

Dear Friends



In the previous issue of Coaching Matters we promised to explore the hot topic of supervision and we are pleased that in this edition we can share results of the recently released research project commissioned by

the CIPD. The role of knowledge, experience and expertise always encourages interesting debate amongst coaches and in this issue we are delighted to be able to share research conducted by Sue Blow on the role of coaching to support knowledge sharing. We also have included interesting news of activities

in the academy and from our alumni and include an update from our colleagues in New York. Finally we have book reviews, reviews of recent coaching conferences and seminars and plenty of dates for your diary! I do hope you will find this issue useful. We would be delighted to receive your views on issues to cover in the magazine and encourage you to send us papers, reviews or opinions for inclusion by emailing felicity@i-coachacademy.com. Please also remember that you can access previous issues of Coaching Matters on our website at <http://www.i-coachacademy.com/pages/about-us/coaching-matters.php>.

Wishing you all the best for 2007

Caroline

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News

BBC internal coaches join the i-coach academy certificate programme

A group of the BBC's internal coaches, all of whom have completed the BBC's own coach training, have joined this year's post graduate certificate programme. Through working with i-coach they have been able to have the learning they have already completed recognised by the National Centre for Work-based Learning Partnerships at Middlesex University as part of the academy's Post Graduate Certificate in Coaching Practice.

Coaches at the BBC currently take part in a four month programme combining module work, field work and reflection. Many wish to convert their learning into a recognised qualification. Having taken part in the BBC programme, coaches can now go on to study for their Post Graduate Certificate at Middlesex University with i-coach academy. This takes place over a six month period and comprises a further 10 days learning, plus receiving coaching, applying coaching, critical reflection and assignments including the completion of a research project.

Currently 13 students from the BBC have joined the Post Graduate Certificate in Coaching Practice and we look forward to more students joining us from other organisations in the future.

i-coach academy graduate selected to coach business school alumni

Our congratulations go to Pattie Horrocks who has recently been selected to coach on a new programme developed by the Manchester Business School designed to provide high quality coaching services for its 24,000 alumni - both graduates and postgraduates - at various stages in their executive careers.

MBS has conducted a rigorous selection process to identify 12 experienced executive coaches, nationally and internationally whom it has deemed suitable to meet the needs of the alumni. These coaches have been selected to provide

a wide range of coaching styles and experience across various sectors.

The selection process involved a face to face interview with the Alumni Relations Manager and a telephone interview with Margaret Chapman, Senior Fellow in Leadership, who is championing this service. The coaches had to demonstrate a proper coaching framework, extensive experience at senior level, an ethical approach, commitment to professional supervision and a clarity and passion for the work they are doing. Pattie commented 'the i-coach academy programme I followed was critical to my meeting the business school requirements. All the work I had put into my coaching framework and presentation felt relevant - I definitely owe a big debt of gratitude to i-coach in preparing me for this exciting opportunity!'

Alumni may either contact their preferred coach directly using the MBS website or may be referred to a specific coach by the School, depending on their needs. The relationship is essentially between coach and client - however MBS will monitor the quality through a rigorous feedback process. If the service proves popular, the School will look to extend its cadre of coaches.

Naturally, Pattie is excited to be one of the selected coaches and is looking forward to working closely with both the individual clients and the business school to develop and promulgate good professional practice.

News from New York: i-coach academy winter update

2006 was a busy year for the five faculty of i-coach academy New York. We completed the third year of our 12 session Professional Coaching Program and granted another 14 students coaching certificates from the Zicklin Business School of Baruch College, City University of New York. Students come to i-coach from a variety of backgrounds, including psychology, HR, and consulting but they share a common commitment to make coaching part of their professional lives in the future. And we welcome this diversity. We continue to challenge all our

students with a high level of material throughout the programme and a significant coaching assignment, including supervision.

We have also had the opportunity to tailor our coach training materials for several organizations that support internal coaching. Citigroup, JetBlue, and The Atlantic Philanthropies have partnered with us to train their HR and leadership development staff to be internal coaches and thereby extend the reach of professional coaching further into their organizations.

