coaching was either before or during the time that coaching was being carried out. As a result, coachees were distracted from being able to focus fully on their development because they were uncertain what expectations there were from the organisation. Additionally, the lack of any explicit corporate coaching definition meant that different interpretations evolved dependent on the coachees' individual experiences.

##### What is understood by the term coaching?

The following empirical evidence suggests that a lot of the coachees did not have an understanding of what coaching was when it was given to them and did not know how to prepare themselves or what to expect:

*Most of the coachees in this sample had not had coaching before, and really did not know what it was. (Coachee 10)*

*I think one of the things to be clear about in the first instance is what is coaching about. I refer to some of the courses I have done, people are simply not clear what it is about. (Coachee 17)*

*I had no preconception as to what it would be like. I did not know what coaching involved, I didn't know if there would be some kind of structure. (Coachee 9).*

The impact of not understanding what coaching was, is that many of the coachees did not know what outputs the business expected it to produce, how it was meant to be carried out, and how they were to balance the time spent on coaching with the rest of their job role and responsibilities:

*I guess the other thing I don't know is what the business wants from it. So I don't fully know what the business driver is. Do they want better, more fulfilled managers, or are they sort of actually saying if the coaching can't justify putting a million on the bottom line, then we are unwilling to pay for it.*

(Coachee 10)

Without the explicit guidance provided to coachees on the theory and purpose of coaching then it was left to the coachees to interpret it for themselves. To do this, they focused on two elements, firstly understanding what it does for them in the work place, and secondly a description of the personal circumstances in which it was applied for them. This implies that coachees understanding coaching as a situation-focused development activity or technique rather than anything more profound.

### *What does coaching do?*

The empirical evidence suggests that coaching has two main uses; to develop their ability to learn and to develop their self-confidence.

#### *Develops internal capability to self learn*

*Reflection.* Coaching may be chiefly about encouraging an individual to reflect and learn from what they do:

*'What coaching enables me to do is stand back from task, and have some self-discovery, and develop some other skills that I didn't think I had'*

(Coachee 3).

Coaching encourages a person to reflect on past issues that may not have worked out the way they might have expected. In this way they may identify why things happened the way they did, and in the process deepen their

understanding and learn. Where reflection concludes with learning, then the coachee is able to do something differently in a similar situation, which should achieve better results.

*It encourages you to explore why did this work or not. It makes you go back and think about it and have another go. (Coachee 3)*

*Develops self-sufficiency.* Coaching appears to work by developing an individual's self sufficiency:

*It is really about encouraging people to think for themselves and to stand on their own two feet. (Coachee 20 ).*

*Motivates.* Coaching may be a process that encourages the coachee to expand their awareness, and to start instead to consider future goals and plans to develop potential and stimulate self motivation.

*I would now define it as helping someone to reach their full potential. ....  
Good coaching should be able to say yeah, you are doing a great job, but imagine this..... (Coachee 7)*

*To develop self-confidence*

*Confidence building.* Coaching may be a process that builds the coachees' self confidence and self belief:

*'Coaching is a great enabler that builds confidence, and develops you in a great way – its fantastic to be able to focus on "me". (Coachee 13)*

*Develops self-awareness.* Coaching may focus on building an individual's awareness of their own behaviours to provide a greater understanding of what is happening around them:

*Coaching brought insight into me and my behaviours, and insight into some of the issues I was facing, (Coachee 21)*

*Removes 'mental barriers'.* Coaching may be about talking impartially with someone to consider a past issue that may have created a negative self-image, and with it, put up barriers to performance.

*It's helped me prioritise on important things, keep my work/life balance in order and it's absolutely brilliant to be able to talk to someone impartial about any blockers to your work. (Coachee 22)*

### *Circumstances in which coaching can be used*

The following section suggests there are three main circumstances in which coaching can be used: firstly to help with career development or changes; secondly to develop capability, and finally to provide someone to 'talk to'.

#### *Career development / change*

*Enabling transition between head office and retail operations.* In this case coaching is used to help someone change role following a move from a head office environment to a stores environment. The coaching itself focused on building their confidence.

*I wasn't sure if I had the same values as some of my retail colleagues, some of the Store Directors and the general store leadership team. I was struggling a bit with that. I was probably a bit paranoid about that. I had come in from the office and I suppose a few people were saying 'what the hell is she doing taking our job!' I have worked 20 or 30 years for this job! So I wasn't sure if I was being set up to succeed. (Coachee 15)*

*To provide career guidance.* At certain times coaching can be used to enable someone to think through what they want to do at a certain point in their careers.

*We sent him to Japan to be a commercial director, when we never ever should have done. He totally failed at it, and he came back in a really rather dreadful state. There was a school of thought that wanted to give him early retirement. The coaching really allowed him to think through what he wanted to do. This was a huge support for him. (Line Director 2)*

*Following a demotion.* Coaching is used in a very supportive manner to help someone 'find their feet' following a recent demotion, and in particular to focus on changing their negative self image:

*One of the things that used to get me into trouble, not necessarily with subordinates, but with managing your boss, was that I used to panic, .....I had some mind-talk about being taken out of the previous shop; that I was no good, I was rubbish, I didn't know what I was doing. And they did a piece a work around 'is it true, is it false, or I don't know'. When I talked about it, I was able to order my own sort of mind-talk. (Coachee 6)*

*Following a change in line manager.* In this case the coachee was given a coach to work through a recent change in a working relationship, which had impacted the coachee's confidence:

*....a working relationship which had changed because of a new dynamic, so I have reacted to that in a certain way which has impacted my confidence and motivation and so on, so that was my reaction to it. So Anne then worked through with me what were my feelings? And I was feeling sad and disappointed, and the fear was growing. And then what was my mind talk saying and I was saying things like 'my new boss questions whether I can do things myself. (Coachee 22)*

*To develop capability*

*Where training is no longer deemed to be effective.* There are times when an individual may have been stuck at a particular level on their career development for a disproportionately long time, and where no specific training course appears to be appropriate to enable advancement. In these situations, coaching can provide a solution.

*....my development needs that came out of my last role, detailed some reasons why I had not progressed as well as one had hoped .....The reality was that there were no training courses, or training method that was available within Tesco. I read the right types of book. I couldn't actually pin-point where I needed to go. So working with my line manager we determined that actually some external coaching would probably benefit me, rather than do something internally like a course, or externally like, go away and read a book. (Coachee 24)*

*I was in a position where I didn't know where I was going to go next, so hence the external coach. (Coachee 22)*

*To address specific development needs. Some individuals may be very clear on what their development needs are, and it may be that the best way to progress these needs is through one to one coaching:*

*I had two separate sets of coaching. The first part was about handling a crisis in my life, in that I wanted to leave the business. I was questioning my commitment at the time. It was quite an urgent recommendation by my line manager at the time. So that is why originally I had that. And then after that, I had a second type of coaching which was around preparing me for my new job. (Coachee 21)*

*Helps to sustain skills learnt in a training course. Coaching may be a way to ensure new skills and concepts learnt on a training course can be implemented in the work environment:*

*Coaching is one of the few examples where Tesco has invested to ensure sustainability of skills practised in a training environment (Coachee 11)*

*Helps to put together development plans. In some cases through a supportive partnership, coaching enables individuals to become more aware of key issues, and help them then translate that into action plans targeting behavioural changes*

*It challenges you to identify the issues, it supports you to understand the underlying behavioural issues are, and is invaluable at rolling that all into an action plan, and it can certainly help you to practice changing those behaviours. (Coachee 23)*

*Develops leadership skills. Coaching may be associated with learning new skills and developing leadership capability:*

*If you want to improve on or build on your leadership skills with confidence to increase your performance levels - Coaching will help. (Coachee 4)*

*To provide someone to talk to*

*To act as a sounding board to senior directors.* In this case the coach addresses a sense of isolation from the coachee, who needed to talk through issues in detail, but who was afraid to do so with their boss in case judgements on her capability might be made.

*On a number of occasions I have not been able to share my true feelings with my manager when making some big decisions on my future, I can do this with Ann without the fear of being judged or saying the wrong thing (Coachee 16)*

*There are some things that you can't work out with your peers because of the rivalry or competition. You can't be seen to be weak and show your emotions particularly in a big corporation like this. So the higher you go, the lonelier it gets, so if you have somebody who helps you develop but also as a mentor to help you through tough times who understands your business, but can give you an objective view to it, well that can be really really useful. (Coachee 17)*

*To substitute for the 'absent' line manager.* Coaching was used to give the coachee quality time and focus to think and discuss their development in cases where the line manager is not investing that time themselves.

*I have a great manager who I trust, however I feel he is time pressured, having a coach helps my development – quality 'me' time (Coachee 26)*

*To act as a support.* Coaching is used to help individuals when their careers are acknowledged to be at a low point.

*It is about understanding this emotional cycle of change (you are doing something new, so immediately you get excited about it, but as you get to know it you start to find it all very difficult, you can't do it, you start to slip down the slope and you get to what we call the 'well of despair'..... Some of the benefit for our business could be that if you coach people through the bit when they are in the well of despair, so that they speed out of it, or stop them from falling over altogether, then that is a benefit (Coachee 15)*

One coachee suggested that coaching did not have to be limited to the work environment that in fact it could be applied in any aspect of the coachee's life:

*It doesn't have to be work-related, it just happens that it translates really well into work as it happens. What they say is that if you are going to reach your full potential, then you have to be happy with all walks of your life. Because if something isn't right at home then it will impact at work, so I think what is really valuable about that is you could really talk about whatever you liked.*  
(Coachee 7)

*Coaching will bring the best out in you at work and at home. Coaching focuses on how you can do things and helps you make good choices.*  
(Coachee 4)

In summary, the empirical section of this chapter suggests that coachees do not possess an understanding of coaching as a theory, interpreting it as a one to one activity that could be used to do a wide variety of developmental activities in an equally wide variety of organisational situations that coachees find themselves in.

### Conclusions

The research suggests that the comprehension, communication, use and application of coaching at Tesco during the time of the research was not clear<sup>7</sup>. Coachees were not clear what it could do, when it could be used, how to balance other responsibilities pertaining to their role with their coaching, and what the organisation expected from the investment.

The lack of an explicit definition from the organisation leaves the interpretation of coaching to those that receive it, and the wide variety of experiences creates difference in these interpretations. These findings suggest two conclusions: firstly that coaching is a complex, in that it is capable of having multiple applications, interpretations and definitions, even in one organisational setting; and secondly the more that coaching is applied within the organisation without a central definition, the more the resulting confusion surrounding its understanding is likely to grow.

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<sup>7</sup> (In fairness to the organisation, the leadership department were aware of this themselves, and this was partly why they had agreed to the research project.)



## CHAPTER FIVE

### WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF WORKING IN A RETAIL ORGANISATION ON THE COACHEE?

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

##### Introduction

Welch (2005, p: 108) suggests that 'retail is a notoriously tough working environment'. This chapter considers the role, impact and influence of the retail organisational environment on the effectiveness of coaching when it is used to enhance its executives' leadership capability. To do this it considers the need for 'distributed' leadership in retail organisations: the effects of a strong organisational culture on development and finally turns to consider Tesco's own organisational culture.

##### *The need for 'distributed' leadership in retail organisations*

Dawson (2000, pps: 119-120) argues that retailing is an economic sector that is 'very different' today from a hundred years ago (e.g. the existence of e-commerce, internationalisation, more efficient demand chains etc). The organisation's form is no longer characterised by being centrally controlled with a charismatic leader, for example Jack Cohen (Tesco), or John Lewis. Instead retailers are now often pursuing an international strategy (Burt et al 2004 p: 483) moving from a 'domestic industry in respect of its format operations' it has taken advantage of 'economic systems that have become more open' in the pursuit of obtaining sales growth (Dawson 2001a, p: 292). Dawson (2000, p: 119) suggests that the 'rapid structural transformation' has led to a 'spatially dis-aggregated and dispersed nature of operations' (Dawson 2000, p: 143 and Dawson 2001b, p: 12) along with a large extent of networked operational units (Dawson 2000, p: 143). Dawson (2000, p: 123) goes on to suggest that there are a number of 'major managerial challenges for the retail sector', such as managing the organisations 'bigness', remaining

in touch with and responsive to customers, maintaining focus on competition, entering new markets, entering new diversifications, managing relationships with suppliers: other retailers and governments, managing mergers and acquisitions, extending brands; turbulence in the retail environment; e-retail etc. In summary, these challenges represent a 'major forecasting challenge facing managers in retailing' (Dawson 2000, p: 136).

Clearly it is not possible for the Chief Executive Officer to be able to be everywhere at once in a dispersed organisation, within a company that often has in excess of 1000 separate units (e.g. Tesco now have around 2000 stores in the UK and employ around 100,000 staff in a total of eleven other international markets<sup>8</sup>). As the size of the operation increases, the CEO's role in many cases focuses more and more on developing strategy.

Mintzberg (1992, p: 447) warns that to prevent the strategy from 'falling into the abyss', organisations must have the 'executorial skill base'. He argues that the 'leaders' role becomes proactive rather than reactive' and quotes from Sam Walton (founder of WalMart) who maintains that the leaders have to keep in touch with customer facing staff because 'the best ideas have always come from the clerks'. The main challenge is the ability 'to seek them out, to listen, to act'. This implies the need for distributing leadership away from the centre as the organisation expands. At Tesco for example it was realised in the late eighties and early nineties that as the number of stores increased, the retail director could no longer be the 'face of the leader', and that this leadership role needed to be distributed to the (regional) director on the ground (Wemms<sup>9</sup>, 2005). Just how much 'leadership' the individual can exercise is related to their expertise, ability, role and position in the hierarchy and the relative freedom they have been granted to exercise influence over others and effect change (Wemms, 2005). The key point here is that leadership capability needs to be exercised by local managers to enable local

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<sup>8</sup> [http://www.tescocorporate.com/annualreview07/02\\_ourmarkets/ourmarkets.html](http://www.tescocorporate.com/annualreview07/02_ourmarkets/ourmarkets.html) & <http://www.tescocorporate.com/international.htm>

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Michael Wemms 21.10.05 – ex-Tesco Retail Director 1992 – 2000 (source: <http://www.inchcape.com/aboutus/board/>)

changes to occur. For example, in a recent presentation<sup>10</sup>, Charlie Mayfield, Chairman of John Lewis Partnership stated that the transformation of their company over the past ten years '*had only been possible through local leadership*'.

Distributing leadership responsibility away from the centre has local advantages, and in addition it creates a greater range of leadership roles, which may stop the drainage of leadership to competitor organisations that often occurs when these roles do not exist. (For example over the past couple of years Tesco have lost 'a string of young leaders such as John Browett, the former Tesco operations development director, Steve Robinson, head of Tesco Direct, Ken McMeikan and Scott Wheway). Shim, Lusch et al, (2002, p: 186) suggest it is important to create some sort of developmental process for them if the organisation is to avoid a potential 'leadership crisis'. Leadership development programmes may also have a range of other benefits, as Hoorne and Steman-Jones (2002, cited in Duckett and Macfarlane 2003 p: 309) suggest that there is 'a positive association between leadership development and the growth of financial turnover'.

### *The effect of a strong organisational culture on development*

The following section considers what is meant by the meaning of the word 'culture' before considering the role of a strong organisational culture on the development of its employees.

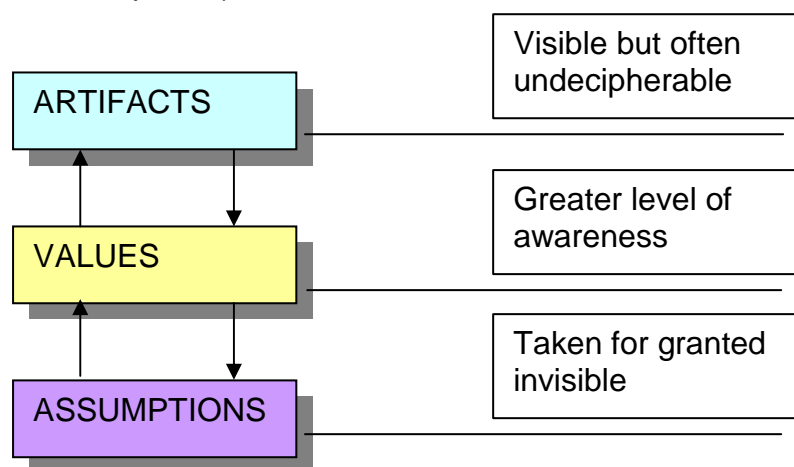
The word 'culture' is 'complex', (Ogbonna and Whipp, 1999, p: 75) and is frequently understood in a limited and 'oversimplified' sense (Palmer and Hardy 2000, p: 135). In trying to define it Grint (1995, p: 162), compares it to a 'black hole' arguing that 'the closer you get to it the less light is thrown upon the topic, and the less chance you have of surviving the experience'. Hatch (1997, p: 202) suggests it is 'probably one of the most difficult of all organisational concepts to define', evidenced by there being over 164

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<sup>10</sup> Premier Series Dinner, Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, George Hotel, 8.4.08

different definitions identified by anthropologists in the 1950s alone (Palmer and Hardy, 2000, p: 117). Palmer and Hardy (2000, p: 123) suggest that the concept of culture is best 'likened to an iceberg', where the tip conveys only the surface behaviour, which may only be 'understood by exploring the deeper structures below, i.e. values, beliefs', myths, heroes etc. An example of this comes from Edgar Schein (cited Hatch 1997, p: 211), who developed a three level model of organisational culture, which is shown below in figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1. Three levels of organisational culture (source Edgar Schein, cited in Hatch 1997, p: 211)



This model is a description of culture, related to the organisation. Hatch (1997, p: 210) describes the model on three levels: at the core there is a set of commonly held assumptions shared by all the individuals in that culture, which are basic and non-negotiable. On the surface there are 'artefacts' (myths, heroes, stories etc) that provide an indication of the assumptions and of what the culture entails. In the middle are the commonly held values that both shape and are shaped by the assumptions and artefacts. Although there is little evidence to support this model, it implies that a culture is 'a living, evolving, self-organising reality' (Morgan, 1997, p: 147) that can change and be changed and applied to an organisational setting.

#### *Organisational culture.*

The study of culture within an organisational setting has become increasingly popular in the last thirty years, perhaps peaking during the eighties and

nineties, primarily as a consequence to the interest taken in Japanese business success (Morgan 1997, p: 119; Grint 1995, p: 173). Writers were particularly interested in how they had managed to rise to the top of the world's economic output tables, even though they had 'virtually no natural resources, no energy, and over 110 million people crowded into four small mountainous islands' (Morgan 1997 p: 119). These studies may have prompted western management writers (e.g. Deal and Kennedy 1982, Peters and Waterman 1982) to take a special interest in the culture and character of their own countries, and the links to organisational life.

Ray ('Corporate culture as a control device' 1986, from Clark et al, 1994, pps: 357-364) suggests that an organisation's culture can be treated as a 'potential control variable' (p: 357), which it is argued 'is something the organisation has'. Similarly writers (Peters and Waterman 1982, p: 9, Deal and Kennedy 1982, p: 4) concluded in the early 1980s that the culture of any organisation could be managed towards greater effectiveness. Managers rapidly gained an awareness of organisational culture, followed by the belief that a 'strong' one was linked to business excellence. It was argued that the impact of having values and beliefs tied to a company's performance was possible, and it would mean that employees living the organisation's values would know instinctively how to act in any given situation (Deal and Kennedy, 1982 pps: 21-36). Peters and Waterman (1982, p: 76) supported this view, arguing that people 'way down the line know what they are supposed to do in most situations because the handful of guiding values is crystal clear'. By the mid 1980s it was being suggested that the organisation's culture could become 'a source of sustained competitive advantage' (Barney, 1986, cited in Grint 1995, p: 176), and as a result efforts to create and sustain strong cultures within the organisation 'temporarily attained the status of a management fad' (Beaumont 1993, cited in Buchanan and Huczynski. 1997; p: 516 and Braddick 2003a, p: 1). In short managers began to try to influence the organisation's culture, so that 'a few transcending values....cover core purposes' (Peters and Waterman 1982, p: 106). Ogbanna and Whipp (1999, p: 78) argue that the organisational culture can 'enact the all encompassing

vision of what the organisation wishes to be', whilst simultaneously offering a 'sense of direction for its members'.

However many businesses discovered an internal 'mosaic of organisational realities' and 'competing value systems', when they tried to do this rather than a 'uniform corporate culture' (Morgan 1997, p: 137), and concluded it was not simple. Hofstede (1998, p: 1) suggests that whilst organizations have cultures, 'parts of organizations may have distinct subcultures'. Hatch (1997, p: 200) suggests that this is because the organisational culture also 'expresses aspects of the national, regional, industrial, occupational, and professional cultures in and through which it operates', and as a result, the mix of individuals inside the organisation creates a 'mini society' (Morgan 1997, p: 129). Morgan (1997, p: 135) suggests that it is not surprising that two organisations in the same industry can have different cultures that are poles apart such as 'Apple computer's anti-establishment employees devoted to rule-breaking innovation', as compared to 'IBM's white-shirted professionals committed to customer service' (Hatch 1997, p: 200). Ogbonna and Whipp (1999, p: 87) suggest that whilst it is widely believed that 'organisational culture can be managed' there is no evidence that the 'deeper levels of culture can be susceptible to conscious manipulation'.

### *A review of Tesco's organisational culture*

Tesco is an example of a highly successful retailer that has consciously developed a strong organisational culture in order to deliver its core purpose of 'creating value for customers to earn their lifetime loyalty' as consistently as possible across the length and breadth of the business. Tesco is the largest, most international, and most profitable grocery retailer in the UK<sup>11</sup>, and has developed a strong organisational culture underpinned by its values.

Mike Wemms<sup>12</sup> (ex retail director for Tesco 1992 – 2000), believes that the key to Tesco's more recent success has been its focus and drive on the

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.tescocorporate.com>

<sup>12</sup> Interview 21.10.05

development of their core values. By the late nineteen eighties and early nineties he and his colleagues recognised that the business was getting too big to be able to lead from their Hertfordshire centre, and that as a result they needed to empower employees outside the centre with leadership capability. The Company knew that managers needed more freedom to make decisions, but many were uncertain how to react in specific situations without first consulting superiors in the centre. As a result of this, in 1997 the company decided to consult with the whole organisation to get ownership from every level, and try to 'articulate what was really important' to their business. These then became a set of core Tesco values and were used to enable managers to make decisions in the field without having to defer decisions upwards. Mike Wemms (2005) believe that these early value statements helped managers make decisions that were never going to contain '*too many mistakes*', and in so doing facilitated the devolvement of power away from the centre. Over the past ten years since 1997, the values have evolved (see figures 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4), with their essence summed up today in their catch phrase: '*Every little helps*'<sup>13</sup>.

#### *Company motto*

At each step, Tesco are focused on keeping their values simple, and easy to understand so that they can be transferred easily between business functions, between staff grades and between operating countries. For example the Chairman of Tesco, David Reid<sup>14</sup> continually makes the point to emphasis the simplicity of the Company motto at his presentations: '*Better for customers, simpler for staff and cheaper for Tesco*'.

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<sup>13</sup> [http://www.tescocorporate.com/annualreview07/01\\_tescostory/tescostory2.html](http://www.tescocorporate.com/annualreview07/01_tescostory/tescostory2.html)

<sup>14</sup> Presentation given to the Management business school, Edinburgh University, 20.4.05

### *Company slogan*

The 'Every Little Helps' slogan is described<sup>15</sup> as '*a common philosophy to bind us all together*', and refers to the three critical elements of the business: the shopping trip: the work environment: and the way the company does business

*Shopping lists.* The slogan is used to underpin 'shopping lists' (see figure 5.2 below), which are a set of values relating to each of the above areas, and are then used to guide how all operational decisions throughout the company are to be made by those with leadership responsibilities.

Figure 5.2: The Tesco 'shopping lists' derived from 'every little helps'

<p><u>Shopping trip</u> (Customer focused)</p> <p>Clear aisles Get what you want Good prices No queues Great staff</p> <p><u>A great place to work</u> (Staff focused)</p> <p>Treat with respect A manager who helps An interesting job Opportunity to get on</p> <p><u>The way we work</u> (enables the above two 'shopping lists')</p> <p>Better for customers Simpler for staff Cheaper for Tesco</p> <p>Source: <a href="http://www.tescocorporate.com/annualreview07/02">http://www.tescocorporate.com/annualreview07/02</a></p>
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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.tescocorporate.com>



The total number of Tesco corporate values has grown over the past few years as depicted in figure 5.3 below. For example in 2000, there were approximately ten core values (Wemms 2005), whereas by 2008 this had grown to twenty (www.tescocorporate.com). This is partly due to environmental, social and technological developments, such as the increasing consumer awareness on global warming and the responding need for ‘green’ policies that create the new grouping of ‘community’. The values themselves have evolved, becoming more explicit but without losing their simplicity. For example under the heading ‘operations’, the 2000 value statement ‘operate better’ has evolved into the 2008 statement; ‘we always save time and money’.

Figure 5.3: Changes in the Tesco Values between 2000, and 2008.  
(Source: Wemms 2005, and www.tescocorporate.com)

Heading	Values 2000	Values 2008
Operations	Build better Supply better Operate better	We try to get it right first time We deliver consistently every day We make our jobs easier to do We know how vital our jobs are We always save time and money
People	Retain loyal people Recruit the best	An opportunity to get on An interesting job A manager who helps me To be treated with respect
Customers	New Customers Encourage loyalty	Earn life time loyalty The aisles are clear I can get what I want The prices are good I don't queue The staff are great
Shareholders	Invest wisely Maximise profits Grow sales	
Finance		Manage our investment Maximise profit Grow sales
Community		Be responsible, fair and honest Be a good neighbour

Tesco try to ensure that all staff members are aware what the values are, and how they all fit together through the use of the Tesco Steering wheel', (see figure 5.4 below). Here the core values are developed from the company slogan through the following two over-arching values that apply throughout the business;

- No one tries harder for customers
- Treat people how we like to be treated

In summary the employees all share in trying to deliver the values, which culminates in an organisation-wide effort to constantly find ways to make the customers' shopping trip better.

Figure 5.4 – the Tesco Steering wheel (source: [www.tescocorporate.com](http://www.tescocorporate.com))



## Summary

This chapter suggests that many retail organisations have had to increase their number of operating units in order to grow sales, which in many cases has resulted in internationalisation policies. With the growth in size has come a competitive need to devolve leadership capability away from the centre, so that local decision making can be done quickly without having to take time to refer back to the 'figurehead leader' at the centre.

This chapter suggests that one way to distribute leadership capability is through generating a set of core organisational values to become accepted as part of its culture. In this way it is argued that people throughout the business know simply and instinctively what their core purpose is, what they stand for, and what they are trying to do. In the case of Tesco, the organisational culture is very explicitly articulated through a core set of guiding values, which are made explicit with reference to the corporate 'steering wheel'. The values act as a leadership tool, enabling the managers in leadership positions outside of the organisation's centre, (theoretically in any part of the world, and in any business function) to be guided on the decisions that they make, so that they always focus in on the core purpose (i.e. making the customers shopping trip better, and earning their lifetime loyalty), and reinforce the company slogan.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF WORKING IN A RETAIL ORGANISATION ON THE COACHEE?

#### EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

##### Introduction

The following section considers the empirical evidence relating to the effect Tesco's organisational culture has on its employees, its coachees and the use of coaching within the organisation. It suggests that the organisational culture exerts pressure on employees to restrict aspects of their own personality in order to conform to the implied behaviours associated with their role, inferred in the corporate values and expected by line Directors. Often this pressure manifests itself as an inner sense of fear that may prevent risk taking in case it results in undesirable repercussions. This then is the background for the coachee who adopts coaching as a leadership development technique. The empirical evidence suggests that the strong focus on performance coupled with the lack of any explicit reference to what coaching is, or how it supports the business's core purpose, creates uncertainty on how coachees should use it, and how line managers should support it. The resulting confusion relating to its use and application results in diverging interpretations to form in the minds of different line managers and different coachees, which can impact and influence the willingness, motivation and commitment of both parties to the development intervention. When this happens it is likely that the potential benefits coaching might deliver are compromised.

##### *The effect of the organisational culture on employees*

The following section considers the effect of the Tesco organisational culture on employees. Evidence is implied from coachees' interviews when positive aspects of their coaching are revealed in relation to the daily working

environment. It is the contrast that the interviewee describes that indirectly provides the insight.

Frequently coachees suggest that as employees working in the organisational culture, they feel under pressure to comply to a set of expected patterns of behaviour associated with their role and level of seniority within the organisation. This can sometimes act to suppress part of their personality (and potential performance), preventing them from talking to other work colleagues about certain issues, and stopping them from behaving in ways that they naturally adopt outside work. The following quotes list a range of inner fears that act as barriers preventing them from adopting a more authentic working manner.

#### *Vulnerability*

Some coachees feel unwilling to behave in any way that is outside what is expected of them in role. This sense of inner fear appears to inhibit both their own development as well as potential company performance. The following quote is taken from a stores director who was able to reason why managers would not want to be wholly open and honest with their line managers:

*I just think it would be asking too much. A lot of these guys don't want to unload on their boss. They are trying to portray a role. One store manager did actually talk to me about some stuff but later on he said, I think I put myself in a vulnerable position there saying that to you. Now he hadn't, I had in fact just got more respect for him, but the point was that was in his mind. He had made himself vulnerable by opening up to that extent. (Coachee 15)*

Similarly this inner fear associated with vulnerability may even prevent employees talking openly and honestly with work colleagues in the workplace. This seems to be particularly the case the more senior one becomes in the organisation:

*I think I found it hard. I don't think it was easy being very very open and honest, because that makes you feel vulnerable. To be honest to you, I think I came away wondering if I had been too honest, and wondering if I had opened up vulnerabilities. I was in a position coming away wondering if I*

*should really have been so honest. Having said that I have reaped the benefits from it. I have been able to really work hard and I understand myself better. So that I have got skills now to be able to think this is where we are, and now what are we going to do now. I just think they had the same skills as other coaches. It was YSC that I used. They were skilled just like any other consultancy. (Coachee 14)*

#### *Inhibition*

The coachee in the quote below implies that some things are deemed to be 'right' whereas other things are 'wrong' and that her fear of making a mistake is enough to suppress any risk taking, and to withhold her true personality. *On a number of occasions I have not been able to share my true feelings with my manager when making some big decisions on my future, I can do this with Ann (reference to their coach) without the fear of being judged or saying the wrong thing (Coachee 16).*

#### *Judgement*

The following quote implies that unlike the coach, with whom it was possible to be open and honest, the coachee feels they must once again suppress parts of their true self in order to prevent being 'judged' by others. *I was able to be open and honest with my coach because he was non-judgemental and very good at getting to the heart of the problem (Coachee 27)*

#### *Threatened*

The implication of the following quote suggests that some coachees feel that what they say can result in them feeling threatened or belittled in the work organisation. *And what I liked about Trevor was that he was able to relate it, and I never felt threatened, and never felt inadequate (Coachee 24)*

#### *Exposure*

Some coachees fear they will be 'exposed' if they step out from behind the expectations of the role that they are currently involved in. One Store Director

talked about store managers who often had a perceived need to behave and act in ways that are expected by the business organisation for people in their roles, and that it would not be appropriate to do anything that did not fit into that ideal, such as sometimes speaking openly and honestly about certain issues.

*They have probably never talked about themselves to somebody before, because you tend not to, at least not that honestly, because you are always trying to deliver yourself in a role to somebody. If you are a husband you probably wouldn't talk to your wife in that way, because you are trying to be a husband, you wouldn't talk to your boss in that way because you are trying to be a Tesco manager. (Coachee 15)*

#### *Intimidation*

Some coachees suggested that there were certain things that their colleagues would not dare say, even if they needed to be said, because they lacked the necessary courage to challenge established thinking:

*Then the next level down, and some of them are never going to make it because they are not brave enough and they are not truthful with themselves. And then you have people underneath, people like me, and I was hitting at it. So I would be saying things to people and they would be saying 'you can't say that' (Coachee 17)*

#### *Weak*

One coachee believes that anyone who wants to be part of the senior Tesco Corporation has to be perceived as 'strong', and not carry any weaknesses. *You can't be seen to be weak and show your emotions particularly in a big corporation like this. (Coachee 17)*

The quotes listed above suggest that employees are prevented from revealing aspects of themselves by a perceived fear of what might happen if they did. It is possible that this range of fears is derived from the strong organisational culture that is capable of exerting a strong influence on employees' behaviours and actions, guided by employees' interpretation of what the organisation does and does not want them to do or to be.

### *The effect of the organisational culture on the use of coaching*

The following section considers the impact of the organisational culture on the use of coaching. It is likely that the lack of any explicit reference to coaching either within the values, or elsewhere creates uncertainty both for coachees, who question how it should be used and applied and what is expected from them as a result of the coaching, and for line managers who question its importance and value and whether to support it or not. Both can impact the coachees' motivation and drive to use coaching as a development tool.

#### *The effect on the coachee*

The strong organisational culture has an effect on the coachees' perception relating to the use and value of coaching as a development intervention. Primarily the impression that employees reach is partly based on their experience and partly based on the emphasis placed on it by the organisation. The following quote suggests the coachee is confused and distracted by the lack of guidance received for coaching:

*I just haven't seen any real energy behind it. It is left to the individual and I am not sure if it is really supported at the senior level. So I am not sure that if I was to say that I would like to have coaching once a month for a day, that that would be received very favourably. (Coachee 10)*

Without the explicit reference to the use of coaching within the organisation then coachees are left to make assumptions, and interpretations for themselves. The following examples show a range of interpretations from uncertainty to acceptance to denial (for someone who did not want to tell others he was having a coach) to the cold fear of someone equating coaching with their impending dismissal.

*Uncertainty.* Within Tesco many employees work in a strongly task focused environment, where coaching as a form of personal development can often be seen as secondary to the primary role of achieving budgets and



deadlines. The following quote makes direct reference to coaching in relation to the core business activity:

*'It is quite alien to the culture of being very task orientated. We are not particularly focused on spending time to develop self'* (Coachee 3)

*Acceptance.* The following quote suggests that the coachee who is used to working in a strong task focused culture, prevented himself from complaining about their coaching (which he felt was not adding much value), because they did not want to be perceived as negative, unwilling or 'weak'. The coachee decided that it was better to accept what was happening and what he was going through as 'part of the system of coaching':

*She would take me back to 'when do you think your relationship with your father got bad?' It got quite personal. But I was fine with that. If that was part of the system of coaching then I was happy to go along with it....* (Coachee 2)

*Denial.* The uncertainty about coaching within the organisational culture made some individuals unwilling to share their experience with work colleagues, perhaps in the belief that some unfavourable judgements might be made about why it was being carried out.

*To be honest I didn't tell them. Maybe I should have. Should it have been done on the quiet? I think there is a perception 'why do you need a coach? Are you not good enough?' Do you know what I mean? I mentioned it to one or two people. I don't think that was a particularly positive thing to do.*  
(Coachee 9)

*Fear of dismissal.* The uncertainty about the use of coaching for employees created in some people a perception that it was only for remedial purposes, with one coachee assuming that being given a coach was a signal that the business were about to terminate their employment:

*'One of my director colleagues – the business suggested he had a coach, and he was really suspicious. He thought it was part of a process to basically get rid of him. When it was first introduced he was horrified* (Coachee 15)

The uncertainty about what coaching is, how it works, what it does and what is expected from it seems to be responsible for generating a sense of fear and uncertainty and adds to the confusion surrounding it. It is not just the coachee who is affected by this, as the line managers may also be asking similar questions, and interpreting coaching for themselves from afar.

#### *The effect on the line manager*

The following quotes describe the diverging interpretations that different line managers reach, ranging from negative and sceptical to supportive and valued. The quotes reinforce the impact the line manager's interpretation can have on their coachee's use of coaching and on their development.

*Dismissive.* Some line managers were clearly dismissive of coaching as a development intervention:

*I generally feel that there is a real opportunity for this area to be very woolly. .... A bit 'wishy washy'. A bit black art, a bit black magic stuff. All of my business experience tells me that as soon as you come up against anything that sits in this area, the first thing you do is strip it down to its binary black and white components, turn it into a very simple thing .... that tends to bring you the best value. (Line Director 1)*

*Negative.* Other line managers were clearly negative towards the use of coaching for development purposes, and by making this public indirectly created a similar coaching sub-culture capable of influencing their team members away from its use:

*It had to come from your leader. Because those guys who worked for Terry Price who is John's equal, - there was resistance to it. .... And it definitely came from the top down, through the leadership. We were all absolutely up for it, when we were under John. The other guys under Terry were very sceptical about it..... there was complete resistance. I mean one guy didn't even turn up. Definitely it is about what comes from the top. (Coachee 17).*

*Provides value.* In contrast, another example shows the effect of a line manager with a supportive attitude to coaching. In this case the coachee

feels valued and encouraged to talk openly about their coaching experiences and so deepen their learning. (In the quote below the coachee is referring to their line manager).

*....someone who I could bounce off ideas, learning, and trial what I was trying to do differently. I think I have spoken to my current boss at least once every two to three weeks, just to get his buy in and or any advice from him.*

(Coachee 1)

*Involvement.* One store director believed that the line manager should be involved at the beginning of the coaching in order to share their thoughts about the coachee's development with the coach. In this way there is a sense of shared ownership to the development goals as well as creating an atmosphere of openness:

*Danielle and I are going to have a three-way conversation with Neil my boss in the first meeting. That way he can be clear what it is that I am going to be working on in those sessions. So he will describe the gap that he sees, and what he would like to happen. I would say that is critical. But it is only about setting up the expectations about what it is you are working on in the coaching. But I wouldn't expect the individual boss to sit down with me and say 'right Julie what have you spoken to Danielle about this time?' It is just about goal clarification. (Coachee 18)*

*Empathy.* Some line managers that have had coaching themselves can be more empathetic with their direct reports and add value:

*Another big benefit from this is that as soon as Nick was aware that I was being coached, he arranged to have a one to one. So we had an hour's session, with him helping me understand what I should be getting out of coaching, and what I should feel by the end of the programme. Not shaping or giving me clear elements, but in terms of what I should feel at the end.*

(Coachee 1)

## Summary

The empirical evidence suggests that by having a set of explicit corporate values, some employees feel under pressure to adopt ways of working and behave in ways that may suppress aspects of their own individuality. Under these conditions managers may evolve who simply do not wish to challenge the status quo, may be characterised as wanting to please, and be unwilling to take risks. The lack of any explicit reference to coaching in the organisational culture is likely to create confusion within coachees and line managers, and affect their understanding of the value and motivation towards coaching, and influence their interpretation. It is likely that many of these interpretations will diverge, which simply compounds greater confusion. The uncertainty is likely to be further compounded in relation to working in a strong organisational culture that is usually performance focused, clear, and explicit.

## *Discussion*

It is suggested above that a key advantage associated with developing and harnessing a strong organisational culture lies in using a set of explicit values to empower organisational employees to make 'leadership' decisions without having to refer them back to the centre for authorisation. The implication here is that organisations with explicit value systems may attain a competitive advantage over those without. Peters (1986, p: 265) summarises these points when he suggests that 'shaping values and symbolizing attention' can greatly reduce administration and promote leadership. However Peltier (2001, p: 57) suggests that when values are set up to encourage specific patterns of behaviours, the actual patterns are not always those that are intended, that sometimes they are random, or 'at odds with the espoused goals'. Bennis (1999, p: 52) argues that people have a natural tendency to want to feel part of the 'organizational society', often finding a sense of identity, in terms of 'status, position, competence and accomplishment' from membership. This membership of a profession or organisation is a 'real life passport to identity, selfhood, and to self-esteem', where 'what you do determines to a large extent, what you are'. However he goes on to warn that

an individual's perception of 'loyalty', or the 'pressure to be a member of the club' or a 'fear of being outside looking in' are 'often given as a reason or pretext for muffling dissent, or suppressing a person's natural desire to say what they think'. Hilmer and Donaldson (1996), (cited in Palmer and Hardy, 2000, p: 134) concur with this, suggesting that cultural change can 'encourage people to suppress or suspend independent thought and action'. Peck (1987, p: 58) suggests that many people in western societies can get 'trapped' in a 'tradition of rugged individualism', where they feel that they 'dare not be honest about themselves' (p: 59), preferring instead to live the life they think they ought to live. Ogbonna and Whipp, (1999, p: 77) make the point that whilst some business organisations attempt to develop a set of values to 'link to the strategic direction' of the organisation, these may not be sufficient to alter the employees own deeply held values that tend to 'remain intact' (Ogbonna and Whipp, 1999, p: 87). The potential result in this case, is an employee who is behaving in ways that reflect the organisation's values, but not their own.

Palmer and Hardy (2000, p: 134) warn that attempts to manipulate behaviours through changing culture has a 'dark side', because sometimes it 'encourages people to suppress or suspend' their own personalities. In summary, they describe culture manipulation through for example the use of a set of organisational values may be a 'double-edged sword', which can 'lead to closure of mind, restriction of consciousness, and reduction of autonomy' (Palmer and Hardy, 2000, p: 136).

## Conclusion

There is perhaps an irony here in that the organisational culture that has been manufactured through the creation of explicit values to support the core purpose and to allow leadership to be dispersed away from the centre has resulted in some cases of restricting the natural and free spirited individualistic performance of its leaders. Rather than setting them free, its effect seems to be limiting how much of their private self they share in the public arena of the work organisation. The use of coaching is affected indirectly, as it does not

yet appear to be explicitly 'valued' by the organisation, or by some line managers and coachees. As a result coachees are unable to determine what it is, how it is defined, and what level of commitment they should put into it, all of which distract from their development. Line managers too have the power to influence sub-pockets of the organisation with their interpretation, which can adversely affect coachee motivation to their coaching. It is likely that this uncertainty stems from the organisational culture that has not yet explicitly stated either in its values or elsewhere where or how coaching fits into the corporate slogan; '*every little helps*'.

## CHAPTER SIX

### WHAT ARE THE DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COACHEE?

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

##### Introduction

Comparatively speaking, whilst a lot has been written on the role and activity of the coach, much less has been devoted to the role of the coachee. Dembkowski and Eldridge (2004, p: 3) suggest that the potential success of coaching may be dependent on 'the coachee's motivation and willingness to reveal emotion'. Flaherty (1999, p: 60) argues that most people 'are not looking for coaching even though in many organizations the buzzwords of 'continual improvement' and 'international competition' seem to necessitate that they get it. In short 'people generally aren't open to being coached' (Flaherty 1999, p: 61) because most of them think that they don't need it.

This chapter considers the characteristics of the individual who is open to being coached, such that they are willing to surface deep-rooted issues, and then talk and answer questions about them. It is possible to describe people with these characteristics as 'intrinsically motivated'.

##### *Traits associated with intrinsically motivated individuals.*

Some writers suggest there are traits that characterise those individuals who are prepared to focus intrinsically on their own development.

##### *Coachee self-motivation*

Not all coachees are equally self-motivated towards their own development by coaching. Dembkowski and Eldridge (2004, p: 4) point out that 'not every client is a good client' and in relation to coaching Downey (2003, p: 123) maintains that trying to coach someone who doesn't want it 'will get you nowhere', recommending that 'if an individual in a work organisation is

achieving all their goals, is not disrupting things for others and does not want to be coached, then leave them alone'. Belasco (in Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: xii) suggests that for coaching to be successful the coachee 'must want desperately to move to learn, to grow and be truly dedicated to spend time and energy to do so'. Morgan et al (2005, p: 43) suggest that most people will have 'concerns and anxieties, some of which are bound to be self-serving or protective' that are in 'danger of limiting the coach's effectiveness'. For success it seems likely that the coachee 'must commit to the hard work, risk and awkwardness that are part of real, sustained impact' (Morgan et al, 2005, p: 41). In summary 'the coachee must take ownership over his or her own progress, working at it constantly and with commitment', whilst the coach is there 'with all the necessary support and expertise' (Morgan et al 2005, p: 41 and 42).

### *Openness*

People who are 'open' may benefit from coaching. Bennis (1999, p: 58) describes openness as a 'willingness to try new things.....and be inspired to be both adventurous and creative'. He goes on to warn however that 'the spirit of openness tends to 'atrophy' as people grow up and develop often into 'copies of other adults' (p: 58). Blanchard and Bowles (1998, p: 160) describe an open mind as a 'learning and growing mind'. Drummond (2005, p: 119) encourages people to 'shift away from the run of the mill' and look to do things 'from a fresh angle'. People need to be 'confident' (p: 119) to free themselves from the self-imposed pressure to conform to rigid cultures, and to act and think in predictable ways. Being open applies to many parts of the coaching process, beginning with working in a one to one relationship, which for many coachees will be a new experience, through to talking about issues that they have previously kept secret from others.

### *Commitment to change*

Individuals who are prepared to give up doing familiar things in favour of change are likely to benefit from coaching. Ferucci, (1982, pps: 155 - 156) argues that to develop oneself the individual needs to accept that a 'series of big changes' may need to happen, that necessitate doing new things that



'may not necessarily be pleasurable'. He goes on to argue that for this to happen the coachee may be 'obliged to leave' their comfort zone, and 'progress into the unknown'.

### *Confronting fear and self doubt*

Downey (2003, p: 42) suggests that 'nothing interferes with human performance more' than fear and self-doubt. Gallwey (1986, p: 104) suggests that everyone has their own 'inner challenge' that they need to overcome, that people need to be willing to face up to and talk about. Ferucci (1982, p: 156) suggests that many people resist change because they fear 'being violently and deeply hurt'. Landsberg (2003, p: 14) refers to feedback to suggest that coachees need to get to the point where they ask for feedback, so that they can 'self-correct' and become more productive.

### *Honesty*

Coaching involves talking to another person about issues that are of a personal significance. Bennis (1999, p: 100-101) suggests that having someone to talk to can help them to 'reflect', 'learn' and 'find out more' about themselves, but they have to be 'honest' (Tolle 2005b, p: 66) with themselves to get the benefits and self-learning that this process brings.

### *Listening to feedback*

A key characteristic of a potentially good coachee is a willingness to seek and then listen to feedback. Goleman (2005, p: 151) suggests that feedback can be the 'lifblood of the organisation', although he points out that in the work place it is often seen as 'criticism', and so frequently it is 'put off'. It is a useful process, because without feedback then an individual must rely solely on self-judgments, which may often provide only a 'façade of reality' (Fine, 2006, p: 165). Similarly Gallwey (1986, p: 27) warns that by ignoring feedback people are likely to judge themselves too quickly, often creating 'self-judgments that become self-fulfilling prophecies' in the process. In short he argues that 'you become what you think' (p: 27). Levine (1986, p: 12) argues that many people are 'frightened of the open space of investigation, frightened of becoming vulnerable to the truth of the moment'.