These assignments have been real learning experiences for us as well. Internal coaching is a growing phenomenon here in the U.S., but it is still very new and inconsistently applied. Organizations see the benefits of coaching and there are often HR professionals who would like to try their hand at coaching, but there are pitfalls as well. Internal coaching has many more boundary issues and potential role conflicts than external coaching. Helping our clients understand both the risks and opportunities of internal coaching has been a key element of our in-house coach training projects.

Based on our experiences with our in-house applications of coach training, we have designed three short courses that focus on topics of more general interest: a two day course on "Feedback Coaching," a two day course on "Managerial Coaching," and a three day course on "Internal Coaching."

Looking forward, we already have advance registrants for our fourth spring Professional Coaching Program, as well as plenty of organizational sponsors ready to supply pro-bono coaching assignments for those students. In general, we have had very favourable reactions from those sponsors as to the value received from student coaches.

Our best wishes to the world wide i-coach academy community,

Bob Lee, Michael Frisch, Karen Metzger, Jeremy Robinson

Welcome to Felicity Thomas



A warm welcome from the whole i-coach academy team to Felicity Thomas - our new operations manager who is responsible for the day to day running of the London office. Felicity is working alongside Caroline and Eunice and is the first port of call for i-coach clients and students, as well as coordinating with the New York and South Africa offices.

Born in London with a degree in Human Resource Management from Greenwich University, Felicity has always been interested in

all aspects of personal development and coaching. She is also passionate about the theatre and reading.

Felicity is in the London office Monday through Friday from 9.30 to 5.30 and can be contacted on 0207 224 1774 or emailed at felicity@i-coachacademy.com - and she will be very happy to help you.

Summer Party 2006



i-coach academy community celebrate at the 2006 Summer Party - which has become a popular annual event.

Watch for news about this years' party which is scheduled for June.

Top L-R: Maria McArdle, Tracey Cockerton, Jolanta Jagiello.

Right L-R: Louise Sheppard, Paul Ellis, Liz Barnes



Feature Focus

Coaching Supervision: Where are we headed?

Last year i-coach faculty, alumni and students participated in the research into coaching supervision being conducted by the CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel Development) as part of its Change Agendas series. The subsequent report entitled 'Coaching supervision: maximising the potential of coaching' explores the development of supervision as good practise in the coaching profession. As i-coach is keen to support further research into this important area Coaching Matters spoke to Eileen Arney (EA) of the CIPD, who commissioned the research and Gil Schwenk (GS) of the Bath Consultancy Group who conducted the research and co-authored the report. This is what they had to say:

Q. Why did the CIPD want to do this research?

EA. We were very keen to do this research because the CIPD's role is to help promote good practice in HRM. There's a huge amount of coaching going on: eight out of ten organisations say that are using coaching of some sort. Half of all organisations report that they are training their managers in coaching skills. Therefore it's helpful and timely to be looking at supervision.

Q. How was the research carried out?

GS. We conducted a large online survey that went out to 5000 members of the CIPD learning community plus it was distributed widely to the coaching professional bodies and organisers of coaching within organisations. It also went to internal and external coaches and coach managers. It was not random and was intended to get as much coverage as possible. There were a substantive number of coaches who replied. We were pleased with the response but recognise that the data pool itself was self selecting and those responding were more likely to be those that had at least thought about supervision at some level.

We then set up focus groups to help identify the challenges to HR and personnel practices within organisations. The primary focus was on organisers of coaching within organisations - those who are doing supervision and those who are thinking about it.

The third piece of research was about good practice - six organisations were selected from

contacts that were known to be doing a lot of supervision. There was no organisation that had best practice over all - but 'best practice will' was evident and some were quite high up the scale in terms of the quality of their supervision practice.