### *Perseverance*

Ferrucci (1982, p: 156) warns that there may be a natural resistance to 'opening up' about oneself that may stem from a particular point in a person's development. However, he stresses that the key is to have 'the courage to face the negative' issues, and 'the patience to stay with it', because 'very often a transformation happens when we face it long enough and let the corresponding feelings freely emerge' (Ferrucci 1982, p: 41).

### *Courage*

Ferrucci (1982, p: 156) believes people must be brave, because they have to 'progress into the unknown, to face the tremendous impact of the self'. Similarly Drummond (2005, p: 126) suggests that people who 'stick' to their values and beliefs won't always make themselves 'popular', but they will get 'a strong sense of who they are and where they are going'.

### *Neoteny*

Finally, Bennis and Thomas (2002a, p: 20 and 2002b, p: 9) suggest that an intrinsically motivated individual is likely to have 'neoteny' (defined as 'the retention of youthful qualities by adults') as a characteristic, which manifests in the following ways: curiosity; playfulness; eagerness; fearlessness; warmth; energy; being willing to take risks; hungry for knowledge and experience; courageous; and eager to see what the new day brings. In short it is the quality that keeps people focused on 'undiscovered things to come'. Drucker (2000, p: 163) supports this view arguing that people 'will have to learn to stay young and mentally alive during a fifty year working life'.

## CHAPTER SIX

### WHAT ARE THE DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COACHEE?

#### EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

##### Introduction

The following section considers the empirical evidence regarding the characteristics of the coachee both before and during the coaching intervention. It confirms much of what is detailed in the literature, particularly the importance of openness and honesty and the commitment and willingness required to put themselves into what can occasionally be uncomfortable situations, and talk about issues they might have preferred not to.

Additionally the empirical evidence also demonstrates the erosive impact on motivation caused by pre-conceived expectations associated with coaching, and the lack of an open mind, which often manifest in coachees who are unwilling to take responsibility for their own development, and develop cynicism as to the reasons they are being coached.

##### *The mindset of the coachee*

The following section considers how the coachee is thinking and feeling about their coaching.

##### *With line manager involvement*

Two senior directors interviewed revealed that they had spent time with their direct report before their coaching. The first line manager stresses the importance to coaching of the coachee's mental state prior to coaching,

arguing that it must be 'right'. However what is not clear is how this is determined;

*The precondition of coaching is that if someone is not in the right mental state, then it is not going to add any value (Line Director 2).*

One other director took a personal interest in what specifically coaching was going to do for their direct reports. If the two of them could not agree on the development needs, then coaching would not be allowed to proceed:

*'People who are actually working with you need to agree with you what it is you think they need to be coached on, and if they refuse to acknowledge their need, or if they don't do anything about it, then I don't want to do anything for them' (Line Director 1)*

#### *Without line manager involvement*

The following section considers the mental state of the majority of coachees when there is no line manager involvement prior to coaching. In these cases, they were free to interpret and prepare themselves for coaching as they saw fit. The empirical evidence below suggests that coachees ranged from closed and sceptical to open and self-motivated.

*Closed-minded.* In some cases, coaching was given to coachees where there were other extenuating circumstances. In the following quote, the coachee had been given coaching following a recent demotion. The organisation perhaps hoped it would re-energise the coachee, although in reality it fueled cynicism

*I felt that coaching was to 'tick a box' for my boss's boss, and someone would be able to say 'we've supported him through that'. So if I was a problem, they could demonstrate they had done everything to help me. (Coachee 6)*

Another coachee began their coaching with a closed mind, wondering what it was going to do for her.

*I went without an open mind. I was really sceptical to start, and thought 'ho ho, I really don't want to be here.' (Coachee 7)*

*Not taking personal responsibility.* Some coachees implied that at the beginning they were neither motivated nor demotivated, but willing to see what it was all about.

*Before my coaching I was a bit curious'* (Coachee 21)

Similarly one other coachee suggested the following:

*'I was willing to give it a go'* (Coachee 23).

Others however chose not to take any ownership for their coaching, drifting aimlessly instead, enjoying the experience of talking to a coach, but without any willingness to learn, perhaps because they see coaching as the company's solution for them:

*I would have wanted more. I would have quite happily had a coach for the rest of my career. And let Tesco pay for it if they want.* (Coachee 9)

*Self-Motivated.* The following quote concerns an individual who requested coaching to help get his career moving upwards after a ten year period of stagnation during which the coachee tried a range of development techniques but with no discernable success.

In contrast to the previous quotes, this person is getting coaching because they themselves requested it, and because they believe it can provide a solution to their development needs. It is likely that they will derive much more value from coaching as a consequence:

(When asked to rate out of 10 his willingness to be coached before he begun, the coachee replies):

*'10. Yes absolutely, 100%. I just woke up to the fact one day, that the feedback had been fairly consistent. I got frustrated to the point where I wanted to address it.* (Coachee 24)

*Willing to move out of 'comfort zones'.* Often coachees report that to get value from their coaching, they knew that they needed to take some risks:

*It is about putting yourself in an environment where you are uncomfortable. Some people like that environment and some people don't, and there is no point putting yourself in that environment if it is ultimately not what you want in life. (Coachee 24)*

*Open and honest.* Many coachees emphasised the importance and need to be open and honest when answering questions and talking through their issues.

*'I said to myself 'you only get something out of this if you are very open and honest' and that is what I did. I suppose I gave the coaches the opportunity to really understand me right from when I was a really small child actually..... I just think if you don't do that then you are not going to get to the bottom of it'. (Coachee 14)*

For many coachees, being willing to talk openly and honestly implies that they must at some point face up to some of their own fears such as talking about times in the past when they might have failed:

*'I think the first one is about being very very honest with yourself and your coach. Because I don't see it can work otherwise. I think for a lot of people talking about failure is not easy. I certainly don't find it easy saying I am not as good at this as I should be. Whereas in reality I am driven and want to do well, and I don't like thinking that I don't do well at things. So I think you have to be very very honest. And very very open, and trusting of the coach'. (Coachee 24)*

*Learning to take responsibility.* Some coachees who started their coaching sceptically found that over the course of time, their resistance ebbed, and slowly their realisation grew that in fact their development was their responsibility, and should no longer be left to someone else to manage for them:

*'It is about whether you want to do things at the end of the day. You can either decide 'this is a load of rubbish and I don't want to do it'. You have to*

*take responsibility for yourself in this, because no one else is sharing what you are doing'. (Coachee 7)*

## Summary

In summary, the potential success of coaching is in part dependent on the characteristics of the person who is to be coached. Someone who is 'open' to the process, and willing to immerse themselves in what is required, facing up to their fears, surfacing and then talking honestly about their issues, prepared to listen to feedback and committing to change with perseverance and resolve is likely to get more value from their coaching than others. This implies in summary that the coachee needs to understand what coaching is all about, and then exhibit the necessary commitment. Leider (cited in Morgan et al, 2005, p: 92) argues 'that courage is also key since it is not only necessary to look deep within yourself, but also necessary to be decisive about the risks you must take to grow'. This is in contrast to those who Carl Jung (cited Peck 1987, p: 19) described as unwilling 'to meet the shadow', because these people have aspects of themselves 'that they do not want to own or recognize'. When applied to coaching it is unlikely that people who are not open, or committed to being honest with another, will derive the same level of value as others.

The literature suggests that the coachee who is willing to work with another person, be open, honest and motivated to talk about issues that they might normally prefer to keep to themselves and learn about themselves is likely to get much more from their coaching experience than others who do not share these characteristics. The empirical research suggests that these characteristics are important drivers that can determine the value coachees derive from their coaching.

The empirical data also highlights the role the line manager can have in preparing, selecting and setting expectations prior to the coaching beginning. However evidence suggests this was seldom done, leaving the coachees free to interpret their own assessment of whether coaching can help them or not.

## Conclusion

The literature review suggests that there are a number of traits that characterise a coachee that might be more suitable for intrinsic development than another.

The empirical research suggest that some coachees are motivated to approach their coaching in a positive and open manner even before it begins, others are sceptical and wait to see how their initial experience turns out before deciding whether to support it or not, and finally some are already closed to coaching even before it begins, perhaps by harbouring cynicism in relation to why it is being given to them. Where the attitude is negative or cynical it is unlikely that the coachee will be able to 'open' up to the coach, reveal important issues, and answer questions honestly about them, and as a result it is unlikely that they will derive much value from their coaching.

The key point here is the need for coachees to have the right mental state of readiness prior to their coaching, so that they are open for intrinsic analysis. Evidence suggests that coachees differ from each other in terms of their level of willingness to be coached, and that this may be related to the stage and level of their career progression within the organisation. For example an enforced period of time without promotion may force someone to reflect and begin asking questions of self, to understand why their careers may have stalled. This can be a very positive mindset to work with during coaching. Conversely however the coachee's mental state can be influenced negatively either by the line manager's influence or by a lack of any guidance to what coaching is, how it works, what it does or why it is being given to someone, which in turn can have an impact on its potential.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### WHAT SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES ARE NEEDED TO COACH?

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

##### Introduction

The coaching market continues to grow at an ‘explosive’ rate (Hardingham 2006, p: 1), attracting a huge variation of people from multiple backgrounds to set themselves up as a coach. Jarvis (2004, p: 46) argues that due to the ‘variable quality of coaches who are working in the industry’, the organisational coaching sponsor must adopt a ‘more discriminating approach to identify high-calibre coaches and secure a quality service’. It is not clear however what skills and competencies a coach should have to coach effectively. For example Jarvis (2004, p: 46) suggests that there is an on-going debate on whether coaches should be selected ‘with relevant business experience’ or not. Accordingly, this chapter considers the skills and competencies that are deemed to be useful in creating a strong relationship with the coachee: a safe and supportive environment: helping them to ‘open up’ and talk about personally relevant issues: and doing whatever they can to help that person.

##### The coaching relationship

Former Retail Director at Tesco, Mike Wemms<sup>16</sup> suggests that it might not be possible to say with certainty what the core skill for coaching is, ‘*although I know that it would have to be something to do with chemistry*’. Rapport is often considered to be an essential ingredient (O’Neill 2000, p: 7, Bolt 2000, p: 39, O’Broin and Palmer 2006, p: 16, Nielson and Eisenbach 2003, p: 13) that lies at the ‘heart’ (Bolt 2000, p: 40) of coaching. It is ‘vital’ (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 5) for its success and positively associated with productivity and

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<sup>16</sup> From interview conducted October 21, 2005

yet it is often the 'most hard-earned factor in relationship building, even more so than honesty' (Downey, 2003, p: 139). Similarly, O'Broin (2006, p: 19) suggests that the quality of the relationship is a 'putative factor in coaching outcome', and as a result the coach should use their skills to create a strong relationship as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Bolt (2000, p: 41) argues that the coach needs 'to see things from the other's point of view and to understand their motivations and experiences'. Rapport building lets the coachee see that the coach is totally focused on them. Clutterbuck (2004a, p: 52) suggests that the coach must possess 'an innate interest in achieving through others, and in helping others recognise and achieve their potential', which he argues must be 'instinctive'. Flaherty (1999, p: 10) suggests that the relationship 'must be one in which there is mutual respect, trust, and mutual freedom of expression', so that the coachee quickly is willing to 'lower their shield' (Bell in Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 134), and open up about issues that they really want to talk through and understand better. Bell goes on to argue that 'quality learning will not occur' (p: 134) until the learner takes the 'risk' to do this.

Peltier (2001, p: 70) suggests that to form a good rapport with someone, the coach needs to do whatever they can to 'understand the client's subjective reality'. Flaherty (1999, p: 10) argues that the relationship 'is the background for all coaching efforts'. Clutterbuck (2004a, p: 91) suggests that the essence of the relationship 'is its informality'. O'Neill (2000, p: 173) warns however that the coach still needs to have a 'strong sense of self', so that they will not be intimidated by people in positions of authority.

Downey, (2003, p: 137) suggests that rapport can be quickly built if the coachee knows that everything they talk about is confidential. Bolt (2000, p: 139) suggests that the close confidentiality in coaching with an external individual allows the coachee to 'express an honest opinion' which they might be less likely to reveal to work colleagues. As a result another key factor that helps to build rapport is trust, and there is almost universal agreement that what is discussed during coaching should be confidential (e.g. Bolt, 2000, p:

16, Gallwey 2002, p: 192, Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 7 and Downey, 2003, p: 137, Dembkowski and Eldridge 2004 p: 5). Morgan et al, (2005, p: 43) go as far as to say that coaching should be 'inviolable' stressing that the coach should never discuss, divulge or repeat to anyone else any of the information elicited in the session. However Bolt (2000, p: 16) warns that if trust is ever compromised then 'the game is over'. Handy (1996) suggests that the respect that has been built through developing rapport can be likened to 'a pane of glass', arguing that 'once cracked, it cannot be put together again' (p: 176).

### *Skills to build the relationship*

Bolt (2000, p: 39) argues that it may be possible for anyone 'with the right attitude' and who develops 'the right skills' to become a good coach, and as a result many people from a broad range of disciplines have been able to reinvent themselves as coaches (e.g. O'Neill 2000, p: xiii, Jarvis, 2004, p: 12). Downey (2006, Coaching at work Vol 1 Issue 4, p: 19) suggests however that whoever becomes a coach needs to have a range of coaching skills to build strong relationships with their coachees, and suggests these skills can be learnt. Flaherty (1999, p: 32) suggests that the coach 'has to be able to observe the way that the client observes and be able to articulate this so that it can be observed by the client'. The key capability is the need to be 'precise in their observations and assessments' (Fleming and Taylor 2000) and be 'alert', so that they are able to 'interpret what one sees, hears, feels etc.' (Whitmore 2001, p: 28). Bolt (2000, p: 16) suggests whatever skills the coach uses, they just need to 'help the individual understand the issues involved'.

### *Interpersonal skills*

Clearly there are many skills that could be used to interpret and understand human beings, however the skills of listening, asking questions and giving feedback are discussed below because they are frequently referred to in the literature.

*Listening.* Bennis (1999, p: 75) argues that when someone feels like they have been listened to, it is one of the 'most powerful dynamics of human interaction', and also one of the best ways to build trust. Bennis (1999, p: 75) goes on to suggest that 'listening doesn't mean agreeing, but it does mean having the empathic reach to understand another'. Others agree that the coach has to have excellent listening skills (Whitmore 2001, p: 28, Weafer 2001 p: 49, Goldsmith et al 2000, p: 6, Bolt 2000, p: 42, Clutterbuck 2004a, p: 51, Bailey, Coaching at work 2006, vol 1. Issue 4, p: 9, Ellinger et al 2005, p: 622, O'Broin and Palmer 2006, p: 17, Hill 2004, p: 23, Clutterbuck and Megginson 1999, p: 15), because often a coach will need to spend at least '70 to 80% of their time' (Green et al 2003, p: 115) doing just this. However, although many people believe themselves to be good listeners, in fact 'usually we listen most intently to ourselves' (Bennis, 1999, p: 134), waiting for the opportunity to respond, rather than listening in order to 'understand' (Downey 2003, p: 61). Greene and Grant (2003, p: 115) suggests that to understand another person, the coach not only has to listen, but has to listen 'emphatically' meaning that they should be conscious not only what has been said, but also how it has been said, such as the 'tone of voice, emotional content, being able to reflect back and hear what the person is saying' (e.g. noticing body gestures, choice of words, use of hands etc). Whitmore (2001, p: 43) highlights also the need to listen to what has not been said, as it may be valuable for the coach 'to focus on any aspect that the coachee appears to be avoiding'. Greene and Grant (2003, p: 115) emphasise similarly that this is the only way to 'tune into another person', piece together how the individual constructs their world, how they interpret their reality, and understand the 'meaning' (Bolt, 2000, p: 43) of what they are saying. Pinchot (in Goldsmith et al 2000, p: 58) highlights that often 'there is a gap to be bridged between the reality held by the client and what we hear through our inevitable filters'.

*Summarising.* Greene and Grant, (2003, p: 116) suggest that 'the only way that you can indicate that you are listening attentively and that you can be sure that you have really understood and heard what the person is saying is to reframe it and feed it back to them'. Ellinger and Bostrom (1999, p: 763) describe this process as 'holding up the mirror – a reflection of what has just

taken place'. Downey (2003, p: 66) recommends that a coach should regularly 'summarise' or 'paraphrase' what has been said back to the individual. In this way the coach shows the coachee that they have been 'listening attentively', and gets the opportunity to confirm that what they have heard fully represents what the coachee has said. Downey (2003, p: 66) and Bennis (1999, p: 75) suggest that this is a very important element of building trust and rapport, because the more the coach understands, the more the individual can share with them.

Gallwey (2002, p: 188) suggests that the 'natural outcome' of a coach that listens to the client non-judgmentally, is 'learning to ask questions that help clients reveal more and more to themselves'. As a result, at this point coaching becomes all about 'the journey from tell to ask' (Greene and Grant, 2003, p: 96), and then 'hearing how they are responding' (Bolt 2001, p: 42). Whitmore (2001, p: 44) points out that most people need to consciously stop themselves from passing comments following a period of sustained listening arguing that 'perhaps the hardest thing a coach has to learn to do is to shut up'. From a more practical perspective, Weafer (2001, p: 35) suggests that coaches should not be 'tempted to offer advice', because 'many people today find themselves managing specialists whose knowledge far exceeds their own' (Greene and Grant, 2003, p: 96).

*Questioning.* The ability to ask open focused questions is an important skill for the coach to possess because it provides insight for the person being coached, and deepens their understanding about their own situation, simplifies complexity, and encourages people eventually to find their own solutions (e.g. Greene and Grant 2003, p: 117, Clutterbuck 2004a, p: 21, Bolt 2000, pps: 32-36, Ellinger and Bostrom p: 759, Landsberg 2003, p: 8). Gallwey (2002, p: 188) supports this suggesting that 'the coach's questions are geared to finding out information not for the purpose of recommending solutions but for the purpose of helping clients think for themselves and find their own solutions'. Downey (2003, p: 34) argues that the 'role of the coach is to encourage the player (i.e. the coachee) to think, and not to think for them'. Whitmore (2001 p: 41) suggests that the coach must ask 'effective

questions' in order to raise levels of awareness in the coachee, and encourage them to take responsibility. By using the interrogative as the 'primary form of verbal interaction' (Whitmore 2001, p: 41) the coachee is forced to learn for themselves, which Harvey-Jones (1994, p: 73) argues 'transfers the ownership' of whatever needs to be accepted or done to the coachees themselves. O'Neill (2000, p: 34) suggests that the coach can get a deeper understanding from the coachee by listening to the way they answer the questions, because often 'your experience of the leader in the moment' may be a reflection of 'the ways she may be doing the same thing elsewhere'.

Some authors (e.g. Weafer 2001 pps: 52-55, Gallwey 2002 p: 188, and Whitmore 2001) suggest that the coach should know of and then be able to use and select from a range of different types of open questions, that 'compel someone to engage their brain' (Whitmore 2001, p: 42) such as those listed below:

- (i). Indirect questions; Peltier (2001, p: 124) suggests that these can be quite useful when the coach wants to indirectly suggest something or to 'plant an idea or set up a situation that causes someone to do something without being specifically asked or told to do it'.
- (ii). Reframing questions; Greene and Grant (2003, p: 118) describe reframing as a technique for moving an individual's perception of some experience or issue 'from resistance to cooperation'. In other words it gets people to see issues from a different perspective, and by doing so changes the meaning given to a situation. Reframing is similar to what Sethi (in Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 146) calls 'visualisation', whereby a person is encouraged to imagine a different outcome than the one they currently perceive. Reframing or visualisation can have a very positive effect for overcoming 'anxiety' that might make someone 'less able to perform' (Greene and Grant, 2003, p: 32).
- (iii). Scaling questions: Greene and Grant (2003, p: 41) describe 'scaling' as 'a means of subjectively measuring experience'. For example the individual who is being coached may at any time be asked to scale themselves between two extremes (e.g. nought to ten, where

nought is very poor, and ten is excellent). Hawkins (2004, p: 22) suggests that scaling 'is an elegant way of measuring how far the client is towards achieving their goal'.

(iv). Miracle questions: Greene and Grant (2003, p: 39) and Peltier (2001 p: 116) highlight the use of this question to focus the individual on a future state when every aspect of the current difficulty in discussion has disappeared. The coach would typically ask 'what would be different if overnight a miracle occurred?' Focusing on the future state allows the individual to become more aware of the key barriers that currently prevent performance.

*Giving feedback.* Buckingham and Coffman (1999, p:200) argue that 'great managers excel at giving feedback'. Folkman (in Goldsmith et al 2000, p: 299) suggests that 'honest feedback' may be 'possibly the most valuable gift we can receive from another person'. Many other commentators agree that it is a vital part of good coaching (e.g. Downey 2003 pps: 78-86, Whitmore 2001 p: 106, Goldsmith et al, 2000 pps: 277-284, Flaherty 1999 p: 32, O'Neill 2000 p: 98, Greene and Grant 2003 p: 105, Bolt 2000, Ellinger et al 2005, p: 622). Ellinger and Bostrom (1999, p: 761) suggest that traditional coaching models incorporate the concept of giving feedback to the coachee.

Bolt (2000, p: 109) suggests that at times the coach must be 'willing to tell the individual exactly what they think', especially the many coaches that have an inherent need to remain in control (Weafer, 2001, p: 37), but it should be given from an objective viewpoint where the impact of what is said has been fully thought through (Gallwey 2002, p: 201). Gallwey (2002, p: 202) warns that the coach 'should exercise extra caution to limit the evaluation to the performance and avoid the possible perception of judging the person'. Similarly Downey (2003, p: 83) emphasises that the role of the coach is to give feedback 'as cleanly as possible' in a 'non-judgemental' approach, although Gallwey (2002, p: 200) points out that it is not easily achieved by the coach. Goleman (2005, p: 150) argues that the ability to give and receive feedback is a technique, which allows people to get 'the information essential to keep their efforts on track'. Without it Goleman argues (p: 151) that 'people

are in the dark; they have no idea how they stand with their boss, with their peers, or in terms of what is expected of them'. Goldsmith et al, (2000, p: 21) cites research to suggest that people 'highly value honest feedback, whether or not the feedback itself is positive'. However Goleman (2005, p: 151) makes the point that often in a work environment, feedback is seen as 'criticism', and so is often 'dreaded', or even 'put off' altogether by managers. Traditionally feedback may just have been reserved for addressing poor performance, however it is just as capable of delivering value when failures are used as opportunities to change things 'for the better' (p: 153). However Levine (1986, p: 12) suggests that many people 'push' the 'truth of the moment away', 'pretending it is not there', and as a result often 'lose another opportunity' and a 'reflection' to find out 'who they really are'.

*Goal setting.* Goal setting has long been hailed as the motivational technique that works, and remains one of the most important for coaching (Johnston 2005 p: 10, Ellinger and Bostrom 1999, p: 765). Within coaching it can range from 'loose and informal' to 'scheduled and structured in such a way that the purpose and the roles are unambiguous' (Whitmore 2001, p: 48). In the majority of cases, what is discussed is framed by a detailed action plan and follow up (Whitmore 2001, p: 80) or else it will resemble little more than 'a conversation' or a 'friendly chat, which may lead nowhere' (Greene and Grant 2003, p: 100).

Setting goals is the way the coach and coachee can jointly define issues, develop a solution or a future vision and then make it specific and tangible, so that movement towards it can be measured, kept in focus and be 'vital in bringing about positive change' (Greene and Grant, 2003, p: 55). Focusing on goals and actions lets the coachee move from a 'simple increase in the leader's understanding of the dilemma' (O'Neill 2000, p: 115), 'into actions and finally onto results' (Greene and Grant, 2003, p: 48). Flaherty (1999, p: 3) and Downey (2003, p: 100) support this view making the point that without knowing where one is going, then it is not possible to correct oneself during the coaching, and 'difficult to be successful or to discuss performance'. Goals can be business related or personal (O'Neill 2000, p: 103) but a measure for



each must be identified (O'Neill 2000, p: 104) so that performance can be evaluated, and the coaching doesn't 'waste the time, money and energy of the leader' (O'Neill 2000, p: 7).

Goals set should be done in partnership and consistent with the coachee's personality, supported by key stakeholders, be targeted, 'specific' (Flokman in Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 304) and be meaningful and relevant for the coachee (Downey 2003, p: 18, and Frankl, 2004, p: 140). Greene and Grant (2003, p: 103) argue that 'each coaching session must finish with a written action plan' or 'its not coaching'.

Whilst most commentators appear to be in favour of goal setting, Clutterbuck (2004a, p: 92) sounds a warning against formulating goals which are too rigid in advance of the coaching, as this may make the relationship 'less open, less willing to admit weaknesses and less trusting'. Similarly Greene and Grant (2003, p: 32) emphasise the point that if people think too much about what they are doing, then, 'they are liable to choke or fail in their task'. Finally Grant (Coaching at Work, 2007. Volume 2. Issue 3, p: 18) cautions that 'goals can hinder the development of coaching and mentoring if practitioners are rigid', and to avoid this he recommends that coaches 'need to be flexible'.

### *Competencies to build the relationship*

The following section considers the coaches' background, knowledge and experience, collectively termed 'competencies' that may be viewed by some as assets in their coaching.

Jarvis (2004, p: 12) suggests that coaches can come from a wide variety of backgrounds from qualified therapists, counselling psychologists, and human resource professionals, to management and recruitment consultants.

Currently it is not clear what background 'competencies' may compliment the coach's ability to create strong coaching relationships, although Morgan et al (2005, p: 264) argue that 'the most important aspects of coach selection are coaching experience, level of business experience, and area of expertise'.

Similarly Andreas Bolder (HR Director for Randstad in Germany) believes 'it's a big plus if coaches have had some first hand management experience at some point in their career' (Coaching at Work, 2007, Volume 2 issue 1, p: 9). Conversely Whitmore (2001, p: 37) suggests that it might be 'difficult for experts to withhold their expertise sufficiently to coach well' warning that 'every time input is provided the responsibility of the coachee is reduced'.

The following discussion considers some of the competencies the coach may require that might compliment their capability.

### *Self-aware*

Peltier (2001, p: 69) emphasises that the coach needs to maintain a caring relationship that is 'unconditional in that it is not evaluative or judgmental of the client's thoughts, feelings, and behaviours'. As a result coaches may need to make a conscious effort to limit any potential biases they may have such as preconceived 'opinions, judgments, expectations, prejudices, concerns, hopes and fears' (Whitmore, 2001, p: 61), as they may become a potential 'interference' (Downey 2003, p: 189) to objective and effective coaching. To this effect, Weifer (2001, p: 99) maintains that every coach should be involved on a programme of continuous personal learning in part to develop levels of their self-awareness. Bolt (2000, p: 18) argues that 'a coach needs to recognise when issues have moved beyond their own level of expertise' and limit the possibility that they would ever attempt to operate in a role where they are not qualified such as a counsellor or therapist, which could 'potentially be dangerous' (Downey, 2003 p: 199). Berglas (2001) suggests that 'in an alarming number of situations, executive coaches who lack rigorous psychological training do more harm than good'. Many argue (e.g. Jarvis et al 2006 p: 48, Goldsmith et al 2000, p: 75, O'Neill 2000, p: 207, Downey 2003, p: 209) that coaches should be supervised themselves, as this is likely to result in greater levels of self-awareness. More recently, supervision has risen to be seen as a top priority for any effective coach (Coaching at Work, 2006. Volume 2, issue 1, p: 14). In summary whether coach development is done by supervision or an investment in some other

form of self-learning that questions their assumptions and techniques, then they 'will soon fail as coaches' (Flaherty 1999, p: 12).

### *Psychology competency*

The profession of psychology brings a large number of developmental frameworks that are being adapted for application in the coaching context (Palmer and Whybrow 2006, p: 9), (e.g. solution focused brief therapy, cognitive behavioural therapy, rational emotive behaviour therapy, multimodal therapy, neuro-linguistic programming, etc). Although many commentators believe that 'psychologists are uniquely qualified to work as academic coaches' (e.g. Berglas 2002 p: 86, Shapiro 1999, p: 2, Passmore and Gibbes 2007, p: 126), opinion is divided on whether a coach should be a trained psychologist to allow them to coach. Whitmore (2001, p: 2) suggests that a degree in psychology is not required in order to 'practice as a coach', suggesting that all they need is 'just an understanding of psychology'. Similarly Whybrow and Palmer, (2006, p: 66) in a survey conducted by the British Psychological Society suggest that 'to practice as a coach, a degree in psychology is not necessary', although it may be that having some knowledge in psychology would allow a coach to spot where they might need more specialist help. However, Berglas (2002 p: 87) asserts that coaches without psychological training are prone to 'down play or ignore deep-seated psychological problems that they do not understand'. He argues that a coach without psychological training is heavily influenced by their backgrounds and biases, and in the worst cases 'can actually make a bad situation worse'<sup>17</sup>.

Psychologists who have already ventured into the executive coaching field believe that there are many 'opportunities for more of their colleagues to enter the field – but only if they understand and care about business (Foxhall, 2002, p: 1), although Brickey (1999, p: 3) contends that it should not be assumed that 'just because they do therapy they can do coaching', arguing that they 'need to learn the skills involved'. Brickey goes on to argue that to

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<sup>17</sup> Perina (2002) suggests that when the article by Berglas (The Very Real Dangers of Executive coaching) was published in the Harvard business review (2002), he was 'inundated with calls from therapists asking how they could break into the business'.

successfully make the transition to coaching, psychologists need to be 'outgoing, flexible, focused, and action oriented, good at closing deals' and at 'dressing in a manner appropriate to the business culture' (p: 3), and Shullman (cited in Foxhall, 2002, p: 3) supports this arguing that they 'need to have some passion and respect and understanding for business and organisations'.

It is unclear how important psychology or business related skills are for coaching, and opinion seems to be split. Hardingham (2006, p: 6) concludes that the coach just needs to have a set of skills in a given coaching relationship that sets the coachees 'free from anxiety', and allows them to be 'authentic and fully present' because this is the 'essence of coaching'. Pinchot (cited in Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 50) suggests that some combination of business, psychology and human development would make for a good coach. Whitmore (2001, p: 54) and Downey (2003, p: 17) both stress that the coaching goal is to enable the coachee to take ownership and responsibility for what that entails. Whitmore (2001, p: 29) warns against being a coach with too much expertise, suggesting that the more often the coach solves the coachee's dilemma, the more likely the coachee will form a 'dependence on the expert' (Whitmore 2001, p: 29) and treat them like a 'crutch' (Bolt 2000, p: 49).

Greene and Grant (2003, p: 97) highlight the paradox for the expert who withholds their expertise during their coaching by moving from telling to asking. They suggest that 'you can feel like you are losing control' but 'it is only by making this shift that you will gain the control you need if you are to be a successful manager in today's complex organisation'.

### *Business competency*

John Bailey, UK Director of coaching, KPMG (cited in Coaching at work 2006, vol 1. Issue 4, p: 9) suggests that whilst questioning and listening skills are clearly important, other top qualities in coaches are; 'experience and knowledge relevant to the situation and the right mindset'. In support, O'Neill (2000, p: 173) argues that coaches need to be 'business and results focused'

so that they have a level of understanding at least equal to the coachee's personal agenda and share a similar 'results orientation to the leader's problem' (O'Neill 2000, p: 7). Freas (cited in Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 40) concurs that the coach 'must understand how businesses operate and what internal and external pressures are being faced', and should know 'when, where and how to use that knowledge' (Hawkins 2003, p: 288). Fox (1999, p: 3) stresses the point that 'one of the things that weighs heavily in the minds of potential new clients' is the coach's 'familiarity with their particular type of business'.

It might be that a coach should have held a similar or more senior role to their clients (Morgan et al 2005, p: 28), as this would allow them to quickly empathise, and understand their issues, and in some cases it would positively enhance their credibility. Conversely if the coach has not got these credentials the coachee may be 'offended by the idea of engaging in the relationship' (Goldsmith et al 2000, p: 69). Jarvis et al (2006, p: 165) argue that 'coaches fully understand the wider organisational context in which the coaching takes place', and 'have appropriate knowledge, skills and competencies' to work with the organisation's executives. Jarvis et al (2006, p: 172) go on to emphasise that 'effective coaching will only take place when the organisational conditions are conducive to coaching'. Research conducted by Nielson and Eisenbach (2003, pps: 6-7) report that 'homophily (also known as social similarity) is correlated with relationship quality and productivity. As a result they recommend that organisations should 'seek to match mentors and protégés with similar values and attitudes'.

Finally, O'Neill (2000, p: 173) makes the point that the coach must not allow themselves to be 'intimidated by people in positions of authority'. Weafer (2001, p: 96) and Jarvis (2006 pps: 164-165) believe it is important that the coach should have experience in the field in which the people they are coaching operate, and have worked generally in multiple organisations and sectors, and with people at varying levels of seniority. Similarly Barrow (2001, p: 1) believes that it is 'critically important' to find a coach who has had a 'successful experience at a senior level', so that they are able 'to provide

surefooted pragmatic advice on the political and people issues as well as business judgements'. Fox (1999, p: 3) suggests that this is important, as often business leaders' do not want to put themselves in the hands of an 'expert' who is unfamiliar with their realities. They want someone who understands them and what makes them go'.

Ellinger et al (2005, p: 622) suggest that 'a good coach has to believe that people are worth developing, and is an enabler rather than someone with the answer to all questions and problems'. Whitmore (2001, p: 131) goes on to suggest that coaching is not difficult to learn, and no prior experience is necessary to coach other than that 'it requires practice', making the point that the 'coach's role is not to be an adviser, instructor, a problem-solver, a teacher or even an expert: he or she is a sounding board, a facilitator, a counsellor, and an awareness raiser' (p: 35). Gallwey (2002, p: 185) believes that the coach should 'coach without judgments and virtually without technical instructions'. Downey (2003, p: viii) claims that the coach 'does not need to impart knowledge, advice or even wisdom', just help people 'learn and perform at their best'.

### Summary

It is likely that a sound knowledge and capability in the use and application of a range of interpersonal skills, coupled with a continuous effort to personally develop levels of self-awareness enhance the coach's ability to create strong relationships, which are widely acknowledged to be vital for coaching. This is because developing a strong relationship allows the coachee to open up, and honestly talk through issues that they are concerned about. By investing in their own continuous self-development, the coach is less likely to let any unconscious prejudgements or biases influence their interpretations or understanding of the coachee's issues.

Whitmore (2001, p: 36) suggests the ideal coach is a 'detached awareness raiser' and does not rely on any background experience or technical knowledge, which can be 'overused' by 'less good coaches' (p: 37), and

reduce the responsibility of the client to think for themselves, others do not agree. Not all commentators share this view. Dembkowski and Eldridge (2004 pps: 1-7) draw attention to an empirical study conducted in Germany, Switzerland and Austria that set out to identify success factors in individual executive coaching. Data from the study revealed that the focus of the most important factor is the coach's 'personal credibility, education, professional background, experience and expertise as well as overall regard' (p: 2). Nielson and Eisenbach (2003, pps: 6-7) suggests that where the coach and coachee had 'social similarities' (e.g. attitudes, background, values, appearance, communication styles and work histories) then this can have a significant positive effect on the quality of mentoring relationships. Heather Cooper, from Gordon Cooper associates (cited in Coaching at work 2006, Volume 1, Issue 6, p: 14 – 15) suggests that experience which is relevant can create credibility with the client organisation and encourage the relationship with the prospective coachee, because they have faith the coach will understand their circumstances.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### WHAT SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES ARE NEEDED TO COACH?

#### EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

##### The Coaching relationship

The literature section suggests that the coach and the coachee need to form a strong relationship to encourage the coachee to feel they can open up and talk honestly about issues that they would normally not disclose to work colleagues. To encourage this, the coach must have a range of interpersonal skills such as active listening, open questioning, summarising, goal setting and the use of feedback. It is possible that the coach may have some additional background characteristics that can enhance relationship building, such as psychology competence, business experience and organisational knowledge, although there is little evidence to support these assertions.

The following section considers the empirical evidence to understand more clearly what coach skills and background characteristics the coachees value. It suggests that strong interpersonal skills along with relevant past experiences such as any business, industrial, organisational and role similarity, and any social and educational similarity, are all important factors for coaching. Coachees imply that the more relevant the coaches' background characteristics to their own, the better.

##### *Coach skills relevant to building strong relationships*

###### *Building relationships*

The following three quotes emphasise the importance of the coach and coachee spending time to develop strong relationships with one another. Through these efforts a key output is the building of trust between the two, which naturally leads to a willingness in the coachee to open up and talk honestly about important issues.



*But it was more about the relationship we built up. She generated a massive level of trust. I naturally find it really difficult to open up to someone in the initial phases. Because of the trust relationship, I gave really honest answers, and helped her to understand me as a person. (Coachee 1)*

Most coachees suggest that the relationship they had with their coach was the most important aspect of their coaching, allowing them to feel confident enough to open up and be honest about their issues:

*The ability to be open and honest with my coach is for me the whole point – without this it would be a non-starter (Coachee 22)*

One coachee quantified the value of their relationship:

*If there was not a good relationship then I couldn't give 50% of what I gave. (Coachee 25).*

The following section considers the skills and competencies the coachees believe are important for the coach to possess in order to develop a strong coaching relationship:

#### *Coach interpersonal skills*

The following are some of the interpersonal skills that the empirical evidence suggests are important coaching skills for building relationships.

*Asking questions* The empirical evidence suggests that many of the coaching sessions begun with questions, and that this enabled the two parties to get to know one another. By asking questions, the coach is able to begin to understand what they need to do, and where they need to focus within the coaching.

*They need to be perceptive enough to work out what they need to do. It will be an ambiguous brief, and the coachee will be less aware of what their needs are. So they need to be able to spend some time with that coachee to clarify before what their needs are. They need to ask lots of open questions. (Coachee 15)*

*Summarising.* Coachees also frequently commented how useful it was for them when the coach summarised back to them what they had just listened to. It seems to be an important skill for the coach to possess because it enables coachees to start thinking about what they had been saying and to arrive at solutions to their own issues:

*Through asking questions, open questions and playing back to me in a skilled way I was able to answer the question myself but without a structured questioning, I just would not have got there. (Coachee 23)*

*Listening.* Listening appears to have multiple positive outputs for the coach: It is a key part of the coaching session:

*The coaching session is 66% self-discovery, and 33% listening, probing and asking the right questions. And the coach's role is to bring it out, (Coachee 3)*

Coachees mentioned frequently how useful they found being listened to by someone else on matters that were important to them, with many suggesting that it helped them to deepen insight and understanding into issues being discussed:

*So to talk to someone for three hours it was quite a good way to think it through in my own mind. And you don't really get that opportunity in the work environment. (Coachee 9)*

Some coachees recognise that good listening goes beyond simply interpretation on words alone but extended to a consideration of the other non-verbal forms of communication:

*Listening is with eyes and ears, it is latching on and being able to understand what a person is saying as well as not saying (Coachee 7)*

Listening helps to build a safe working environment of trust in which the coachee feels comfortable to talk:

*There are incidents I don't find easy to talk about but through her patience and listening she earned my total trust and I feel able to be open and honest (Coachee 11)*

*Building trust.* Coaches need to focus on building safe environments where coachees felt trusted and secure.

*I think without having somebody who you felt created a very safe environment, and who you trusted and had the technical skills to help you; I would not have got started. (Coachee 23)*

Most of the coachees emphasised that the need for trust is paramount for coaching to be possible, with there being no risk of others finding anything out about the discussions that were held:

*The confidentiality of coaching is absolutely key. If you didn't have that you simply would not go there. (Coachee 3)*

### *Coach competencies relevant to building strong relationships*

The following section considers the empirical evidence to determine if there are any background competencies the coach possesses that are valued by coachees, and perceived as having a positive impact on relationship building.

#### *Emotionally intelligent*

The following quote emphasises the need for a coach to have a competence in emotional intelligence:

*I found Alistair very supportive especially as the first session was quite emotional (Coachee 28)*

#### *Empathy*

The following quote suggests a good coach has a deep passion for what they do, which manifests as an ability to empathise with the coachee, and with their circumstances:

*Technical skills can be learnt I suppose, but the personality is very important too. The thing is that I really felt that Veronica had great empathy. They have to really love what they are doing, really care for people and want to help them. To break these barriers down, they have to do that. If it is just seen as a job, then it won't work (Coachee 7)*

### *Background similarities*

The following section considers a range of situational factors that coachees value in their coach, and suggest can positively enhance their coaching relationships.

*Role similarity.* It seemed to be generally positively viewed by coachees interviewed, when their coach can demonstrate a history of working in a similar environment.

(My coach should be) *'Someone I can relate to with a degree of experience. So that they have an idea of the kind of things I am going through, and the pressures I am under, and worked with others in similar industries or whatever.* (Coachee 10).

Where the coach has a similar working background and can share experiences, it may enable the coachee to feel more relaxed to open up and talk more easily:

*The coach has been a great match for me, because she is very easy to talk to and having worked in supply chain has a good understanding of the context of some of the challenges I was facing.* (Coachee 29)

*Career similarities.* Where there are similarities in career development between coach and coachee, it is possible that the relationship can be strengthened:

*She was a MD before she started coaching. In fact she had a very similar background to myself in terms of education and how quickly she progressed through the company she worked for. So although the company she worked for was very much smaller in terms of scale, in terms of work levels she moved through, it was very similar to me, so that helped because of the parallel.* (Coachee 1)

*Social similarities.* Where there are similarities in the social background between coach and coachee, it is possible that the relationship can be strengthened:

*I really enjoy talking to Ann, I feel comfortable opening up and we share some common interests that help develop a close relationship (Coachee 16)*

The key point here is that any commonality between the coach and the coachee seems to have a favourable impact on the relationship

#### *Organisational knowledge*

Some coachees positively valued a coach who had local knowledge of their situation and environment, in terms of what it was like to work for their organisation, and or possessing knowledge of key personalities within it.

*The client organisation.* Some coachees felt it important that their coach had a grounded knowledge in their organisation:

*I think they almost need to understand retail. I am not saying they need 10 years experience, but all I am saying is that it is a funny world. It can be incredibly high pressure, it can be incredibly rewarding it can be incredibly demotivating. Tesco is the 'bizzarest' company to work for. I just think that someone who has an understanding of what it is like to work for, someone to appreciate the environment, someone who had a little understanding of the Tesco culture, yes that is what I would ask for. (Coachee 20)*

*Organisational personalities.* In some cases, coaches possessed a well-developed knowledge of the personalities and culture in the client organisation, as this appeared to be seen favourably by the coachee and able to positively influence their coaching relationship:

*She was able to give me some feedback. I think this is quite unique. I don't think you would normally get this. But I think because she has had other relationships in the business she was able to give me her own personal feedback on issues because she had personal knowledge of the issues that I was describing. .... And I am not sure if most coaches would be able to do that. I was lucky in that respect. (Coachee 18)*

#### *Business knowledge*

Others suggest that the coach should have a business capability:

*They must also have an understanding of business. Ideally they have worked in industry, and have also got a theoretical understanding that underpins it. That was probably the difference between my two coaches. The first coach didn't have the business understanding. When the issue became less about me and how I fitted in to the business, and became more about how I operated within the business and developing me as a business leader, the second one became more appropriate than the first. (Coachee 21)*

### *Psychology*

Only one coachee spoke explicitly about the need for a coach to have a psychology background, believing that it was a basic pre-requisite. *Definitely you have to have that (i.e. psychology) as a background, the ability to probe and drill into things. Not to give the answers, because people come up with their own answers, but definitely understanding the individual and asking the right questions. (Coachee 17).*

In summary, the empirical evidence suggests that any coaching skill that can be used to help develop a greater understanding of the coachee and their issues is useful because it deepens their relationship. Other background experientially derived competencies such as the coach's business experience, previous roles, industries worked in, and any local knowledge of the client organisation, can create credibility and empathy, and once again aid relationship strength and depth with the coachee as the following quote demonstrates:

*They need credibility. And that credibility can come from a variety of different areas. (Coachee 23).*

Where background competencies are absent, then coaching relationships may be more difficult to generate:

*Talking to a complete stranger who doesn't know much about you, doesn't know much about your working environment, just felt a bit odd. (Coachee 20)*

However Whitmore (2001, p: 29) warns that when a coach has a relevant experience background in the industry or in the position of the individual being

coached, then it is likely that the 'personal preferences and attributes of the performer' will be 'suppressed' which may result in the coachee failing to take responsibility for their own development and potentially forming a 'dependency' on the coach.

## Conclusion

The empirical evidence emphasises the importance of generating a strong coaching relationship, which creates trust, openness and honesty in the coachee, and makes them more willing to commit to talking through issues of a personal significance with the coach. To develop the relationship, the coach needs a range of interpersonal skills to help the process of getting to know one another. The ability of the coach to generate a strong coaching relationship can be enhanced by the presence of appropriate background competencies that may provide them credibility, are perceived credibly by most coachees, and increase their willingness to open up to the coach.

Whilst the literature review is split over the value of the coaches' background competencies for relationship building the empirical evidence suggests that the closer the match between the coach's background and the coachee's situation, the more highly valued they are likely to be, and potentially the stronger the coaching relationship may become. O'Broin and Palmer (2006, p: 17) suggest that a 'salient observation from the coaching literature is the agreement that coaching seems to occur in stages, with relationship building being the critical first one', and stage two is associated with helping the coachee with the issues they raise. When coaching is seen in this way, then the coach's background competencies may theoretically become less important during the secondary stage. Although it is not clear what skills a coach might need at this point during coaching, it is likely to depend on a multitude of factors. The key point here is that potentially it is the less talked about but more 'technical' skills such as a psychology competency that may be more prevalent during the secondary stage of helping.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### WHAT DOES THE COACH DO?

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

##### Introduction

Parsloe (Coaching at Work, 2007, Volume 2. Issue 4, p: 20) highlights that 'there is no single correct style, technique, methodology or theoretical approach that should be followed' when the coach is engaged in a coaching assignment. The following literature review considers what the coach does during a coaching assignment and is divided into two sections. The first considers coaching activities that are associated with building a strong relationship between the coach and coachee, so that issues normally concealed by the coachee can be raised and discussed with the coach. The second section then looks at what the coach does once these issues have been disclosed. It considers the potential for variation that each coach brings to this stage of their coaching, reflecting their individuality along with his or her background, knowledge, beliefs, values, and personality. It then goes on to consider some differentiating factors that can be used to classify 'approaches' such as the level of direction the coach gives the coachee: the use of coaching techniques, and finally the coach's use of theories and philosophies.

##### Part one: Core coaching activities used to build strong relationships

The core coaching skills discussed in chapter seven ('what skills and competencies are needed to coach?'), are practiced by coaches to build and develop rapport with the coachee, and to create a relationship characterised by trust, respect, openness, safety and honesty.

Morgan et al (2005, p: 42) recommend that at the first meeting the coach should always 'establish exactly what the ground rules are'. These 'ground rules' are very likely to vary from coach to coach, but begin a process of



building confidence in both the coach and the coaching process. However, very quickly the coach begins to use their skills to understand what the client's key issues are by encouraging them to 'lower their shield' (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 134), listen and learn. Hardingham (2006, p: 6) suggests that the 'essence of coaching' lies in the coach's ability to create a relationship that sets the coachee 'free from anxiety', and allows them to be 'authentic and fully present'. In this way the coachee can begin to gain greater levels of self-awareness, enabling better decision making than was previously possible (Downey, Coaching at work Vol 1 Issue 4, p: 19). To create these relationships the coach may employ the core coaching skills discussed in the previous chapter, and summarised below:

### *Interpersonal skills*

#### *Listening*

Listening is widely acknowledged to be a very important activity for the coach to build rapport with their coachees (e.g. Bennis 1999, p: 75, Whitmore 2001 p: 44, Weafer 2001 p: 49, Goldsmith et al 2000, Bolt 2000, Clutterbuck 2004a, p: 51, Bailey, Coaching at work 2006, vol 1. Issue 4, p: 9). Greene and Grant (2003, p: 115) emphasise that the coach needs to listen 'emphatically', so that they observe not just what has been said, but how it has been said too. Many writers believe that listening is the only way one person can get to really 'understand' and 'relate to the context' of another (e.g. Bennis 1999, p: 134, Greene and Grant, 2003, p; 115).

#### *Summarising.*

To emphasise that what the coachee has said has been registered and understood many writers suggest that the coach should regularly summarise what they have heard (Greene and Grant, 2003 p: 116, Whitmore 2001 p: 45, Downey 2003, p: 66).

#### *Questioning.*

A key activity for coaches in the opening phase of a coaching assignment is to ask open questions (Gallwey 2002, p: 182, Greene and Grant, 2003, p: 96,

Whitmore 2001, p: 43, Ellinger et al 2005, p: 622). Asking questions provides insight for the person being coached, and deepens their understanding about their own situation and options (e.g. Greene and Grant 2003, p: 117, Clutterbuck 2004a, p: 21, Bolt 2000, pps: 32-36). Whitmore (2001 p: 42) suggests that 'open questions that require descriptive answers promote awareness' and because they 'compel someone to engage their brain' they are 'much more effective for generating awareness and responsibility in the coaching process'.

### *Giving feedback.*

Some writers (e.g. Downey 2003 pps: 77-94, Whitmore 2001, pps: 106-116, Goldsmith et al 2000, Flaherty 1999, p: 32, O'Neill 2000 p: 98, Greene and Grant 2003, Bolt 2000) believe that the coach can raise a person's self-awareness by giving regular feedback, which in turn can improve their performance.

The coach begins by using the range of core coaching skills highlighted above, which 'is a prerequisite for successful coaching' (Bolt, 2001, p: 42), indirectly building a strong rapport with the coachee, that in turn creates a strong relationship wherein the coachee feels secure, and subsequently confident enough to disclose issues (for discussion) that they would not normally reveal to other work colleagues. Flaherty (1999, p: 45) suggests that 'only the relationship can provide the foundation' for successful coaching, and that without it, 'it won't work'. The following section considers what 'work' the coach does once the relationship has been created.

## Part two: The coaches' 'approach'

It is likely that once the 'foundation' (Flaherty 1999, p: 45) of the coaching relationship has been built, then it can move to a secondary stage, where other coaching activities occur, reflecting the characteristics, capabilities, beliefs, values, theories, background and preferences of the individual coach. However, Hardingham (2006, p: 1) suggests that as a result of the 'explosive' growth in coaching over the past ten years there has been a corresponding growth in the 'diversity of what is offered and bought under the general heading of coaching'. As a result, it is not possible to understand all the detail of this diversity or the impact it has on different coachees in varying circumstances. The following section considers some of the classification categories that can be used to group common characteristics within an approach to coaching, so that what happens during the secondary coaching stage can be considered.

### Variable coaching activities

Jarvis (2004, p: 21) warns that 'in the UK, the use of the designations 'psychologist', 'therapist', 'counsellor' are not restricted by law to those that are qualified', and advises caution for potential users to check how authentic they are to be operating in a coaching capacity. Jarvis et al (2006, p: 8) suggest that 'people have entered the market 'calling themselves coaches, but lacking the necessary training, experience and knowledge base'. Berglas (2002 p: 87) suggests that many 'are former athletes, lawyers, business academics and consultants'. This rich 'diversity' (O'Neill, 2000, p: 9) means that it is not clear how a coach approaches the secondary stage of coaching, although there is no shortage of books written offering advice and guidance on the matter. Whitmore (2001, p: 49) suggests that coaching can be done 'loose and informally' so that 'the coachee does not know they are being coached'. However, Berglas (2002) argues that some coaches attempt 'quick results' (p: 88) by 'defining success in 12 simple steps or seven effective habits' (p: 88). For example, Landsberg (2003, p: 30) suggests following 'steps', Weafer (2001 p: 30) offers 'phases', Harris (1999, p: 1) offers

'elements', and Bolt (2000, p: 11) suggests following his 'ten Commandments of Coaching'. However Hardingham (2006 p: 2) makes the point that very few of these authors have a 'theoretical pedigree, nor indeed sadly, any particular evidence base of demonstrated success'. As a result it is not clear which approach is best, nor is it clear what the coach should do during this phase of the coaching assignment. Nevertheless, it has been shown that the use of coaching continues to grow in its many variable forms and has been accompanied by many divergent approaches. The following section considers some of the differentiating factors that can be used to classify and group different 'approaches', such as whether the coach relies on the use of coaching tools, techniques or models, the intensity of their direction, whether they underpin their approach in a wider theoretical framework or whether they use philosophies to extend greater meaning and relevance to the coachee's development. In this way it is possible to comment generally on the secondary phase of coaching.

### *The use of coaching techniques*

Whether a coach leads their coaching in the use of a particular 'technique' can provide a differentiating factor between different coaching approaches. O'Neill (2000, p: 9) however warns against adopting someone else's approach, firstly because it withholds the coach's own true 'signature presence', secondly because it will probably be 'resented' (Flaherty 1999, p: 13) by the client and lastly because it may simply 'doom an authentic coaching relationship' (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 320). Whitmore (2001, p: 145) argues that there is 'no one right way to coach', and Hardingham (2006, p: 1) cites David Megginson and David Clutterbuck who advocate the use of the 'British eclectic model' that 'synthesizes tools, techniques and frameworks from a range of approaches to helping people initiate and sustain goal-directed personal change...as a unifying framework'. Nevertheless, there are a wide range of models and techniques that are used by coaches to lead what they do during the 'helping' phase of the coaching. For example some may use goal focused models, others may 'shadow' the coachee in their work

environments, and others may concentrate on the use of psychology-based techniques and theories, of which there are a great many.

### *Goal setting*

Dembkowski and Eldridge (2003, p: 1 and 2004, p: 3) suggest that some coaches frequently use goal-centred models and techniques as an effective framework for coaching, and to project good practice such as those listed below:

*Grow*; The 'GROW' model (Whitmore 2001 pps: 48-51) is designed to enable the coach to structure a coaching conversation. It is an acronym, and encourages the conversation to consider firstly a 'goal', then to discuss what is actually happening at the moment (the 'reality'), moving on to consider what 'options' there are, before confirming 'what' actions the individual is going to take.

*Arrow*; The 'ARROW' model (Somers, cited in Libri, 2004, p: 1) is another acronym guiding the coach once again through a conversation, from developing 'aims', discussing 'reality', 'reflecting', discussing 'options', and agreeing the 'way' forward.

*Achieve*. The ACHIEVE model (Dembkowski and Eldridge, cited Libri 2004, p: 2) once again uses an acronym to guide the coach from 'assessing' the current situation, 'creating' brainstorming alternatives, 'honing' goals, 'initiating' options, 'evaluating' options, design a 'valid' action plan, and 'encouraging' momentum.

Goal setting has long been hailed as the motivational technique that works, and remains 'one of the most important' available for coaching (Johnston 2005, p: 11). Within coaching it can range from 'loose and informal' to 'scheduled and structured in such a way that the purpose and the roles are unambiguous' (Whitmore 2001, p: 48). In the majority of cases, what is discussed is framed by a detailed 'action plan' (Whitmore 2001, p: 80) or else the session 'may lead nowhere' (Greene and Grant 2003, p: 100). By setting goals the coach and coachee can jointly define issues, develop solutions, or create a future vision, which can then be made specific and tangible. This then allows 'movement' and 'progress' in coaching to be measured and kept

in focus so that eventually 'positive change' (Greene and Grant, 2003, p: 55) can be brought about. Focusing on goals and actions lets the coachee move from a 'general venting to a specific plan', by concentrating on 'actions', (O'Neill 2000, p: 115), and finally onto 'results' (Greene and Grant, 2003, p: 48). Flaherty (1999, p: 3) and Downey (2003, p: 100) support this view making the point that without knowing where one is going, then it is not possible to correct oneself during the coaching or evaluate oneself at the end. O'Neill (2000, p: 103) argues that there are 'two kinds of goals the executive needs to work on; business goals....and personal goals', but emphasises that that there must be 'a measure for each' (p: 104) because it is 'essential to the business'. Goldsmith et al, (2000, p: 302) suggest that 'it is impossible to improve performance without establishing clear and specific performance objectives', targeted to develop specific learning that is 'meaningful' and relevant for the coachee (Downey 2003, p: 18, and Frankl, 2004, p: 140).

### *Shadowing*

Peltier (2001, p: 12) suggests that 'the best way to get a comprehensive and accurate sense of our clients is to 'shadow' them' (or in other words to accompany them at work). Shadowing is increasingly being seen as a useful way to coach (Bennis 1999, p: 134, Goldsmith et al 2000, p: 13, Flaherty 1999 p: 90, O'Neill 2000 p: 128, Clutterbuck and Megginson 1999, p: 15). The key advantage here is that learning can be applied right away, responding to immediate events (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 14, O'Neill 2000 pps: 128-129). Flaherty (1999, p: 90) suggests that 'observing your client in a variety of situations' gives the coach the ability to notice 'behavioural and speech patterns' that can then provide vital 'openings' that allow a 'diagnosis' (Weafer 2001 p: 30), which Gallwey (2002, p: 189) likens to 'turning on the headlights of a vehicle'. Similarly Bennis (1999, p: 163) argues that 'leadership doesn't come from genes. It doesn't come from reading or listening to lectures. It comes through the hard earned experience in the arena, rather than watching from the balcony' (Bennis, 1999, p: 164). In short, people learn about things when they experience them. For a prospective leader, there are two 'major sources of learning; the individual and the organisational setting' (Bennis, 1999, p: 134). Using specific events that can be captured (indirectly) by the

individual in a diary at the time, or observed (directly) from shadowing for example, makes it possible to review, reflect and learn from them. Bennis (1999, p: 135) describes this process of talking through and reviewing an immediate event as 'reflective backtalk', arguing that it 'can be deeper if it is done with a person who is respected and trusted', such as a coach. Goldsmith et al, (2000, p: 14) conclude that shadowing is a form of 'just in time teaching' allowing coachees to learn in the workplace and on the job. Without it, the coach is limited to one to one interviews, where the coachee provides a 'self report', providing only a single stream of knowledge which can be criticised as being potentially one dimensional 'biased' and 'flawed' (Peltier 2001, p: 12). O'Neill (2000, p: 133) warns however that 'few people feel at ease when someone observes them doing their work', but that 'they begin to see the benefit when it enables them to increase their effectiveness'.

#### *Psychology based models.*

Peltier (2001, p; xiii) argues that 'most coaching books do not effectively establish a direct relationship between psychological methods and coaching practice'. He goes on to argue (p: xviii) that 'executive and management coaching are ideal ways to bring the positive potential of psychology into the workplace', because it can 'draw from frameworks of humanistic, existential, behavioural, and psychodynamic psychology to choose techniques' (p: xix) concluding that 'the skills that psychotherapists possess are of enormous potential to business executives and corporate leaders.....and ought not to go to waste' (p: xxi). Peltier (2001, p: xxxi) suggests that psychologists can become coaches by 'synthesizing the best lessons from psychological theory in a way that they can be quickly understood and effectively applied to executive and management coaching'.

Peltier (2001, p: xxxi) devotes a separate chapter to different psychological theory and explains how 'its basic concepts', (listing for example theories that relate to assessments, behaviours, ethics, existentialism, functional analysis, hypnosis, person-centred approaches, psychodynamic views, social psychology and transitioning) 'can all be applied to coaching in the workplace' in the form of management coaching. Peltier (2001, p:xx) cites Kiel et al

(1996) of KRW International, a company that coach CEOs of the Fortune 500 companies in the States. In their coaching assignments their coaches 'draw from the frameworks of humanistic, existential, behavioural, and psychodynamic psychology and choose....techniques eclectically to fit the client, the situation and the need.' For example cognitive behavioural theories can be adapted to management coaching where the coach focuses the coachee on noticing their own conscious thoughts so that they realise they have the power to influence feeling, behaviours and actions (Peltier 2001, p: 84). In short, Peltier (2001, p: 84) argues that these models derived from psychotherapy can all help to 'control thinking' so that the coachee is enabled to manage their emotions and behaviours more efficiently.

In summary, Dembkowski and Eldridge (2004 p: 6) warn that an 'over-reliance on analytical tools is by no means justified,' and Flaherty (1999, p: 13) stresses that it is 'dangerous for coaches to imagine that the use of any technique, however powerful, will allow them to escape engaging fully with the client with openness, courage and curiosity', warning in summary that: 'techniques can not replace human heart and creativity in coaching'

### *Direction in coaching*

Another way to classify one coach's approach in relation to another is to consider the level of direction they give their coachee. This relates to the proportion of asking they do in relation to telling.

#### *Non-directive*

Kieslowski (1993, cited in Garvey 2006, p: 3) suggests that nobody other than the coachees themselves can come up with what they want to get from their coaching, and implies that the coach should not try to direct, give or tell the coachee what to do. Whitmore, (2001 p: 36) suggests that any attempt by the coach to contribute directly in the coaching means that the coach is not acting effectively as a 'detached awareness raiser'. Peck (1987, p: 97) suggests that 'my cure is not my friends', making the point that offering anyone the answer to their issues, 'usually only makes that person feel worse'. He goes on to



argue that offering a 'cure' is not only 'naïve and ineffective but quite self-centred and self-serving'. Whitmore (2001, p: 43) suggests that throughout the coaching assignment the coach must resist 'the compulsion to talk' and try to 'listen twice as much as' they speak. Weafer (2001, p: 37) supports this view, insisting that the coach must set aside their own agenda and let the person they are coaching 'find a reason, a sense of purpose, so then their own internal energies will drive the process and the coach simply acts as a guide and support, while the client moves inexorably towards the fulfilment of their needs.' Harvey-Jones (1994, p: 71) argues that this approach produces other indirect benefits, as it is likely to make any individual feel 'wanted, needed and respected'.

By not giving the coachee answers through direction, but instead focusing on asking questions, the coach is encouraging the process of self-teach. Bolt (2000, p: 42) maintains that this is 'fundamental' to good coaching, and Landsberg (2003, p: 5) states quite simply that 'coaching by asking is often more effective than coaching by telling'. Greene and Grant, (2003, p: xiii) cite Socrates who said: '*I cannot teach anybody anything. I can only make them think*'. In this way, a fundamental concept of coaching may be that it is a 'mission of transfer, not dependence, encapsulated in the following quote: 'Give a man a fish – feed for a day; Teach a man to fish – feed him for a lifetime' (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 32). Downey (Coaching at Work. Volume 2. Issue 4, p: 39) describes this non-directive style of coaching as an 'absolute cornerstone', although he qualifies this statement suggesting that it should not stop good coaches from bringing in their own intelligence 'in a way that doesn't interfere with the authority of the other'.

### *Directive*

Other commentators believe that 'it is vital that the coach confronts their people' (Blanchard and Shula, 2002, p: 105). Cavanagh (2006, cited in O'Broin and Palmer 2006, pps: 16-17) suggests that 'effective coaches often do tell', but Peltier (2001, p: 124) suggests it can be done subtly, that the coach has frequent opportunities to lead the coachee 'indirectly', using

questions and making 'suggestions' (p: 125) that makes the client adopt new ways of thinking, as if they had come up certain answers themselves.

Others suggest that the coach must find a balance, and the key may be the ability to display both qualities. Grant (Coaching at Work, volume 2 issue 5, 2007, p: 37), suggests that 'helping a client to reach their destination sometimes requires that the coach be quite directive, and sometimes non-directive. The skill of the coach comes in knowing when to point out the way, how firmly to point it out, and when to let the client figure it out for themselves'. Downey (Coaching at work Vol 1 Issue 4, p: 19), argues that 'it is impossible to be completely non-directive, and almost certainly not desirable'. O'Neill (2000 p: 13) believes that one should not be favoured more than the other, emphasising that 'executive coaching is a continual dance of balancing backbone and heart while you work with the leader'. Jarvis et al (2006, p; 161) argue that the coach needs to be able to apply their skills to a broad range of different situations, issues, and people, flexing their approach to cope with different audiences at different leadership levels.

In summary, opinion on what a coach should do during the secondary stage coaching sessions is split, with some arguing the role is to help a person learn how to learn, whereas others suggest the coach's role is 'as an instructor, providing the specific competencies needed' (Harris 1999, p: 1). The majority of writers conclude that the coach must be impartial, so that the coachee finds their own solutions 'so then their own internal energies will drive the process and the coach simply acts as a guide and support, while the client moves inexorably towards the fulfilment of their needs' (Weafer, 2001, p: 37).

### *The use of theories and philosophies*

Handy (2006, p: 166) suggests that although 'as with all philosophical questions there are no right answers', simply having one reduces the coach's vulnerability to criticism or scepticism from others about what they are doing, and avoids being accused of having a 'laissez faire attitude of anything goes'.

Flaherty (1999, p: 3) believes that the coach is 'more than being an accountability partner that supports someone in reaching their goals or a disciplinarian who changes someone's unwanted actions'. Hannon (2006, Coaching at work Volume 1, Issue 5, p: 51) suggests that coaching that aims to help people find meaning in their work can result in highly motivated and self-confident clients. As a result it is not uncommon for some coaches to use a variety of theories to underpin their coaching approach. He goes on to suggest that 'the successful twenty first century organisations will be those with the flexibility to recognise that their executives have spiritual lives as well as physical lives' (p: 53).

Flaherty (1999, pp: 20-21) suggests that a coach should have an explicit theory about human beings, since they are 'the focus, centre, and subject of coaching'. He goes on to say that the theory must be one that allows for people to change, to become more competent, and to become excellent at performance. For example Downey (2003, pps: 189-190) uses a set of 'propositions' that he claims 'eliminates much interference' when he coaches. The assumptions that he makes about all the coachees he works with throughout assignments are that they all have 'huge potential'; they all have a 'unique map of reality'; they all have 'good intentions'; and finally they are all 'achieving their own objectives – perfectly – all the time'. Whitmore (2001, p: 27) warns that coaching without an 'underlying philosophy', means that what they do is likely to 'fall far short of what is possible.'

Flaherty (1999, p: xi) suggests that many coaches do not address the philosophical questions at all and simply work with 'an assumed theory that is never revealed', and as a result often 'the people who coach and people who are coached don't really know exactly what it is that is happening' (Downey 2003, p: vii). The following are examples of philosophies or theories that can underpin a coaching approach.

### *The inner Game*

Gallwey (1986 p: 18) underpins his approach to coaching with his 'inner game' theory, that suggests each person has two 'selves', one that is

characterised by the voice in ones head (self one) and the second, a deeper self (self two), recognisable as the object of self one's criticism. Gallwey suggests that the key to exceptional performance is to silence self one's criticism, and trust that self two can move performance closer to ones potential. In summary Gallwey (1986, p: 21) describes this 'master skill' as 'the art of concentration', which he claims is needed to get anything done. Other writers and coaches (e.g. Whitmore 2001 p: 8, and Downey 2003, p: 10) incorporate elements of this theory into their individual coaching approaches.

### *'Oakreeness'*

Whitmore (2001, p: 9) uses the word 'oakreeness' to convey the theory that within everyone there is a metaphorical 'acorn' waiting to be developed, and that everyone has a potential waiting to be unlocked and grow. Coaching he argues enables this process to happen, acting much like a 'catalyst' (p: 12) so that an individual's potential can be released and their performance maximised. Whitmore (2001 pps: 28-34) builds on this belief by suggesting that in the first instance the individual must become aware of issues that affect them, and then they must take personal responsibility for them.

### *Existential philosophies*

Peltier (2001 p: 155) suggests that existential philosophies 'offer a great deal to the coach who can effectively pick and choose amongst the many views subsumed under the title of 'existentialism''. For example Peltier (2001, pps: 157-162) highlights three of Nietzsche's concepts which can make the coachee think deeply about themselves.

*Independent morality.* The concept of independent morality can be used to make the point that everyone has a 'moral obligation to become excellent' and should therefore make the most of everything they have and they are (Peltier, 2001 p: 157).

*Will to power.* The concept of 'will to power' (Peltier 2001, p: 157) can be relevant because it emphasises that to have a say in ones own life, people must use their own 'willpower' and not rely on someone else.

*Herd instinct.* The concept of 'herd instinct' can be used to highlight that human beings are often 'inclined to be lazy, to be fearful, to seek comfort, and to hide behind habits that keep us safe and the same' (Peltier 2001, p: 162). Peltier goes on to argue (p: 162) that people 'don't often think for themselves', and take the easy option which is often to accept 'prevailing wisdom', which Nietzsche refers to as living with a 'slave morality' (p: 162).

#### *Choice and life purpose*

Frankl's (2004) account of survival in Auschwitz generates two key philosophical concepts that can be used by the coach. The first is that no matter how much is taken away, the one thing that always remains is 'the opportunity' to make the 'decision' determining whether they 'submit to those powers' that could 'rob them of their very self or inner freedom'(p: 75). Frankl (2004) noticed that some people become 'apathetic' (p:74), feeling frustrated and bored, as if ever waiting for someone else to come and change their lives for them. He concludes that choice is 'the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way' (Frankl 2004, p: 75). Similarly, Csikszentmihalyi (2002, p: 225), suggests that some people come to realise that 'there is no one out there to tell them what to do', and that 'there is no absolute certainty to which to turn', concluding that they must discover their purpose on their own.

#### *Purpose*

Another philosophical concept that the coach can use is to focus on what purpose the coachee has to fulfil in their life. By helping a person come up with a 'future goal', then they can 'look forward to it' and derive an 'inner strength' (Frankl 2004, p: 81). It is not that each person will immediately be able to accurately detail the life goal, which is 'different and unique' for everyone (p: 85), but that it is about 'taking the responsibility' to find out what it is, because it is related to each person's 'destiny' in life.

#### *The paradox of death*

Flaherty (1999, p: 27) suggests that the subject of death is frequently pushed out of consciousness in many western cultures, but that it can provide a useful

philosophical concept for coaching. Levine (1986, p: 2) argues that paradoxically 'the ways of a lifetime are focused in our death' and as such people should consciously think about their deaths to ask whether they are really living their lives, or simply 'hiding' (Levine 1986, p: 13). By focusing on ones demise Levine (1986, p: 30) suggests the individual is likely to conclude that they must take responsibility for their lives now, seizing the 'extraordinary opportunity to be really alive', because at the end of ones life 'it will be too late' (Flaherty, 1999, p: 27).

Using philosophies and theories to underpin a coaching approach can be useful as they not only reduce the coach's vulnerability to criticism or scepticism from others, but that they create a platform for the coachees to think deeply and introspectively. The implication of discussing philosophical-based issues is that it may create is a sense of urgency for the coachee to take control and assume the responsibility to find their answers to these philosophical questions as soon as possible.

Goodge (2005, Coaching at work, launch issue p: 44) highlights that in comparison to the use of coaching models and techniques, the use of philosophies and theories is seldom employed by coaches. Clutterbuck (2004a, p: 108) suggests that the coach should just develop a 'flexible and individual approach', and Parsloe (Coaching at Work. Volume 2. Issue 4, p: 20) suggests the best way for them to do this is just 'to be themselves and trust their life experience'.

### Summary

In summary, this section has suggested that there are two phases involved in what the coach does during a coaching assignment. During the first phase the coach focuses on using a range of core coaching skills to build a relationship with the coachee, so that at some point they feel secure to surface issues that they would not normally share with other work colleagues. At this point the coaching moves into a secondary phase, where the coach attempts to 'help' the coachee with these issues. It is here that the literature

diverges because during the second phase there are a multitude of potential approaches that a coach can employ to help the coachee, reflecting the complexity associated with the term coaching, the rapid growth of coaching as a development intervention, and the huge variation in backgrounds reflecting the diverse capability that coaches are bringing to the market.

As a result of this, and the very limited research that has looked at the effectiveness of different coaching approaches, techniques, and models (Grant cited in Whybrow and Palmer 2006, p: 62), it is not possible to favour one over another. However, it is possible to categorise approaches using differentiating factors such as the use the coach makes of coaching techniques and models, the level of direction they give to the coachee, and whether they use theories or philosophies to underpin, guide or stimulate their coaching. By doing this it is possible to group commonalities, comment on approaches, and reach a greater depth of understanding in the analysis of the empirical evidence.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### WHAT DOES THE COACH DO?

#### EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

##### Introduction

The following section considers the empirical evidence relating to what the coach actually does during a coaching assignment. It suggests that there are two phases. During the first, the coach uses a range of 'core' skills described above in the literature section to build trusting relationships, wherein coachees feel able to surface issues that then become the focus of the coaching in the second phase. What the coach actually does to help the coachee during the latter phase is variable, and depends on many different factors such as the coach's own specific background, experience and beliefs. Activity here is referred to as the coach's approach. The empirical evidence highlights that the core coaching activities used to build rapport and which dominate in phase one, continue throughout the coaching assignment, present and underpinning all the different types of coaching approaches employed by the variety of coaches.

##### The coaching relationship

The relationship building phase of coaching is likely to be necessary to enable coaching of any value to take place. The following quote suggests that without it, the coachee will be unlikely to open up and reveal key issues about themselves:

*Talking to a complete stranger who doesn't know much about you, doesn't know much about your working environment, just felt a bit odd. (Coachee 20)*

Conversely, the following quote highlights the benefit of investing time in creating rapport at the start of the coaching, to generate a strong relationship



characterised by confidentiality, trust, a belief that the coach can help and a willingness on the part of the coachee to disclose issues of a personal nature that they would in normal circumstances be unwilling to talk about with other work colleagues:

*But it was more about the relationship we built up. She generated a massive level of trust. I naturally find it really difficult to open up to someone in the initial phases. Because of the trust relationship, I gave really honest answers, and helped her to understand me as a person. (Coachee 1)*

### *Characteristics of the relationship*

The following are a range of characteristics associated with the relationship that imply it is strong and potentially capable of allowing the coach and coachee to progress through to the secondary phase.

#### *Trust*

One of the most important characteristics of the relationship is that there is abundant trust between the two individuals, so that the coachee feels that virtually anything can be discussed without any risk of others finding out.

*The confidentiality of coaching is absolutely key. If you didn't have that you simply would not go there. (Coachee 3)*

#### *Safety*

Closely associated with trust is the need to create a relationship that is perceived by the coachee to be 'safe'. Along with the presence of trust and the assumption that the coach can help, this influences whether the coachee is going to 'open up'.

*I think without having somebody who you felt created a very safe environment, and who you trusted ..... I would not have got started. (Coachee 23)*

### *Open*

Some coachees were intimidated to talk openly about certain issues with their boss, but this was not the case when working with their coach (in the following quote the coach is called Ann)

*On a number of occasions I have not been able to share my true feelings with my manager when making some big decisions on my future, I can do this with Ann (Coachee 16).*

### *Activities to build the relationship*

Evidence suggests that the coach begins a coaching assignment by doing what they can to develop rapport with the coachee and build a relationship with them. In this case coaches often emphasise aspects of their backgrounds and experience to build credibility in addition to employing a range of core coaching activities to build trust and generate confidence. The following quotes provide examples of this, supporting much of what has already been discussed in the literature review section.

### *Coaching activities*

The beginning of any one to one coaching relationship appears commonly to start with a core range of coaching activities to build rapport, such as asking open questions, listening and summarising back by the coach as the two individuals get to know one another. The frequency that these activities are mentioned within the empirical data suggests that they are at the 'core' of coaching during the early period of an assignment:

*Asking questions:* When the coach and coachee meet for the very first time, after the introductions the coach will often begin by asking the coachee questions, so that the process of getting to know one another begins, and the coachee's needs begin to emerge.

*They need to be perceptive enough to work out what they need to do. It will be an ambiguous brief, and the coachee will be less aware of what their needs are. So they need to be able to spend some time with that coachee to*

*clarify before what their needs are. They need to ask lots of open questions.*  
(Coachee 15)

*Listening.* Many of the coachees emphasised the need for the coach to be a good listener.

*The coaching session is 66% self-discovery, and 33% listening, probing and asking the right questions.* (Coachee 3)

The coachees expect that the coach is also capable at 'active' listening, so that any subtle nuances associated with the message as it is being listened to are picked up as well:

*It is latching on and being able to understand what a person is saying as well as not saying* (Coachee 7)

Listening well can also create other elements of the relationship to develop, such as a sense of caring for the coachee, the raising of trust and the willingness to be open with the coach:

*There are incidents I don't find easy to talk about but through her patience and listening she earned my total trust and I feel able to be open and honest*  
(Coachee 11)

*Summarising back.* Related to good listening skills, the coach often summarises back to the coachee what they have heard them say, to ensure that they have understood and captured all the points the coachee has explained. In some cases the effect of 'playing back' what the coachee has just said provided the opportunity for the coachee to learn and make new connections:

*Through asking questions, open questions and playing back to me in a skilled way I was able to answer the question myself.* (Coachee 23)

#### *Coaches' background capabilities*

In addition to the activities that are associated with coaching in the beginning phase of the coaching assignment, evidence suggests that often some of the

coaches used relevant aspects of their backgrounds and experience in business to emphasise their suitability to be coaching them.

*Experience.* In the following quote the coachee values the coach's empathy from having experienced a similar role to theirs:

*..... that they have an idea of the kind of things I am going through, and the pressures I am under, the context in which there is maybe others they have worked with, or worked in similar industries or whatever. (Coachee 10)*

*Local organisational insight.* In some cases the coach would appeal to the coachee because they had insight of the organisation and its personalities, which would be valued:

*She was able to give me some feedback. I think this is quite unique. I don't think you would normally get this (Coachee 18)*

*Care for the coachee.* A couple of coachees talked about how important the personality of the coach was in building a strong relationship, arguing that this is necessary along with the technical capability the coach brings;

*Technical skills can be learnt I suppose, but the personality is very important too. .... They have to really love what they are doing, really care for people and want to help them. To break these barriers down, they have to do that. If it is just seen as a job, then it won't work (Coachee 7)*

The empirical evidence suggests that there are a range of core coaching activities that are prominent at the beginning of the coaching assignment serving to build rapport and create a strong coaching relationship. Additionally the evidence suggests that coaches use their background experience to generate higher levels of credibility with the coachee, which can often positively affect rapport building. When sufficient levels of trust have been built, the relationship offers a safe and supportive environment where significant issues can be raised with the coach. It is at this point that coaching moves to the secondary stage, where the coach's individual approach becomes apparent.

## The coaching approach

When an appropriate coaching relationship has been reached (characterised by a coachee who is willing to open up and disclose key issues to the coach), then it is possible for the coach to begin helping the coachee. That helping process manifests as the approach the coach chooses to adopt. The literature has suggested that the approach is a reflection of the coach's own individual background, experiences and values, and as such there are potentially infinitesimal variations possible. As a result, the following section considers how coaching approaches differ, using the differentiation factors outlined in the literature section earlier in this chapter.

### *The use of techniques*

The following section considers the effect of using coaching models, tools and techniques to manage and guide the coaches' approach. The empirical evidence suggests that many of the coaches used an 'in-house' coaching model called 'mindtalk clearing'.

#### *Mindtalk*

The concept of 'mindtalk' (also known as 'in the box, out the box') is a 'self-coaching' model taught, coached and used throughout Tesco. This model enables managers to recognise and acknowledge the conscious thoughts they have in their heads (mindtalk), and instead of allowing these thoughts to influence emotions, actions and behaviours, they are taught a process to 'verify' that they are an accurate reflection of their reality. For example if a manager feels that current events are making their job 'impossible'<sup>18</sup>, they would sit down and write out why they are thinking like that. When the list is complete they then review it, to confirm for each thought whether it is 'true',

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<sup>18</sup> Tesco suggest that there are four 'boxes' in which a manager's mental state can be at any one time: 'survival', 'impossibility', 'obligation' and 'willingness'. The key here is for the manager to recognise which box they are in, and then use the mindtalk clearing exercise to return to the most conducive box for leadership, namely 'willingness'.

'false' or if they 'don't know'. The theory is that by targeting the validity of the mindtalk, the individual will be able to identify thoughts that are not true, 'clear' the negative state and return to a more favourable mindset appropriate to dealing with the daily challenges in their role.

Many of the interviewees reported that the mindtalk clearing technique was conducted on them.

*Structuring coaching.* In some cases the coachee did not remember much about the technique itself, but often was positive about its overall use and its value to put a structure on and to explain what was being done: *We used 'in the box, out the box' – taking people with you (whatever it is called), we used the different motivational states. And Alistair was learning a whole load of other tools, and I was not sure what they were. They were useful because they put a structure to analysis and to problem solving.* (Coachee 23)

*Ownership of technique.* Evidence suggests that techniques when applied to the coaching were seen very much as owned and administered by the coach. For example when the mindtalk model is employed, it would often be the coach who would take responsibility for suggesting it, and then asking the questions, listening, writing, verifying and facilitating any resulting changes. In the following quote, the coach is leading with this model, and the coach implies it is the only model that is used: *Normally Alistair would take notes, and virtually every time you do it, it would be a clearing process – we would be talking about a topic, and he would say so what do you think and I would try and pull out the mind talk. He would write it down as I generate it, and then ask well is that true or false? And we would try and verify it.* (Coachee 3)

*Over-reliance of technique:* There is evidence that some coaches were over-reliant on their techniques, using them to lead their coaching. In a couple of occasions this led to the coachee requesting a change of coach:

*Well, with the first coach the example would have been: Right lets get out a piece of paper, let's jot down your mindtalk. Is that true or false? So it was very much a set of steps. Essentially Simon did the same thing but without the paper, so it felt more natural. It meant that the conversation wasn't so constrained. (Coachee 15)*

*Responsibility for the technique.* Although the mindtalk model is taught to employees with the intention that they will self administer it, often coachees associate the coach as being the administrator, and are reticent to use it on their own. The following quote implies that the coachee has developed a reliance on the coach, and is unwilling to use the technique to self-help. *Even though I have that tool kit to do the mindtalk myself I would have to work on my own on it. It is just so useful and so effective to have a coach to do that with. (Coachee 22)*

### *Psychotherapy*

The empirical evidence suggests that the majority of coaches used the Tesco mindtalk technique with their coachees, with little evidence of any other coaching tool or model being used. In one case however, the coach begun the psychological techniques without first getting a rapport built with the coachee. This seemed to unnerve the coachee, and leave them feeling 'numbed' by the impact. The following quote is the coachee's answer to a question that asked how long it was into the first coaching session that the coach started using psychotherapeutic techniques:

*About an hour. (Q: How did you feel about that?) Numb. It was just something I wasn't expecting. I think every session left me with some sort of numbness. I was on the plane and just not talking and thinking 'ooh', I felt like I had been hypnotised. I have never been hypnotised but I wondered if there was any difference between what someone would tell you if you were. It did feel strange. You were always aware that people were looking at you and watching you, and eventually we started going to a lounge in the Gatwick hotel. But there were always people there as well. And I always found it strange as well. (Coachee 2)*

*Leading with technique.* It is possible that in this case the technique was so dominant that the coachee resembled a patient who had not been asked for his or her own personal view of the issue:

*It was words and it was more in your head. How do we remove these demons from your shoulders..... There was times when she made me close my eyes, talk in my ear, to bring out memories to think back when you were 3, and the impact that had when you were 5..... She drilled into issues, and tried to understand if they had got established when I was younger..... I think the point was to try and inspire 'trigger moments' to determine what lead to my intensity and what I was worried about. (Coachee 2).*

During the interview with this coachee, it became clear that the individual had never been given the opportunity to talk freely, outside of a technique, and as a result the following key issue about his line manager had never been exposed or explored in any one of his nine coaching sessions, and yet it would appear to be one of, if not the integral issue associated with their development:

*'He was a bully. He was a psychological bully rather than physical obviously. It was very psychological. He would just bully you round the shop. ....*

*(Question: did you go through that with the coach?)*

*It was mentioned, but I don't think we drilled into it. (Coachee 2)*

In summary, the empirical evidence suggests that techniques can be useful to add structure to what is being done during coaching. However, they can dominate coaching, take away responsibility from the coachee to locate and expose key issues, be associated with the coach themselves, so that a potential dependency on them can form and they can be overly used by some coaches. It is possible that some coaches may use techniques to cover their inexperience, and to present capability to the client, but there is evidence here to suggest that administering these techniques may pre-occupy their consciousness so much that they fail to 'hear' what is happening with the coachee. As a last point it is possible that the widespread use of the mindtalk clearing technique may create an over-simplification of what coaching is.



### *Coach direction*

The literature suggests that coaching can vary between coaches dependent on the level of direction that they give the coachee. This 'direction' can occur in different ways, such as how much control they put on the coaching sessions, how often they provide the coachee with solutions to their issues, and the level of direct challenge they give the coachee (which can often indirectly be used by the coach to lead a coachee to a solution).

#### *Directive*

In some cases there is clear evidence that the coach is taking control of the structure and content of the coaching session, with the result that the coachee's responsibility to decide what to focus on, discuss and seek a greater understanding of may be withdrawn:

*'She used to come in and say 'right on this session we are going to deal with this', and on another, she would say she was going to deal with that. I was possibly going to her agenda' (Coachee 2).*

*Challenging.* In some circumstances it is not clear whether the coach is providing direction or simply attempting to create deeper thinking in the coachee. For example challenging appears to be an important element of coaching that some coaches bring to the sessions. In the main it is welcomed and viewed positively;

*In my case I would say that I needed quite a challenging coach, and I actually changed my coach half way through. My last one had helped me to work through a specific issue with a specific background, but I just felt that once I had resolved that she was no longer an appropriate coach. So then I realised I needed a softer style to get through the first challenge, and then after that I needed someone who was a bit more challenging. (Coachee 21)*

The following two quotes suggest that the coach is challenging the coachee, but does not have any specific destination as to where it will lead. In this case the challenge could be described as 'open'. Open challenge can clearly

provide value for coachees by stretching their thinking on certain issues. In the following quote the coach uses their local knowledge of the organisation and personalities within the organisation to provide specific but valuable feedback, which challenges their coachee's thinking:

*She was able to give me some feedback. I think this is quite unique. I don't think you would normally get this. But I think because she has had other relationships in the business she was able to give me her own personal feedback on issues because she had personal knowledge of the issues that I was describing..... She would challenge me to do things and not to wimp out of doing things. She challenged me in terms of having an action plan, and not just sit there and say that is how it is (Coachee 18).*

Open challenge is valued highly by coachees as the following quote suggests, *Well I actually had two coaches. Because the coach I was using I didn't get enough from her. I didn't think she was practical enough..... There was not enough 'so what' afterwards. That might be a bit about my style. I am happy to talk, and I am happy to draw conclusions, but I needed some help in them saying, okay look I have drawn those conclusions now what am I going to do with it afterwards. I just wanted to work with someone who understood the practical implications. I would say that is probably true for a lot of Tesco people. (Coachee 15)*

The following quote could be termed 'closed' challenging, because here the coach appears to be deliberately attempting to 'steer' a coachee towards a specific line of thought. The key point here is that closed challenging takes away a coachee's responsibility to develop their own awareness, and potentially creates a dependency to form from the coachee on the coaches: *At no point was he saying 'this is what I think'..... whilst I believe in his own mind he was working out some options, he certainly did not allow me to walk out of the room knowing what they were, but I sometimes wondered if his questions deliberately enabled me to get to them anyway (Coachee 24)*

*Coach as 'expert'.* In some cases when the individual's personal situation is reviewed and it becomes immediately clear what the key issues

are, the coach may be tempted to provide 'tailored' remedies, such as in the following example, where a coachee is given two pieces of advice on how to overcome self-induced stress when coping with a line manager: In this case the coach provides two techniques as solutions, firstly to manage his 'mind-talk' and secondly a breathing technique to enable him to calm down:

*One of the things that used to get me into trouble, ..... was that I used to panic, and someone like David Woodfield<sup>19</sup> would come in, and I'd just panic ..... So there is a technique about managing my mind-talk, that was very useful, which was just around concentrating on your breathing, and concentrating on it, whilst listening to the individual. This helps you lose your mindtalk, and this helps you become very calm..... It was great, I took it away, and when Woodfield next came in, I waited for my moment, and calmed myself down. (Coachee 6)*

#### *Indirect*

It is possible for a coach to provide solutions but in a manner that is indirect. In the following example the coach provides solutions without actually recommending any of them: This can on occasion be greatly valued by the coachee:

*One of the good things with that episode of coaching, wasn't that it said 'right this is what you should do', but more 'these are some of the things that you might like to think about, consider or ponder....' Coming out of that I chose a course of action that actually worked for me. (Coachee 10)*

On other occasions on completion of each coaching session the coach provides a whole range of possible solutions, leaving the coachee to read through them in their own time and select the most appropriate one.

*So the actual coaching was a bit about she would give me loads of information that I could take away, and then in my own time I was to select what was most suitable for me. (Coachee 2)*

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<sup>19</sup> Operations Director for Superstores

### *Non-directive*

Some coaches were very conscious not to provide any answers directly or indirectly to the coachee at all. The non-directive approach tends to concentrate on the original range of core coaching activities used during the first phase of coaching to build rapport. As the coach continues to use them throughout the coaching they build ever-greater depths in the relationship, continually working to deepen levels of rapport and trust. Using the core coaching activities such as asking questions, listening and probing, during the secondary phase of coaching helps the coachee to reach greater levels of understanding to their own issues, and the potential to develop deeper awareness of those issues to help them find their own solutions.

The empirical research suggest that many coaches were non-directive.

*Listening.* The following quote is in response to the question; 'what skill is most important in a good coach?'

*Massive listening. I think to understand psychology and human behaviour, definitely you have to have that as a background, the ability to probe and drill into things. Not to give the answers, because people come up with their own answers, but definitely understanding the individual and asking the right questions. (Coachee 17)*

*Relationship building.* Often the relationship that is created becomes the main catalyst for successful coaching:

*There were lots of models and things that she had learnt in the past. But it was more about the relationship we built up. (Coachee 1)*

*Talking.* Whatever is done during coaching by the coach, the key manifestation for the coachee is that they are allowed to talk openly about a wide range of issues of their choosing, and it is the talking process that is valued, because it is not often encouraged during normal working:

*It was very relaxed, very informal but it was a real opportunity to stop and reflect. I am one of those persons who never really stops talking. So to talk*

*to someone for three hours it was quite a good way to think it through in my own mind. And you don't really get that opportunity in the work environment.*  
(Coachee 9)

*Asking questions.* Whilst asking questions is frequently done to enable a strong coaching relationship, coaches continue to use them to generate greater levels of understanding, and to encourage learning in a non-directive manner. The following quote demonstrates how the coach facilitates learning by asking questions that allow the coachee to grow their own self-awareness as they search for answers to their own issues.

*..... but without a structured questioning, I just would not have got there.*  
(Coachee 23)

### *The use of theories and philosophies*

The empirical evidence suggests that none of the coaches specifically underpinned their coaching with an overarching theory or philosophy that explained what their coaching approach was attempting to do, or what meaning it was attempting to create. However, on occasion, some coachees independently made sense of what was happening by linking aspects of their thinking during their coaching to something more meaningful.

### *Control and choice*

There is evidence that some coachees developed a sense of being more in control as a direct result of having had coaching:

*I feel more in control. It is an achievement for me. If I am in control it follows that I can make choices in how I behave. So I am more likely to get a better return.* (Coachee 3)

As a result of coaching, some coachees realised that they actually had the power to choose what they wanted in their lives and how that would affect how they felt:

*I suppose it is about controlling how I feel, and choosing how I feel.* (Coachee 22)

### *Values and beliefs*

Some coaches talked with the coachees about their own values and beliefs, which they found useful to help raise levels of self-awareness. However, it was not clear how this related to the coaching approach:

*It gives you the opportunity to explore your values, and how to explore how you felt at different times and how that relates back to your values. And I found that was a very powerful platform to help me to understand myself better. (Coachee 23)*

### *Life focus*

One coach asked their coachee about what they wanted in life making it clear that they could make it happen if they wanted it. Whilst this sentiment touches on philosophical concepts it did not explicitly explain them, nor did the coach appear to relate it back to coaching and development. Nevertheless it made some sense to the coachee and emphasised the need to take personal ownership of their own development:

*We did the sessions and occasionally he told me that he came up against people fairly often, that they want something, but on the other hand they offer up half a dozen reasons why they can't do something. So he said it was really important to be clear with yourself what it is that you want in life, because sometimes these things come at an expense. It is about putting yourself in an environment where you are uncomfortable. Some people like that environment and some people don't, and there is no point putting yourself in that environment if it is ultimately not what you want in life. (Coachee 24)*

## Summary

The empirical evidence suggests that what the coach does during a coaching assignment alters between two distinct phases. During the initial stages of a new coaching assignment the coach is engaged in activities that build rapport with the coachee, and then in the subsequent phase the coach changes what they do to approach helping the coachee with the issues they surface for discussion.