Supervision: the facts

- 86% of coaches responding to the research said coaches should have supervision
- 44% of them actually have supervision
- 88% of organisations who provide coaching services say that coaches should have supervision
- 23% of them provide supervision
- 75% of coaches belonging to a professional body have supervision

Q. What, in your opinion, are the main learning points that came out of the research for coaches?

GS. Supervision is essential for good coaching practice. The majority of those involved in coaching believe it's important. However, only half of the coaching respondents actually receive supervision although over 80% said they thought it was important. It's a fairly recent development - most coaches have come into supervision in the last two years. It's a leading edge trend that has developed quite quickly - we have the pioneers here in this research. I think people are increasingly saying 'I don't want to just get by' which is why more and more are getting involved now.

EA. Most striking is that people are really waking up to the importance of supervision even though a minority of coaches say they currently undertake supervision and a minority of organisations actually provide it. This is changing.

GS. There are barriers to doing it though - people said that it's too expensive, or that they can't find anyone to supervise them. But this increase in awareness precedes behaviour. People are thinking about it

Key findings from the research:

- Supervision is considered essential for good coaching practice
- It's still pretty new - those who have supervision have come into it in the past two years
- It's not always easy to get supervision - it can be expensive and there are not many trained supervisors as yet
- Those who have supervision benefit to such an extent that they frequently engage in more than one type
- Buyers of coaching are starting to ask external coaches if they have supervision
- External coaches are usually expected to provide their own supervision
- Organisations are looking to supervision as a way of quality assuring their coaching programmes
- Organisations are beginning to use supervision as a way to improve organisational learning by pulling together key organisational themes to inform policy and leadership development
- Supervision is likely to become a requisite for professional body membership and become a requirement for ongoing accreditation

more and more - 75% of coaches in the independent sector, and by that I mean coaches that belong to a professional body, are receiving supervision. And what's really interesting is that they participate in more than one type of supervision i.e. the more they get the more they see the value of it and the more they want it. This is a combination of approaches: individual, peer, group and telephone. People really get into it.

EA. Yes - it's important to have more than one type of supervision. It's important to have individual supervision as this helps to develop the coaches confidence and provides them with support and a way to 'dispose' of some of the emotional burden that comes with coaching. It also is very focussed and gives close attention to the way a coach works

continued overleaf

and provides a parallel process for the coach where the supervisor/coach relationship can help to mirror elements of the coach/client relationship and the supervisor can give very helpful feedback. It's unlikely that some of these elements would be found either at all or very strongly in a group setting.

GS. There's a difference between group and individual supervision – group is more about learning together and identifying with a professional community, whereas individual is more focussed on the coach and the client. It's important that coaches understand this when they are choosing supervision.

EA. Group supervision has other benefits – it's very helpful to get a number of different perspectives rather than just one and it's also very helpful to be able to see how others work. It's important to note the terminology here: peer supervision can be either individual or group so by saying group supervision we mean either a group of peers or a group with a lead supervisor.

Q. Are there any other learning points for coaches?

EA. Yes – it's important to note that it seems from the research that organisations expect external coaches to provide their own supervision for the purposes of continual professional development and support. So coaches need to make sure that they get this support for themselves. But they also need to be aware that organisations are looking for ways to quality assure their coaching initiatives and to draw information from them that will help their overall OD. One way that organisations are doing this is through coaching supervision.

It was stated in one focus group by an organisation that supervision is not optional – it opens up the coach's practice to scrutiny, provides a window into the practice and helps the organisation see who's not operating effectively.

Key benefits of supervision:

- Helps develop coaching capability and capacity
- Raises coaching standards
- Minimises the risk of poor/unethical practices
- Adds to organisational learning
- Assists ROI for organisations

GS. That supervision will be more and more of a requisite of professional bodies and not just a recommendation. It will become a requirement for the ongoing accreditation and evidence will be needed. And more than one supervisor/form of supervision is likely to be required. This will therefore require the accreditation of supervisors.

Q. What, in your opinion, are the main learning points that came out of the research for organisations using coaching services?

EA. Supervision also allows the organisation to hear what the key issues are – and this is something that coaches need to be aware of – that all the really invaluable information gathered during their coaching sessions has a value to the organisation. It's a really big challenge to pull this together. For more information on this I suggest you take a look at the PWC case study in the report (page 13) where they are collecting information from internal coaches completely anonymously and feeding it back into the organisation at partner level.