The empirical research suggests that coaches build rapport by using a set of 'core coaching' interpersonal skills as well as using any of their background capabilities (e.g. previous experience in business, psychology competencies, knowledge of the organisation etc) that may compliment relationship building by adding credibility to their role. The empirical evidence suggests that coaches who try to by-pass the relationship building phase are unlikely to be successful. The creation of a strong relationship builds a platform for the second phase of coaching, beginning at the point where the coachee feels willing to 'open up' and discuss issues that would normally remain hidden to other work colleagues.

It is not possible to assess the individual approach of every coach in the secondary phase, as coaching activity diverges to reflect the coach's own individual style (reflecting their backgrounds, beliefs, values, experiences, and so on). As a result, the multiple variety of coaching approaches (coming from the diversity of coaches in the rapidly growing market) are classified to provide commentary on what 'types of coaches' do during coaching sessions. The empirical analysis section uses three differentiating factors to identify 'types', relating firstly to a coach's use of techniques and models; secondly the level of direction provided to the coachee and finally their use of wider theories and philosophies to underpin, guide and challenge what they are trying to do.

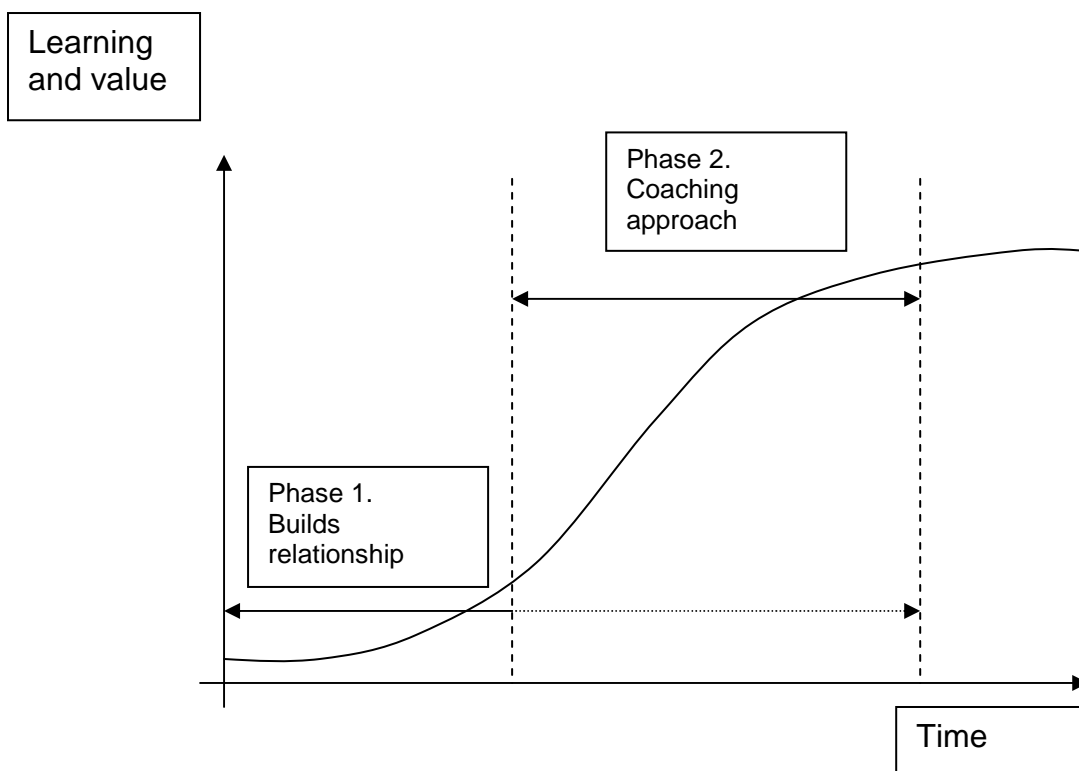
Using coaching models and techniques was often found to be useful, but limiting, and because the coach tended to administer them personally, their

ownership was never found to have been successfully transferred to the coachee for future self-learning. Coaches were found to direct coachees in different ways. Some challenged thinking, which was often highly valued by the coachees. Others provided solutions, or a range of solutions to the coachees' issues, which coachees appreciated, but did not sometimes accept, some were non-directive, characterised as a coach that continued to use the core coaching skills from phase one throughout the coaching. Finally there was no evidence of any coaching that explicitly incorporated any theoretical or philosophical elements.

### Conclusion

It is not clear what the coach does during the secondary phase of coaching just after the coachee begins to surface issues that they would like to discuss, except that it is expected that the main opportunities for the coachee's development exist from this point, and where the coach can have greatest help. This is depicted in figure 8.1 below.

Figure 8.1: The two phases of coaching in relation to time and value added





This study can only comment on what ‘types of coaches’ do during the secondary phase. Evidence suggests that coaches often were adopting key roles during the coaching, such as administering models, or providing solutions, or challenging thinking. This is appreciated by the coaches at the time, but carries consequences. It is likely that coachees will not develop awareness firstly on what is being done during their coaching, they may be unable (or unwilling) to administer self-coaching models, may come to rely on the coach to provide a basis of challenge to their thinking, and may not conclude that their development is ultimately their responsibility. (e.g. There is little or no evidence to suggest that any of the coaches have attempted to instil any self-learning techniques to generate future learning independent of the coach). This has implications for their futures, and the value of coaching as a development intervention (see chapters 9, 10 and 11). Additionally the lack of any evidence to suggest any of the coaching included theoretical or philosophical elements suggests that as a development intervention it is likely to fall well short of what it could do.

## CHAPTER NINE

### WHAT DOES THE COACHEE EXPERIENCE DURING A COACHING SESSION?

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

##### Introduction

Due to the limited empirical research that has been carried out on coaching (Professor Bob Garvey, Sheffield Hallam University, e-mail correspondence, 2005), very little is actually known about what the coachee experiences during a coaching assignment.

The previous chapter suggests that a set of 'core' coaching activities are employed in the opening phase of coaching to build rapport between the coach and coachee before moving into a secondary phase where a range of variable coaching activities related to the coach's own individual approach, are introduced to help the coachee with the issues they surface. The coach's approach during the second phase of coaching is likely to reflect in part their background, beliefs, values and experience. As a result of the diversity of coaches who have entered the coaching market, there are multiple variations of approach possible. In a similar way to the previous chapter, this chapter utilises the same categories of coaching approaches to facilitate commentary on what the coachees are experiencing during stage two, i.e. by the level of direction given to the coachee, the relative use made of coaching techniques and models, and finally whether their coaching incorporates theories and philosophies to underpin, guide and extend understanding as to what is happening.

The structure and layout of this chapter is similar to the previous one, but the key difference is the focus shift from what coaches do to what coachees experience.

## Phase one of coaching – using core activities to build rapport

Wilber (2001, p: 156) argues that if an individual is going 'begin to tell the truth about his or her interior without fear of retribution', then they need to have a 'safe environment surrounded by empathy, congruence, and acceptance'. Previous chapters suggest that 'core' coaching activities, commonly most pronounced at the start of a coaching assignment are designed to build rapport and create a strong relationship between the two parties, so that the coachee feels secure enough to surface issues for discussion that they would not normally raise with work colleagues. The following section considers the effect of these core activities on the coachee.

Downey (2003, p: 136-137) argues that spending time to build rapport with the coachee is necessary in order to build strong coaching relationships. Gallwey (2002, p: 177) suggests that coaching is not about 'external results', but should concentrate much more on 'the person being coached'. Wilber (2001, p: 156) suggests that when conditions are right the individual can be helped to understand their interiors better, where 'lies' and 'pain' 'disclose themselves' and the 'false self slowly burns in the fire of truthful awareness'. As a result it is possible that the whole point of focusing on building a strong coaching relationship is to make the coachee feel that they can 'express themselves' (Flaherty, 1999, p: 47) and relaxed enough to 'lower their shield' (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 134).

Commonly the coach will develop rapport in the ways already outlined in previous chapters, incorporating a set of core coaching skills. This has the intended effect of building empathy and respect, such that the coachee feels 'valued and trusted' (Bolt, 2000, p: 7), knowing that nothing will be 'divulged to anyone outside the coaching relationship' (Downey, 2003, p: 137), whilst at the same time 'enthusing' and 'building confidence in what he or she could become' (Clutterbuck, 2004a, p: 52).

## Phase two of coaching – the coaches' approach

When rapport has been developed to a sufficient point, the coachee is likely to feel inclined to surface issues that they wish to discuss, allowing coaching to move to the secondary coaching phase, where the focus is on 'helping people to learn and develop' (Garvey 2004, p: 6). It is likely that at this point the coaches' approaches are likely to diverge, reflecting the diversity of those that currently practice coaching in the market, and the beliefs, backgrounds, experiences, values etc that they bring. Due to the volume of coaches practicing in the market, their diversity, and the lack of empirical research that exists in this area, it is not practically possible to define and then consider all the experiences from these different approaches. As a result, this chapter uses the same three differentiating factors used in the previous chapter (i.e. level of direction given, techniques used, and the use of coaching theories and philosophies) to categorise types of coaching approaches and enable the coachees' experiences to be conceptualised.

### *Direction given in coaching*

One coach's chosen approach can diverge from another's, dependent on the level of direction they give the coachee, from those that give none, to those that give a lot. For example Whitmore (2001, p: 29) suggests that if the teacher tells the learner the 'right' way to do something, they will end up 'suppressing' the 'personal preferences and attributes of the performer'. However O'Neill, (2000, p: 8) and Blanchard and Shula (2002, p: 105) differ, suggesting that at times the coach should make their views known directly to the coachee, by 'confrontation' if necessary. Grant (2007, Coaching at Work Vol 2. Issue 5, p: 37) suggests that coaches should be able to vary their approach so that at times they are 'quite directive and sometimes non-directive'. He argues that it rests with the coach's experience, that sometimes direction in coaching is required to enable the coachee to 'reach their destination.'

### *Non-directive*

Goldsmith et al (2000, p: 111) highlight the need for coaching to focus both on behaviours as well as thoughts, arguing that 'the entire array of someone's personality' (e.g. their thoughts, attitudes, behaviours, habits, needs wants, fears, desires etc), both personal and business related are brought into the business arena'. As such coaching needs to deal with the whole person, and be 'tailored to the executives individual needs' (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 27). Goldsmith et al, (2000, p: 11) suggest that this is one of the main reasons that coaching is evolving as 'a natural form of leadership development'.

The coach that is non-directive uses a range of skills to understand the coachee and their issues as well as possible, resisting any urge to provide a viewpoint, solution or suggestion. Whitmore (2001, p: 110) argues that the 'primary objective must be to understand what the performer/learner needs in order to perform the task well', whilst at the same time suppressing 'our own wish to be in control, or to display our superior knowledge.....if we want them to perform'. When this is the case, the coach is likely to continue to use core coaching activities throughout the assignment to generate the necessary level of understanding on issues.

At whatever level of direction the coach operates, Gallwey (2002, p: 188) argues that the coachee should leave each coaching session 'feeling more capable'. As a result, the coach that has a non-directive approach is likely to focus on raising the coachee's awareness of issues, in the hope that they then can learn something that results in a change. The use of the core coaching activities enable the coachee to become more conscious of issues that are affecting them and then take responsibility for them. Whitmore (2001, p: 43) argues that 'questions should follow the interest and the train of thought of the coachee not the coach. If the coach leads the direction of the questions he will undermine the responsibility of the coachee'. He argues that in this way they are likely to become 'far more present and focused on whatever will emerge as the best path' (p: 43). When coachees find things out about themselves that they previously did not know, then it is possible this can influence their attitudes and behaviours (Oakland J. 2000, p: 193, Whitmore,

1996, p: 28), potentially leading to deep 'psychological and motivational lessons....when they involve an immediate experience of what was being taught conceptually' (Goleman, 2005, p: 262). For example, as a result of answering questions that probe specific detail on important issues, the coachee is forced to think 'at the level beneath that at which' the problem manifested itself (Whitmore, 2001, p: 38), which in turn then generates new insight, greater understanding, and new ways of dealing with that issue (e.g. Greene and Grant, 2003, p: 117, Bolt, 2000, p: 33, Clutterbuck, 2004a, pps: 20-21 and Downey, 2003, p: 68). In this way the coachee feels that any changes to their behaviours are voluntary, rather than forced (Weafer, 2001, p: 52 and Peltier, 2001, p: 124).

Bennis (1999, p: 101) refers to Plato to suggest that 'all learning is basically a form of recovery and reflection'. He goes on to suggest that coaching is an 'aid to learning' because it often encourages the individual to talk through a meaningful experience, which inadvertently makes the individual reflect on how they describe it to another person. Similarly, by asking open questions the individual is encouraged to think for themselves (Whitmore 2001, p: 39) and evaluate their own performance, which in turn 'promotes awareness' (p: 42) that can lead to 'corrective actions' without 'resort to technical input from the coach'. This helps the individual to deepen their understanding (Greene and Grant, 2003, p: 117, Bolt, 2000, p: 32 and Downey, 2003, p: 69) which is an essential characteristic for an effective leader (Bennis, 1999, p: 83). In summary Whitmore (2001, p: 43) argues that 'the curative properties of awareness are legion'.

A non-directive coaching approach, characterised by the coach who uses a range of skills to develop understanding can be a powerful aid to learning, by firstly raising the coachee's awareness on issues, and then helping them to find a suitable response for which they feel ownership and responsibility. Additionally, this approach can potentially make the coachee more self-sufficient. Greene and Grant, (2003, p: preface) describes coaching as 'Socratic', that it is not teaching because it seeks to make coachees think. Coaching should be seen as a 'mission of transfer, not dependence; i.e. 'Give

a man a fish – feed for a day; Teach a man to fish – feed him for a lifetime’ (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 32). Rather than instruct the coachee, the coach’s role is to ask the questions that create the learning ‘helping clients think for themselves and find their own solutions’ (Gallwey 2002, p: 188).

In summary Whitmore (2001, p: 35) argues that the coach must be ‘a sounding board, a facilitator, a counsellor and an awareness raiser’, so that the coachee is encouraged to feel throughout the process that they are solving their own problems developing ‘ownership’ (Harvey-Jones, 1994, p: 48) and accepting ‘responsibility’ (Bolt 2000, p: 15), where the coach’s approach is simply to ‘guide and support’ them (Weafer (2001, p: 37). In this way, it is likely that they will feel equipped to solve similar issues in the future on their own, where the power of coaching has moved from ‘outside the organization to within’ (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 32). Handy (1997, p: 217) argues that ‘schools ought not to be force-feeding their students, but teaching them how to feed themselves’. Bennis (1999, p: 128) argues that it is because coaching can do this that the use of external coaches is so important, and makes it likely that it will become ‘the model for leaders in the future’.

### *Directive*

Whitmore (2001, p: 35) warns that ‘the coach is not a problem solver, teacher, adviser, instructor or even an expert’, arguing that a coach that provides only slight direction ‘withholds responsibility’ and ‘kills’ ‘awareness’. For example, Peck (1986, p; 97) argues that ‘my cure is usually not my friends’ explaining that giving someone else a solution to their issue usually ‘only makes that person feel worse’.

### *The use of coaching models*

Whitmore (2001, p: 48) suggests that at times coaching 'can be loose and informal, so much so that the coachee does not know they are being coached'. However, some coaches can differentiate their approach through the use of coaching models and techniques. The following discussion, considers the possible effect of using goal focused coaching techniques.

A common feature of many coaching models involves the setting and reviewing of goals<sup>20</sup>, a process which is commonly seen to be very important in coaching (Megginson, 2007, *Coaching at Work* volume 2 issue 2, p; 58). In cases where the coaching model requires the coachee to develop a set of written goals then they should 'work together' to 'define the issues, and jointly construct a solution' (Greene and Grant, 2003, p: 29). The coachee will be able to construct goals that act as a focus for on-going self-development that should be meaningful, and stretching. Most importantly the coachee feels ownership for their goals because 'clearly it is they who need to define what they want to get' (Whitmore 2001, p: 52). These goals are stretching but also meaningful and aim to be enjoyable (Downey 2003, p: 18, and Frankl, 2004, p: 140). The coachee should sense that they are 'consistent' with their personality (Flokman in Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 305), or 'the potential of the relationship to deliver high quantity and quality of learning' may be limited (Clutterbuck 2004a, p: 92).

However, it is possible that a coach who adopts a rigid goal focused coaching model may miss some of the important issues a coachee may want to discuss. Greene and Grant (2003, p: 49) argue that coaching should consider 'the four areas of experience; thoughts, feelings, emotions and environment' so that the coachee feels that all aspects of their life are being considered. In this way coaching is not disjointed, but rather a process of transition or in other words a 'gradual, psychological reorientation' (Greene and Grant, 2003, p: 73). Megginson (2007, vol 2, issue 3, 2007, *Coaching at Work* p: 17)

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<sup>20</sup> E.g. 'GROW, ACHIEVE and ARROW' from previous chapter number 8 for a fuller definition.



argues that where goals 'are specified by organisational representatives, and not the client', then as a result, 'this can diffuse motivation and create conflicts of interest'. He goes on to warn that goals can sometimes 'stifle the agenda and limit development', because they distract from the 'bigger concerns' and 'provide a focus away from exploring other issues'.

Flaherty (1999, p: 13) argues that each coach has to 'create their own form' of coaching, adapting to each individual coachee. He warns that any routine, mechanical way of coaching is 'quickly' picked up by clients who can 'react with resentment'. Flaherty argues that people are 'always and already in the middle of their lives' (p: 12), and usually when they are given any new techniques, other people simply 'shield themselves from the effects' (p: 13), and 'wait for the enthusiasm to die off'. In summary he argues that 'techniques cannot replace human heart and creativity in coaching' (p: 13).

Goldsmith et al (2000, p: 321) suggests that 'help is defined by the person receiving it, not the person giving it' arguing that presenting a 'one-dimensional approach' by rigidly using a specific model may make the coach feel good, but it is likely that the client's need would not 'emerge' (p: 320).

### *Philosophies and theories*

Whitmore, (2001, p: 27) suggests that it may be possible to coach by learning a specific model or approach but that without an underlying coaching philosophy it promises only to deliver 'limited success' and 'fall far short of what is possible'. Flaherty (1999, p: 13) suggests that 'using only techniques won't work' arguing that coaching is 'a principle-shaped ontological stance and not a series of techniques.' He argues (p: xi) that many coaches work with people without first 'coming to grips with ....what they understand human beings to be', and as such suggests that the coach has an obligation to underpin their coaching with an explicit theory about human beings, that 'allows for people to change, to become more competent, and to become excellent at performance' (Flaherty 1999, p: 21). A recent survey (Hannon, 2006, Coaching at work Volume 1, Issue 6, p: 52) suggests that out of a

sample size of 25, 80% of coachees 'wanted to talk about the purpose of their work, and three-quarters were 'searching for meaning' in their lives'. The use of theories to underpin what the coach is doing, and the use of philosophies within coaching may characterise coaches that wish to emphasise more profound elements associated with the coaching experience, by making the coachees think more deeply on a range of issues. For example Weafer (2006, Coaching at Work volume 1. Issue 4, p: 13) suggests that during coaching the question 'why are we here?' is often considered. Peltier (2001, p: 155) suggests that 'existential philosophy offers a great deal to the coach who can effectively pick and choose amongst the many views subsumed under the title of 'existentialism''. The following examples are given to demonstrate that some concepts contained in this area of philosophy can in the right conditions resonate with the coachee.

*A moral obligation:* Coachees may have a 'moral obligation' (Neitzche, cited in Peltier, 2001, p: 157) to achieve 'what Aristotle called 'entelechy' – 'the full and perfect realisation of what was previously in a potential state' (Ferrucci 1982, p: 163). Using these philosophies can open the coachee's mind to consider, reflect and try to discover their 'purpose' in life that Ferrucci, (1982, p: 164) argues 'is already present within us'. Key here is for individuals to take personal 'responsibility' (Whitmore 2001, p: 31), to take the necessary 'steps along the way toward the fulfilment' of their 'ideal pattern' (Ferrucci, 1982, p: 164).

*Choice:* Linley and Harrington (2006, p: 40) cite Carl Rogers (1959) to suggest that 'human beings are ... motivated toward developing to their full potential, and striving to become all that they can be'. Rogers (1961 cited in Linley and Harrington 2006, p: 40) 'was conceptualizing the actualizing tendency.....as 'the urge which is evident in all organic and human life – to expand, extend, to become autonomous, develop, mature – the tendency to express and activate all the capacities of the organism, to the extent that such activation enhances the organism or the self'. However Linley and Harrington (2006, p: 40) go on to argue that 'this does not always happen, since this directional force can be thwarted and distorted through external

influences that disengage us from ourselves'. Downey (2003, p: 101) supports this view suggesting that because of 'cultures, our institutions of state and religion and particularly our educational systems, people have been trained to submit to authority'. He goes on to outline the consequences of this, suggesting that 'people do not take responsibility, do not take risks, are not creative and are not proactive' arguing that they would 'rather wait to be told' what to do. Philosophical questioning can be used to help coachees become aware of this condition around them and enable them to make changes that stem from their realization that they have 'submitted authority' in the past, but ultimately they still have the power to choose what they want. Goldsmith et al (2000, p: 55) suggest that in this case the coach is enabling 'control' to be returned to the client.

*Authenticity.* Goldsmith et al, (2000, p: 51) suggest that 'when a client is reaching out for deeper meaning, an opportunity exists to release more of the 'true self' that has been papered over by the demands of the 'false self', which was created to please others'. Releasing aspects of self that are true creates a more 'authentic person' that Downey (2003, p: xi) suggests is able to release much more of their 'capacities – intelligence, creativity, imagination, sensitivity and pragmatism', and 'enable extraordinary results to accrue' (p: xii). Goldsmith et al, (2000, p: 87) suggest that people perform better when there is a 'consistency between speech and actions', arguing that 'it is only the leader who can foster real commitment and engage followers'.

*Open:* Morgan et al, (p: 89) suggest that philosophical questioning that introduces the concept that coaching is about the 'development of the whole person' enables the coachee to become more open and reflective. In short they argue (p: 90) that coaching needs to focus on 'discovering the 'who' before working on the 'what'.

## Summary

During phase one, the coachee should start to feel empathy with the coach and relax in their company as they start to feel understood, special and confident that they can 'lower their guard', and open up.

During phase two, where the coach is non-directive the coachee feels that their issues are understood, that they are able to be 'present and focused' as they talk through and answer questions about their issues. The ability to talk about key events deepens understanding and awareness for them, which in turn often creates solutions to emerge, where coachees become aware that they are answering their own questions. This has the effect of internalising learning, and creating personal responsibility for what changes may need to happen. Much of the learning is done through formalised reflection and as such the coachee understands intimately what is happening, so that any solutions are self-generated, and capable of being repeated without the coach. The coachee feels that their competency has increased along with their self-awareness. However if the coach is too directive and provides solutions for example, it is likely that the coachee's awareness will not change, and as a result they will be unlikely to take any personal responsibility for those solutions.

The use of models can be a feature during phase two, although if they are to be practical and beneficial then the coachee needs to still feel that they have defined the issues and constructed the solutions, so that they generate greater levels of awareness. Additionally the coachee should feel ownership and responsibility for any solutions or learning that come from the use of coaching models, or they may feel disappointed or disillusioned if the technique or model is not able to do this.

Finally, the use of theories and philosophies can make the coachee think more deeply about their lives, and their purpose. The experience can make them reflect on their purpose and potential beyond where they currently are, and then consider what changes they may need to make to change and reach

towards their potential. These theoretical and philosophically based conversations within coaching have the potential to help the coachee to consider how much responsibility they are taking to control their lives, how many choices they are allowing others to make for them, how authentic they are living their lives, how open and reflective they are being and how much learning they are deriving from their lives.

## CHAPTER NINE

### WHAT DOES A COACHEE EXPERIENCE DURING A COACHING SESSION?

#### EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

##### Introduction

The literature review in this chapter speculates that as soon as a strong coaching relationship has been built, then potentially the coach's approach can proceed in any one of many possible directions. This implies that the coachees' experience can potentially diverge similarly. This variation between experiences is dependent on the approach the coach adopts, such as the level of direction they provide, and the impact from the use of a wide variety of potential coaching techniques, philosophies and theories. This section considers the empirical evidence relating to the coachees' experience of their coaching. It finds that regardless of the approach used, many of the coachees had a similar coaching experience, often referring to their enjoyment at having an opportunity to talk confidentially about themselves and their issues with someone that they believe can help them. The research emphasises that it is this core element of talking and its associated benefits that creates one of the greatest impacts in the coachees' experience.

##### Phase one – building rapport

The thesis has considered already the importance of building rapport during a coaching assignment and how coaches can do this. Chapters seven ('What skills and competencies does a person need to coach?') and eight (What does the coach do?) emphasise the need for trust, openness, and honesty between the two parties, and highlights the importance of asking questions, listening, summarising back and other key interpersonal skills. They both then go on to highlight the need coachees have to feel support and empathy

from their coach, and the value that coachees make of their coach's background capability when it is related to their own situation.

In summary the empirical data suggests that all the aforementioned criteria are important for coachees to experience if an effective coaching relationship is to be successfully built, but that perhaps most importantly are that the coachee feels trusted, secure and confident to be open with their coach, as summed up in the quote below:

*He has been honest and open with me and shared things from his side. I feel comfortable being open with him and trust him with confidential things.*

(Coachee 26)

This initial phase of rapport building is very important, and that without it the coachee may lack the willingness to be coached as the following quote implies:

*I found the whole thing a real struggle, and stilted. I didn't do the final one. I was busy, and I thought what am I going to get out of it that I have not already had? I was busy. I didn't feel there was anything I had to deal with. I think if I had had an on-going problem that I had been trying to work through, then that sort of support may have been wonderful. I think if I had been having difficulty with a member of my team it might have been very beneficial. As it was I wasn't.* (Coachee 20)

### Phase two of coaching – the coaches' approach

The following section looks at the coaches' approach to 'helping' the coachee learn, focusing on how the experience is reported by the coachee. To do this it considers the same three differentiation factors used in the previous two chapters to categorise different coaching approaches.

#### *Direction*

The following section considers how coaches experienced the different levels direction they received during different aspects of the coaching in phase two.

It considers the structure of their sessions, questioning techniques, the type of challenge they got, and how solutions were generated.

### *Session structure*

The following quotes suggest that different coaches bring different levels of direction to the structure they employ for their coaching sessions.

*Directive.* In some cases the coach can be very direct with the coachee, telling them exactly what is going to be covered, as the following quote suggests:

*I like the way he was so methodical. Everything had a start, middle and end. I always knew at the beginning what we were going to cover, and I always knew at the end what we had done, and what conclusions we had reached.* (Coachee 24).

Some coaches would go further than directing the framework of the session, by taking control of the agenda of the session. The following quote suggests that this level of direction may alienate the coachee, and remove a degree of responsibility from the coachee for their own development:

*'She used to come in and say right on this session we are going to deal with this, and on another, she would say she was going to deal with that. I was possibly going to her agenda'* (Coachee 2)

*Non-directive.* However, there were some coaches who employed no direction to the framework or agenda to their coaching, allowing it instead to 'emerge' and 'evolve'. This approach was appreciated by just as many of the coachees:

*I never know quite what to expect from my coaching sessions – I don't think this is a negative feeling as I always feel positive after my sessions, and I think it is often helpful not to have a pre conceived idea of how the session will develop.... sessions have often taken on a completely different direction to that expected which has always helped but not always in the way that I would have thought going into the session* (Coachee 31)



### *Challenge*

Many of the coachees chose to comment on the perceived benefits associated with a coach that would challenge their thinking. It appears possible for this to be done in both a directive and indirective manner.

*Non-directive.* For example in the following quote the coach challenges the coachee to complete an action plan, but falls short of explicitly telling the coachee what to write in it:

*She would challenge me to do things and not to wimp out of doing things. She challenged me in terms of having an action plan, and not just sit there and say that is how it is (Coachee 18).*

*Directive.* Some coachees did expect their coach to go further than this, to not only challenge their thinking but also to provide some 'opinions', which could potentially be used to influence their thinking. The key point to note here is that the coachee does not think that this is 'directive', but some would argue (e.g. Whitmore 2001 p: 32, and Downey 2003, p: 77) that providing any solutions reduces their 'awareness', takes away their 'choices' and prevents them taking full 'responsibility' for their own development:

*That is part of the challenging process. I would never look to the coach to give me the answer. That is not what they are there for. They must provide an opinion though, otherwise they become a bit too facilitative. And I think I would have a problem with that, as it dilutes the value a little. (Coachee 21)*

### *Questions*

A coach can use questions in both non-directive as well as directive ways.

*Non-directive.* When used with a non-directive approach in coaching they often concentrate on asking open questions relating to the subjects raised by the coachee, listening and then summarising back what they have heard. This process often encourages the coachee to develop a greater depth of understanding on the subjects they have raised, and in some cases to find their own solutions to their questions.

*Through asking questions, open questions and playing back to me in a skilled way I was able to answer the question myself but without a structured questioning, I just would not have got there. (Coachee 23)*

*Directive.* However some coaches may use questions in such a way as to subtly and indirectly lead the coachee to arrive at answers that they may want them to reach: The following quote is taken from a coachee who is recalling the questions the coach was using, and implies an indirect coaching approach:

*Did I ever show it differently in the house, as opposed to how I show it at work? Does my body language ever change? Does the tone ever change? He was exploring lots of different things. And while he was still exploring around, I was beginning to piece it together in my own head. I was beginning to work out in my own head some of the things that I wasn't doing as well as I thought..... What Trevor (the coach) was doing was that he was getting me to the point where I actually knew what the issues were. And I think that some of those issues I was subconsciously suppressing (Coachee 24)*

#### *Providing solutions*

Many of the coaches differed in how they could help coachees arrive at solutions to their issues.

*(Semi-) Directive.* Evidence suggests that there were subtle differences in the degrees to which coaches differed in how outcomes and solutions were developed during the coaching sessions. The following quote describes how a coach helped a coachee reach a conclusion:

*It could have been that she lead me down a route that maybe I didn't pick up on, but it wasn't a great deal of 'now this is the answer, and this is what you should do next'. It was more 'now here are some options and a selection of things that may provide an answer, or here are a selection of things that may be the cause of why it all happened that way.... Here are some options that come out of that, and some options of what you can do next. So 'coachee 10', I cannot tell you what to do next, all I can say is that you should go away*

*and think about it for a bit, before you decide what final option to take. Then we can discuss the implications of all that.....and how you might want to tackle that..... One of the good things with that episode of coaching, wasn't that it said 'right this is what you should do', but more 'these are some of the things that you might like to think about, consider or ponder....' Coming out of that I chose a course of action that actually worked for me. (Coachee 10)*

In summary, there is no sense from the empirical data that coachees preferred one type of approach to the other. In most cases the coachees experience is complimentary whether the coach's input is directed or not.

However, there were two quotes from the empirical evidence that serve to warn that sometimes each of the two approaches can have its disadvantages. In the following example the coachee has allowed their coach to direct proceedings so much that they no longer exercise any control for what is happening during the sessions themselves. As a result the experience appears to be 'damaging' for the coachee. The following quote describes how they felt as they returned home after a session:

*I think for me I had this hour in the departure lounge and then an hour's flight back and then one hour in the car home, so by the time I got home I felt as though I had done a hard working fifteen hour shift. It was deflation. .... I think in the initial hour in the airport, I would be walking around the shops in a blur. I was trying to take in what was being said. (Coachee 2)*

Conversely there is a risk that in cases where the coach is non-directive, preferring an emergent agenda with little or no structure, that the coachee could get lost and confused. The following quote suggests that the coachee is not clear what they are working on, where the coaching is heading, nor if they understand the implications of what is being said:

*But I was open to it in the first place, because I had had a life coach before. But I was just determined that life and work was not just about task. I knew it was our culture, I just knew it wasn't the right way. So to see it in black and white, I sort of forget what the boxes are around task, but I think it is me, us*

*and it, with it being the task. You have got to spend as much time on me and us as you do on the it, for everyone on the group to get on. (Coachee 12)*

### *Techniques*

A second differentiation factor between coaching approaches is the level and use the coach makes of coaching models and techniques, such as the Tesco 'mindtalk-clearing' model, and goal setting techniques.

#### *Mindtalk tool*

The Tesco Mindtalk model is used extensively as a self help tool to promote good leadership practice. In short, the technique necessitates the user to take the time to write down a range of their conscious thoughts associated with an issue, and then assess objectively how likely they are to happen in reality. By taking the time to consider these interpretations objectively they can help rationalise them, which in turn improves decision making (for more see chapter eight: what does the coach do?).

*Directive.* In every case the empirical research suggests that the coach administers the mindtalk model. This has implications for its intended future use (ie as a self-administered 'learning tool'). Many of the coachees admit to difficulties and problems administering the mind talk model themselves,

*That's a process I have really struggled to do on my own. Whilst it is a process we do in the course, it has all felt a bit a struggle to believe in it enough to be able to do it. (Coachee 3)*

It is likely that as a result of the coaching being 'spear-headed' by the use and application of the mindtalk tool, that many of the coaches have become 'associated' with its administration. As a result, it is likely that although it is made clear to the coachees that the intension is for them to continue to use it themselves, they have often not taken responsibility for this:

*Even though I have that tool kit to do the mindtalk myself. I would have to work on my own on it. It is just so useful and so effective to have a coach to do that with. (Coachee 22)*

#### *Other models and techniques*

A small number of coachees liked the use of coaching models, because they felt they provided a structured framework to the coaching, and a focus for their development.

*Directive.* However the majority of coachees either dismissed the impact of models and techniques or failed to explicitly make reference to them during their interviews. This implies that whilst being interesting at the time, there was no development of personal responsibility created for their future use in a self-learning context:

*Although there were lots of models and things that she had learnt in the past, there wasn't then a particular tool that lead to the breakthrough. (Coachee 1)*

#### *Visualisation .*

In the following quote, the coach has helped the coachee by encouraging them to consider the range of possible outcomes that are likely in response to a potential action.

*Directive.* In this example the coachee does not realise that the coach has shown them a very simple technique called 'visualisation', and it is questionable if the coachee will use this independent of the coach.

*The most helpful aspect of the coaching was being able to talk through possible scenarios before they become "live". (Coachee 32)*

#### *Philosophy and theory*

Only a couple of coachees reported that their coach related the coaching to a theoretical or philosophical level even though the literature suggests that these areas have the potential to raise levels of self awareness, and greatly increase the potential of what coaching can do.

The empirical evidence does record some quotes that imply thinking in philosophical and theoretical dimensions, but there is no evidence that this has come about deliberately through their coaching:

*It gives you the opportunity to explore your values, and how to explore how you felt at different times and how that relates back to your values. And I found that was a very powerful platform to help me to understand myself better. (Coachee 23)*

One coachee articulated his philosophy, which served to reinforce and encourage him to commit to coaching because it was seen to support it:

*I very much believe that I have loads to learn and anyone who can help me learn, I am willing to listen to (Coachee 10)*

In summary coaches in this sample diverged greatly from one another. Some were directive, evidenced through structured sessions, the providing of solutions, and challenging thinking, whereas others were non-directive and facilitative. Some used models and techniques, and in most cases coachees who found it valuable at the time appreciated their use. However it is equally likely that in most cases coachees would be unable to recall how to use these models on their own, nor would the majority want to, preferring instead the allow a coach to manage this function for them. Finally coaching appears to fall short of what it is capable of achieving as there is virtually no evidence in this sample that coaching includes a theoretical or philosophical dimension.

One coachee makes the point that for them the most important element to their coaching was their coach as a person and emphasising that the strength of relationship that they managed to have far outweighed the use of any model or technique:

*But in summary it was the relationship. I felt at ease with her. It felt like a lot of the tools and models I could have read about, but I am not sure whether they would have worked. (Coachee 1)*

### *Talking things through*

This previous quote highlights another key coaching approach that relates to the depth and strength of the relationship that is built between both parties through the coaching. The empirical research suggests that many coachees derived most benefit from the simple opportunity of having another person encourage them to talk about themselves.

*Well essentially he listened, talked, asked a few questions. It was pretty basic stuff. He asked me some practical stuff. 'if you want to get yourself out of feeling like this, what are some of your options?' (Answer): well I could speak with this person or whatever. You could do this or do that. If you follow that course how would you feel, etc we didn't get to a conclusion. But we explored enough in a practical way to enable me to act. He helped me to think through something that I wasn't giving myself time enough to do. (Coachee 15)*

The frequency of reference to this experience suggests that being given the time to talk through and think through personal issues is highly valued by coachees, perhaps lying at the heart of the coaching experience for the coachees, and is explicitly credited as the key activity that results in a wide range of positive outputs. (For more detail on this, see chapter 10, 'What are the outputs from coaching for the coachee and the organisation?').

#### *Intrinsic analysis*

In other cases the coach would convert the general 'talking' that occurs in the coaching session, so that valuable work-related outcomes, actions and learning might be generated:

*It was an opportunity to open up about how I was feeling and what was going on from a work point of view, and through that gently we almost identified an area that might be a route cause, and then talk about what we could do to try and sort things out. (Coachee 9).*

*Therapy.* In this study, the majority of coachees greatly valued their coaching and embraced the opportunity it provided to spend time talking about themselves and about issues that were of concern to them. Many

made reference to the fact that this was the only opportunity they had had within the whole of their working career to stop for a moment, and spend time reflecting on both what they were doing and how they were doing, through a 'one to one' process of talking with another person. Many summed up this experience as 'therapeutic':

*The most useful aspect of my coaching has been the opportunity to talk through top-level issues about work and life at Tesco to a sympathetic ear..... I cannot describe something specifically that I have done differently as a result of the coaching, but it has been very therapeutic! (Coachee 33)*

The focus on talking in coaching was noted by many other coachees who also equated this aspect to their perceptions of what psychotherapy might be like:

*I was feeling really traumatised at that time, so I did find it useful to use it as a sounding board and a bit of a psychotherapy session. (Coachee 7)*

One coachee went as far as to suggest that coaching, as psychotherapy was necessary as it provided a preventative service for employees acting as a channel for the release of 'inner commotions' that might, if not dealt with be unhelpful to the coachee;

*I think that keeps you sane. You hear all these stories of these Americans who go off to see their shrink. And I have used my coach as a shrink. I have done it to keep sane. So it is really key for the company to invest in a mentor, an outside mentor – keep you sane, or otherwise I think Tesco would have it s own psychiatric hospital. (Coachee 17)*

*Encourages reflection.* Many coachees found the time that coaching gave to focus on issues of personal significance to be a very useful opportunity to reflect.

*What was really good for me, I think that because we are busy people, having time for you to reflect on the difficult objectives that haven't gone entirely how you might have wanted them to, or the objectives that have gone well, it is time to reflect on them and make you think how you could have done them differently. So I think it is having that time to do that. That is what I found a personal coach did for me (Coachee 14).*



*Stimulates thoughts.* Many coachees made reference to the positive effects associated with being probed and challenged on issues that they were talking about, which often brought about greater insights, more advanced thinking and learning:

*'when you talk about what has affected you in your life, what has influenced you in your life, and all those scenarios. It makes you think..... Basically by asking me questions she helped me get through that. Again it was about self-realisation. What made the difference? That is what made me think. She stimulated my thoughts. (Coachee 22)*

*Generates greater understanding.* Many coachees were able to learn about themselves as they talked through issues of relevance, and particularly as they sensed the coach was listening, and occasionally summarising back to them what they had said. The key point here is that the core coaching skills that are often used to create good coaching relationships and trust continue to be used by coaches, and appreciated by coachees (to generate understanding and encourage learning) throughout the coaching:

*The first was that she was a very good listener. She listened carefully. She did not understand me, so she asked me until she was clear on what I was saying. (Coachee 25)*

*Generates acceptance.* Answering questions and talking about issues that have been active on the coach's conscious mind, (and in many cases, distracting), allows the coachee to develop greater insight, and become more objective. As a result, many coachees were able to provide themselves with a choice on whether they wanted to deal with them, or simply accept them and let them be:

*I was able to park the baggage, and move on. I got into the coaching carrying a lot of baggage. It was weighing me down. I could take one of the options to park it. The other one would be to take it on and address it and all the issues associated with that. It was the ability to recognise it that was the key for me. (Coachee 10)*

*Increases self-awareness.* By talking through their issues, many coachees were able to adopt an objective position in which they could critically assess themselves, and often conclude by learning more about themselves:

*It gives you the opportunity to explore your values, and how to explore how you felt at different times and how that relates back to your values. And I found that was a very powerful platform to help me to understand myself better. (Coachee 23)*

The empirical evidence appears to show that coachees most commonly describe their coaching experience as the opportunity to talk openly about issues that are personally significant to them, which in turn provides a number of benefits such as bringing about a greater depth of understanding to issues and bringing order, structure, and objectivity to thoughts, emotions, and feelings. These outcomes can then lead to the generation of actions and solutions to deal directly with the coachee's issues. The coach that encourages the coachee to talk can potentially help the coachee generate greater self-learning and advance self-awareness.

*'Talking through issues when you talk about what has affected you in your life, what has influenced you in your life, and all those scenarios. It makes you think. It is that view and the reassessing of your self, which again shows you what is important. (Coachee 22).*

However, whilst the core coaching skills of listening, summarising back and asking open questions are commonly employed to bring about these benefits, it is noted that often the coachees directly credit the coach as the individual for making this possible, implying that they themselves have not wholly owned the process of change.

*She was a very good listener. And the outcome was pretty clear, and she was able to help all these thousand and one things going on. She was able to listen to my issues, characterise them, put them into some sort of shape, put a bit of clarity to what was before that a fog. (Coachee 10)*

## Summary

This chapter has considered how coachees describe their coaching experience. Most of those interviewed confirm that at the start of their coaching they tried to understand if their coach was going to be of help to them, and whether they could be trusted. By spending time getting to know their coach the coachee gradually became more relaxed, feeling increasingly more secure that the relationship would be helpful. At some point the coachee becomes willing to open up to their coach and surface issues that can become the focus of the secondary phase of coaching where the coach can help the coachee with these issues.

The multitude of different coaches who may exist in the market at any one time manifest in a rich diversity of coaching approaches during this secondary phase, and complicates the task of understanding both what coaches actually do, and accordingly what the coachees experience. In addressing this, the chapter considers the coachees' experience once again in relation to the three differentiation factors (i.e. the level of direction provided to the coachee, the extent and use of coaching models and techniques, and finally the extent and use of theories and philosophies to explain and underpin coaching) used in the previous chapter (What does the coach do during a coaching assignment?)

The empirical research suggests that coaches range in the level of direction they provide their coachees. Most will actively challenge their coachees by asking probing questions that encourage new thinking. In some cases there is evidence that by challenging the coachee, the coach is indirectly and subtly leading the coachee to preconceived outcomes. In other cases coaches provide lists of options and solutions to the issues the coachees have raised, and in some cases coaches are purely facilitative, providing no solutions or personal opinions. It is possible that by providing challenge, or by providing solutions to the coachee, they may grow to rely on the coach, and not be able to develop their own mechanisms to self-challenge, or find their own solutions. The use of models is widespread in this sample, with many of the coaches

leading their coaching by the use of the Tesco Mindtalk model. As a result many coachees may be liable to develop the perception of coaching as the administration of a model where the responsibility lies with the coach. Finally there is little or no evidence in the empirical data to suggest that any coach used a philosophy or theory to explain or enhance their coaching, and as a result it is not possible to comment on coachee experience. However the lack of any explicit empirical evidence relating to the use of philosophies or theories within the coaching suggests that it is not achieving as much as it potentially could.

Regardless of the variation of coaching approaches detailed in this chapter, many coachees appeared to have gained a similar interpretation of their coaching experience, highlighting the welcomed opportunity it provided them to talk about themselves in relation to issues that concerned them, with a trustworthy individual that they respected. Many coachees recalled the coach's ability to ask questions, listen and summarise back that enabled them to reach a greater depth of understanding, which then often resulted in a way forward.

## Conclusion

In this study, there were different coaching approaches utilised by different coaches, ranging from directive to non-directive, and those that lead with coaching models to those that used them subtly. Regardless of the variation in approach from coaches, the majority of coachees valued their experience, which perhaps implies that there was a common element throughout the different coaching approaches. The empirical research suggests that the core-coaching skills, used to develop rapport at the start of coaching, are often explicitly referred to by coachees as being present throughout the coaching, and it is this that allows some to compare their experiences to 'therapy'. It is possible that these non-directive coaching skills simply frame the coaching approach, or it might represent a coaching approach in its own right during the secondary phase. The point is that coachees value the high level of encouragement they get from their coaches to talk, answer questions,

be listened to, or hear what they have said summarised back to them. As a result the empirical evidence suggests that it is this opportunity to talk through issues with someone that they trust and who they believe can help them that is singled out as being the most valuable experience they associate with coaching. However, it is unclear from what long-term benefits this has for the coachees' development, and as a result, is considered in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER TEN

### WHAT ARE THE OUTPUTS FROM COACHING FOR THE ORGANISATION AND THE COACHEE?

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

##### Introduction

This chapter considers what outputs coaching can create for both the coachee and the sponsor organisation. For the coachee it suggests that there are two areas where coaching can produce outputs. Firstly it can enhance the coachee's performance capability, evidenced by extrinsic changes, such as new technical skills and behaviours, or improved work output measures. Secondly it can impact thinking evidenced by intrinsic changes such as deeper self-awareness. Further this section considers how coaching can enable the development of self-learning mechanisms that can drive further development and learning after the coach departs. For the sponsoring organisation the lack of evidenced based research means that very little is known about what outputs coaching provides, and that currently most organisations rely on little more than their faith that coaching is capable of enhancing business performance.

##### Outputs for the coachee

Whitmore (2001, p: 8) suggests that coaching can be used 'to unlock a person's potential' and maximise their own performance. It does this by focusing on the pragmatic development of skills to enable a superior performance in their specific role (e.g. Bennis 1999, p: 133, Greene and Grant, 2003, p; Introduction, Hill, 2004 p: 10, Landsberg 2003 p: 8, Harris 1999, p: 2). However, Flaherty (1999, p: 3) argues that coaching 'is more than ... supporting someone in reaching her goals ... or changing someone's unwanted actions'. Greene and Grant (2003, p: xiv) suggest it is about

'helping people to develop their potential' and can affect a range of issues, such as the coachee's attitude (Armstrong 1996, p: 892), self esteem (Bennis 1999, p: 133), self confidence (Kubr 1996, p: 95) and can change their behaviours (Goldsmith et al 2000, P: xviii). Morgan et al, (2005, p: 23) suggest that coaching 'optimises their abilities' and Peltier (2001, p: xxii) argues that this 'can help leaders adapt'. Linley and Harrington (2006, p: 44) argue that when coaching has been successful, the coachee feels 'celebrated, valued, and appreciated with a re-engaged enthusiasm, energy and motivation', showing a keenness to 'get back to work or life and perform even better'.

### *Developing new skills and behaviours*

An individual can be coached to learn new skills (Armstrong 1996, p: 892) and behaviours that are likely to enhance their performance (Landsberg 2003, p: 96). Performance is targeted often by agreeing goals and solutions in advance with the coachee (Greene and Grant 2003, p: intro). These goals may simply focus only on performance (Jarvis et al 2006, p: 31) or they may target the use and practice of new behaviours (Goldsmith et al 2000, p: xviii).

### *Developing self-awareness*

Coaching can help an individual to deepen their understanding of their sense of self (Greene and Grant 2003, p: 117, Bolt, 2000, p: 33 and Downey, 2003, p: 68). O'Neill (2000, p: 9) implies the importance of self-awareness by arguing that the coach should bring their 'own unique signature presence to their role' so that they can use their unique talents to their best advantage, and it allows them to recognise when they 'need to ask for help' when they recognise that they are in difficulty (Goldsmith et al, 2000 p: 215).

Cairns, (cited in Green et al, 2003, p: 2) suggests that an activity such as coaching that encourages someone to take the time to reflect on an experience can help them to grow their awareness of their self. Downey (2003, p: 116) suggests that as people reflect they 'put a certain distance'

between their thinking and their actions', and this helps them to become more aware of their thoughts and emotions, which are 'externalised'. Whitmore (2001, p: 29) argues that coaching can be used to enable this process, suggesting that 'awareness is knowing what is happening around you', whereas 'self-awareness is knowing what you are experiencing'. Where coaching is used to develop self awareness Goleman (2005, p: 268) suggests it can take the form of 'recognising feelings, building a vocabulary for them, and seeing the links between thoughts, feelings and reactions'.

A person's sense of self is not limited to their feelings, emotions and thoughts. Blanchard & Shula (2002, p: 11) suggest that knowledge of ones 'core beliefs, values and convictions' support ones vision and can then drive one's philosophy. Goldsmith et al (2000, p: 87) argue that this is important as it enables coachees to lead with an 'integrity', which is only possible when there is 'consistency between speech and actions'.

#### *Clarity of purpose*

Goldsmith et al, (2000, p: 87) works to the theory that everyone has a 'purpose' which they are born with, and that to find out what it is requires the individual to actively attempt to 'understand' it, and then to 'lead from it'. They go on to argue that this is important as it is the quality that 'attracts and retains others' (p: 87). Similarly Zeus and Skiffington (2002, cited by Megginson 2007, Coaching at work, volume 2, issue 5, p: 58) refer to the need for people to find meaning in their lives, arguing that it is 'not automatically bestowed' on the individual. Handy (2006 p: 213) quotes Voltaire to emphasise how '*infinitely*' important it is to 'take responsibility for their own lives', and to do their very best in order to achieve whatever 'infinitesimal' thing it is that they are born to achieve. Nealy (cited by Megginson 2007, Coaching at work, volume 2, issue 5, p: 58) argues that the coach can enable clients to find their purpose by helping them to 'listen to life, tune out the outside world, listen to (their) inner voice and remember (they) are the author of (their) own life'.



McDermott and Jago<sup>21</sup> (cited by Megginson 2007, Coaching at work, volume 2, issue 5, p: 58) describe the process of trying to work out what one's life purpose is as an 'unequivocally useful thing to do', and Linley and Harrington (2006, p: 41) suggest that doing this in coaching can enable the coachee to 'discover the power within them'. Megginson (2007, Coaching at work, volume 2, issue 5, p: 58) suggests that it may not be possible to help someone find their life purpose from asking a few questions, but Peltier (2001, p: 167) suggests that the discussion of philosophies during coaching can promote 'a thoughtful and energetic approach to things.....can be exciting and productive and satisfying.....can promote creativity and action' and 'result in relationships that are close, substantial and enduring'. A key point that Peltier (2001, p; 159) makes is that philosophical questions have the potential to 'make us take the risk with eyes wide open', so that life is lived 'intensely' and 'not tediously'. Finally Handy (2006, p: 166) argues that discussing philosophies allows people to investigate issues and challenges, and to become 'clear where they stand', so that they don't allow themselves to 'go along with the accepted wisdom of the generation' (p: 157).

### *Authenticity*

Kets de Vries (2005, cited in Lines and Robinson, 2006, p: 18) suggests that because society places enormous pressure on people to 'stifle their real selves', many people feel that they have to act a role in life. Possessing a greater sense of self-awareness allows the individual to bring the best aspects of who they are to be brought 'to their role' (O'Neill 2000, p: 9). Downey (2003, p: ix) suggests that coaching can do this by helping the individuals believe that who they are naturally is the best person to be. Goldsmith et al (2000, p: 51) suggests that at some point the executive may realise that by understanding who they are more clearly, then they may be able to express the power of their 'values and whole self' in their work.

Goldsmith et al, (2000, p: 85) suggests that most 'followers' are hungry for leaders 'who have purpose, values, vision, and courage'. He argues (p: 86)

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<sup>21</sup> McDermott and W Jago, the NLP coach; A comprehensive guide to personal Well-being and Professional Success, Piatkus, 2001.

that it is important for an individual to first 'focus on the 'who' question before the 'what' question', so that they 'discover their natural instincts as leaders'. Similarly Bennis (1999, p: 83) argues that 'learning to be an effective leader is no different from learning to be an effective person'. Downey (2003, p: 75) emphasises this point by suggesting that coaching helps the coachee 'understand themselves and their situation more fully so that they can make better decisions'. Goldsmith et al, (2000 p: 86) describes those who lead themselves 'from their true essence as opposed to leading from their form' as 'authentic' (p: 83), and suggest that 'people perform better when they act in harmony with their authentic selves' (p: 44).

The literature suggests that by generating a greater awareness of ones self (e.g. talents, values, beliefs, thoughts, feelings and emotions), a person can appreciate more clearly the impact that their actions and behaviours have on others. Additionally the coachee can consider the concept of their 'purpose' to potentially develop greater authenticity, where all elements of their self are more in harmony with behaviours and actions. The literature suggests that when this happens, the leader may be perceived as having more authority and integrity by others.

#### *Self development processes*

Gallwey (2002, p: 188) suggests that coaching should encourage the individual to think through problems for themselves so that they can be enabled to find their own solutions. Flaherty (1999, p: 4) argues that whatever the change that coaching impacts in the individual, the coachees must be able to 'self generate' or in other words develop a process to 'continually improve their competence' themselves. Flaherty (1999, p: 4) argues that most people have the capability to continually learn new things and improve themselves throughout their lives, and as a result people who have been coached should 'continually find ways on their own to do so'. In other words he suggests (p: 4) that following a period of coaching the individual should develop mechanisms to 'self-coach' that allow them to learn from their experiences. Whitmore (2001, p: 98) highlights that 'coaching by its very nature enhances enjoyment' because it encourages the individual to

'stretch somewhere' they may never have been to before, 'in exertion, in courage, in activity, in fluidity, in dexterity, in effectiveness, we reach new heights in our senses, accentuated by the flow of adrenalin'. This in turn can fill that person with inner self-confidence as they realise they are advancing further than they ever realised they could before (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: foreword xi).

### Outputs for the organisation

Coaching is increasingly being seen as 'a natural form of leadership', because it is 'relevant to the modern world of business, because it is holistic and adaptive', and because it 'respects people as individuals' (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 11). The CIPD suggests that coaching has made 'unequivocal' progress in UK organisations' (Jarvis et al, 2006, p: 9). Many organisations that use coaching have an expectation that the individual being coached will 'reach their business and personal best' (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 183), and that this 'change at the level of the individual can lead to a change in the whole organisation' (Greene and Grant, 2003, p: 9) by bringing 'humanity back to the workplace' (Downey, 2003, p: xi) and 'rehumanize the modern worker' (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: xvi). Goldsmith et al (2000, p: 27) argue that the client organisation expect it to 'yield quantifiable, positive output; improved business performance and increased competitive advantage', although Garvey (2005, p: 1) suggests that trying to prove this is 'far from simple'. Although executive coaching is now among 'the most widely used executive development techniques' (McGovern et al, 2001, p: 1), there is still a 'paucity of empirical research into its effectiveness which leaves the field open to speculation and subjective opinion'.

In summary there is very little known about what benefits an investment in coaching for the individual actually manifests for the client organisation. There are an increasing number of studies being done but they are producing 'conflicting results' and leaving more 'unanswered questions than definite statements' (Hunt and Baruch 2003, p: 731). As a result 'rigorous research

data is surprisingly hard to find' (Jarvis et al, 2006, p: 15), with 'specific literature on coaching in organisational settings being particularly sparse'.

(How the organisation measures the return on the coaching investment is considered in more detail in the following chapter 11: *How can the organisational sponsors control the quality and consistency of the coaching?*)

## CHAPTER TEN

### WHAT ARE THE OUTPUTS FROM COACHING FOR THE ORGANISATION AND THE COACHEE?

#### EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

##### Introduction

The following section uses the empirical research to consider the outputs coaching creates for both the coachee and the business organisation. To do this it breaks down the coachees' responses into outputs that are tangible and outputs that are intangible. Where a response is categorised as tangible it should be possible to measure it, whereas when they are intangible it is not possible.

The empirical section suggests that the tangible outputs arising from coaching are mostly technical, whereas the outputs that are intangible are much 'deeper', often relating to an intrinsic change, and consequently much more difficult to assess. These findings are discussed before the conclusions that suggest that intangible outputs from coaching are unlikely to be sustained by the coachee after their coaching finishes unless they understand how they happened, and are accompanied by a rise in their self awareness.

##### Outputs for the Coachee

The following section reviews the empirical data to consider the tangible and intangible outputs coachees report they got from their coaching.

### *Tangible outcomes for the coachee*

There are a number of tangible coaching outcomes such as the possession of new skills and knowledge, and the creation of new and improved personal development plans.

#### *Acquiring new skills*

Perhaps the most tangible evidence of a direct output from coaching is through the up-skilling of the coachee, so that on completion they can clearly demonstrate new management capabilities complimenting their job function. In the following example the coachee has been taught a technical component of coaching from their coach, which has directly influenced their management style, and they are describing how they are applying it to their team:

*A lot of it was very pragmatic. So trying to get people to find their own solutions. That was the whole crux of it. They usually know what the solution is, but they often won't volunteer it. So it was about how you coach that out of them. So they can reach their full potential by questioning them. (Coachee 20)*

#### *Creating personal development plans*

In a number of cases the coachee used their coaching to produce a personal development plan, which once again provides a very tangible output from the coaching.

*'Coaching gave me a clear PDP along with my objectives, and gave me clarity around my purpose. As a result I feel I have become a better boss. (Coachee 34)*

#### *Generalist knowledge*

In some cases, at the end of sessions, some coaches would present their coachees with a varied array of generalist information, which might or might not have been relevant or useful. Nevertheless it represents a tangible output from the coaching sessions:

*So the actual coaching was a bit about she would give me loads of information that I could take away, and then in my own time I was to select what was most suitable for me. (Coachee 2)*

The empirical data did not contain many examples where coaching produced tangible outputs. Much more often, coaching created intangible outputs.

### *Intangible outcomes for the coachee*

The empirical research highlights that the majority of outputs affecting the coachees that came from their coaching were of an 'intangible' nature and in particular related to perceived changes to their sense of self, often accompanied by a rise in self-confidence, and sometimes with a rise of self-awareness.

#### *Growing self belief / confidence*

The empirical research shows that almost every coachee felt that their coaching had helped to give them a rise in self confidence / belief / esteem, which in one case was described as 'life-changing':

*Here was someone who had had this shit education and wasn't really interested in the latter half of school, and yet here was someone saying 'well actually you are quite smart, and we can do something with you'. It just changed my life. (Coachee 17)*

Some of the coachees suggested that the increase in self confidence lead to a belief in their abilities and a commitment to their futures:

*'What coaching gave me was a level of commitment to those new roles, not in terms of ability, but in belief of the future. (coachee 21).*

#### *Growing self-awareness*

The literature suggests that coaching can be used to raise a coachee's level of self-awareness by enabling the individual to become more aware of a range of inner factors associated with their self such as their strengths, weaknesses, emotions, thoughts, values, beliefs etc. Evidence from the

research suggests that this was sometimes the case. The following quote emphasises the importance of becoming more conscious of the impact of one's behaviours on others. Developing a greater depth of self-awareness allows the coachee to think more about how they should operate in different situations and with different people in order to maximise the potential for desirable outcomes.

*What it did was it woke me up, because I had been in this bubble thinking, that if you were technically proficient in your job, you were going to achieve things, and get there in the end. What I hadn't realised was that that was only part of it, and the behavioural side of it was just as important. The best thing for me was that the coaching identified what my strengths and weaknesses were, and what my development needs were. It was about awareness, and being aware of yourself and how you behave and the impact that has on other people and that in certain situations your behaviour might be suitable, but in other situations it might be totally unsuitable. And I think I just had one way of operating behaviourally, and suddenly the lights came on and I realised I had to adapt my style to suit different audiences. (Coachee 17)*

*Emotional self-awareness.* Some coachees used their coaching to develop a greater awareness of their emotions and then how they were influencing their thoughts and behaviours:

*Your emotional state changes. You can actually feel yourself going from open mindedness to close mindedness. That's the difference. Open mindedness is about exploring, understanding and asking questions and listening. Not passing judgment and agreeing. I can feel myself emotionally change, physically inside when that happens to me. So what I do now when I feel that is to deliberately ask an exploring question. (Coachee 14)*

Other coachees found their coaching helped them to understand the propensity their thoughts had to generate emotions that then created moods influencing behaviours and actions:

*I am more aware of my mood and how I create problems in my mind that are not necessarily issues (Coachee 35)*



By raising self-awareness the coachee is enabled to control the impact of their behaviours and actions in the work environment:

*I knew when I was catching myself out, and if I found myself doing that, then it was a case of catching it, and then in my head, making sure I didn't do that which I wanted to do. (Coachee 7)*

Where the coachee is able to develop their own self-awareness by taking ownership of their own development, then it is likely that learning will be long lasting. For example in the quote below, the coachee suddenly realises that she needs to occasionally alter her behaviour to suit her audience:

*It was about awareness, and being aware of yourself and how you behave and the impact that has on other people and that in certain situations your behaviour might be suitable, but in other situations it might be totally unsuitable. And I think I just had one way of operating behaviourally, and suddenly the lights came on and I realised I had to adapt my style to suit different audiences. (Coachee 17)*

#### *Encourages self development*

The literature suggests that a key outcome for coaching is the development of processes to enable the coachee to 'self-generate'<sup>22</sup> their own development and achieve continuous personal excellence. Only one coachee attempted to use her coaching experience to make a conscious effort to develop herself by trying to mirror what the coach had done on her own.

*Instead of reacting in a way I would have done in the past, my reaction is more tempered and controlled. And I think that is where the coaching comes in, because you remember. So if I am faced with another stressful situation I then remember stuff I have been through with Anne. .... And I think, 'what would they say if they were here?' (Coachee 22)*

Despite this one quote, the empirical data does not provide any other evidence of the coachee attempting to self-learn, nor is there any evidence of

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<sup>22</sup> Reference here to Flaherty's (1999) term meaning continuous development towards excellence.

the coach helping the coachee to develop self-learning mechanisms that could be used.

*Raises philosophical issues*

The research suggests that four coachees attempted to relate the coaching that they had received to deeper philosophical concepts such as taking personal responsibility for development, taking control of their lives and understanding their freedom to choose. Although all these outputs relate to deeper aspects of self, they all appear to have been reached more by chance than by explicit coaching.

Two coachees concluded at the end of their coaching that their development was their personal responsibility:

*One big conclusion I took personally out of the sessions was the ownership I had to take on all these things. It was not just about delivering. It was a lot about me, and what I had to do differently. (Coachee 24)*

One coachee concluded from their coaching that they always had the power to 'choose' to do anything they wanted to do.

*I suppose it is about controlling how I feel, and choosing how I feel. So why should I spend my time feeling anxious worried or bad, because actually there won't be any material difference in the world, so it helps me choose the attitude. (Coachee 22)*

Finally, one coachee concluded from their coaching that they had the opportunity to take control of their own life, and the freedom to begin asserting their own agenda in the work organisation:

*I was amazed at how I could empower myself, and take control, not be victims of anything negative that I perceived this big monster of a company might be doing to me, and that in fact I am my own person and I could just take control. (Coachee 12)*

### *Reduces anxiety*

The research suggests that a significant and common output from coaching was that regardless of the broad range of differences in the coaches and the approaches that they adopted, most coachees were left feeling 'calmer' after their coaching. Interviewees often would say that they felt 'truer to themselves', often used similar words in their responses such as: 'liberated', 'lighter', 'relieved', and 'released', as the following quotes sum up:

*It is relief. Absolute relief. It is like I had a massive weight I've had on my shoulders for years. (Coachee 1)*

This reduction in anxiety manifests in different ways for different coachees as the following three quotes demonstrate:

*My life is more balanced as a result of the coaching. I am focusing on more personal time, and not rushing into decisions but laying things out calmly (Coachee 30)*

*I think the coaching helped me to be calmer about my place in the business and (to have ) more confidence in the future. (Coachee 21)*

*I was feeling really calm more than anything, nothing would phase me, nothing would get to me..... I feel calm and I feel it helps me re-evaluate and motivate myself again. I felt relieved. It is all to do with relieving tension and anxiety. (Coachee 22)*

### Outputs for the Organisation

The following section now considers the outcomes coaching might provide to the organisation, and once again categorises data into those that are tangible and those that are intangible.

### *Tangible outcomes for the organisation*

This section considers how coaching outputs manifest as tangible outcomes for the organisation, such as any learning derived from coaching that can then be reapplied directly within the organisation creating a potentially positive influence. For example this might include the application of coaching styles, techniques, and models by the coachee to compliment the performance of others within their team.

#### *The application of coaching models and techniques*

Coaching can provide people with a range of pragmatic tools, models and techniques that can be applied to others. In the following example the coachee describes how she has applied a coaching model called 'CIGAR'<sup>23</sup> to many different work situations, with good results.

*I try to do it in their PDP session, or rather, you know the bit about the 'ideal', I try to get them to create it for me..... The model works for negative feedback too. So it is depersonalised. You change the model slightly. They taught us how to do that. Again it is the same sort of questions. So for example if you give negative feedback, you would spend more time in the context, rather than the ideal, ..... it is all about them talking, but you give them feedback. You do more of the talking, but you just basically depersonalise it. So the model is fantastic. (Coachee 7)*

A few coachees appear to have learnt the need to apply the core coaching skills of listening, asking questions, and summarising in order to promote understanding in another person. This coaching capability can then be replicated and applied within the work organisation potentially with all those that the coachee has any contact with.

*I have gained the understanding and awareness of how important peoples' thoughts and feelings are. I didn't necessarily explore that in the past, and the impact of my decisions. But now I have a greater understanding around*

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<sup>23</sup> The model in reference is called 'CIGAR', which is used by a company called 'Full Potential'. The letters stand for: C – context, I – ideal, G – gaps, A – actions, and R – review, and is used as a framework approach to coaching.

*emotions, (we did a big piece of work around emotional intelligence), I just think I consider that more than ever now. 'What was the impact of that on my team, on my people?' And not necessarily in the short term, but in the long term too (Coachee 1)*

### *Intangible outputs for the organisation*

The following section revisits some of the intangible outputs coachees reported from their coaching such as a rise in self-confidence, and a drop in anxiety, and considers how they might impact on their performance within the organisation. (It is only the coachee who can report these intangible outputs that affect the organisation, and mostly they can only do this only through self-assessment.)

#### *The impact from raising self-confidence*

It has already been stated that many of the coachees reported greater levels of self-confidence and self-belief, as a result of their coaching. Many then suggested that this inner sense of positivity would have an impact on the business organisation, although it was often implied rather than made explicit: *'I feel better inside, thus Tesco get the best out of me as an individual.* (Coachee 19).

Some of the coachees suggested specific business areas that would benefit from this heightened level of self-confidence:

*Dealing with the unexpected.* The following quote suggests that coaching has helped this coachee become better equipped at dealing with and preparing for unexpected situations. This benefits the business because the coachee is much more alert.

*For the team it has been recognised that I have raised my profile, and I know I am much more comfortable in high level meetings, than before. It is good to understand the techniques when they are used on me. I feel more confident because I feel better equipped to deal with unexpected conversations. You don't want people to catch you off guard, and for you not to know the*

*answers, or be able to rationalise it all through. I think I feel in a safer place with myself. .... I can question them back, and I can challenge better. Now, not all of that has come through coaching but I think some of it has, with the rest coming from experience. (Coachee 20)*

*Presence.* In the following quote the coachee suggests that their self-confidence has given them greater presence when they perform in front of their superiors. This benefits the business because the coachee claims that it 'shows in their work'.

*I do feel more confident since undertaking coaching sessions and am able to speak more easily in large groups and meetings. I believe in myself much more now and it shows in my work. (Coachee 36)*

*Resilience.* Some reported that coaching had made them more able to take setbacks when they happened. As a result the business benefits because the coachee claims they get back to work more quickly, and challenge more positively.

*I have been able to grow the confidence I have in my abilities, pick myself up more quickly getting back to where I was and it has helped me to take knock backs and challenge much more positively (Coachee 16)*

*Improved performance management.* This quote suggests that their inner self-confidence translates through to a benefit to the organisation because they are able to manage difficult performance management issues with senior work colleagues more effectively:

*I felt very confident in performance managing a senior member of my team. I was able to better prepare and get re-assurance on my approach. This helped me to deliver this difficult task very effectively – and the benefits have now started to come through for the person concerned. (Coachee 37)*

*Greater candour.* Some coachees felt that a rise in their self-confidence enabled them to start dealing with issues that in the past they might not have tackled. In the following quote the coachee is more open and

honest with other work colleagues so that potentially volatile and emotive subjects are addressed, where in the past they might have been left:  
*Coaching has given me greater confidence using my leadership skills, and removed barriers I had to them. My confidence has risen as a result. For example I recently told a senior person how their behaviour makes me feel and how we could work together better to help each other (Coachee 11)*

*Improving team morale.* Confidence is infectious, and some coachees report being able to build belief and confidence amongst their direct teams because of the way the coaching had made them feel and act:  
*'I now have an inner confidence in my own ability. I can share this and bring out belief in others ability' (Coachee 1)*

*Self-control.*

One coachee felt that the sense of self-control that their coaching had given them had allowed her to make more choices about how she behaved. This she claims would generate a positive return for the organisation.  
*I feel more in control. It is an achievement for me. If I am in control it follows that I can make choices in how I behave. So I am more likely to get a better return. (Coachee 3)*

*Personal funding to continue coaching*

Two coachees confided that they were prepared to fund their own coaching, so that it did not finish when the organisation ceased financing it for them. This implies the extent of the value the coachee got from their coaching, and by paying for more coaching personally it implies the organisation will get a benefit from the potential for further development.  
*I now have a personal coach, because I want to keep on learning about myself and learning how I can improve. So as part of my latest promotion I got last year, I keep investing in it. Because I see the benefit in it..... and yes, I am paying for my own coaching. (Coachee 12)*

### *Potential reduction in labour turnover*

Two of the coachees explained that the Company's decision to invest in their coaching had strengthened their individual loyalty and persuaded them to remain with the business, and not look to leave. The following two quotes suggest that coaching enabled both coachees to find solutions to issues that potentially may have resulted in them leaving the organisation:

*But what I would say is that the coaching stopped me from cracking up at a particular point in time and throwing the towel in (Coachee 15).*

*The first part was about handling a crisis in my life, in that I wanted to leave the business. I was questioning my commitment at the time. (Coachee 21)*

These two cases demonstrate the benefit of coaching to the organisation as well as highlighting the difficulty in ever bringing this knowledge to its consciousness because to do so would require the coach to break confidences.

### *Sustaining coaching benefits*

So far the empirical section of this chapter has suggested that coaching creates both tangible and intangible outputs for the coachee and for the organisation. This section considers how sustainable these outputs are.

In relation to all the outputs that the empirical evidence suggest come from coaching, only a few are tangible, such as acquiring new skills, using coaching techniques, and developing personal development plans. It is possible to argue that for these outputs other development interventions could be used, such as group training.

For most, coaching helps the coachee feel better about themselves, so that outputs are mainly intangible, and rely on coachees to describe how they impact their performance and the performance of the organisation. What is not clear is how permanent these change in their sense of self is, as the following examples suggest.



### *The use of coaching models*

There is evidence to suggest that some coachees, who have been shown by their coaches how to use and administer coaching techniques and models have not then used them for themselves after the coaching finishes. As a result in the following quote the coachee's sense of self-confidence has declined since their coaching, and by implication it is possible their work performance with it:

*If I am honest I haven't done the clearing mindtalk exercise on a piece of paper, but I have applied it mentally. They said do it until you are fluent with it, and then do it mentally. Well, the fact is you come to a point where there is literally not enough time to do it..... It was probably about going back into the box<sup>24</sup> and thinking oh goodness I have to prove myself all over again, I have to go back to square one, and all that. There was a time in the project where there is a lot of paperwork, all necessary – lots of reporting. And you are trying to finish off last year, and then plan next year, again it becomes very demanding and very confusing and I was just feeling a bit overwhelmed. I was just on a complete low (Coachee 22)*

### *Coach dependency*

It has been suggested earlier in this empirical section (see Intangible outputs for the organisation: 'personal investment in coaching') that some coachees continue their coaching by paying for it themselves after their company allocation has completed. This may be seen as a positive reflection on the value the coachee has derived from their coaching, or it may provide evidence that the coachee is becoming dependent on the coach implying that performance may falter without this input: .

*I think it is quite addictive, which is similar to a lot of very good consulting. It is quite addictive, and you need to be very careful not to become a crutch. I think it is most powerful to be used at a particular tipping point in an*

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<sup>24</sup> The statement 'going back into the box' refers to the Mindtalk self-coaching model. The theory suggests that your mind can vary between different states (known as boxes), such as being in 'survival': being in 'impossibility': being in 'obligation', or being in 'desire'. The point here is that some of the traits of ones behaviour in those boxes don't actually enable good leadership, because in any of those emotional states the individual is not at their best. The box that the individual needs to aspire to is called 'willingness', with all other states referred to as performing 'outside of the box'.

*individual's career, then walk away, and then come back at some other point in that person's career, rather than being an on-going part of everyday life, because then it is a crutch. (Line Director 2)*

### *Creating false belief*

It is possible that in some cases the coach may be responsible for generating higher levels of self-belief by what they say to the coachee. In the following example it is not clear what the coach based their complimentary assessment on, but what it creates is a mindset in the coachee that may not be sustainable in the long term;

*What my coach said to me was that you have achieved it all. I am not sure how else I can help you, so get on and carry on. So that was really great.*

(Coachee 14)

## Summary

This chapter has considered what outputs coaching can create for the coachee and the client organisation. The literature section begins by suggesting that there are at least five potential outcomes that coaching can make possible: developing new skills and behaviours; developing an individual's self awareness; enabling the coachee to develop an understanding of their individual purpose; encouraging self evaluation; and helping an individual to come up with processes to self-develop. However the lack of evidence based research that exists in the public domain means that the business-related outputs expected by the sponsor organisations are based largely on subjective speculation, and in a faith that coaching will deliver better performance and greater competitive advantage.

The empirical section considers firstly the tangible coaching outputs for the coachee, such as learning new skills, and management techniques, getting help with their personal development plans, and in some cases being given lots of generic information from their coach. Whilst these tangible outcomes may help a coachee improve performance, evidence suggests that there is no guarantee that this is the case. Other coaching outcomes for coachees are

mostly intangible in nature. For example many coachees reported a rise in their sense of inner calm, self-confidence and self-belief along with a drop in anxiety. A few coachees suggested that their coaching had enabled them to gain greater self-awareness, so for example they had become more conscious of how their emotions, perceptions and thoughts could influence their actions and behaviours. As this consciousness of self grows, the coachee becomes more aware of how they affect the perceptions of others. This knowledge gives them more choices about how they approach new situations because they are more considered, and implies that they are gaining greater control on how they manage themselves in different situations, and how they react to different events.

The empirical data was then used to assess the benefit to the organisation to come from these coaching outputs. Most coachees suggested that the growth in their self-confidence had an impact on organisational performance, describing a range of business benefits such as greater presence; impact, resilience, performance management, openness and candour.

Finally the empirical research shows little or no evidence that coaches explicitly attempted to introduce a deeper philosophical element to the coaching to generate clarity of purpose, or approach the subject of authenticity in leadership, nor finally was there any evidence of coaches helping the coachee to generate long term self development processes.

## Conclusion

The empirical research highlights that the majority of coachees derived intangible outputs from their coaching, such as experiencing a sense of inner 'calm' and a rise in self-confidence. It is possible that this is due to the coaching, which often eases coachee 'anxiety' by allowing them to talk through their issues rationally. Many of the coachees claim that by experiencing greater self-confidence their work performance improved as a result. However evidence suggests that in some cases these coaching outputs are not sustainable without the direct influence of a coach being

present, implying that business performance may decline at some point after the coaching finishes. Additionally, evidence suggests that those who decide to self-finance the continuation of their coaching may simply be a reflection of a growing dependence on their coach to maintain their work-related outputs and development. These hypothetical situations are detailed in figure 10.1 below:

Figure 10.1 to show the possible effects of coaching on leadership capability

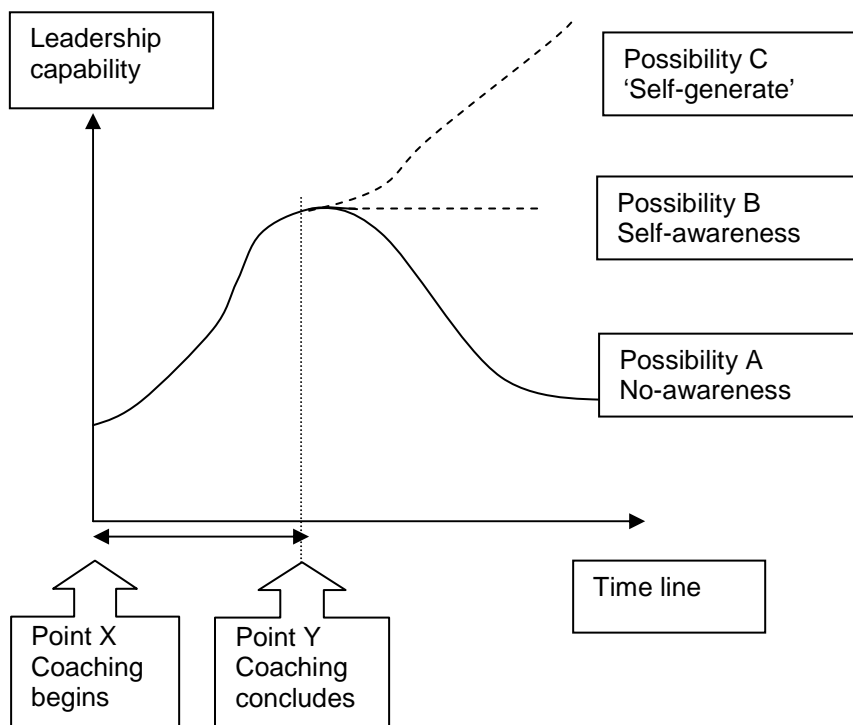


Figure 10.1 suggests that over a period of coaching time between X and Y, a person is likely to demonstrate greater capability, greater self-confidence and greater business performance. However the diagram suggests that there are three potential subsequent outcomes:

The first possibility (A) is that the individual is not aware why they have felt so confident, and as a result, when the coach departs, performance is likely to decline, perhaps back to a similar level of capability associated with the pre-coaching phase. This situation is detailed primarily because there is little evidence of any of the coachees having developed an awareness of what the

coach did to propel their self-confidence upwards. Without this knowledge, it is likely that an event in the future may reduce that self-confidence back to the level it was at before the coaching, because coachees will be unable to resolve it on their own.

The second possibility (B), suggests that the individual has an awareness of what has changed for them during their coaching, and implies that despite the departure of the coach, the coachee is able to maintain their new level of capability. The following quote is in answer to a question that asks what coaching has done for them, and supports the existence of possibility (B). Here the individual is able to provide a 'development story' focusing on changes they have recognised in their own performance that have provided them with a deeper sense of self-awareness.

*Just that it has made a difference: That I can describe how I have changed from the person I was to the person I have become (coachee 1)*

The third possibility (C) suggests that coaching is capable of enabling deep learning to continue after their departure, so that part of their role whilst actively coaching the coachee is not only to build their self awareness (to sustain coaching development), but to build self-learning mechanisms, so that they are equipped to solve similar issues in the future on their own (e.g. Goldsmith et al, 2000 p: 32, and Handy 1997 p: 217). The empirical evidence is insufficient to suggest that coaches are actively engaged in doing this.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### HOW CAN THE ORGANISATION'S SPONSORS CONTROL THE QUALITY AND CONSISTENCY OF COACHING?

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

##### The role of the Organisational sponsor

This chapter considers the range of external decisions that are involved in setting up and managing a coaching assignment. It suggests that organisational sponsors have a range of coaching responsibilities such as sourcing a suitable coach, assessing its overall return on investment, and identifying and overcoming any barriers to its use in the organisation. These decisions are important because they can have a direct effect on the impact that coaching has on an individual's development, and also because they enable the organisation to continually use coaching more effectively in its learning and development strategy. It is possible to conceptualise these decisions as 'external' to other coaching decisions because they do not directly influence what is done during a coaching session itself, but rather focus on all the other decisions that make coaching happen.

##### *The application of coaching in the business organisation*

The following section considers some of the key decisions that must be taken by the organisation so that a coach and coachee can work together on a coaching assignment.

##### *Selecting a coach*

One of the first decisions an organisation must make is in sourcing a suitable coach from the market, and then 'matching' them to a coachee. This is a vitally important role because the individual can have a considerable influence on the overall success achieved from the coaching (Stober et al 2006, cited in

O'Broin and Palmer 2006, p: 16). Nielson and Eisenbach (2003, p: 7) point out that there is a significant positive relationship between the 'relationship quality' and resulting productivity. As a result Dembkowski and Eldridge (2004, p; 2) suggest that the organisation should establish 'stringent quality criteria for the selection process of their coaches'. Van Oudtshoorn (2007, Coaching at Work, volume 1, issue 5, p: 10) suggests that a key consideration in selecting a coach is whether the coach can explain their approach to their clients, arguing that it is 'absolutely fundamental' for the coach to strike a balance between humility and assuredness'.

### *Selecting a coachee*

There is little in the literature to guide organisations on how to select a coachee, although some companies (e.g. Credit Suisse, Hall L, 2006, Coaching at Work Volume 1, issue 5, pps: 23-29) have become much more focused at this, suggesting that there should be a comprehensive assessment made of their needs and their suitability prior to coaching ever being allowed to take place.

### *Assignment duration and termination*

It is not clear how long a coaching assignment should last. Morgan et al (2005, p: 47) recommends that prior to any engagement in coaching 'an exit strategy much be in place' or else there is a risk that the coach will try 'and hang on for as long as the client will pay'. Morgan et al (2005, p: 47) go on to suggest that 'when the objectives are accomplished, the coaching engagement is over'. In summary 'the goal of coaching is not to create a dependency, but to give the coachee the tools and capabilities to excel and grow on his or her own'. Downey (2003, p: 130) suggests that on conclusion of the coaching objectives, someone should 'review the programme' and check that goals have been achieved, that no dependency on the coach has formed, and that the coachee has improved aspects of their 'competence' (Flaherty 1999, p: 44).

### *Location*

Organisational sponsors may need to consider where coaching should physically take place. Peltier (2001, p: 12) suggests some of the coaching should 'shadow' the coachee, watching them in the work arena in order to get 'a comprehensive and accurate sense' of them. He warns that if the coachee is allowed simply to 'self-report' then the information they offer up is 'filtered through the needs and biases of that person' (p: 12). Thach (in Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 222) cites evidence to show that '80% of leadership development occurs on the job', and Bennis (1999, p: 135) supports this arguing that 'reflective backtalk' of real life experiences at work is a powerful learning environment.

### *Measuring the return on investment from coaching*

Jarvis et al (2006, p: 9) suggests that coaching is used by almost nine in ten of organisations (that responded to their surveys), and Goldsmith et al, (2000, p: 27) suggests that it has the potential to increase an organisation's business performance and competitive advantage. Goldsmith et al, (2000, pps; 18-19) argues that coaches must 'maintain the links between the personal development of individual clients and the attainment of solid business results for their organisations' arguing that this may be the only way that coaching can 'hope to justify the investment that it demands'. However Goleman (2000) suggests that this objective may not be simple, warning that whilst coaching does deliver bottom line results, it does not 'scream' them.

A recent survey suggested that 'there is little genuine measurement of the benefits of coaching currently within organisations' (Association for coaching, 2004, p: 4). Gray (2004, p: 1) suggests that the 'evaluation of most training and development initiatives (of which coaching is one) suffers from a lack of accurate and complete information'. Jarvis et al (2006, p: 98), suggest that the key question is 'whether the benefits from executive coaching are worth what organisations are spending on it'. As a result more and more organisations are seeking to quantify the return, but this 'is an extremely



complicated calculation to undertake'. Gray (2004, p: 1) argues that if coaching is going to grow as a professional practice and gain 'sustainable credibility' then it must be evaluated effectively.

Table 11.1 below shows the most popular ways organisations are attempting to measure and understand the return from the coaching investment.

Figure 11.1, to show the most popular methods of assessing the return on investment of coaching:

1. Asking for feedback from individuals receiving the coaching (89%)
2. Asking for feedback from participants line managers (75%)
3. Assessing changes individual performance or career progression (64%)
4. Assessing achievement of goals set at the beginning of the coaching (57%)
5. Assessing changes in employee attitude survey ratings (39%)
6. Assessing changes in the culture of the organisation (36%)
7. Assessing changes in organisational performance (32%)

(Source: Jarvis et al, 2006)

Kirkpatrick (1959, cited in Garvey 2005, p: 2) argues that evaluation of any training programme should occur at four levels:

1. Level 1 - Reaction (from the participants in the programme)
2. Level 2 – Learning (measuring the knowledge, skills and attitudes that result from the programme)
3. Level 3 – Behaviour; (measuring aspects of improved job performance that are related to level 2), and finally
4. Level 4 – Results (relating the results of the programme to organisational objectives).

In relation to Kirkpatrick's 'techniques for evaluating training programmes' Garvey (2005, p: 2) argues that most organisations appear to evaluate coaching at level one only, and this is supported in the case of coaching with reference to the statistics in figure 11.1 above that show the two most popular ways to measure coaching effectiveness is by asking for stakeholder feedback.

One study that tried to quantify the actual return on the coaching investment (McGovern et al, 2001, p: 7), estimated that the return from executive coaching was 5.7 times the initial investment. However Fillery-Travis and Lane (2006, p: 29) point out that there is a 'difficulty with this study in terms of reliability, as it surveyed the clients of the consultancy where the author was based and the results were based upon the coachees' own estimates'. Ahern (2004, p: 3) disagrees that 'direct business outcomes from coaching can be evaluated scientifically', arguing that there is always the need to make some 'interpretations'.

Jarvis et al (2006, pps: 98-99) cite evidence from a study done by Colone (2005) suggesting a variety of indicators can be used to measure coaching performance including turnover, achievement of targets, time taken for new recruits to reach competence, comparisons between coached and non coached individuals, employee climate surveys, 360-degree feedback results, competencies, behaviour changes, employee turnover rates, employee retention statistics, recruitment costs, development costs, and productivity gains. However what is clear is that the organisations that have tried to carry out this task have found it very challenging in practice, and as a result, the task of trying to measure the return on coaching is increasingly being referred to as 'the 'Holy Grail' in the coaching debate (Jarvis et al 2006, p: 97).

Morgan et al (2005, p: 50) stress that 'success isn't measured by how well the coachee performs with the coach's direct help; it must be judged by how well the coachee performs after the coach has left the scene', implying that business performance indicators should be evaluated after a period of time has elapsed from when the coaching session has taken place.

Jarvis et al (2006, p: 57) highlight that only approximately half of the organisations surveyed 'reported assessing whether the goals set at the beginning of the coaching had been achieved'. Hall (2006, Coaching at Work Volume 1, issue 5, p: 28) suggests that organisations in the United States are further ahead on the evaluation of coaching by highlighting that 'some companies are starting coaching assignments by putting qualitative and

quantitative return on investment measures up front, including measuring positive changes in peoples' perceptions, or using measures with more teeth including increases in productivity or sales'. However, despite this, Jarvis et al (2006, p: 207) argues that the 'vast majority of organisations 'rely on little more than anecdotal evidence' often coming from the 'authority' (Downey, 2003, p: ix) of the people who have been coached.

In their book, Jarvis et al (2006) use twenty one case studies to research coaching and yet still conclude that 'specific literature on coaching in organisational settings is particularly sparse' (p: 15). They go on to say that although some companies have carried out their own research on measuring coaching returns 'most of these remain confidential to the organisation' (p: 98). Hunt and Baruch (2003, p: 731) cite evidence from Burke and Day (1986) to suggest that of all the studies done to date, most have 'produced conflicting results and left more unanswered questions than definite statements'.

Hunt and Baruch (2003, p:731) argue that buyers are demanding evidence to substantiate the claims being made about the effectiveness of programmes. There is a growing appetite to know what the quantitative benefits are, and as a result the search for an accurate measurement device will continue. As more organisations are called to account for coaching investments, it is no longer sufficient to say that the benefits are intangible, or that it is 'good for the individual' (Hunt and Baruch 2003, p: 731).

### *Barriers to learning from coaching*

Goldsmith et al (2000 p: xiii) argue that coaching is 'the leadership approach of the twenty-first century', and Hall (2006, Coaching at Work volume 1, issue 5, p: 24) suggests that in the United States, it is increasingly playing 'centre stage in leadership development activity and strategy shaping'. Gray (2004, p: 2) emphasises that businesses should make every attempt to evaluate it, to understand what it does, and how best to use it, so that 'personal interactions and coaching processes can continually be improved'. Referring to Drucker,

Goldsmith et al (2000, p: xv) argue that the 'knowledge worker' 'is replacing the factory worker at such a rate as to become today's stereotypical worker'. Drucker (1993, cited in Nielson and Eisenbach, 2003, p: 2) suggests that companies must invest in obtaining new knowledge arguing that it is possibly going to become the 'only meaningful resource in today's economy'. However Van Oudtshoorn, (2006, Coaching at work Vol 1 Issue 4, p: 39) makes the point that whilst there can be enormous power released during a coaching assignment, much of it might never be realised or utilised by the business organisation. It is possible that some or all of the following 'barriers' may be restricting the level of learning the organisation gets from its investment in coaching.

#### *Client confusion*

Goldsmith et al (2000, p: 7) suggest that the multiple stakeholders in coaching relationships can create some 'serious questions' and 'ethical conundrums' such as how to deal with confidential issues. Jarvis et al (2006, p: 49) stress that 'unless HR oversees and manages coaching activities it is difficult to get a clear picture of what coaching is taking place and how effective it is'. As a result, external coaches should be 'briefed' so that they 'are clear about the objectives and desired outcomes' (p: 47). Jarvis (2004, p: 61) suggests that the coach has a duty to provide regular updates on the 'progress of services and sufficient information to enable the client organisation to monitor the quality and effectiveness of services provided', but Goldsmith et al (2000, p: 317) warns that a coach that tries to serve two masters (i.e. the coachee and the client organisation) is 'unethical' and may be 'setting themselves up for failure as a coach'.

#### *Coachee confidentiality*

The widely held need for confidentiality (e.g. Bolt, 2000, p: 16, Gallwey 2002, p: 194, Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 7, Downey 2003, pps: 137-138) can act as a barrier that prevents information flowing back to the organisation that might, were it known, provide greater clarity and understanding on the value and function of coaching as a leadership development technique. Downey (2003, p: 138) argues that 'the information elicited in the coaching session should not

be divulged to others', and Bolt (2000, p: 16) warns that if it ever is, then for the coach, 'the game is over'. However, Ludeman and Erlandson (2004 p: 62) suggests that a coach often unwittingly tries to protect the coachee by withholding information, and as a result creates an 'organisational black hole' where much time, money and resource is put in, with very little coming back out. Goldsmith et al (2000, p: 7) argue that because coaching has the potential to 'unleash' so much 'power', the coach and client organisation should discuss how confidential issues should be treated, so that any potentially valuable knowledge gets back. Ludeman and Erlandson (2004 p: 62) argue that the coach should not operate in a vacuum, and that on occasions information about the coachee should be communicated to the client sponsor. Law (2006, p: 15) suggests that the coach should warn the coachee during the coaching session if any subject matter comes up that they may need to report on. Peltier (2001, p: 6) argues that coaches should talk about these issues to the client organisation, suggesting that coachees 'cannot count on absolute confidentiality, as would a psychotherapy client'. Hall, (2006. Coaching at Work, Vol 1, issue 5, p: 24) makes the point that whilst in the United Kingdom businesses remain nervous about breaking any confidentiality, in the United States some of the coaching information is classified as 'non-confidential', such as 'where the coach and client are in the process, frequency of meetings, key observations and development plans'.

### *Organisational culture*

Chapter five (*What impact does the retail organisation have on the coachee?*) suggests that when an organisation creates a set of explicit values, then these can help employees to know what to do and how to act in any given situation (Deal and Kennedy, 1982 pps: 21-36, Peters and Waterman 1982, p:76). The antithesis implies that if something is not included within the values then employees will not know what to do and how to act. As a result the organisational culture has the potential to either positively endorse its use, or work against it.