GS. The benefits for organisations (of good supervision) are enormous – it's about getting feedback and drawing on the themes. It's about tapping into the organisational trends and getting systemic feedback. Increasingly, organisations feel they have a 'right' to do this and that there is real value in it.

EA. This also helps to show the value of coaching but organisations need to treat this whole area with care – it's better to throw away the information than to compromise confidentiality. This raises a whole other issue and organisations need to be able to choose coaches and supervisors who can demonstrate solid commitment to dealing with integrity and contracting effectively – confidentiality is essential and must be at the centre of a strong ethical commitment to protect the client. This also applies to supervision: there needs to be a strong contract and individuals must be anonymised – no names, no grades. But it's still possible in some situations, with internal coaching to recognise individuals so this is an issue. Confidence cannot be absolute – if individuals talk about things such as breaking the law or self harm this information cannot be kept confidential and all this needs to be carefully thought through at contracting. I think we need a debate about this.

GS. Supervision is a symptom of a profession that is emerging and is part of assuring good practice. It is the natural evolution of where we are in the coaching business. There are a small percentage of organisations providing internal supervision – they are the real pioneers. Most don't even think about it. A participant in one of the focus groups said that if organisations are not providing supervision as part of their internal coaching initiatives they are wasting their money. What happens is you lose momentum.

There are some serious challenges for internal supervision namely confidentiality – this is really important in both individual and group supervision internally. You need very strong guidelines. Plus it's difficult to look outside the immediate environment – an external supervisor may not see it either but may have a greater perspective from working with a wider range of organisations. It's not impossible to provide effective internal supervision but it does require very high level capability on the part of the supervisor.

Q. Is there something about the terminology that can put people off?

GS. The term supervision can really put some people off – this came out of the focus groups. It's well known in other helping professions and many in coaching did not want to go down same path as psychotherapy for example – probably because of the bureaucracy involved and the potential for too much psychological introspection.

Currently coaching supervision is dressed in borrowed clothes and we are collectively testing these out as we find what is suitable for coaching. We looked at the terminology - which doesn't help its spread due to the negative connotations around the word supervision - but as more people get involved it begins to lose that. Most people are OK with the terminology.

Q. What 'tips' coaches into supervision?

EA. I don't know the answer to this as we didn't ask in this piece of research but I think it's two things: the first is a sense of professional integrity and the second is the recognition that buyers of coaching services are starting to ask about supervision and whether the coach uses supervision

Buyers (of coaching services) have started to ask but they don't follow through at the moment so through the research we have devised a list of questions (see page 17 of the full report) that can be asked to determine how the coach is using supervision and how it benefits their practice and will therefore benefit the client and the organisation.

Q. Why do you think that buyers are not pursuing coaching supervision at the moment?

EA. Again we didn't ask about this but I think it's because there is a lot of uncertainty about it from buyers. It's an unfamiliar world to a lot of them and once you recognise that you need coaching support

there is a lot to take in. It's a very complex market – where do you go?

Q. Is there a good/best practice model for supervision as yet?

GS. I think the 'wheel of good practice' that we have drawn up in the paper is a good start.

EA. Yes – take a look at the wheel – there are four very important points but you could play with it and add more. Also helpful are the case studies (www.cipd.co.uk/coachingcasestudies) which show how different organisations have addressed supervision – all in different ways. Organisations need to think about what it is they need to achieve and tailor their own practice accordingly. There's no one way of doing this that fits all.



Coaching Supervision: Wheel of good practice

It would be useful for organisations to think about whether it's helpful to bring together external and internal coaches in supervision. They would get different perspectives from each other. This practice seems to be very uncommon but bares thinking about.

GS. You have to be quite experienced at supervision to supervise groups – it can easily end up being 'reviewing coaching'. The report recommends a 1:35 ratio of coaching to supervision or every 6-8 weeks. I personally recommend individual supervision supplemented by peer or group supervision. It's difficult to deal with the qualitative, developmental and supportive aspects of coaching in the group setting – I have reservations about there being enough time for this.