In summary the process of coaching involves decisions to be made and actions to be taken that occur outside of the actual coaching sessions, which are referred to as 'external' to emphasise this point, and highlight the role for the organisational coaching sponsor. External decisions and activities might typically include the following: Selecting coachees; sourcing coaches; establishing the duration, quantity and location of coaching sessions; carrying out subsequent evaluations; establishing accurate indications for the return on the coaching investment and obtaining coaching knowledge that enables the organisation to learn and identify best practices. However organisations attempting to both measure the return on coaching performance and learn the detail on how it is operating in practice may encounter a range of difficulties, primarily stemming from the inherent need for coaching between two individuals to remain confidential, from possible 'client confusion' and in some cases from an unsupportive organisational culture. It is possible that a lack of knowledge to enable organisational learning, coupled with the rapid growth in the use of coaching has been the catalyst for the emergence of external coaching institutions<sup>25</sup> with a focus on promoting evidence-based research, developing coaching insights, constructing ethical guidelines for coaching promoting best practices and outlining key components for coaching qualifications<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> E.g. The Association for Coaching (AC); The Coaching Psychology Forum (CPF); The European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC); The International Coach Federation (ICF); and The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)

<sup>26</sup> For more on this see chapter four 'What is understood by the term coaching?', subsection entitled 'professionalism' in the literature review for more detail

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### HOW CAN THE ORGANISATION'S SPONSORS CONTROL THE QUALITY AND CONSISTENCY OF COACHING?

#### EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

##### The role of the organisational sponsor

The following section considers the empirical evidence in relation to the organisation's role in the management of coaching activities. External coaching decisions can impact and influence how effective coaching can be, and as a result this section considers the empirical evidence in three key areas relating to the responsibilities of the coaching sponsors. Firstly it considers the application of coaching, secondly how the organisation evaluates coaching and finally how the organisation learns about coaching following its use.

##### *The application of coaching*

Coaching sponsors are responsible for all the decisions that must be taken prior to a coaching session beginning. These decisions include selecting coaches and coachees, matching them together, and then establishing the duration, frequency, location of the coaching, and finally how the coaching will conclude.

##### *Selection of coachees*

At the time of the research the most usual route for an employee to secure a coach was following participation on an in-house leadership course that the company run for all its senior managers. In addition to this, senior managers could get a coach by securing permission from their line Director. The following quote by one coachee indicates that they believe getting a coach is too easy, and that there should be a selection process of some sort to ensure

that the person getting a coach will benefit from it, and the organisation will get value from the investment:

*What's lacking is a process to filter those who should get coaching and those who should not. We probably need a better method of determining when someone needs to get training. There needs to be a sharp filter to involve the individual and their broader team, the boss, the personnel manager.*

(Coachee 15)

Some of those interviewed felt that there should be a series of conditions that coachees should meet before being given a coach:

*Self-driven.* As a result of not having robust systems to select coachees or coaches, there is potential for unsuitable candidates to successfully get a coach, such as giving them to people with insufficient drive. The following quote comes from a senior Director who stresses the need for coachees to have sufficient drive and intelligence:

*'..... that there are a few attributes that are fairly undevelopable.... Now I don't know if there is any basis for any of this in any of the academic studies, but the basis of it is if people don't have the IQ and or if people don't have the drive, they're the two things that I cant get people to coach them on ..... if they ain't bright enough or if they are not driven enough, then I'm not going to bother, because I think that is where they are'.* (Line director 1)

Some evidence suggests that coachees without sufficient drive may compromise the coaching investment the business has provided:

*'I found the whole thing a real struggle, and stilted. I didn't do the final one. I was busy, and I thought what am I going to get out of it that I have not already had? I was busy. I didn't feel there was anything I had to deal with'.*

(Coachee 20)

*Awareness of development needs.* One director believes that it is important that a prospective coachee has a clear understanding of what their development needs are prior to engaging the services of a coach, and that they have been agreed with the line manager and or the organisation:



*...the next thing is to ensure that those people who are actually working with you agree with you what it is you think they need to be coached on. (Line Director 1)*

#### *Location of coaching*

The next decision that the organisation may consider is whether coaching should occur within the work environment, off-site at a neutral venue, or a mixture of both.

*Off-site.* Many coachees interviewed valued the ability to have their coaching carried out away from their normal place of work, and felt that this contributed positively to their overall experience. In the following quote the individual argues against doing coaching in the workplace, as it would feel like 'work', implying that they believe coaching is not connected to their daily role and responsibilities:

*If the purpose is all about me, then if it is onsite then one still feels that it is work, it is here, and all that is going to be talked about is work stuff. Whereas if it is off-site it changes everything. I think you would be more open, more relaxed, and you are prepared to talk about things that are not just work, such as family, next holidays or whatever it might be.....your partners, your parents. (Coachee 10)*

However not all coachees enjoyed going off-site. On one occasion a store manager had to fly from Scotland to England to get their coaching, resulting in a four hour session necessitating a whole day away from their workplace.

*I had this hour in the departure lounge and then an hour's flight back and then one hour in the car home, so by the time I got home I felt as though I had done a hard working fifteen-hour shift. (Coachee 2).*

Sometimes when coaching occurs off-site, the venue is distracting, which can make the coachee uncomfortable, such as in the following account where a meeting takes place in a busy hotel reception area:

*It did feel strange. You were always aware that people were looking at you and watching you, (Coachee 2).*

*On-site.* Far fewer coachees felt that coaching should be done in the work place. For those that did prefer the work place, it seemed to make good practical sense:

*Question: You had coaching in the office but would you have preferred to go out of the office?*

*(Answer). No. I think you can find somewhere quiet. We are all 'time precious', but to go out somewhere, to do an hour and a half takes a half-day!*  
(Coachee 3)

### *Timings*

The empirical evidence suggests that there were no guidelines relating to the number of sessions a coachee received, how long the sessions were, the amount of time between sessions, and the process of termination. One response from a senior corporate spokesperson is detailed below:

*..... we are looking to do a sort of six months of coaching, and then stop because some of these relationships just drift on forever. They become a dependency.* (Line director 3)

*Number of sessions:* There did not seem to be explicit clarity given by the organisation with reference to how many sessions a coachee could expect. This appeared to leave the decision to the coach, and in the following example no explanation was given to the coachee for this decision:

*Originally I thought it was only going to be two or three sessions but it ended up at 8 or 9.* (Coachee 2)

*Duration.* The following interviewee had had continuous coaching every one or two months for a period of four consecutive years. She confesses that by the end of it she felt 'coached out' and unable to have any more.

*Carole phoned me every month for a session. There was no period between Carole and YSC<sup>27</sup>. Jonathon was once every 2 months. I used to go into Covent Gardens to see him there. Usually on a Friday morning. That was the average, about once a month. You can imagine why I was coached out. It wasn't anything to do with Carole or Jonathon Bloom, it was just that I had had coaching tentatively for 4 years. (Coachee 17).*

*Time between sessions.* There does not seem to be any corporate guidelines on how much time should be left between coaching sessions, and once again it seems to be the coach and coachee who decide this.

*'It has been quite spaced out over an 8 month period, which has worked better for me, and giving me some time to consolidate each session and work out what I wanted to do before the next session'* (Coachee 19)

*Termination.* There does not seem to be any corporate guidance on how the coaching would end other than dictated to through a budgetary rationale. For the following coachee the conclusion of their coaching came abruptly.

*Because the budget agreed it was to end, it ended fairly suddenly. (coachee 24)*

#### *Matching a coach to a coachee*

The following section considers how a coach is selected and matched with a coachee. Evidence here suggests that rather than there being any direct intervention or system to monitor and guide the organisation on this process, it is often the coaching organisations themselves which would make these decisions:

*I think they have to get the right coaches..... Tanya was great because she was a director at MROI<sup>28</sup>. She said she would meet me and then decide who was going to coach me. Brilliant. I thought it is great to get a coach, but to get someone to tell me which coach would be the best for me, that was even*

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<sup>27</sup> YSC is a coaching provider. The interviewee makes the point that she changed coaches from one to another, with no gap between them

<sup>28</sup> MROI is the name of one of Tesco's preferred external coaching suppliers

*better. But when we actually met she said I would really like to coach you personally. I really respected that I was going to get the right person.*

(Coachee 19)

One coachee felt that the involvement of any prospective coachee in choosing their coach would not be viable, arguing that without prior knowledge or experience of what coaching does, they would be unable to make a valid judgement:

*Q). Should a perspective coachee be involved in the selection and matching process?*

*A). I think it depends on whether they have had coaching before. At the first point, I was not as articulate as I could have been to tell the business what my needs were. Certainly compared to the second coach that I had. In retrospect I would not have been able to say with certainty what type of coach I needed. Now, I could tell you precisely what type of coach I need. But it took me a little while to get into that process and understand what I needed for my coaching. (Coachee 21)*

### *Measuring the return on the coaching investment*

The literature section to this chapter has shown that assessing the return on an investment in coaching represents a considerable challenge for any organisation. In this empirical section, when the ex main board Director for retail at Tesco was asked how it could be done he concluded that 'it would be very difficult' (Interview with Mike Wemms, 2005).

Up until the time the research was carried out the company were aware that it was not adequately in control of the coaching it was using, as born out by the following quote from a leading figure in the leadership department:

*.... my concern with coaching is that it is a bit secretive. And we don't really know (a) how much we are spending on it, (b) whether we are getting any return on that money and (c) whether the quality of the experience is what we would want it to be. (Line director 3)*

The following analysis considers measuring coaching before, during and after it is carried out.

#### *Prior to coaching*

A number of coachees suggested that for coaching to be measurable, then prior to it taking place they should have an introduction that explains what it is, how it works, and what it can do. Coachees imply that this would help them to get more from the coaching:

*Prior to coaching taking place there seemed to be a widespread lack of understanding about what coaching was, what it did, how it worked and what it could deliver for the individual. Most of the coachees in this sample had not had coaching before, and really did not know what it was (Coachee 10)*

*Agreement of goals in advance.* One senior Director stressed that no coaching investment should be made unless it is clear in advance what the output is going to be:

*'If I want to spend 10 grand as investment in one of my guys I want to know that I am going to get some sort of return on this' (Line Director 1)*

This sentiment is widespread, and is desired by coachees as well, suggesting that their coaching goals should be agreed up front with their line managers prior to the coaching taking place, so that coaching value can be monitored consistently.

*Before starting the coaching you need to be really clear what is it that we want to get out of these coaching sessions. Otherwise it is very expensive.*  
(Coachee 18)

#### *During coaching*

For some coachees even during their coaching, they were not clear what the business expected of them as coachees, and this became a distraction.

*I guess the other thing I don't know is what the business wants from it. So I don't fully know what the business driver is. Do they want better, more fulfilled managers, or are they sort of actually saying if the coaching can't*

*justify putting a million on the bottom line, then we are unwilling to pay for it.*  
(Coachee 10)

#### *Assessments after coaching has finished*

The following section considers how both feedback from the key coaching stakeholders as well as the use of some key performance indicators can be used to provide an indicative assessment on the return of the coaching investment.

*Feedback from line managers.* Some coachees suggest that one of the best ways of realising the return on the coaching investment is by asking their line managers:

*....you can only track the performance of those people who have taken coaching by asking for feedback from their line managers.* (Coachee 23)

*Feedback from the coachee's local team.* Other coachees believe that taking the feedback from their own team would provide a realistic assessment of the impact of their coaching:

*The other way to measure it is feedback from the team. I haven't asked them, but would like to think they would have noticed a change. I did a 360 last year prior to the course, so potentially I could measure it again in a couple of months.* (Coachee 3)

*Feedback from the coachee.* One coachee felt that the human resource department should talk regularly with the coachee to get an indication on how the coaching was progressing. The quote below confirms that no effort was made to do this in her case;

*I would question whether they knew if I was getting any value from it (i.e. the coaching). Because no one ever asked me if I was getting value from it, other than my line manager. Now you may say that that was my line managers job, but I think HR should have some feedback from it. Or be tracking it.* (Coachee 21)

A selection of coachees provided self-assessment to indicate the perceived value that coaching created for them:

*Personally I can measure my success by my own personal sense, which I would quantify to be about a 40% improvement (Coachee 3)*

Other coachees described how having a greater level of self-belief impacted their work performance as a result of coaching:

*I genuinely believe I am operating at a higher level, and feel better about Tesco, and I don't think you can put a value on it. (Coachee 24)*

Raising self-confidence can also have a value in terms of the impression a person creates on their teams. The following quote refers to a store manager who manages a large workforce who all look upon that person as their leader:

*I think about the impact they are having on 400 people every single day..... So there is a massive impact in terms of morale if you can affect their behaviour in a positive way, and the impact on a store level, because they can touch so many people. (Coachee 15)*

*Indicative feedback.* In addition to the feedback from coaching stakeholders, there are a range of performance indicators that can further provide evidence to build a picture on coaching efficacy. For example one coachee felt that labour turnover indicators should be monitored because coaching was a positive and proactive investment in an individual's welfare and it should be able to increase employee loyalty to the business organisation.

*No one has resigned. They are all happy, we have a sustainable resource, and we don't need to seek recruitment from outside'. (Coachee 20).*

Similarly the quote below suggests that the return on coaching can be clearly seen in how successful the coachee's career progression is following their coaching:

*The only way is to look at the career progression for the person getting the coaching. That is a hard measure. (Coachee 21)*

### *Barriers to organisational learning*

The literature section suggests that there are barriers, which can hinder the organisation's ability to learn about coaching, such as the strict bond of confidentiality between the coachee and coach that restricts what can be communicated by the coach to the organisational sponsor. The following section considers the empirical research to determine the extent of these 'barriers' to organisational learning.

#### *Confidentiality*

Every coachee interviewed who addressed the issue of confidentiality in coaching were clear that the coach should not talk about any aspect of their coaching to other organisational members:

*I think there is a degree around the confidentiality of coaching. That is a huge issue. .... I mean because sometimes you say stuff you don't want everyone to know. The confidentiality of coaching is absolutely key. If you didn't have that you simply would not go there. (Coachee 3)*

Many of the conversations with the coach describe a coachee's inner fears, and should remain in the private domain.

*The whole thing is deeply personal. I don't want my peers or HR manager, or boss to know that I have doubts as to whether I could be a good Director or not. (Coachee 7)*

Many other coachees wish to discuss aspects relating to their immediate line manager, which once again is a topic that coachees would not want to be divulged to the wider business community:

*I need to trust, my coach as some of my past issues were related to specific individuals within Tesco. This requires extreme confidentiality (Coachee 35)*

#### *The Organisational culture*

In addition to the inherent need for confidentiality in coaching, the organisational culture itself was found in this study to exert a significant



influence over how willing and open employees and coachees were to their coaching. The quote below from a senior Director suggests that the main board had still not explicitly created a vision for the future use and application of coaching; implying that this uncertainty might impact the way coaching was interpreted in the organisation:

*So if I take Tesco for example, I would say that genuinely I believe that Terry and the board want to see greater diversity. Really deeply genuinely, but I don't think they have the slightest idea what that would mean. I don't think that they are really as ready for the consequences of that as they think they are. (Line Director 2)*

As a result, people have been left to interpret coaching for themselves, and this has allowed differences in its interpretation and its perceived utility to occur between different parts of the business. The following discussion looks at the various interpretations coaching has within the Tesco culture along with the consequences this has.

*Task focused.* Some coachees suggest that the Tesco operating culture has been strongly task focused for many years, and this legacy is at odds with the way coaching is presented in some instances: One coachee felt that during their coaching they were made to feel that the activity was not as valuable as their 'day job'.

*I just wish the business would more fully embrace it and more publicly embrace it, so that it didn't feel like you were skiving for an hour (Coachee 10).*

*Remedial.* In some parts of the business, coaching is seen as an activity that only addresses poor performance in under-achievers. As a result it is likely to send out negative signals, which may put people off wanting coaching for their own development:

*Question). The organisational culture in Tesco when you got the coach, what did your colleagues say?*

A). *To be honest I didn't tell them. Maybe I should have. Should it have been done on the quiet? I think there is a perception 'why do you need a coach? Are you not good enough?'* (Coachee 9)

#### *The role of the line manager*

The research suggests that the line manager can set the organisational sub-culture over the area of the business that they have jurisdiction, by influencing their direct reports and teams into their way of thinking on coaching. The following section considers various quotes highlighting first where the influence of the line manager can have a negative effect and then secondly where it can have a positive effect.

*Lack of time.* On occasions some coachees sensed that their line manager was 'too busy' to make time to talk through their coaching:  
*My boss has got 12 reports. It is hard enough to get a meeting with him let alone to get personal development. The boss relationship is focused on the task side, and as a task-orientated business we are quite poor at setting aside time for anything else.* (Coachee 3)

*Lack of interest.* Some line managers appear to have a general lack of interest in what the coach is doing with the coachee. As a result, some less scrupulous coachees might have taken this as an opportunity to 'relax' during their coaching as the following quote implies:  
*When I mentioned I'd had a day out, she said; ah yes, how is it going? There was no structure or particular involvement with her. I quite liked that because I didn't have to go back and report what I was doing in the coaching, and what I had got out of it.* (Coachee 9)

*Exclusion.* The following quote from a senior Director suggests that the line manager may be made to feel excluded if they are not involved;  
*.....the thing that makes it hard for your boss to engage is that they don't know what you have been actually talking about.* (Line Director 2).

If the line manager is excluded, then the potential for their added value is lost:

*My line manager has not really been involved in my coaching, and has not been in a position to support it or otherwise (Coachee 16)*

*Relationship difficulties.* Problems can occur if there is an existing relationship or communication difficulty already present with the line manager: *I never felt comfortable with my boss. So at no point did she ever say 'so how are you getting on with that coaching? What sort of conclusions were you coming to? In a funny sort of way, it stopped me from feeding that back, whilst I wanted to, I couldn't. I never got any feedback from her. (Coachee 24)*

*Lack of understanding.* One senior Director highlighted their suspicion about the use of coaching to develop leadership. It implies that they have not had any opportunity given to them to understand its merits, and have as a result come to their own conclusion:

*I generally feel that there is a real opportunity for this area to be very woolly. .... A bit 'wishy washy'. A bit black art, a bit black magic stuff. All of my business experience tells me that as soon as you come up against anything that sits in this area, the first thing you do is strip it down to its binary black and white components, turn it into a very simple thing .... that tends to bring you the best value. (Line Director 1)*

Just as the line manager can have a negative influence on the efficiency and value of the coaching, they can on occasions be supportive by being open, willing to listen, and offer advice and guidance when appropriate:

*(my boss was)...someone who I could bounce off ideas, learning, and trial what I was trying to do differently. I think I have spoken to my current boss at least once every two to three weeks, just to get his buy in and or any advice from him. (Coachee 1)*

*Involvement.* One store director believes that the line manager should be involved at the beginning of the coaching in order to share their thoughts about their development with the coach. In this way there is a sense of

shared ownership to the development goals as well as creating an atmosphere of openness:

*I think it should be open. Might be better to have a three way meeting. If I had coaches for my guys I would say in a three way meeting; look, from my perspective you do what you want here, and talk about what you want here, but my reasons for suggesting coaching in the first place are these reasons and these are my concerns. (Coachee 15)*

One coachee described a meeting that they had set up with their line manager and coach:

*Danielle and I are going to have a three-way conversation with Neil my boss in the first meeting. That way he can be clear what it is that I am going to be working on in those sessions. So he will describe the gap that he sees, and what he would like to happen. I would say that is critical. But it is only about setting up the expectations about what it is you are working on in the coaching. But I wouldn't expect the individual boss to sit down with me and say 'right Julie what have you spoken to Danielle about this time?' It is just about goal clarification. What it is we are going to work on. (Coachee 18)*

*Showing empathy.* Coachees value a line manager who has experience of coaching because they can then be empathetic to what they are experiencing.

*Another big benefit from this is that as soon as Nick was aware that I was being coached, he arranged to have a one to one. So we had an hour's session, with him helping me understand what I should be getting out of coaching, and what I should feel by the end of the programme. Not shaping or giving me clear elements, but in terms of what I should feel at the end, and not feel that it hadn't added value. I needed to be able to describe to him how I felt different. (Coachee 1)*

## Summary

The empirical evidence has been reviewed to assess the role of the organisation's coaching sponsors, who are responsible for a range of external

decisions than can exert an influence on how successful coaching can be. It considers how coaching is applied to the organisation, how its value is assessed, and finally any barriers that exist, which prevent organisational learning. Evidence here suggests that there currently appear to be sparse controls and systems in place to manage any of these processes. For example there are limited controls to ensure appropriate coachees are selected<sup>29</sup> for coaching, (resulting in some being given a coach who lack the drive to work on their own development): how coaches are selected; and how coach and coachee are matched. Coachees often lack any preparation for coaching, are often unsure what it is, how it works and their role within it, and usually have not agreed any development needs in advance of the coaching.

With regard to measuring the return on the coaching investment, there do not seem to be any systems currently in place to ascertain how much value coaching is providing the coachees and returning to the organisation. Barriers do exist that perhaps prevent information being communicated between the coach / coachee partnership and the organisational sponsors. These barriers include the need for coaching confidentiality, (that is heavily endorsed by coachees), a strongly task focused organisational culture, that makes some coachees feel 'uncomfortable', 'unsupported' and 'conscious' of being coached, and some line managers, who may feel excluded, disinterested or simply just do not share much enthusiasm for what coaching is meant to be doing. Altogether the empirical evidence suggests these 'barriers' are preventing the flow of coaching knowledge back to the centre, which prevents organisational learning and their ability to improve their controls and raise the quality and consistency of coaching as an executive leadership development tool.

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<sup>29</sup> Although the Company are aware of this, and working on a solution

## Conclusion

There are very few external decisions being exercised by organisational sponsors, and fewer still that are based on the experience of using coaching within the organisation for the past few years. Line managers and directors, are often behind the demand for coaches and obtain them from a variety of different sources. Coachees are selected without any rigor or assessment. The coach supply companies usually do the matching of coaches to coachees. The duration, frequency and location of coaching is haphazard, often decided upon by coach and coachee, and there does not seem to be any system or process to capture the return on the coaching investment. Barriers exist that prevent new coaching knowledge to flow into the centre, such as the inherent need for confidentiality. Other barriers exist that can be shaped in favour of coaching, such as the organisational culture, and the line manager, who can create a supportive environment for coaching to thrive. However, currently without any external intervention this situation is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future.

There appears to be a lack of ownership for the management of coaching within the organisation, which may relate to an organisational culture that has yet to define what coaching is, how it works, what it can achieve, who should be involved, and how it should applied. It may be possible to change this using a board intervention to set a clear vision for its use within the organisation, to clarify ambiguities and detail expectations.

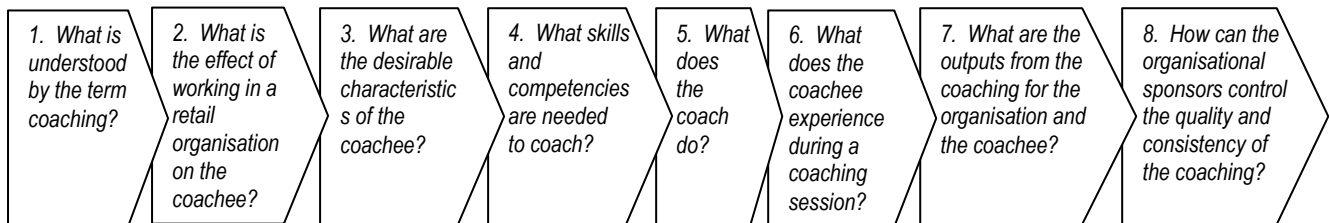
## CHAPTER TWELVE

### SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Introduction

The following chapter is in three sections. It begins with a summary of the literature and empirical data results from chapters 4 to 11 that address the coaching questions derived in chapter three and outlined in box 12.1 below.

Box 12.1 – sub-questions to the main thesis question:



It then moves on to the conclusions, beginning by developing a coaching model that acknowledges the multiple and variable dimensions of the self discussed in section one of chapter three, as well as reflecting key issues to have emerged from the empirical data. The coaching model that is presented enables an explanation of how coaching may be able to enhance the executive coachee's leadership capability.

The final part of the thesis builds on this model, stressing that coaching has the potential to indirectly enhance the leadership capability of retail executive coachees by deepening their self-awareness and making them more competent at leading themselves. The potential for this to happen depends on coaching stakeholders possessing an awareness of the complexity that is involved with coaching to multiple dimensions of the self. However the role of the coachee appears to be the most important, as their determination,

courage, drive, openness, honesty and general willingness to be coached is a crucial factor if coaching is to achieve the potential it offers.

Where these criteria are met the use of coaching can deepen levels of self-awareness in the coachee, which subsequently allows them to interpret events more consciously and react more precisely to the situational factors. Additionally it is likely that the coachee uses coaching to develop a set of 'learning mechanisms' so that each experience can be used to continually deepen self-awareness. Finally the coachee can use coaching to identify a meaningful life goal or purpose that can create a constant focus strong enough to fuel an inner sense of urgency towards achieving that goal. This inner urgency drives the coachee's motivation to learn, replacing any reliance on the coach and continually builds on levels of self-awareness in a spiral of development towards their potential. Where this is the case, the coachee may sense a range of internal and external 'benefits'. For example internally, as coachees begin to lead themselves with greater capability, they may sense being more 'in control' of their life, which may be accompanied by a rise in self-belief, which is sustainable. Externally the coachees' reactions to events are more considered and appropriate, may create positive impressions within the minds of potential followers who may recognise a range of attractive 'leadership-type' traits, such as integrity, authority, presence, judgement, impact and authenticity.

### Section one: Summary

The following section provides a summary from each of the separate thesis coaching chapters 4 to 11.

#### *Chapter 4. What is understood by the term 'coaching'?*

This chapter suggests that the complexities associated with the multiple meanings and definitions attached to the word 'coaching' are not fully appreciated. Often then its use, application and measurement creates difficulties, frustrations, and confusion to coaching stakeholders. Coachees



particularly do not appear to have an understanding of coaching which means they are not clear how to use it, when to use it, how to balance it with other activities, and what is expected of them. With a lack of empirically based evidence to guide its application and association with leadership development, its rapid rise and use is based on little more than a belief that it will add value to the performance of the organisation.

Coaching is used at Tesco, to enable the creation of leadership capability, but it is not clear when it should be used, what it can do, and whom it should be for. There is limited corporate guidance provided to clarify these uncertainties, and as a result various conflicting interpretations of coaching have emerged within the organisation allowing diverging pockets of sub-culture to develop. As different coaching providers are used within the organisation, and without any corporate policy on coaching, it is likely that its associated confusion will continue to rise.

*Chapter 5. What is the effect of working in a retail organisation on the coachee?*

This chapter suggests that there are three areas where the retail organisation can exert an influence on the coachee. Firstly, the strong organisational culture is a source of pressure on employees to conform to a set of expectations outlined in the range of explicit corporate values detailed on the Tesco 'steering wheel'. The empirical research suggests that some employees suppress their own personalities and values in order to appear to be leading with the corporate ones. The second area of influence comes from using coaching in the organisation to develop leadership capability, without firstly providing any accompanying explanation as to what it is, and how it is to be used. As a result some coachees are not sure how to balance their day-work expectations, with the use of coaching to aid their development. Finally, there appear to be differences in how coaching is interpreted by various line directors, creating different coaching 'sub-cultures', some which favour and support its use, and others that do not.

Each of these three areas can impact the mindset, readiness and commitment of the coachee. The key point here is that the strong value-lead organisational culture designed to distribute leadership away from the business centre by allowing employees to make decisions based on a clear frame of reference, may paradoxically be constraining the growth of leadership capability through the use of coaching.

#### *Chapter 6. What are the desirable characteristics of the coachee?*

The literature suggests that part of the potential success of the coaching intervention depends on the readiness and state of mind of the coachee, so that individuals who are open, honest, and willing to face up to their fears, courageous enough to ask for feedback and then listen with an open mind, are more likely to get more value from coaching than those who are not.

The empirical section raises two key conclusions: firstly that there is evidence that not all coachees have these characteristics, and may accept coaching, not so much because it is what they want to do (e.g. to learn about themselves), but because it is what they believe the organisation want them to do; and secondly that some potential coachees may become more willing to be coached depending on the length of time they may have been held at a specific point in their careers. For example where someone has not been promoted for a time, they may enter a period of 'enforced reflection'. This creates questions that they are not able to answer alone. In this instance a coach has the potential to be very useful.

#### *Chapter 7. What skills and competencies are needed to coach?*

It is not clear what skills and competencies a person needs to be able to coach. There is broad agreement that the individual should have a set of core coaching skills to enable them to develop a strong and trusting relationship with the coachee, as this often leads to a platform on which the coach can then help the individual. It is likely that these core-coaching skills include the ability to actively listen, ask open questions, and regularly summarise back to

the coachee. These basic interpersonal skills help the coach to understand the coachee, build confidence and trust between the two and have the potential to create trust where the coachee feels they can talk through issues they wouldn't openly share with other work colleagues.

The literature diverges on the characteristics, background and competencies that are important attributes for the coach. For example it is not clear whether a coach should have an explicit psychology competence in order to coach, or a strong business background, or both. Equally it is not clear what experience if any, a coach requires in relation to the role and activity of the coachee. It is not clear what relevance and impact these criteria might have on generating credibility, complimenting relationships or enhancing coaching capability and potential.

The empirical section of this chapter suggests that coachees positively favour coaches who have business experience, knowledge of their industry and their roles, an inner-knowledge of the organisational culture, and of the organisational personalities. In short it appears that the more similar the coach's background to the coachee's role, then the greater the perceived value. These background capabilities may help quickly build a strong coaching relationship, but it is not clear how important they are during the secondary phase when the coachee is seeking help with their issues. It is possible the coach may feel the urge to provide solutions based on their experience, whereas perhaps a greater psychology competence may be more appropriate in the circumstances, particularly in the secondary phase of the coaching assignment when rapport has been built.

### *Chapter 8. What does the coach do during a coaching assignment?*

Both the literature and the research suggest that coaching has a beginning phase, which concentrates on building rapport and trust between the two parties, and then a 'helping' phase, when the coach's own individualistic and specific background capabilities are used in an approach to help the coachee. During the rapport-building phase the coach is likely to use core-coaching

skills, to develop an understanding of the coachee, build trust and create a strong relationship. At some point following this, it is likely that the coachee becomes willing to open up to the coach and surface any issues of personal significance that they might wish to share with the coach. This is the beginning of a secondary phase in coaching. It is not clear what coaches do at this point as it is likely their individuality (e.g. experiences, values, beliefs, skills, expertise etc) surfaces, and determines their approach. Given the diversity of coaches in the market, then there are a multitude of different coaching approaches possible. In an attempt to understand what the coach might be doing during this secondary phase, coaching types are considered differentiated by three key characteristics: the coach's level of direction; their reliance on the use of models and techniques; and finally their use of theory and philosophy within their coaching.

#### *Direction.*

The approach is differentiated according to the level of direction the coach gives their coachees (i.e. how much they tell as opposed to how much they ask). The empirical data suggests that coachees differed considerably here, with some providing solutions, some offering a range of solutions, and some indirectly leading the coachee to solutions. Most coachees seemed to favour some direction from the coach, arguing that it would be too 'facilitative' otherwise, although for many this being their first experience of coaching meant that they were unable to comment on how directive their coach was as they had nothing to relate or compare it to. The key concern here is that by providing any direction at all, it may take some responsibility away from the coachee to find their own solutions and answers, and thereby create dependency on the coach's input for their future development.

#### *Models and techniques.*

Some coaches use models and techniques to guide what they do during their coaching, ranging from hypnosis, and emotional intelligence questionnaires to the use of the 'mind talk' clearing model. This may create the perception that the coach is competent, grounded, structured, reliable and valuable. However the over-reliance on models may make some coaches less able to adjust to

the coachee's agenda. Additionally the over-reliance on coaching models may over-simplify what coaching does, and may reduce the responsibility the coachee has to their own development.

*Theories and philosophical concepts.*

Some coaching is framed within an explicit theory about human beings that underpins what is being done. Similarly, some coaching explores philosophical questions to deepen dialogue and make what is being done more personally meaningful to the coachee. The empirical research suggests there was no explicit reference to coaching in this area.

*Chapter 9. What does the coachee experience during a coaching assignment?*

Whilst there is much written in the literature to describe what the coach does during a coaching session, there is much less written in comparison about the coachee's corresponding experience. The literature suggests that at the start of the coaching assignment the coachee is often sceptical and so tries to assess the coach, to establish whether they can help. Where the coachee is satisfied this is the case, then the secondary phase of coaching can begin.

The empirical evidence suggests that coachees experienced a wide variety of direction from different coaches, with some even providing solutions to their issues. Additionally, many of the coaches used models to lead their coaching. There was no evidence of any philosophy-related discussions, no evidence of coaches transferring capability by helping coachees to develop their own self-learning techniques, or any use of theories of philosophies to underpin, guide or make the coaching more meaningful.

One key output to emerge from the focus of this chapter was that in spite of the variation in approaches, (as evidenced by the variety of coaching companies used), the majority of coachees chose to describe their coaching experience similarly as an opportunity to spend time talking about themselves, which they valued highly because they had no other opportunity to do this

normally during working hours. Additionally coachees often commented on the coach's active listening, open questions, summarising, and challenging, which often enabled them to deal with anxiety and tension, resulting in similarities to be made with forms of 'therapy'. The empirical evidence highlights the continuing importance of core coaching skills, which continue to feature heavily throughout a coaching assignment.

*Chapter 10. What are the outputs from coaching for the coachee and the organisation?*

The literature suggests that coaching can create a number of outputs for the coachee such as learning new skills, increasing self-awareness, clarifying and understanding (one's) purpose, and developing self-development processes. However there is very little evidence-based research to confirm that these positive outputs for the coachee then manifest as business performance and leadership improvements. The growth in coaching to support leadership development is based largely on faith and belief that it will deliver sustainable business performance improvements. The empirical research suggests that the majority of coachees gained two recognisable outputs from their coaching; firstly that it taught them to use a self-coaching model (mindtalk clearing technique): and secondly that it provided a sense of inner calmness, accompanied by a growth in self-confidence. Although many of the coachees claimed that this then enabled them to perform better at work, it is suggested that these outputs are unsustainable. There appear to be two reasons for this: Firstly evidence from some coachees suggest an unwillingness to use the self-coaching model without having the coach there to administer it, and secondly because most coachees were unable to explicitly link their growth in self-confidence to a learning experience, or be able to describe a growth in their self-awareness. It is likely that the calmness experienced by many of the coachees may have come about from the therapeutic nature of the coaching, which allows the coachees to talk through issues that were making them feel anxious, that they had kept hidden. This implies that positive enhancements to a person's sense of self may only be temporary, along with any related

business performance improvement, unless they are accompanied by a growth in the coachee's self awareness.

*Chapter (11). How can organisational sponsors control the quality and consistency of the coaching?*

The organisational sponsors are responsible for a range of 'external' coaching decisions, such as creating a conducive environment for coaching to occur, which coach and coachee to select and match, how many sessions to buy, where they take place, how long they last, assessing progress during the coaching, assessing the return on investment when it concludes, and establishing best practices, so that organisational learning occurs, and future coaching continues to better serve the needs of the organisation and individual. The empirical evidence suggests that there do not appear to be many systems and processes set up to control the quality and consistency of these 'external decisions'. For example there does not appear to be any filter to select prospective individuals for coaching, nor are there any opportunities for prospective coachees to be told about coaching and ask any questions before it begins. Equally there do not appear to be any systems to check what is happening during the coaching, or to measure how effective the investment in the coaching has been. Barriers do exist that make information flow between the coach / coachee and the organisational centre difficult such as the inherent need for confidentiality, a strongly task focused organisational culture, and the lack of any explicit reference as to what coaching is, which can result in some coachees feeling uncomfortable being coached, and line managers who may feel excluded, or simply not share the same levels of enthusiasm for the coaching as their direct report. All of these reasons suggest that the organisation is not learning as much about coaching as it could. As a result it appears that the coach supply companies may often take external decisions such as the duration, frequency, and location of coaching sessions as well as the matching of the coach and the coachee themselves.

In summary, the empirical evidence suggests that coaching is used often by coachees to talk through issues of a personal significance that they have

hitherto been unable to deal with on their own, and been unwilling to share with other organisational members. This often has a therapeutic effect on the coachee, reducing anxiety and instilling a sense of inner calm and raising self-confidence. Whilst some other coachees go further and learn more aspects about themselves from their coaching that they had not previously known, the majority experience a change in their 'sense of self'. The literature however suggests that coaching can go well beyond simply drawing out learning from an experience, that it can transfer the capability to self-coach, and can go 'deep' when it is underpinned in theory or considers aspects of philosophy. However in this case the empirical data provides no clear evidence that any coach has either instilled the capability to self-coach in the coachee or addressed philosophical or theoretical considerations directly.

One consistent element throughout the chapter summaries, other than the complexity associated with coaching, is the reference to the 'self', both within the literature and the empirical evidence. It is the one common theme to emerge as a result of posing different coaching questions.

For example, chapter 4 suggests that because coaching is a complex, it can only be defined in relation to the individual (i.e. their self) and the specific context; chapter 5 suggests the strong organisational culture may sometimes limit the extent to which the individual is prepared to show their true self at times: chapter 6 suggests that coaches should have a set of skills that helps them firstly to build relations with the coachee, and secondly to help the coachee to understand their self: chapter 7 suggests that for coaching to have the potential to reach desirable outcomes, then the coachees must be open, courageous, honest and willing to face themselves: chapter 8 suggests that the coach helps the individual understand more deeply how they interpret events and the impact they have on them: chapter 9 argues that coaching is valued as an opportunity for coachees to talk about themselves, that it can create a sense of inner calmness and a growth in self-confidence: and finally chapter 10 suggests that many coachees feel coaching has helped them to learn about themselves, which they then claim positively influences their work performance.



## Conclusion

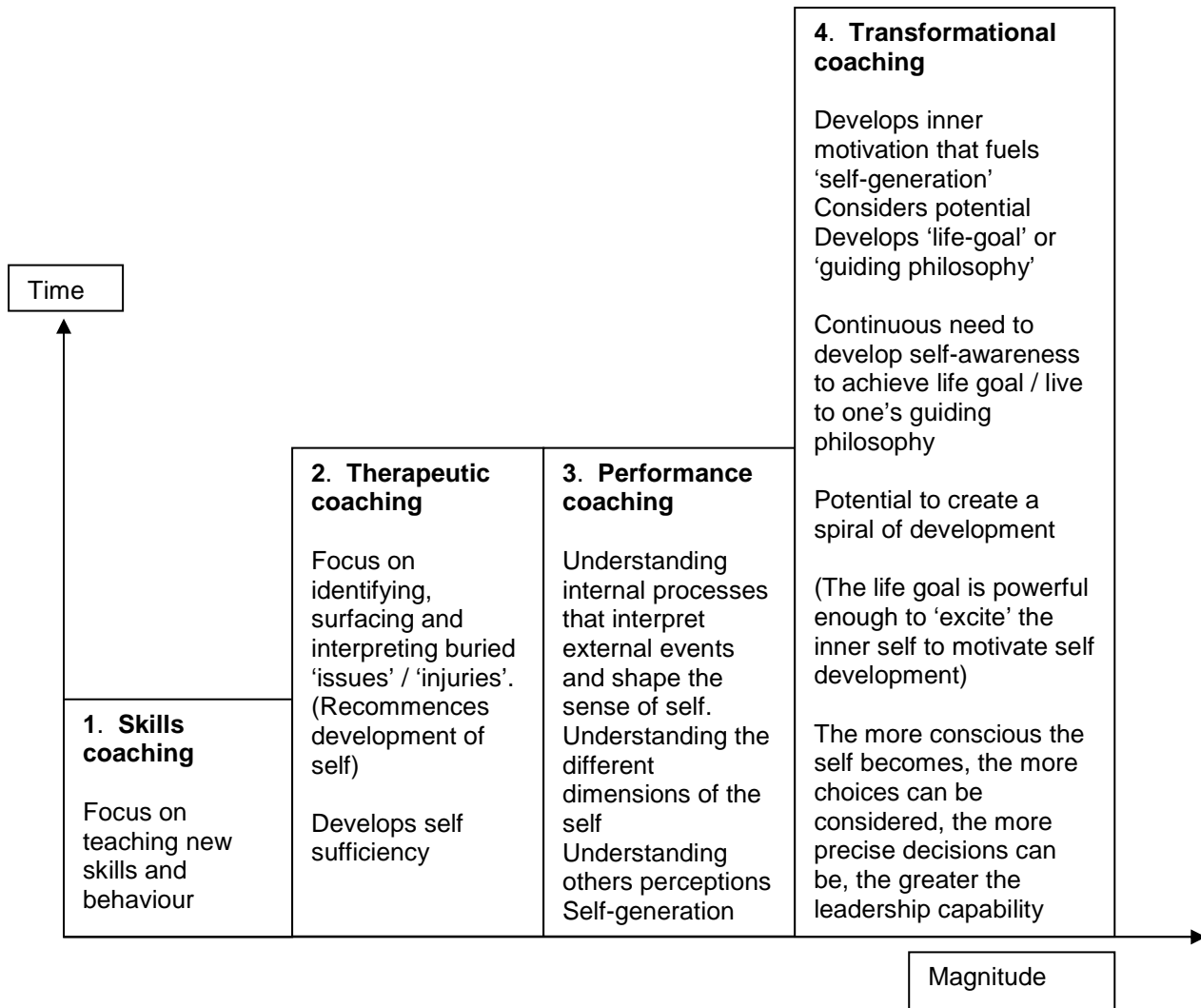
The following section begins by using the empirical data to demonstrate that four different 'types' of coaching were evidenced in the study organisation, and that from this and in conjunction with the literature it is possible to create a 'four dimensions of self' coaching model. Conceptualising coaching in this way suggests that what a coach does must change depending on which dimension of self the coachee is referring to. The common output is that coaching is used to develop the depth of the coachee's self-awareness.

The thesis concludes that the influence of coaching on leadership capability, its potential for change, and the sustainability of its outcomes are in part related to the depth of understanding that coaching stakeholders possess, and in part related to whether coaching is used to develop the coachee's self-awareness, as this directly enhances their capability to lead himself or herself which indirectly affects their ability to lead others.

### *A multiple-utility coaching framework*

The analysis of the empirical evidence in relation to the literature suggests that coaching is complex, and emphasises that it can have multiple meanings and definitions, can be used in many altering contexts and can be interpreted and applied in a myriad of different formats and variations, by a highly diversified group of coaches. The coaching framework that follows in figure 12.1 reflects both the empirical and literature-sourced data from this thesis, suggesting that depending on the time invested in the relationship between coach and coachee, coaching can be used for a variety of uses ranging at one end of the spectrum from up-skilling an individual to being used to potentially 'transform' an individual at the other end of the spectrum. As a result the model serves to highlight the multiple utility that coaching can have, where the magnitude of what is done is related to the time invested in a relationship with an appropriately driven coachee.

Figure 12.1: A multiple-utility coaching framework



The multiple-utility coaching framework as depicted in figure 12.1 above suggests that different types of coaching activities relate to different dimensions of the self, which emerge as the focus for the coaching, depending on the context and on the coachee's specific needs. The framework is in four boxes of differing size, each representing a different utility for coaching that relates to both the empirical research and the literature. The different sizes to the boxes reflect the point that coaching can range in the magnitude of what it does from 'merely another tool in a kitbag of quick fixes' (Whitmore 2001, p: 27), to a theory acknowledging that people 'can become excellent at performance' (Flaherty 1999 p: 21). The magnitude of what coaching can do increases in relation to the time both coach and coachee

work together, and the depth of trust, openness and rapport that is created over this time. The more willing and open a coachee is to the process, the greater the potential coaching has to be transformational.

The following section considers each of the four boxes in the multiple utility coaching framework in relation to Wilber's (2001) theory of the development of self. The discussion then incorporates the Johari Windows model to allow a four dimensions of self coaching model to emerge that is used to exemplify how coaching can have a profound understanding which is considered in the conclusion.

### *Skills Coaching*

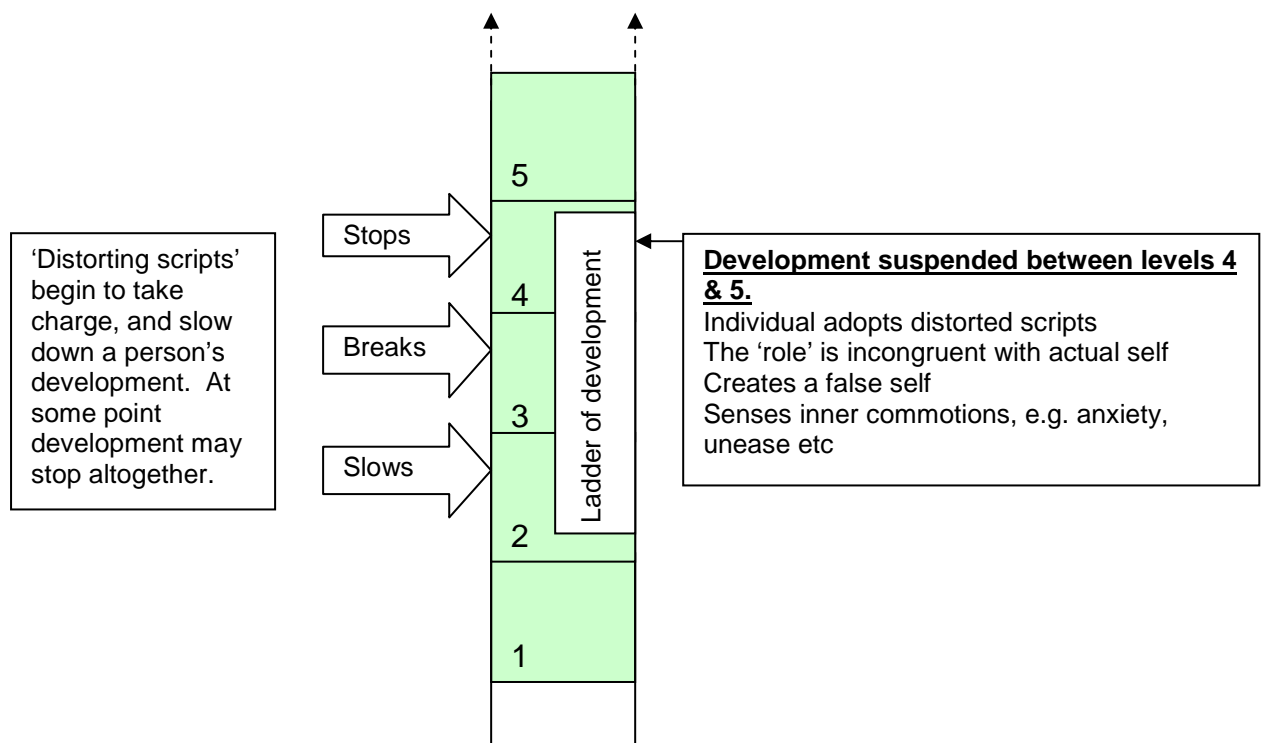
Evidence from the research suggests that in some cases coaching is used to pass on new skills, techniques and behaviours that can then be adapted and utilised by the coachee for immediate use on their colleagues in the work environment. Here coaching is used to pass on extrinsically derived knowledge. It is likely to reflect a skill or behaviour or a technical point of knowledge. It is unlikely to require the coachee to look intrinsically for their own solutions. The empirical evidence suggests it is the coach that introduces, explains, and 'teaches' the coachee who has a passive and inactive role. With skills coaching there is little need for the coach to get to know the coachee and there is little or no impact on the person's sense of self.

### *'Therapeutic' coaching*

A majority of the coachees interviewed for this thesis, suggest that one of the greatest benefits they got from coaching came from having someone they trusted that they could talk to about themselves (see chapter 9: what does the coachee experience during a coaching session?). For many, the opportunity to be able to talk honestly about issues often relating to the past, that they felt they could not discuss with work colleagues brought a release from tension and anxiety, and an increase in self-confidence. The resulting sense of inner calm that it often created made some coachees suggest it has therapeutic qualities, which lead to the labelling of this type of coaching.

*Therapeutic coaching in relation to the development of the self.* It may be possible to attribute the ‘therapeutic’ qualities of coaching as being in response to a part of Wilber’s (2001) theory pertaining to the development of the self, (for more see Chapter 3; ‘Development of a conceptual framework to analyse coaching’), which suggests that a person’s growth of consciousness is often ‘interrupted’, prematurely, resulting in the development of self to slow or stop. Although there are many possible reasons for this Wilber (2001, p: 168) suggests that generally it is due to ‘distorting scripts’ that have ‘taken charge’ in the person’s life, which can exert feelings of anxiety and tension, which can make the person behave in ways that differ to their actual self. For example figure 12.2 below shows an interruption to the developing self between levels 4 (rule role) and 5 (formal reflexive).

Figure 12.2: An interruption to the developing self between level 4 and level 5

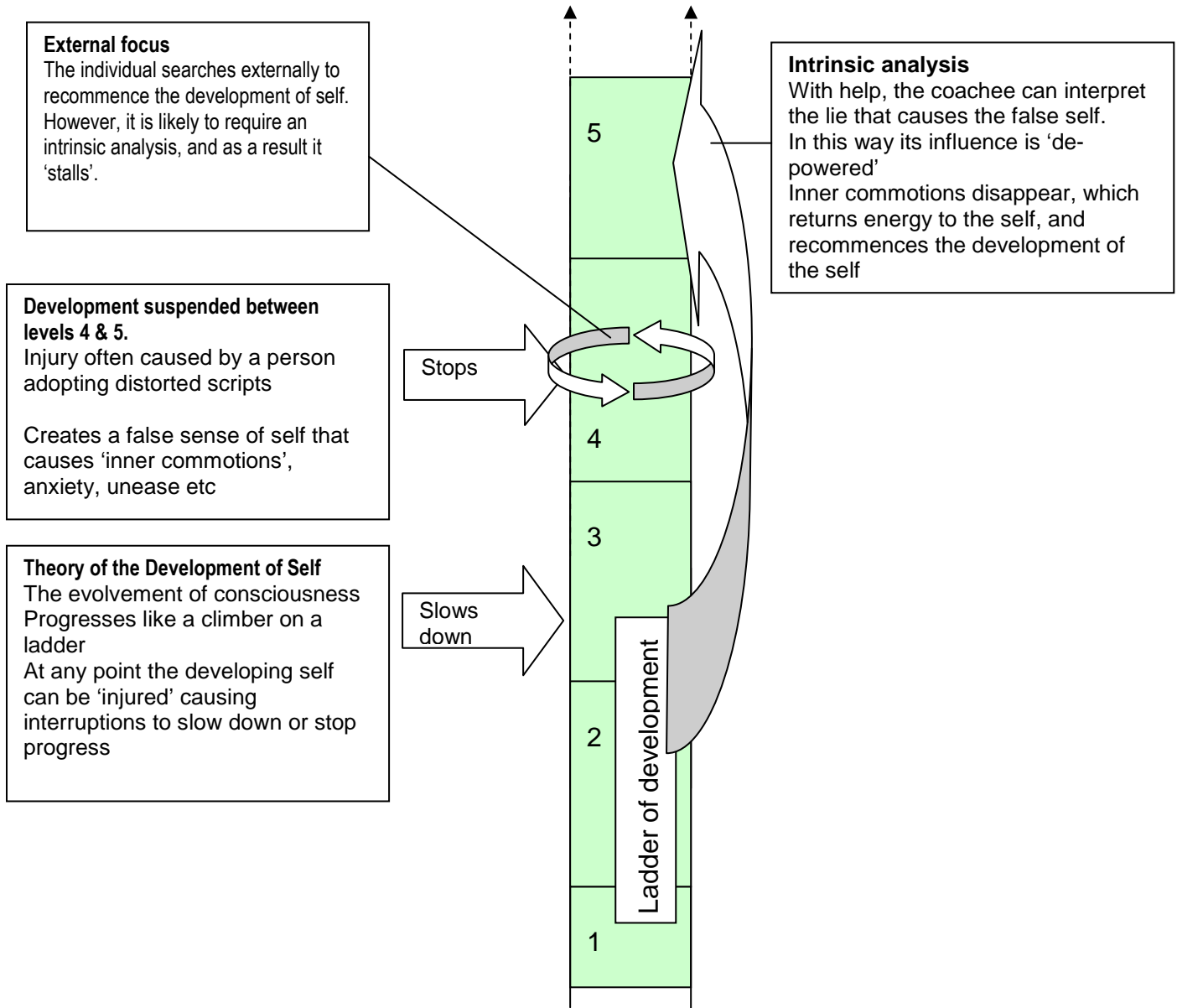


Wilber (2001 p: 168) argues that without ‘therapy’ that attempts to re-interpret internal scripts, then the individual’s development may remain ‘stuck’ in a loop

(see figure 12.3 below), as attempts are made to find an external solution to an internal problem. There is a possibility that the 'false' self that has been created temporarily whilst development is interrupted may remain in charge, causing the individual to 'limp through a life of internal insincerity' (Wilber 2001, p: 156) that could at any stage lead to a 'breakdown'. In this case, where development has stopped at level four, Wilber (2001) suggests that the individual is living falsely, observing and obeying the social 'rules', and 'roles' that they believe they need to adhere to in order to get what they want.

However, it is possible to recommence the development of self, but to do so requires the individual to look intrinsically. This process may be best performed with the help of a therapist to 'uproot the false scripts and replace them with a more realistic interpretation of yourself' (Wilber 2001, p: 168). Figure 12.3 below shows firstly suspended development (on the left hand side) as an individual seeks externally derived solutions to internal problems, and secondly on the right hand side of the diagram, the necessary intrinsic investigation that is likely to recommence the development of the self after it has become stuck by 'distortions'.

Figure 12.3: Recommencement of development of the self achieved through intrinsic analysis following a period of suspension



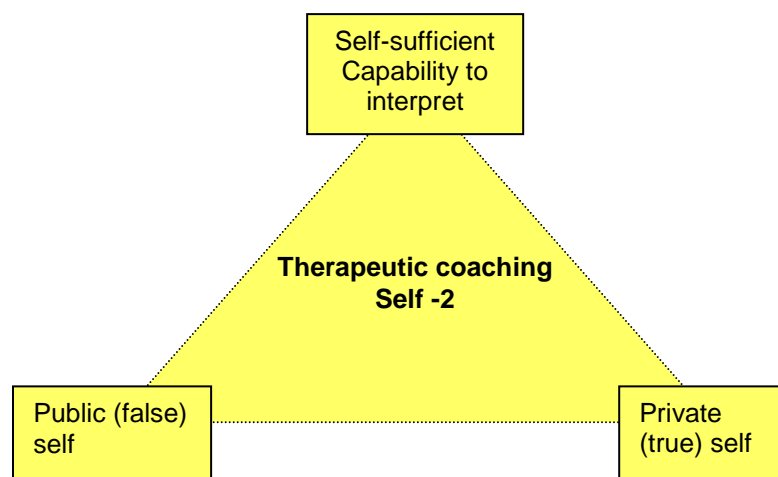
*Developing therapeutic coaching self-sufficiency.* The research in chapter 9 ('What does the coachee experience during a coaching assignment?') suggests that coachees frequently find solutions to their internal problems with the help of a coach who encourages them to talk through these issues and answer questions on them at length. This is associated with a release of tension, and instils a sense of calm and self-confidence. However, the research also suggests that in the majority of cases, coachees were unlikely to be able to replicate this process on their own. The implication here is that when further 'injuries' to the self occur later (as can theoretically happen at any stage in development (Wilber 2001), their development may slow down or even stop again replacing their inner sense of self confidence and calm, once again with tension and anxiety. The coachee is then likely to be dependent once again on outside intervention (e.g. the coach) to help them find a solution.

*Summary of therapeutic coaching.* Figure 12.4 below summarises therapeutic coaching. Firstly the coach attempts to understand the coachee's issues, requiring the coachee to be open and honest about their inner depths. If there are issues that the coachee wants to raise, then the coaching is likely to be 'therapeutic' in nature. Here it focuses on a dimension of the self (known as 'self 2') that is captured in box 2 of the Johari windows ('*we don't know this about you & I know this about myself*'). Using Wilber's (2001) theory of the development of the self, it is suggested that when the individual consciously decides to hold back aspects of who they really are (*I know this about myself*) then the person they are in public is not fully the person they are in private, meaning that other people don't really know who they are dealing with (*we don't know this about you*). In other words they favour a false self in public that differs to their true self that exists only in private. Coaching aims to help the individual understand why they are withholding aspects of their self, by deepening their consciousness relating to these issues, and attempting perhaps to expose and reinterpret 'distorted scripts'. By doing this, coachees can become more authentic to both themselves and to others. Through this review process it is possible not only to draw out their self-learning, but also to understand the process used by the coach to help

them, so that they can then be encouraged to develop their own processes to manage any future similar experiences on their own. This is a part of coaching referred to earlier as the 'mission of transfer of capability', and attempts to ensure that no dependence is allowed to grow on the coach by the coachee for their own development.

Therapeutic coaching differs from skills coaching because it is intrinsically focused, relying on the coachee being willing to open up, talk honestly and surface issues that they wish to discuss, which often requires a strong relationship to have been developed between coach and coachee.

Figure 12.4: 'Therapeutic coaching' to 'self-2'



The empirical evidence suggests that in this case therapeutic coaching is likely to be the first and most likely type of coaching that the coachee desires, where topics raised almost always refer to a past issue. Only a limited number of cases progressed from therapeutic coaching to performance coaching where a variety of present-moment work related issues were discussed with the coach.

### *Performance coaching*

The empirical data suggests that far fewer coachees used their coaching to focus on work related, present day performance issues, than used it to focus



on and reinterpret past events. As a result, the multiple-utility coaching framework (see figure 12.1) positions performance coaching to the right of therapeutic coaching to indicate that it occurs after therapeutic coaching takes place.

As the name suggests, the subject matter for this type of coaching relates to the coachee's performance in relation to their current business objectives. Performance coaching tends to focus on present day activities, and targets the dimension of the coachee's self described in box 3 of the Johari Windows (We know this about you & 'I don't know this about myself'), known as 'self-3'.

Performance coaching is likely to be done 'on-site' so that the coach can 'get a comprehensive and accurate sense' (Peltier 2001, p: 12) of the coachee, and so that any relevant experiences can be used immediately as opportunities to learn (Goldsmith et al, 2000, pps: 13-14) about 'self-3'. For executives in business organisations this allows the coaching to focus on current challenges and events covering a multitude of work-related issues specific to the coachee's role and responsibilities within the organisation.

The empirical evidence suggests that the following categories may form the focus for performance coaching:

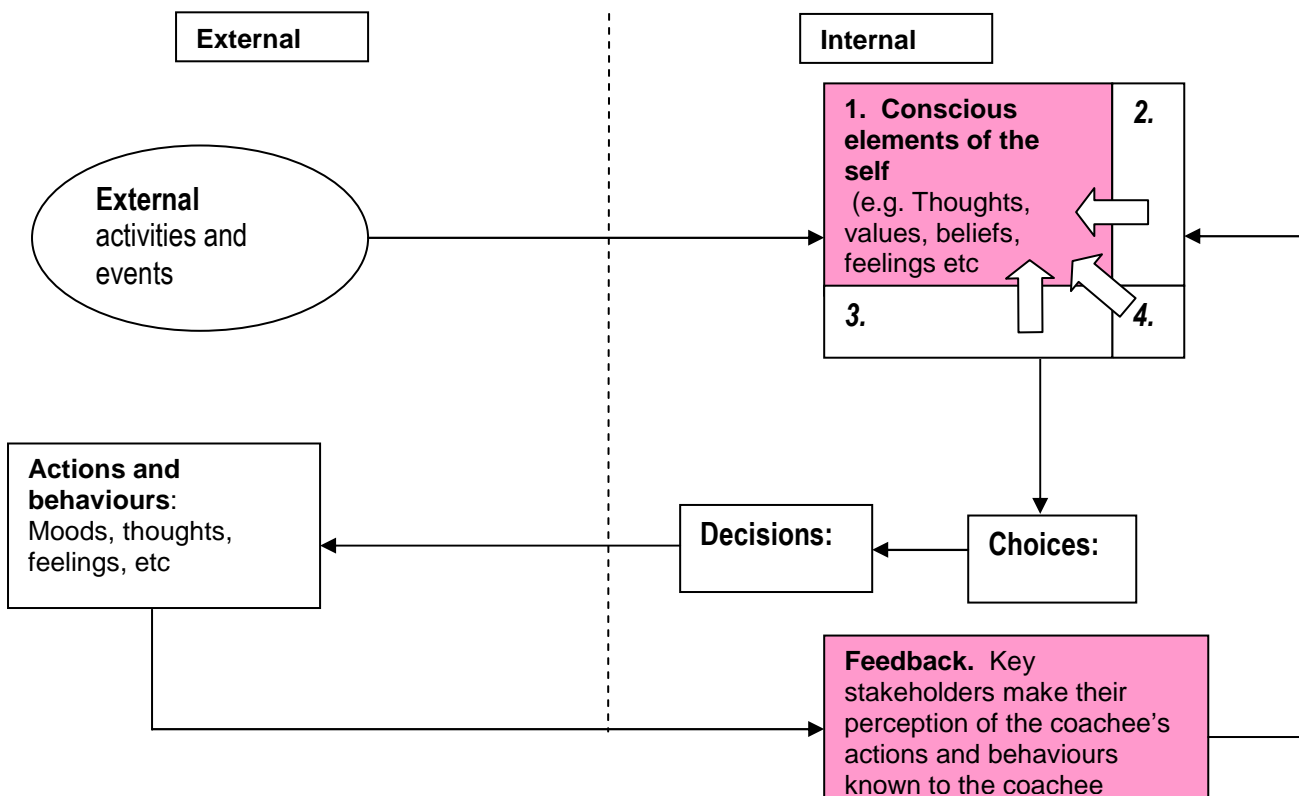
*Clarifying and prioritising performance goals.* Helping to clarify with the coachee what performance issues need to be targeted during the coaching, by identifying and prioritising those with the greatest importance and significance

*Developing self-awareness.* Performance coaching encourages the coachee to become 'formal reflexive' (Wilber 2001 p: 149) and start to think about their thinking, and to stop 'simply swallowing unreflexively' (p: 170). By focusing on business performance, the coachee is encouraged to reflect on how conscious they are of their decisions, and the impact that their decisions have on others. Coaching helps the coachee to become more conscious of the various elements of their self (e.g. their thoughts, feelings, values, beliefs,

judgements, biases etc), and how they can influence and impact the way they interpret events, and how they can unconsciously influence their behaviours and actions in response.

In order to transfer capability so that the coachee is able to self-coach on performance, the coach helps the coachee to consider the use of feedback from other peers to become more aware of the perception their performance is having on them. Feedback allows the coachee to formally reflect on how closely their initial expectations relate to the stakeholders' actual perceptions, which enables the coachee to understand the appropriateness of their decisions, actions, emotions, and behaviours. In this way they can confirm what went well, and what did not, and self-learn. Additionally they can reflect on those elements of their self that they might not have been conscious of, but which might have had an impact or influence on others. The importance of feedback to develop levels of self-awareness is highlighted in diagram 12.11 below:

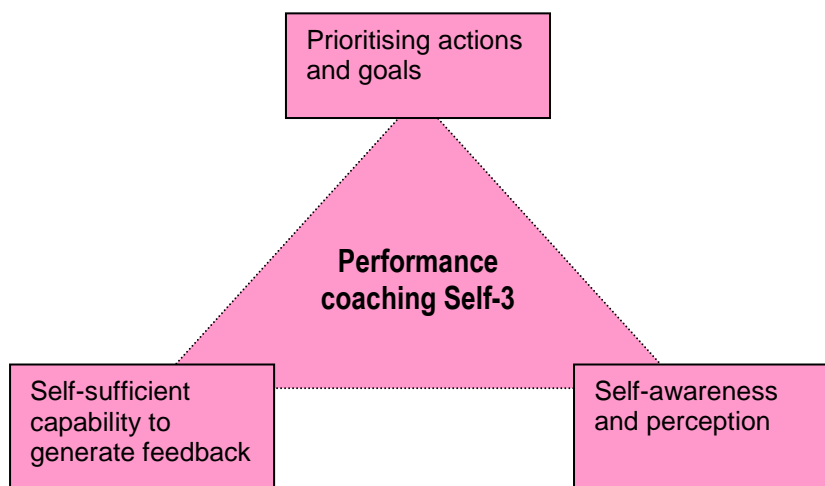
Figure 12.5: The role of the feedback loop to raise levels of self-awareness



*Summary of performance coaching to self-3.* Performance coaching focuses on the dimension of self in box three in the Johari windows, 'I don't know this about myself & we know this about you'. As a result this type of coaching can be done in relation to the coachee's performance activities, using immediate experiences within the work environment as a vehicle to reflect and draw learning from.

Figure 12.6 below, suggests performance coaching is highly pragmatic because it addresses three key issues: firstly it challenges the coachee to prioritise and surface those performance issues that they believe are significant, so that coaching goals and actions can be clearly identified and considered. Secondly it uses immediate work based issues as a focus for developing greater insights. Finally performance coaching encourages the coachee to get feedback so that they can understand what perception their actions are creating in relation to their expectations. This knowledge helps the coachee learn and deepen levels of self-awareness.

Figure 12.6: A summary of performance coaching of self-3



### *Transformational coaching*

So far the discussion of coaching has considered past events that are significant to the coachee in 'therapeutic' coaching, and present day events that are pressing and immediate in 'performance' coaching. 'Transformational

coaching' refers to the dimension of self that is contained in box 4 of Johari windows (*'I don't know this about me & we don't know this about you'*). Here the coachee is encouraged to consider their future potential.

The literature suggests that coaching is capable of maximising thinking and creativity (Flaherty 1999, p: 1), that it has far-reaching possibilities (Whitmore 2001, p: 27) to enable growth towards an unlimited potential (Wilber 2001, p: xvii), however the empirical data suggests that in this study there was no evidence that any coachee was explicitly coached in this dimension of the self. As a result the following discussion is based mainly on the theory within the literature, and is once again underpinned by Wilber's (2001) theory of the development of the self. It is divided into the following three sections:

1. A discussion of Csikszentmihalyi's (2002) concept of the 'flow of optimal / peak performance'. This theory suggests that everyone seeks happiness, and that it can be found when the individual is deeply engaged in an activity that creates 'flow'.
2. The second section considers the personal challenge to find a purpose / (life) goal / guiding philosophy to one's life.
3. The spiral of development. This section suggests that a meaningful life goal can provide an inner determination strong enough to fuel the mechanisms driving self-awareness. The key point to note is that because self-awareness is limitless and because any advance in the consciousness of self is an 'irreversible shift' (Wilber, 2001, p: 171), then self-awareness and by implication the individual's development towards the life goal, can spiral irreversibly upwards.

(1). *The 'Flow' of peak<sup>30</sup> performance*. Csikszentmihalyi (2002, p: 54) suggests that when someone is performing at their optimum best, then they have an 'optimal' experience that he calls 'flow', which has the characteristics set out in figure 12.7 below:

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<sup>30</sup> Also referred to as 'optimal' performance

Figure 12.7 – The Characteristics of optimal performance – ‘Flow’

1. The individual senses they have adequate skills to cope with the challenges at hand
2. The activity is goal directed
3. The activity is rule bound, and provides clear clues as to how well one is performing (i.e. immediate feedback mechanisms)
4. Concentration is so intense that there is no attention left over to think about anything irrelevant or to worry about problems.
5. Self-consciousness disappears, and
6. The sense of time becomes distorted.

(Source: Csikszentmihalyi 2002, pps: 48-67)

To experience ‘flow’ the person needs to have a profound focus in the form of pursuing ‘something difficult and worthwhile’ (Csikszentmihalyi 2002, p: 3) that is capable of stretching the ‘person’s body or mind to its limits in a voluntary effort to accomplish it. Gallwey (1986, p: 78) suggests that it must be ‘compelling’ enough to ‘focus ones attention’ and enable the individual to ‘concentrate’. He argues that as the ‘mind is kept in the present, it becomes calm’ and performance can be heightened. During a flow experience people often report feeling ‘exhilarated’ by what happens, and ‘intrinsically rewarded’ following it (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p: 67).

(ii). *Consideration of a ‘life goal’*. Csikszentmihalyi (2002, p: 209) suggests that the individual needs to find a goal that is ‘autotelic’, (i.e. set by ‘self’) as opposed to ‘exotelic’ (set by others), and be something that the individual has a real passion for, such that they might believe they want to be the best in the world at, and be willing to give ‘a lifetime’s worth of psychic energy to’ (p: 215). He goes on to suggest it would be useful if the goal was located in the individual’s employment activity, so that they would want to

work more if they got the chance (p: 74). Collins (2001, p; 208) argues that if someone sets out to do something that they care a great deal about, that is meaningful, and that they believe passionately in its purpose then 'it is impossible to imagine not trying to make it great'.

Frankl (2004, p: 113) argues that 'everyone has a specific vocation or mission in life to carry out a concrete assignment which demands fulfilment'. He goes on to suggest that it is the activity that creates the positive feelings that people long for, and it is happiness that then 'ensues... as the unintended side effect of one's personal dedication to a course greater than oneself' (p: 140).

Similarly Handy (2006 p: 28) suggests that although Aristotle's concept of 'eudaimonia', can be translated as 'happiness', it is 'not a state but an activity', suggesting that Aristotle might have meant 'flourishing', or doing your best with what you are best at'. Drucker (2000 p: 22) argues that a goal of the organisation 'is to make productive the specific strengths and knowledge of each individual'. Bennis (2002b p: 8) cites Rittenberg<sup>31</sup> who concludes that happiness 'is not a function of your circumstances; it's a function of your outlook on life'.

An implicit assumption of psychosynthesis<sup>32</sup> (Ferrucci,1982, pps: 163-164) is that everyone has a unique potential that is buried within them, but that it needs to be found. He argues that 'at each stage of our life there are subordinate purposes – steps along the way toward the fulfilment of our ideal pattern'. Welch (2005, p: 43) argues that 'each one of us is good at something', and believes that people are at their 'happiest and most fulfilled' when they are doing it. Ferrucci (1982, p: 163) emphasises that there is 'a way for things to happen, which is intrinsically right for them, becoming what they were meant to be'. He relates this theory to what Aristotle called 'entelechy' – 'the full and perfect realisation of what was previously in a potential state'. Similarly Gallwey (1986, p: 122) suggests that potential is 'already within....like the seed of a tree'. Morgan et al (2005, p: 90) suggest that the way to reveal this is for people to ask themselves who they are,

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<sup>31</sup> Sydney Rittenberg who spent 16 years in unjust imprisonment in solitary confinement in communist China.

<sup>32</sup> Psychosynthesis is the term given to techniques for psychological and spiritual growth.

before they start to consider what they have to do. Similarly it has been argued that everyone has a life goal or purpose but that it is up to each one of us to work out what it is (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 87). Likewise Morgan et al (2005, p: 90) argue that everyone has the responsibility to find out what their purpose is in life, and it is in this way that they are enabled to become authentic and in 'harmony' with who they are. McDermott and Jago (cited by Megginson 2007, *Coaching at work*, volume 2, issue 5, p: 58), suggest it is a really useful thing to do, because it allows the coachee to find the 'power within', which can be inspirational and can provide meaning to one's life (Zeus and Skiffington (2002), cited by Megginson 2007, *Coaching at work*, volume 2, issue 5, p: 58). This can also have a positive impact on followers who are 'hungry for leaders with purpose' (Goldsmith et al, 2000, p: 85).

Perhaps closely linked to the concept of finding individual purpose and life goals is the association with finding meaning in life. A recent survey (Hannon, 2006, *Coaching at work* Volume 1, Issue 6, p: 52) suggested that out of a sample size of 25, 80% of coachees 'wanted to talk about the purpose of their work, and three-quarters were 'searching for meaning' in their lives'. Similarly North (2008, *Coaching at Work*, volume 3 Issue 6, p: 23) claims that 43% of coaches are addressing meaning and purpose in their sessions with clients. Hannon (2006, *Coaching at work* Volume 1, Issue 6, p: 51) goes on to argue that any coaching that aims to help people find meaning in their work can result in high levels of inner motivation.

The key point of considering a life goal is to provide an object of focus for the coachee to aim towards and reflect against on their own, after the coach has left. Where the goal has an inner meaning to the individual, then it has the potential to exert a continuous motivation towards its achievement. Frankl (2004, p: 81) argues that knowing what one's purpose is 'provides an inner strength', and 'the opportunity to grow' (p: 80). Without developing clarity on a purpose or life goal, an individual is likely to find that their inner motivation towards a course of self development may decline and efforts to reflect can be meaningless without a central focus or objective that they have a personal desire to accomplish. However Tolle (2005a, p: 75) warns that much time can

be wasted 'entering the bottomless pit of the unknown' exploring and finding things out that may be little more than just 'interesting'.

Handy (2006, pps: 9-10) cites Herminia Ibarra of INSEAD business school to suggest that 'a successful life does not mean knowing what you want to do before you act, but the other way round. He goes on to stress that often the life goal, purpose or mission in life is unknown, but the key point is that 'only by acting, experimenting, questioning and acting again do you find out who and what you are'.

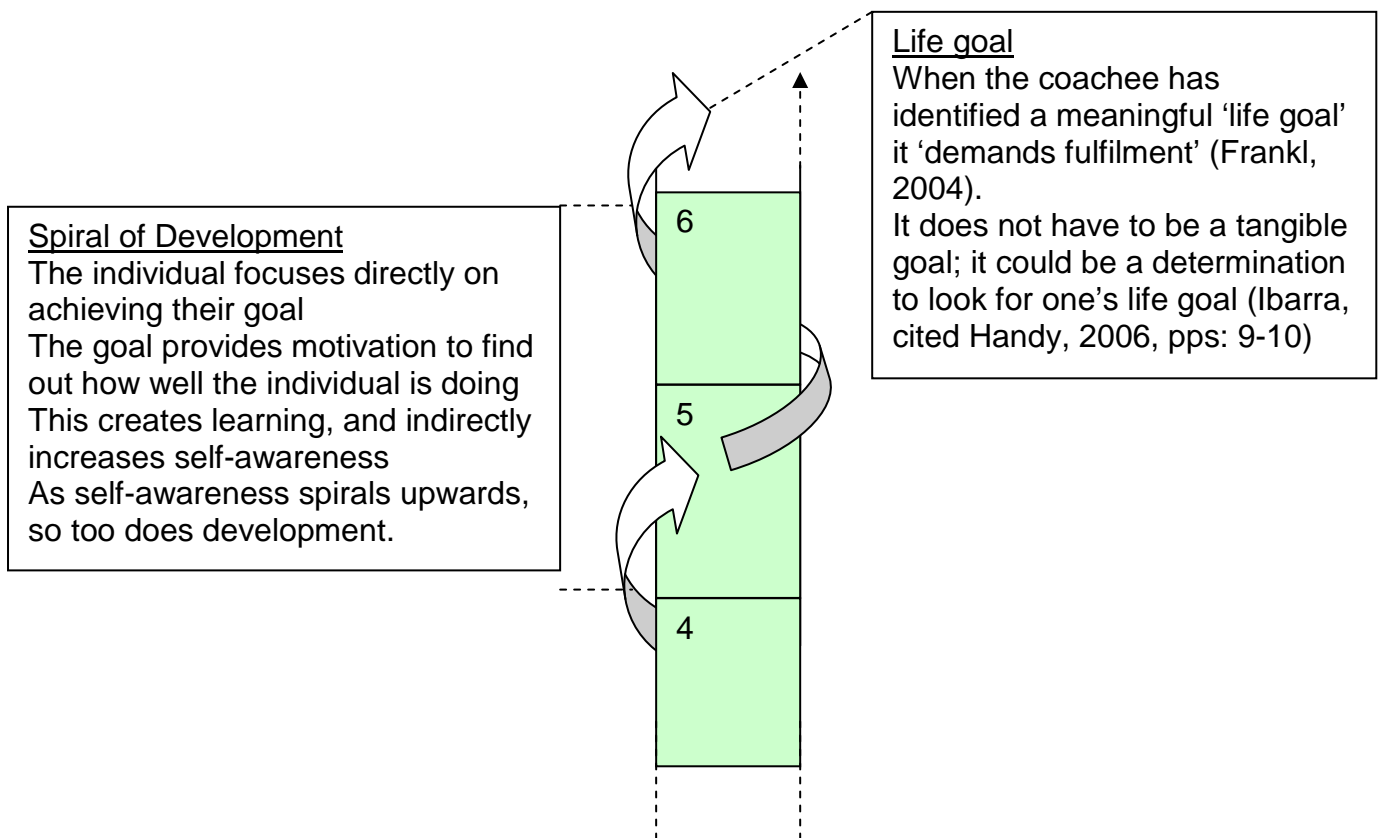
In summary it is possible that a 'life goal' can manifest in a number of different forms. It could be a clear and tangible objective that a person has, or it could be less clear, perhaps a set of values or a guiding philosophy that drive the individual on to keep searching for what they are good at. The key point here is less about how it manifests, but that it resonates with the coachee, and provides a point of reference against which they can reflect, learn and find inspiration to continue to drive their own development. As such it acts as a metaphorical signpost pointing the individual towards and encouraging them to act to find their potential. Handy (2006, p: 85) warns that where a person 'feels totally comfortable and in command of their life or work' then 'they may be mistaking the issue of security for complacency', and warns of the dangers associated with 'resting on one's laurels' whether that be in private life or in business.

*The spiral of development.* When a life goal has been determined, it should 'demand fulfilment' (Frankl, 2004 p: 113) implying a sense of inner urgency. It may be possible to use the development of a life goal to fuel the necessary self-motivation for continuous development. For example a desire to understand how well one is progressing towards a chosen life goal 'forces' the individual to use self-learning mechanisms (such as seeking feedback) to find out how they are doing in relation to achieving that goal, which in turn helps them to learn, and make any necessary changes to improve what they are doing.



Indirectly the mechanisms that allow the individual to gauge how well they are progressing towards their goal are also deepening their levels of self-awareness, which in turn allow the self to develop and 'unfold' as 'consciousness evolves' (Wilber p: 133). As such the individual's continuous efforts to reach their life goal create a continuous and irreversible growth of self-awareness, which in turn can create a spiral of development for the individual in line with the theoretical 'ladder' (Wilber 2001 p: 132). This can be shown in figure diagram 12.8 below:

Figure 12.8 – the Spiral of Development.



In summary, the pursuit of the individual's life goal creates the motivation for the pursuit of self-learning in relation to attaining the goal. The progress towards the goal acts as a 'host', indirectly creating ever-greater levels of self-awareness that potentially allow development to spiral upwards to higher levels of consciousness.

The role of the coach is to introduce the coachee to the theory surrounding transformational coaching, and then encourage the coachee to think and reflect on what they want to do. Weafer (2001, p: 37) suggests that the coach must set aside their own agenda and let the person they are coaching 'find a reason, a sense of purpose, so then their own internal energies will drive the process and the coach simply acts as a guide and support, while the client moves inexorably towards the fulfilment of their needs.' Nealy (cited by Megginson 2007, *Coaching at work*, volume 2, issue 5, p: 58) argues that the coach can enable clients to find their purpose by helping them to 'listen to life, tune out the outside world, listen to (their) inner voice and remember (they) are the author of (their) own life'. For this to be possible the coach may need to help the coachee develop 'self-learning mechanisms that are capable of providing immediate and clear indications as to how well the individual is performing. These feedback mechanisms should include those already developed for self 2 and self 3 coaching, as well as any other mechanism that may be personally useful for the coachee in question, for example formal reflection against life goal.

*Summary of transformational coaching to self-4.* Figure 12.9 below summarises transformational coaching suggesting that it may involve the following three key activities: firstly the coach may need to help the coachee find their purpose / life goal / guiding philosophy: secondly they may need to help the coachee develop self-learning mechanisms to generate a steady stream of data that inform them how they are progressing towards their life goal, and finally the coach provides the theory relating to the development of self, so that the coachee is consciously aware of the potential for a spiral of development to take place, and can take full responsibility for all it entails.

Transformational coaching has the potential to harness the inner motivation relating to a persons' desire to achieve their life goal (purpose, potential state, philosophy etc) to drive the self-learning mechanisms that generate greater self-awareness. It is argued that when this happens, then the development of the self can spiral upwards as the coachee continually pushes in pursuit of their life goal / guiding philosophy / search for their strengths etc.

Figure 12.9. A summary of transformational coaching of self-4



*The mechanisms and processes of a four dimensions of self coaching model*

Figure 12.10 below is a summary diagram that joins up each of the separate dimensions of the self described above to show how coaching works primarily to develop self awareness in different parts of the self, which then feed through to 'self 1' at the centre of the model.

Self one represents box one in the Johari Windows, (*I know this about me & we know this about you*), which is the conscious part of the self. It is not theoretically possible to 'coach' directly to self one because it is always fully conscious. Its growth is dependent on raising unconscious elements of 'self' in its other dimensions.

Ferrucci (1982, p: 61) suggests that the 'self' 'as the most elementary and distinctive part of our being, is our 'core'. The self 'coordinates behaviour' and is in total control of the interpretation of external stimuli. It can be likened to the 'producer, who stages the whole show with expertise, good timing, and tactful handling' (Ferrucci, 1982, p: 65), where the 'show' could be interpreted from Ferrucci's description as a person's life itself.

The model is dynamic, in that it can change daily as new events, new challenges, new experiences and new learning impact the coachee's life.

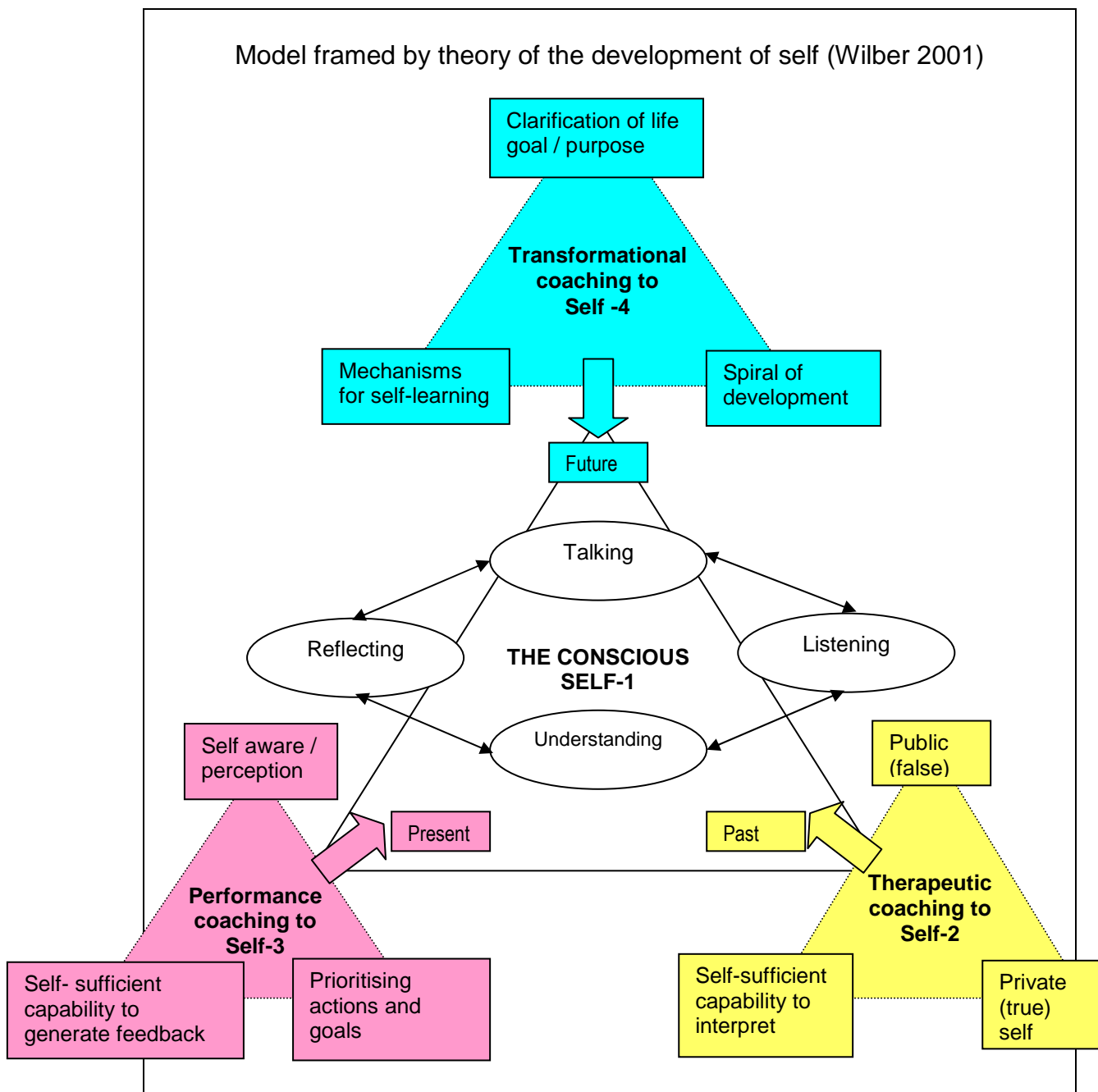
The model argues that for coaching to be successful, it should both vary in relation to the different dimensions of self, whilst at the same time have a set of core principles and assumptions, which are consistent between these dimensions, and are listed in box 12.2 below:

Box 12.2: Features and assumptions referring to the four dimensions of self coaching model in figure 12.10

- The coachee has the necessary skills to self-learn in each of the different dimensions of the self.
- The coachee understands the theoretical basis on which each dimension of the self is based.
- The whole model is framed in the overarching theory that the development potential of a human being's consciousness is limitless.
- The coachee accepts ultimate responsibility for their own development
- Coaches understand that a coachee's needs, situation, context and the dimension of self under consideration dictate their approach
- Coaches are careful to limit any direction or challenge as this may detract from the coachee's sense of responsibility to their own development
- Coach and coachee understand how coaching influences the level of self-awareness a person has
- A key role for the coach is to transfer capability
- The life goal/purpose/guiding philosophy towards potential is meaningful and can generate sufficient inner drive to fuel the necessary levels of motivation to self-learn and develop.
- Changes that result from raising self-awareness are sustainable
- The focus on achieving the life goal provides the motivation to self-learn, providing a continuous stream of knowledge, which continually raises self-awareness and creates a spiral of development.

As a result of building on the multiple utility coaching framework and with consideration of the Johari windows, a 'four dimensions of self coaching model' emerges and is reproduced below in figure 12.10.

Figure 12.10. a four dimensions of self coaching model.



*Key features of the four dimensions of self coaching model*

The white triangle is the core of the persons being, capable of observing all the dimensions of self, without being fused with any of them.

The arrows directed towards self-1 from the other dimensions of the self emphasise the fluidity and dynamism associated with the process of development, where consciousness 'evolves' and 'unfolds' (Wilber 2001 p: 132) with the potential to continue without limits.

Each coaching dimension represents not only a specific box in the Johari Windows, but implies a separate dimension of time, so for example, therapeutic coaching tends to deal with issues from the past, performance coaching focuses on the present dynamics of the working environment within the organisation, and transformational coaching focuses on a future agenda considering the coachee's potential.

Self-learning mechanisms drive new knowledge relating to the individual's sense of self. The coach is responsible for helping the coachee develop these 'self-learning mechanisms'. For example during therapeutic coaching mechanisms are developed that enable the coachee to first recognise any internal commotion, and then help deepen understanding on the issues that are causing this anxiety and any inner turmoil. For performance coaching, the coachee is helped to develop feedback mechanisms that can be used to confirm or correct activities where stakeholder perception differs to expectations. Transformational coaching primarily requires the coach to help the coachee consider their potential to develop a life goal or philosophy to create an inner urgency towards their own self-development.

There are a variety of techniques that can be used to generate self-learning, but 'common currency' to them all is that they encourage listening (e.g. to feedback), talking (e.g. to another person to help interpret the cause of an emotion), and reflection (e.g. considering performance against one's own life

purpose). Together they work towards developing, facilitating and encouraging greater understanding about the coachee's self.

#### A discussion on the influence of coaching on leadership capability

The following section considers the influence coaching can have on a person's leadership capability. To do this it uses the four dimensions of self-coaching model (figure 12.10) as a foundation to suggest that stakeholders may differ in their understanding and appreciation of what coaching can do, and that this can have implications for its overall efficacy.

#### *Limited and profound understanding of coaching*

This thesis suggests that coaching is a technique that can be used to develop a persons' level of self-awareness, so that they can then consider more consciously the impact from applying the skills and knowledge that they already possess. However the overall effectiveness of coaching may vary depending on whether stakeholders have a narrow or limited understanding of its potential or whether it is at a more profound level (that deals for example with philosophies, theories, purpose, potential and meaning.) The following section considers the effect on self awareness and the influence on leadership capability from the application of coaching at three varying levels of understanding ranging from limited to profound.

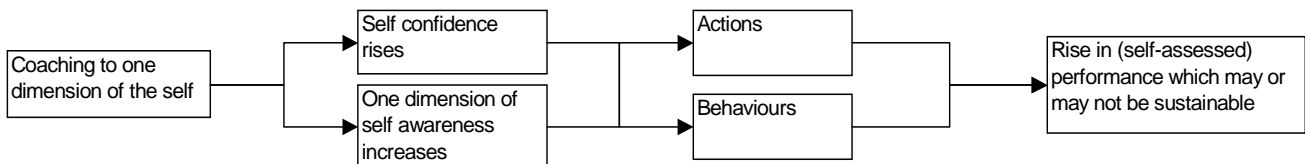
#### *Limited: Coaching to one dimension of the self.*

Figure 12.11 below suggests that when there is a 'limited' understanding of what coaching can do, then there may be no allowances made for the different dimensions of the self. The empirical data for this thesis suggests that the majority of the coaching was 'limited' in that it appeared to be focused on a single dimension of self. More specifically its focus appeared to be solely on addressing 'self-2' through the use of a dominant coaching technique (i.e. mindtalk clearing) that allowed coachees to talk through

various issues, and resulted mainly in a reduction on anxiety and a surge in self-confidence.

Where this is the case, performance improvements and leadership capability improvements can only be coachee-assessed. It is argued that without an accompanying rise in self-awareness it is unlikely the rise in self-confidence is sustainable, and as a result it is likely that any associated performance improvements will be temporary too.

Figure 12.11: Limited understanding of coaching to one dimension of the self



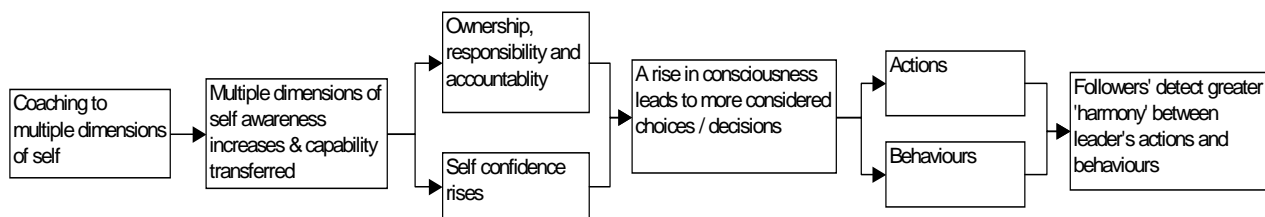
*Deeper understanding: Coaching to the multiple dimensions of self*

Figure 12.12 below suggests that where there is a deeper understanding of what coaching can do, it is likely to be conducted to multiple dimensions of the self, such as described earlier and exemplified in figure 12.10 (a 'four dimensions of self coaching model'). Here the coach is not tied to a singular approach, and can react to the coachee's needs as they emerge from different dimensions of the self. The coaching is framed in a theory of human development that is made clear to the coachee, so that they can appreciate the depth and breadth that the coaching intervention covers. Multiple issues can be considered such as their potential, purpose, values, and beliefs in order to generate a meaningful life goal that can create the necessary self-motivation and inner drive for their own development. The coach is careful to augment the coachee's self-awareness by ensuring that as they learn, capability (and understanding) is transferred, so that they can 'self-coach' independent of the coach, when similar circumstances occur in the future.



Finally, the coach is careful to develop the underlying philosophy that the coachee's development is their own individual responsibility, so that they understand they are accountable only to themselves for doing whatever they need to do in order to achieve their potential.

Figure 12.12: Profound understanding of coaching to multiple dimensions of the self



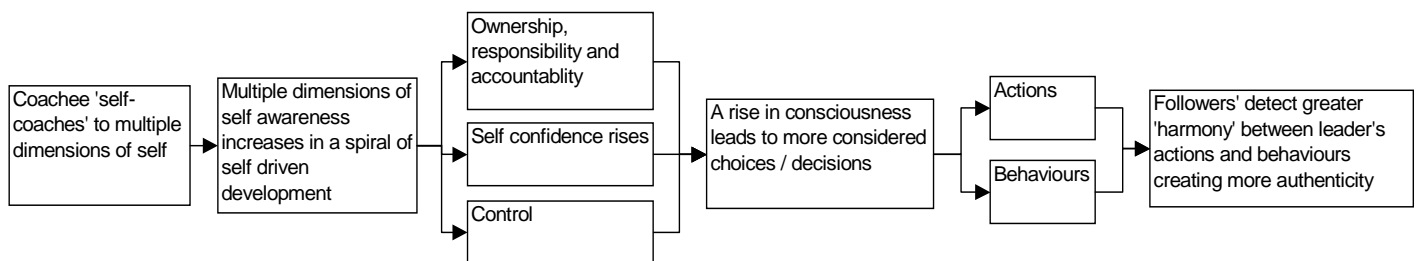
Where coaching is carried out to the multiple dimensions of the self as shown in figure 12.12 above, then as the coachee's consciousness increases, more considered choices and decisions are possible. This then is likely to lead to more precise actions and behaviours in response to events, which are more in tune with the person's sense of self. As a consequence of this it is likely that the person demonstrates to others greater 'harmony' between what they say and what they do. (It is suggested in the diagram that others may perceive this 'harmony' favourably and perhaps be more willing to follow this person)

*Profound understanding: Coachee 'self-coaches' to the multiple dimensions of the self*

Finally a more advanced stage that is possible for coachees with a profound appreciation for coaching is shown in figure 12.13 below. Here the coachees themselves, aware of the theory and potential of coaching, take sole responsibility and ownership for their own development. They have worked with the coach to develop clarity around a future state of being that represents their potential. This can manifest in a number of different ways, such as a life goal, a guiding philosophy, a potential, a purpose, or even a way of living. The key point is that it gives their life greater relevance and meaning, and

points the way forward for them, which in turn creates an inner drive that fuels a self-motivation to pursue actions they need to take (i.e. self-learning mechanisms) to understand how well they are doing in pursuit of their 'goal'. The coachee's ability to self-learn continuously deepens their awareness of how well they are doing in relation to achieving their 'goal', which indirectly creates a spiral of development as their consciousness evolves.

Figure 12.13: Self coaching with a profound understanding of the multiple dimensions of the self



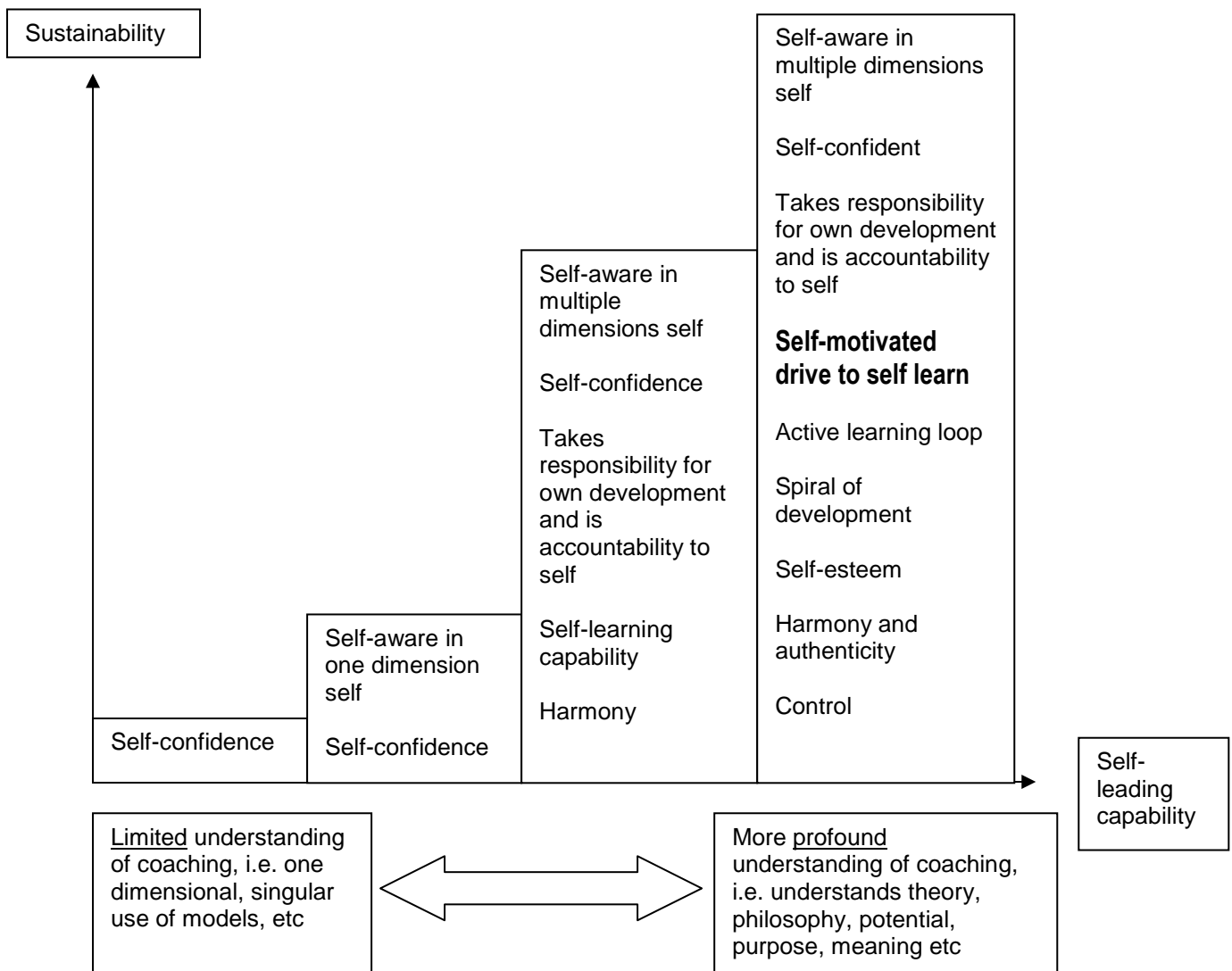
The key difference here in relation to figure 12.12 is that as the coachee takes more and more ownership for their own personal development and independently generates greater levels of awareness, then they are likely to experience a greater sense of control over their lives, which may be associated with greater self-esteem.

Continuous development of self-awareness is likely to create greater harmony between the coachee's actions and behaviours in response to events. It is suggested in the diagram that others may perceive this as 'authenticity', which is a trait that is likely to make the coachee more 'attractive' to potential followers. Welch (2005, p: 88) supports this and argues that 'a person cannot make hard decisions, hold unpopular positions, or stand tall for what they believe unless he knows who he is and feels comfortable with that'. For Welch, this is a leadership characteristic he actively searches out.

*Coaching to influence self-leadership capability*

The following diagram (figure 12.14) below makes two key points. Firstly it suggests that the greater the understanding of coaching that the stakeholders possess, the more likely it is that potential outputs can be captured and be sustained. Secondly it suggests that by deepening self-awareness, coaching enables the coachees to lead themselves more effectively. Any link to leading others is theoretically likely as an indirect consequence of this, but it is not explicit.

Figure 12.14; the role of coaching in influencing self-leadership capability



In figure 12.14, where there is a limited understanding of coaching, it is likely that the coach is leading with a restrictive approach perhaps using a coaching model or tool that targets a single dimension of self. It is likely that at this level any outputs are unlikely to be sustainable. Where the stakeholders have a greater and more profound understanding of coaching, then the approach is variable to accommodate situational factors and the specific needs of the coachee. Here the outputs from coaching are more likely to be sustainable, self-awareness deepens, and their ability to lead themselves rises.

## Using coaching to enhance the leadership capability of retail executives

The empirical evidence discussed in this thesis highlights that coaching is often used by coachees as an opportunity to talk at length about issues and concerns that they have. It reveals that often a common output from coaching is a surge in self-confidence, accompanied often by a drop in anxiety and an inner sense of calm. The literature section highlights the potential for coaching to address deeper and more profound issues of self, the need for the coachee to take responsibility for their own development, and the need for the coach to transfer capability so that the coachee is enabled to self-coach. It is clear that a common theme throughout this study is that coaching affects the individual's sense of self, and as a result this chapter has discussed the following:

The first discussion section considers self-awareness. In conjunction with chapter three of the thesis that considers the theory of the development of the self this section highlights the complexity associated with the self, by discussing some of the many and varied elements with which it is associated. The key point here is that only some of these various elements are conscious to the individual, although they all have the potential to interpret events and influence responses. Using the Johari Window model, it is possible to conceptualise the self in different dimensions, to show potential areas of self that are unconscious to the individual (i.e. a form of self 'blindness') and to show the potential impact of this on performance. The discussion ends by making the case for developing self-awareness in executives and lists a selection of techniques that could be applied to do this.

The second discussion section then turns to consider how coaching could be used to increase a person's self-awareness. It begins by exploring some of the different uses for coaching such as being used to 'up-skill' executives or to target improvements in day-to-day performance. It then moves this discussion to create a 'four dimensions of self coaching model', grounded in the Johari Windows and reflecting both the empirical evidence and literature

review. The model argues that for coaching to be successful, it should both vary in relation to the different dimensions of self, whilst at the same time have a set of core principles to which it should adhere with a common consistency between these dimensions.

The final discussion area turns to consider the impact of raising self-awareness on leadership capability. It emphasises that the potential for coaching to impact a person's sense of self depends on the level of understanding coaching stakeholders possess about what it can do. For example with a limited understanding of coaching, it is only likely that coaching will have a temporary impact on a person's sense of self, whereas with a deeper understanding it is likely that more profound and sustainable changes can be achieved. These changes may be associated with greater conscious control over decisions, greater harmony between behaviours and actions, rising levels of self-esteem and a growing sense of being in control of ones life generally. The discussion concludes suggesting that coaching can help to raise self-awareness, which enhances a person's own ability to lead himself or herself. It implies that this then has a follow on impact on their capability to lead others because the more self aware they become, the more authentically they are perceived.

In summary, the discussion on the self emphasises coaching as a 'complex', in that it can have multiple meanings, be used in multiple contexts, and have multiple approaches. It can adapt to the needs of the multiple dimensions of the self, and needs to maintain consistent principles throughout. It can be difficult to understand, introduce, control and assess. However, key to its potential success to effect change, to positively affect a person's self-leadership capability, and indirectly to enhance their leadership capability appears to be the need for key stakeholders to understand this complexity.

### *Stakeholder responsibilities to coaching*

The preceding discussion sections that have allowed a 'four dimensions of self coaching model' to evolve, provide a diagrammatical explanation to promote a conceptual understanding of coaching. The thesis argues that the potential for coaching to deepen the coachee's sense of self awareness is related to its ability to enhance their self leadership capability, which implies that all the stakeholders have vital roles and responsibilities in helping it deliver to its potential. It is suggested that coaching stakeholders need to have an appreciation of its complexity of coaching (e.g. see figures 12.10 - the four dimensions of self coaching model and 12.14 - the role of coaching in influencing self-leadership capability - ), in order to target what it can do.

It concludes that whilst the term 'coaching' can be conceptualised as a chain of interlinked variables, it is suggested that the most critical link within that chain is the state of readiness, mindset, level of commitment and willingness of the person who is to be coached.

#### *The role of the organisation's coaching sponsors*

The coaching sponsor is understood to be anyone in the organisation that has either a direct or indirect association with the coach or the coachee.

The empirical data suggests that the culture of the organisation can affect the mindset, readiness and commitment of the coachee to their coaching, and that line managers can influence the organisational culture at a local level (e.g. see chapter 5, 'What impact does the retail organisation have on coachees?'). Additionally, the empirical data suggests that line manager interest and positive intervention in the coaching of a direct report can enhance and add value to their experience (e.g. see chapter 11, 'How can the organisation's sponsors control the quality and consistency of coaching?') In summary, the organisational sponsors appear to have the opportunity to create and monitor a supportive environment in which the coaching can be carried out. It is possible in this case that this could occur by creating more clarity around coaching, by agreeing a 'corporate' definition for coaching, and

by creating a new explicit reference to coaching within the corporate values that recognises the value of coaching within the operating environment supporting core objectives.

### *The role of the coach*

The coach may potentially benefit from a broad range of skills covering interpersonal, therapeutic, business theory, business practice, process, performance, philosophical, psychological, and the ability to relate them all to a theoretical framework about how coaching may be used to create greater leadership capability. To do this the coach appears to have a variety of key responsibilities that may occur at any point before, during or after a coaching assignment.

*Prior to coaching commencing.* The coach can act in a teaching capacity; to help other coaching stakeholders understand the complexity associated with coaching, along with the theoretically based potential for transformational change that it can provide. This provides stakeholders with the ability to conceive its potential within their organisation, and in relation to their needs.

*During coaching.* In the initial phases of any new coaching relationship, the coach's role is primarily to build rapport, and thereafter to work as coach in such a way as to realise the potential coaching has to offer for the coachee. It is likely that during the secondary phase the coach will help the coachee self-learn and by adopting a non-directive approach, the coachee is enabled not only to take responsibility for their own learning and self-development, but for understanding how they can grow their self-awareness without the coach. In this way they can help the coachee achieve the state described as 'self coaching to the multiple dimensions of their self' (see figure 12.13).

The coach can deepen the coachee's learning experience by underpinning what is happening to both a theoretical base (such as the Johari windows)



and a pragmatic base (such as demonstrating how raising self awareness can improve decision making).

Once the coachee has been encouraged to develop their own self-learning mechanisms the coach can explore ways to create an inner-drive within the coachee, to fuel self-motivated activities that can potentially result in a spiral of continuous development.

With a vast potential for variation between different coachees' needs, based on subject matter, context, personal experience, situation, age etc, then the coach needs to be open and able to consider and use a wide variety of coaching approaches. This may mean that they have to alter radically what they do from one session to another depending on which dimension of self is being considered. However there remains a core aim that is consistent throughout the coaching which is to enable the coachee to reach a deeper understanding of self, to generate self-development capability, to understand and then accept personal responsibility for self development, and to find a personal and meaningful reason to want to develop. As a result it is likely that the coach will limit the amount of direction they provide the coachee, so as to always emphasise the need for the coachee to own their own development.

*On conclusion to the coaching.* The coach has a responsibility to the coachee and the coaching sponsor to leave the coaching assignment as soon as practical. When this occurs the coachee has taken charge of their own development, is capable of self-learning, focused, and committed to advancing towards a life goal, or driving themselves to follow the actions and behaviours, values and beliefs that they know they need to in order to approach their potential.

#### *The role of the coachee*

The thesis suggests that if coachees lack the willingness to be open, honest, focused without distractions, to let their guard down and surface issues that have a strong personal significance, to courageously face up to their own interior depths or to step out of their comfort zones, and to ask themselves

some searching questions about themselves, then no matter what the other coaching stakeholders do, no matter how competent the coach is, or how explicitly supportive the organisational culture is, the coaching is highly unlikely to fulfil its potential.

The notion of 'coachee willingness' referred to above extends to the need for the coachee to have enough 'courage' in order to actively pursue self learning, because many of the self-learning mechanisms require the coachee to ask questions and seek out information that may potentially affect their 'vulnerable' sense of self, such as asking for feedback which could potentially be negative, or volunteering to take risks by exposing oneself to new and potentially 'uncomfortable' environments. The thesis suggests that there is a paradox here, in that whilst efforts to seek greater self-awareness are often accompanied by an initial sense of inner anxiety, the coachee often discovers that accompanying any rise in self-awareness, there is often a sense of inner confidence that ensues indirectly.

It may be possible to ascertain the coachee's level of potential willingness or suitability to be coached by gauging their responses and enthusiasm towards answering the following three key questions:

*Question one – who are you?* The first question encourages the coachee to consider the notion of 'the self', and is centred on helping them consider how conscious they are about who they are. With reference to the Johari Windows, part of this considers who the individual is currently (boxes 2 and 3), and part of this considers who the individual can become, focusing on their potential (box 4).

The coachee's response to this question, and the resulting level of interest in self that it creates, may be indicative as to the coachee's potential willingness to be coached. This question can allow the introduction of the four dimensions of self coaching model (figure 12.10) to raise the prospective coachee's awareness about coaching, and to gauge their level of interest in it.

*Question two - How do you develop self-awareness?* The second question for a coachee concerns what activities and mechanisms they might use to deepen their self-awareness. Here it might be possible to suggest that every event an individual experiences, carries with it an opportunity to learn and potentially deepen self-awareness within a theoretical 'learning loop'.

Earlier in the first discussion section on self-awareness, it is suggested that a person's sense of self consists of many different elements such as their values, beliefs, philosophies, emotions, thoughts, feelings etc. Each element has the power to influence the interpretation and subsequent reaction to events that occur. The more these elements of self perform this role without the individual being conscious of them, the less control that individual has to the actions, behaviours, moods, thoughts, feelings etc that they exhibit whilst reacting to events. This can be shown diagrammatically in figure 12.15 below.

Figure 12.15. The role of the self to influence responses to events

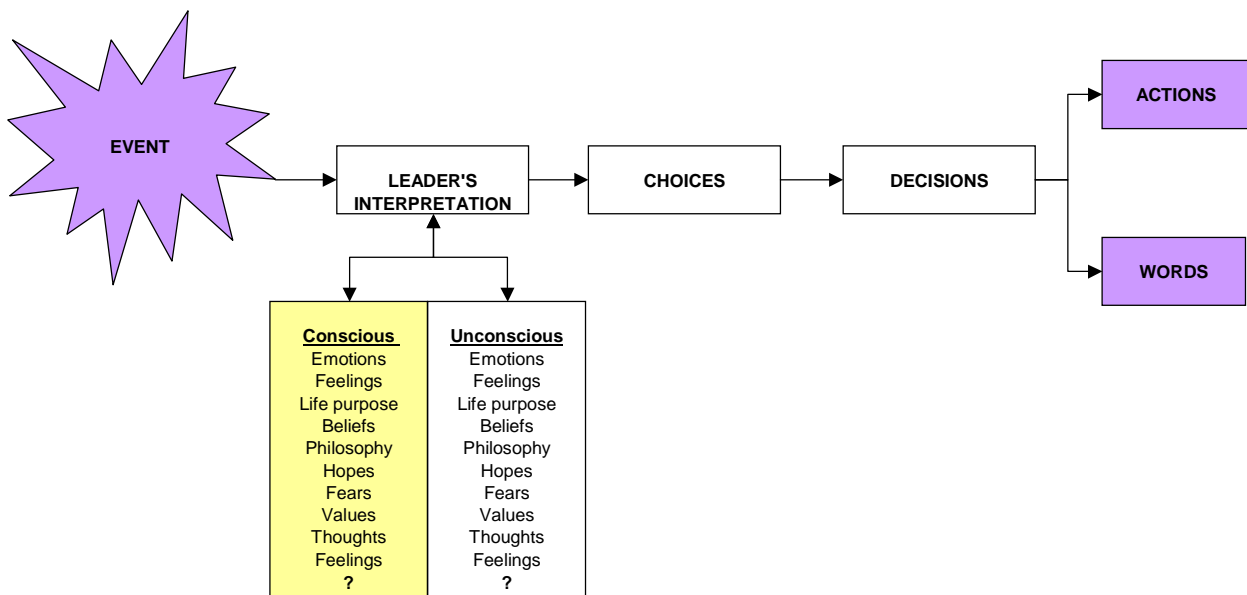


Figure 12.15 suggests that reactions to events are unpredictable because elements of the self that can influence outcomes remain unconscious to the individual. It stands then that taking action to become more conscious of self may result in the individual being able to apply greater control in both the interpretation and reaction to events.

It has been shown that coaching can work to help an individual become more aware of self; encouraging and transferring capability so the coachee develops 'learning mechanisms' to deepen their self-awareness from experiences that they have. The diagram below (figure 12.16) shows coaching as one learning mechanism alongside others that make up the 'learning loop' that can potentially generate greater levels of self-awareness and long-term excellence in performance.

Figure 12.16: Coaching as a separate mechanism in the learning loop

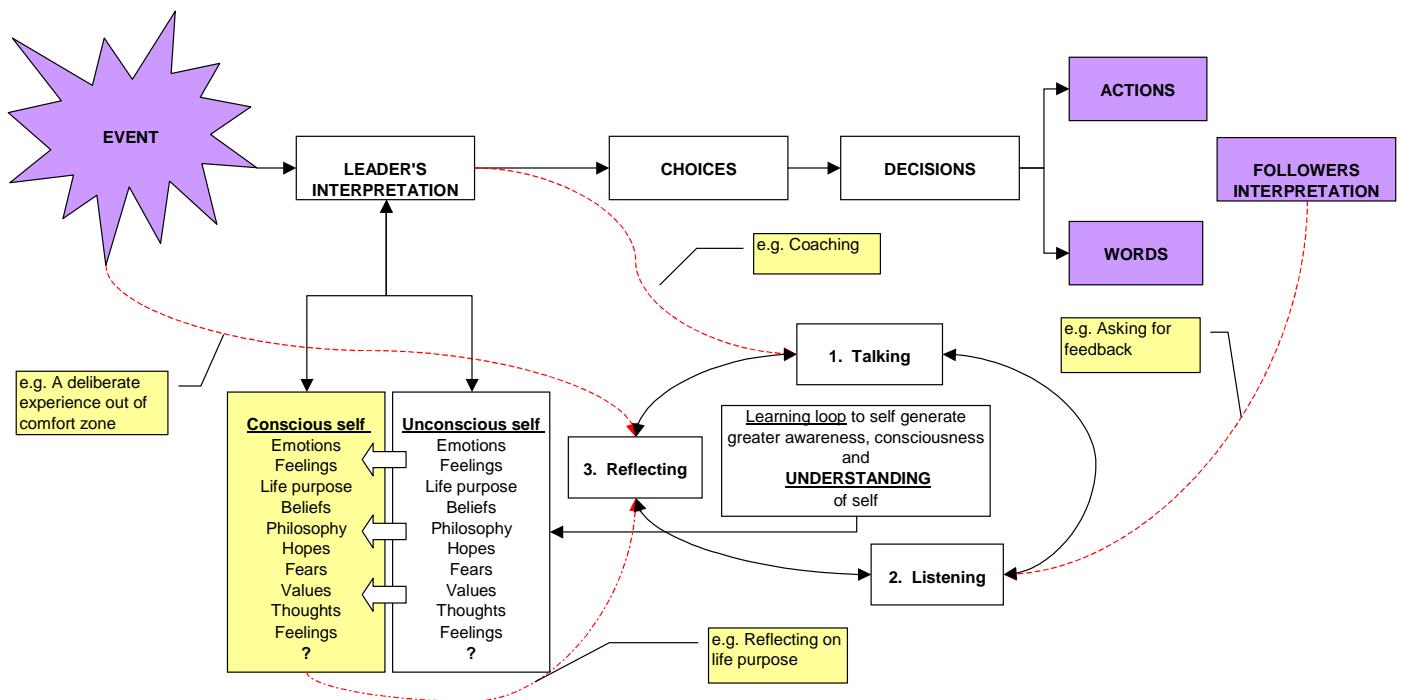


Figure 12.16 suggests that whenever an event happens, the leader's first role is to interpret it before any potential reaction is taken. The interpretation is being made not just by that person's conscious thought, but by all the other internal elements that make up that leader's sense of self (i.e. their identity). In this diagram, those elements of self might include their emotions, feelings, life purpose, beliefs, philosophy, hopes, fears, values, thoughts, feelings, and '?' to indicate that this list can be of any length to include any other element of the human self. Similar to figure 12.15, some elements of the self are conscious, whereas other parts are not.

The diagram suggests that following an event, the 'self' interprets it, considers choices in response to it, selects one that is deemed most appropriate, which then manifests as actions and words in the public domain. This suggests that for a leader the quality of the interpretation phase dictates their ability to judge a situation and come up with a reaction designed to result in outputs deemed most desirable by that person. As a result any activity that can deepen the leader's understanding of what they did, will be likely to improve their ability to interpret future events.

The diagram shows four different self-learning mechanisms that can be used to learn from events as they happen and raise levels of self-awareness. These mechanisms are displayed in the 'learning loop' in the diagram and are considered below:

- Formal reflection. Here the leader considers events and actions in relation to what they know of their self, e.g. values, beliefs, purpose etc.
- Moving out of comfort zones. Here the individual deliberately chooses to experience something that they have no prior knowledge of. With reference to the Johari Windows, this is an example of someone 'experimenting' in box four.

- Seeking feedback. Here the leader actively seeks feedback on their reaction from someone who interpreted it in the public domain, and finally
- Coaching. Here the individual uses a coach to talk through issues of significance with another person to generate a deeper interpretation of those issues and to deepen awareness of self.

All the self-learning mechanisms involve a degree of talking, listening and interpreting, and they all lead to greater understanding of self, which can then be used to move some of the unconscious elements of self into the conscious area.

*Question three – Why is it important to become more self-aware?* The final key question that the coachee could consider focuses on the future, and asks them to conclude why developing self-awareness might be important. Responses to this question might begin to resonate at a personal level. With reference to the Johari Windows, the focus here is on the future, considering the unknown and untested areas of self in box 4.

This question attempts to anticipate the potential the coachee has to move to the 'transformational' stage of coaching where a meaningful and personal focus (e.g. a life goal, a guiding philosophy, a set of core values and beliefs about how they want to live their life) may be sufficient to create a personal urgency and inner drive to self motivated development.

The resulting spiral of development is likely to be accompanied by growing self-confidence and a sense of control over events, which comes about as the individual takes responsibility for their own development, doing what they consider need to be done to advance. It is likely that at this point the coachee will experience 'eudemonia' and be 'flourishing' (Handy, 2006, p: 28).

The preceding discussion on the role of the coaching stakeholders emphasises the vital impact that each can have on whether coaching can

enhance an executive's leadership capability. However it is the mindset, honesty, openness and willingness to face oneself that makes the role of the coachee perhaps the most important therein.

### *Coaching and leadership capability*

The thesis suggests that the primary role coaching has is to enable the coachee to use experiences that they have to generate deeper levels of self-awareness, so that self-learning can be used to constantly improve future performance. It has been argued that at its most profound, coaching can help create a meaningful and personal driving force that can fuel an inner motivation to self learn. In this way it is possible to indirectly create a spiral of development of the self that has no theoretical limit.

As the self develops, the individual is likely to grow in confidence, and self-esteem, eventually concluding that they have a sense of control on their lives, and in the direction they are going. It is possible that as the individual learns more about their 'self' then they begin to lead themselves better. There is not a direct relationship on how the individual might lead others, although a growth in self awareness implies not only that decisions are more considered and precise, but that actions and behaviours are more in harmony, and likely to be more consistently 'self-lead' (e.g. decisions taken because they value-lead etc). This might create an impression of someone with integrity, sound judgement, impact, purpose, or authority etc, but it is likely that they will be perceived as authentic individuals.

The implication here is that by developing self-awareness through coaching, their self-leadership capability increases and by association their ability to lead others is enhanced. This is because potential followers will themselves interpret the leader's responses to events that take place, and judge whether they wish to follow that person or not. It is argued here that the closer the leader's actions match their talk, then the closer the follower is likely to recognise authenticity in the leader, be willing to trust that person, and willing to accept what that person asks them to do. The leader's ability to match

actions and words is not something that can be learnt from an external source, rather it is likely to 'ensue' as a result of developing deeper levels of self awareness.

It is argued here that followers often interpret leadership instinctively, recognising a person who is acting in harmony with their true self, describing them as having a range of characteristics such as 'impact', 'integrity', 'judgement' and 'presence', that are often associated with leadership.

### Limitations and future research

The limitations of this study primarily pertain to the coachee sample and the fact that many of them had never had coaching before, had no introduction to it, or had been given much guidance on what to expect from their coaching. As a result they were unable to provide an insight on their coaching experience in relation to anything they had ever experienced before.

It would have been advantageous to interview the coachees' coaches to have compared and contrasted what the coachees remember from their coaching against what the coaches had intended. The lack of a coach lead dimension to the empirical evidence meant that some 'coach-related' issues could only be 'implied' rather than being explicit. This applied particularly in the chapter 'what do coaches do?', referring to their approach, use of models, direction, level of challenge, use of theories to frame the coaching or use of any philosophical questions to create meaning-centred discussions. This chapter particularly would have benefited from having coach input to compare and contrast what they were trying to do with the experience the coachees reported in the following chapter.

One of the key assumptions made in the thesis was that a rise in self-confidence reported by many of the coachees as a direct consequence from coaching would be unsustainable without an accompanying increase in self-awareness, some evidence of capability having been transferred, a learning mechanism developed, or some sort of motivation created that could sustain



this change. Nevertheless it would have been useful to have had the opportunity to return to interview the coachees between six and twelve months after their coaching had concluded to check how many of the coaching outputs were sustained.

The lack of evidence based research within the coaching field and the lack of agreement on any section of the coaching chain has meant that this thesis has had to take the form of a broad assessment in order to address the key issues associated with key stakeholders, namely the coach, the coachee and the sponsor organisation, rather than been able to build on an existing body of evidence to focus more specifically on a single point of detail within the subject.

#### *Some possibilities for future studies*

(i). The thesis uses the empirical evidence to partly create the four dimensions of self coaching model. It then uses the theoretical base derived from the literature to create the potential for transformational coaching. Much of the discussion and conclusion to the thesis is centred on this model, which is used to demonstrate the complexity of coaching, the need for stakeholder understanding in order for it to be able to reach its potential, and to explain the spiral of development. Future research might focus on the role and use of philosophical and theoretical questioning to inspire coachees to take control of their lives, to create greater meaning, and to transform and advance their potential.

(ii). The empirical evidence for this thesis suggests that many of the coaches did not appear to underpin their coaching within a theoretical framework. It would be useful to understand from other coaches what they base their coaching on, and what they do both before, during and after their coaching to support its use.

(iii). Although widely covered in the literature that coaching should be a 'mission of transfer' the empirical evidence for this case did not show any

evidence of this happening widely. It is not clear why this is the case. Future research is needed to establish how widely practiced this is by coaches, what capability they are providing their coachees, and if it is not, then what they are doing during their coaching sessions.

(iv). The empirical research suggests that in at least two occasions, individuals who had had a long enforced period where they had not been promoted, had concluded that they wanted coaching, firstly because all other attempts to advance their careers through extrinsic development (i.e. training courses) had failed to result in a promotion, and secondly because they wanted to find out why their careers had stagnated. The resulting accounts that they provided in the empirical evidence showed how much they had then gone on to derive from their coaching experience.

This thesis stresses the importance of the role of the coachee to the overall success of the coaching. A very useful future piece of research might focus firstly on discovering the intrinsic characteristics and traits of the 'willing coachee' who is likely to get the most from their coaching, and then consider the extrinsic factors that might make someone want to be coached. This question might be whether there is ever a 'right time to coach' someone? (e.g. At a certain point in their career, at a certain age, immediately after a training course, or when there has been a period of stagnation in one role etc).

(v). Providing direction and challenge: Many of the coachees in the study positively favoured a coach that challenged their thinking with powerful and probing questions. However there may be evidence that such an approach by the coach can grow to be relied and depended upon by the coachee. It is not clear whether by challenging, a coach is in fact directing, and as a result risks' taking away the responsibility a coachee has to finding their own mechanism to self-challenge.

A future piece of research could consider whether the coach should ever need to 'push' the coachee to make them do things that perhaps they do not

want to do, but which might be of great value and benefit to them, and potentially begin a process of self-development. In other words it would ask if there are ever any reasonable criteria in which a coach can be legitimised to direct the coachee?

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Appendix 1: Letter of application for a research project with Tesco Plc –  
March 2005.

David Reid  
Non-Executive Chairman  
New Tesco House  
Delamare Road  
Cheshunt, Hertfordshire  
England  
EN8 9SL

10<sup>th</sup> March, 2005

Dear David,

A voice from the past.....

I worked for Tesco from 1986 until 1996 and had a wonderful time, before leaving to take part in an around the world yacht race. During my time at Tesco I had the pleasure to meet you on a number of occasions, usually at a managers' conference, and we discovered we had mutual friends up in Banchory. Since leaving Tesco, I have been working with my wife Julie Ashworth (who used to be the manager at Hoover building and someone you personally mentored in the past), running our own retail consultancy business.

A few years ago you kindly allowed me to interview you about Tesco's foreign expansion strategy, which I was able to use in my MBA dissertation, enabling me to get the masters distinction that year. To keep myself at the forefront of business thinking I am currently studying for a PhD at Edinburgh University looking specifically at what makes executive coaching successful in retail organisations.

What is needed is research to substantiate the underlying principles of effective coaching, as to date, none has been carried out. Nevertheless it hasn't stopped the plethora of books about the subject raining down on bookshelves around the world, with authors every other day revealing their 'secrets of effective coaching'.

You were the first person I thought of when I considered how I was going to answer my question, because in essence the core interest in this subject is about how to release the potential and talent within people, and this after all was what you and your fellow board members ignited in me, along with many others when I was at Tesco. It was a radical awakening at the time, and I have found it to be the 'Midas touch' and responsible for much of my success in the intervening years.

The bottom line is that I would like to discuss with you the possibility of using Tesco as my research organisation and permission to analyse coaching data, assess the return on investment, and interview stakeholders. In return for this

access, I would produce a 'ground breaking' report using my academic resources, experience and time detailing precisely what makes coaching interventions successful at Tesco. Because no one else has conducted research in this field the report would be of interest to a great many in the academic and business community alike. I would of course guarantee anonymity.

With best wishes,

Malcolm McGregor.  
PhD Student  
Mobile: 07740 720094

## Appendix 2: The Project Brief

The purpose of this document is to record project information to assess the need for the project. It should be updated regularly and used to gain approval to continue.

Project Name	Making executive coaching deliver value at Tesco	Line to business plan or function	
Project Manager	Malcolm McGregor	Sponsor	Clare Chapman, David Reid
Version number and date:	Version 1. 31 <sup>st</sup> May, 05	Stage	

What is the background to the change?

Successful organisations recognise that management and executive development is an essential part of strategic planning. Future critical organisational success depends on having the necessary cadre of managerial talent at the right levels at the right time to take advantage of competitive opportunities. Successful organisations recognise that managerial/executive coaching is an essential element in both enabling managers to rapidly advance to senior positions, and for the seasoned executive to reach their potentials.



Why do we want to make this change?

<p style="text-align: center;">As is</p>	<p>Investment in executive/managerial coaching is not evidence based, i.e. not based on formal evaluations of coaching programmes. The benefit of benchmarking best practice against other world-class organisations is unproven.</p> <p>There are a range of coaching techniques that are currently employed by different providers with different backgrounds, interests and intellectual capabilities. To date there has been no formal feedback on which approach has the most benefit, for whom, when it is appropriate (promotion, assessment, recruitment, progression etc), and in what surroundings, (e.g. stores, distribution, head office etc).</p> <p>Executive coaching appears to work as a leadership development technique, but it is yet to be embraced by the organisation's culture.</p> <p>As a result, its potential has not been fully realised.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">To be</p> <p>By reviewing all the stakeholders in the Tesco executive coaching chain (see figure one), future 'success' will be much more predictable.</p> <p>This 'success' will have the following features:</p> <p>Leaders within group personnel will have a thorough understanding of how executive coaching can be successful at Tesco.</p> <p>They will know what is important for their executives so that critical decisions that lead to their personal advancement are carefully guided. (for example; sourcing, approach, skills, experience, duration, and measurement).</p> <p>They will be confident and be recognised as 'expert' in executive coaching by their peers in other organisations</p> <p>More senior executives of quality will be produced more rapidly from within the company.</p> <p>Executive coaching is explicitly linked to support the Company's strategy for expansion.</p> <p>Personnel throughout the Company understand what executive coaching is, and see it as desirable.</p> <p>There is a common approach to executive coaching that is consistent across different functional areas, and work levels.</p> <p>The domestic policy developed for Executive coaching can serve to launch the international executive coaching policy.</p> <p>Tesco will be seen to possess an approach to executive coaching that others will aspire</p>
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What outcomes will the project deliver for the business?

Benefits 'the benefits to the business'	Impacts 'The improvements in performance that will result in the benefit'	Products 'The physical outputs of the project that will cause the impacts'
<p>More executives of the required quality are produced more quickly from existing Tesco personnel</p> <p>More executives are 'successfully' coached more quickly.</p> <p>There is a consistent approach to executive coaching throughout the company and across different functions, generating improved efficiencies, cost savings and communication</p> <p>Can be used as a starting point to develop an international coaching strategy.</p>	<p>More managers/executives understand the benefits and desire coaching for themselves</p> <p>Better-informed group personnel make better coaching related decisions.</p> <p>Group personnel become 'expert' in executive coaching in relation to other business leaders.</p> <p>A consistent approach to executive coaching has dedicated finance, a proven approach and a system of measurements that include an assessment against evaluated targets.</p>	<p>An evaluative report based on a summary of research findings from all key stakeholders. (The coaching stakeholders are used in a similar way that a 'customer panel' is used to guide both local and national Corporate decision-making).</p> <p>The report will have the following features:</p> <p>It will state how executive coaching is most likely to be successful at Tesco, addressing all critical areas on the coaching chain.</p> <p>It will recommend a consistent approach to the use of executive coaching throughout the organisation It will assess the impact of different coaching approaches from different coaching providers. It will highlight what skills a coach needs and in what circumstances. It will analyse Tesco's executive coaching strategy in relation to other world-class organisations. It will provide a comprehensive review of the development of executive coaching, along with the threats and opportunities within the market. It will use a review of the coaching literature and research from around the world to draw comparisons and conclusions</p>

What is the scope of the Project?

In scope	Out of Scope
Executives levels 3 – 5 Stores, distribution and Head office	

What are the main project milestones?

Milestone	Date	Comment
Interviewed the sample of coachees from level 5	August 2005	
Interviewed the sample of coachees from level 4	August 2005	
Interviewed the sample of coachees from level 3	August 2005	
Questionnaires sent out	August 2005	
Interviewed all relevant heads from the coaching providers.	August 2005	
Interviewed all relevant coaches	August 2005	
Interviewed Tesco's executive coaching business sponsor	September 2005	
Interviewed all line managers	September 2005	

What relationship does the project have?

Relationship with	Description of relationship and why it is important?
David Reid	First point of contact
Clare Chapman	Outlined proposal
Nicola Steele	Point of contact with Tesco
Ken Rowe (YSC - Managing Director)	Has already agreed to allow me to research their philosophy and approach, their coaches, and personnel at Tesco relevant to their organisations.
Maggie Rose (Managing Development – Managing Director)	As with Ken Rowe, Maggie has already agreed the same.

What resources are needed to deliver the project?

Resources needed	Function	Full or Part time	Comments
A series of 20 interviews, each lasting one hour, with executives from levels 3, 4			

and 5.			
Forty 20-minute questionnaires to be completed by executives from levels 3, 4 and 5. (Note this is a simple tick box exercise only)			
1 x 1 hour interview with business sponsor			
A series of ten 30 minute interviews with coachees' line managers			

What are the other costs to deliver the project?

Resource	Capital or revenue	Amount	Comments
Malcolm McGregor	N/A	N/A	External Ph.D student from the University of Edinburgh

What are the risks to the project?

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What assumptions have been made in this project brief?

That you are aware YSC (Ken Rowe) and Managing Development (Maggie Rose) have already been negotiated with and agreement secured to research their philosophy and approach, their coaches, and personnel at Tesco relevant to their organisations.
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Who will be accountable for making sure the change is sustainable and the benefits are achieved?

Name	Role

Approval to continue to:	By	Signature

Appendix 3: Communication to Tesco potential interviewees

17<sup>th</sup> January, 2006

Dear all,

**REF: Personal Coaching Review**

I am writing with reference to the original message from Paul Hawkins copied below.

Thank you very much for agreeing to be interviewed to discuss your views and experiences of personal coaching at Tesco. The next stage of this process is to fill in and return the attached coaching record, and then to be interviewed by myself over the next few weeks. The one deadline that I have is to complete all 28 interviews by the last week of February 06, and I would like to do these face to face.

I fully appreciate how busy everyone is and so to minimise disruption and hassle to you, below is a list of dates and times that I am available to see people. As time is pressing, please could you check your diaries, select your preferred slot and e-mail me back by close on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> January.

Your feedback is invaluable and I have no doubt that your contributions to this process will allow the Company to develop and shape a highly innovative leadership strategy to power Tesco's future growth.

Please don't hesitate to ring or e-mail me if you have any queries.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Malcolm McGregor  
07740 720094  
[m.b.mcgregor@sms.ed.ac.uk](mailto:m.b.mcgregor@sms.ed.ac.uk)

**Notes to the meeting plan below:**

- I plan to conduct a maximum of 3 one-hour interviews per day
- ‘**AM**’ means anytime between 9 and 11.30 ‘**LUNCH**’ means anytime between **12.00 and 2.30**, and ‘**PM**’ means anytime between 3.00 and 5.30.
- Please indicate when you would like to be interviewed by writing the start time in the appropriate box, and where you would like to meet.
- Slots will be allocated on a first come first served basis

DATE	AM	LUNCH	PM	MEETING PLACE
Thurs 26 <sup>th</sup> Jan				
Mon 30 <sup>th</sup> Jan				
Tues 31 <sup>st</sup> Jan				
Wed 1 <sup>st</sup> Feb				
Thurs 2 <sup>nd</sup> Feb				
Fri 3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb				
Mon 6 <sup>th</sup> Feb				
Tues 7 <sup>th</sup> Feb				
Thurs 9 <sup>th</sup> Feb				
Fri 10 <sup>th</sup> Feb				
Mon 13 <sup>th</sup> Feb				
Tues 14 <sup>th</sup> Feb				
Wed 15 <sup>th</sup> Feb				
Thurs 16 <sup>th</sup> Feb				
Fri 17 <sup>th</sup> Feb				
Thurs 23 <sup>rd</sup> Feb				
Fri 24 <sup>th</sup> Feb				
Mon 27 <sup>th</sup> Feb				
Tues 28 <sup>th</sup> Feb				

--Original Message-----

From: Hawkins, Paul D  
Sent: 25 November 2005 17:11  
Subject: Personal Coaching Review

Afternoon

I work for Maxine Dolan in the Academy Team and I am responsible for Personal Coaching for the business.

We are currently reviewing the process for Personal Coaching within Tesco. We are very keen to hear from people who have recently been coached. Your views and feedback about your experience are very valuable and will help us shape how we move forward.

An external researcher will to help us to review and gather information on coaching. The process will consist of a 1 hour interview, either face to face or over the phone, taking place in January/ February 2006. The researcher is called Malcolm McGregor and he will contact you directly.

Would you be willing to support this process? Please email me by Wednesday 7th December to let me know your descision.

Regards Paul

Appendix 4: Tesco in-house coaching survey November 2006.



### Coaching Review

Name:	
Current role and location:	
Name of Line Manager:	
Name of Coach:	

Please take a few minutes to complete this form. Your feedback is very valuable and will help us review and make improvements to coaching at Tesco. Complete all sections of the form by ticking the appropriate box. We also welcome your comments.

Question	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Neither Agree or Disagree 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
I have a clear understanding of what to expect from my coach e.g. the process was explained to me					
Comments:					
I was clear about my focus, objectives and development goals for coaching					
Comments:					
The process of arranging and meeting my coach was simple and easy					
Comments:					
My coach was a good match for me					
Give Examples:					



<b>Question</b>	<b>Strongly Agree 1</b>	<b>Agree 2</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree 3</b>	<b>Disagree 4</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree 5</b>
I was able to be open and honest with my coach					
Comments:					
My line manager has supported me during my coaching programme					
Comments:					
My coach helped me find ways to use my leadership skills					
Examples:					
I regularly reviewed my progress with my coach and agreed clear next steps					
Comments:					
Coaching at Tesco is confidential					
Comments:					

<b>Question</b>	<b>Higher</b>	<b>Same</b>	<b>Lower</b>
Due to coaching my performance levels have been:			
Examples:			
<b>Question</b>	<b>Higher</b>	<b>Same</b>	<b>Lower</b>
My confidence has been:			
Examples:			
<b>Question</b>	<b>Higher</b>	<b>Same</b>	<b>Lower</b>
Since I started being coached, my contribution to the business has been:			
Examples:			
<b>Question</b>	<b>Higher</b>	<b>Same</b>	<b>Lower</b>
In between coaching, my commitment to my development has been:			
Examples:			
Can you describe something which you have done differently as a result of coaching?			
If you were to describe your coaching experience to a colleague, what would you say?			
What has been the most helpful aspect of your coaching?			

**Thank you for completing this feedback form**

Appendix 5: key to coachee job role

Coachee key	Role
Coachee 1	Store Manager
Coachee 2	Store Manager
Coachee 3	Senior buying manager
Coachee 4	Training manager
Coachee 5	Range program stream lead
Coachee 6	Store Manager
Coachee 7	Category manager - great seasonal events
Coachee 9	Central personnel
Coachee 10	Business Development director
Coachee 11	Head of Tesco Hindustan service centre
Coachee 12	People program manager
Coachee 13	Senior Marketing Manager
Coachee 14	Personnel systems manager
Coachee 15	Stores Director superstores
Coachee 16	Finance manager
Coachee 17	buying Director
Coachee 18	personnel manager property
Coachee 19	Stores Director superstores
Coachee 20	Senior merchandise planning manager
Coachee 21	International options uk
Coachee 22	Project manager customer plan
Coachee 23	Commercial business integration director - Czech Republic
Coachee 24	Retail project manager
Coachee 25	Store Manager
Coachee 26	Project manager customer plan
Coachee 27	Fleet Manager
Coachee 28	OTH Chesunt
Coachee 29	Operations development analyst, NTH
Coachee 30	Operations development manager
Coachee 31	Finance manager
Coachee 32	Operations manager
Coachee 33	Stores insight manager
Coachee 34	Quality Category Director
Coachee 35	SBM Hot beverages
Coachee 36	Secretary
Coachee 37	Director Pensions
Line director 1	Operations Director
Line director 2	Retail board Director
Line Director 3	Head of Department