Individual supervision 'holds your feet to the fire' in terms of our own development and habits – you need the regularity and consistency of someone who knows you well to challenge you. In a group the consistency is different every time so it takes longer to hold each individual accountable. It's a lot more difficult to hide in 1:1 situations.

Q. How do you see supervision accreditation developing?

GS. Actual qualifications for supervisors came quite low in the survey (more buyers of coaching services were keen that the supervisor had a good knowledge of business) – so it's not viewed as essential at this point but I think this will change. Supervision will take a similar route as coaching qualifications but obviously not in the same numbers - but it will go through the same process and patterns as coaching.

EA. Our understanding of what is needed is at a very early stage so therefore I think it's too early to say what should be happening. As we have said coaching is using 'borrowed clothes' so we all need to work together and discuss how coaching supervision should work. There's a lot of work still to be done.

The full report can be accessed by going to <http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/lrmanddev/coachmntor>

An i-coach academy perspective on supervision:

Coaches have the professional capacity to help bring about important changes for individuals, groups and organisations. Often their clients are in a life situation or transition which renders them vulnerable and possibly dependent. These occupational conditions require coaches to be strongly aware of ethical questions. It is the individual coach's ethical consciousness, sense of responsibility and professional competence that are critical to ensuring the protection of the clients in their care and to maintain the standards of the coaching profession. Supervision/Continued Professional Development (CPD) is one way for coaches to take responsibility for their clients whilst furthering their own development. i-coach academy subscribes to the benefits of supervision and requires coaches to have regular supervision during their training and throughout the lifetime of their coaching practice.

At i-coach academy our framework for supervision involves exploration using three lenses – a personal/inter-personal lens, a professional lens and a systemic lens. It is our view that encouraging coaches to consider each of these lenses will enhance their own understanding of their work and positively impact the work they do with individual clients and if relevant, their organizations. The first lens is akin to clinical supervision and this lens is aimed at helping coaches to understand themselves in their work as a coach and the parallel processes at play in coaching. Whilst we do not advocate a single model we frequently use an existential

approach to this lens of supervision because for us, the existential approach supports the notion of model/ tool free coaching and allows coaches to develop their own way. We also use supervisors who are psycho-dynamically informed and other clinically trained professionals to support this lens of supervision in our training programmes.

i-coach academy does not support a single model approach to coaching and as such we require a multiple theory and model approach to supervision, the basis for this being the individual coach's coaching framework and model. The second lens is aimed to support coaches to enhance their practice of coaching and ensure congruence between what they say they do and what they do. This approach reflects the i-coach academy philosophy that coaching is an empowering process where we aim not to "do" things to clients, rather making things explicit to clients and providing choice. This lens of focus for supervision is difficult to offer when coaches are not able to make explicit their work, it also aims to actively develop skill and may involve skill practice of new approaches that a coach wishes to experiment with and feedback for the coach on their current skill set.

The final lens aims to help coaches increase their awareness of what is playing out in the system which may be initiating or impacting on the coaching as a further input to their understanding of their work. This lens is most useful when multiple coaches are working in a single system or organization. It is often

used as a means to collate organizational themes from a group of coaches working together on a coaching intervention in order to provide information back to the organization where the intervention is being run. At i-coach academy this type of supervision is run in what we call a coaching forum. This forum aims to enhance the effectiveness of the coaching being delivered by

- Providing a forum for the organization to share information, context and direction to coaches for the intervention to support coaches to keep coaching aligned with the interventions' objectives
- Helping to review the appropriate matching of the coach and client through the stages of the coaching process
- Minimising the risks associated with conflict of interest issues which may arise
- Offering protection to the clients and coaches
- Building a community of practice to further the development of individual coaches and the organisation

It is also important for organisations to note that supervision is not just required for external coaches but that support for learners developing coaching skills and education programmes supporting the creation of internal coach cohorts are areas where supervision should be consider as part of the mix of the intervention.

Supervision Framework



**Personal
Interpersonal**
Clinical Frame
Client & Coach Development
Ethics



Professional
Individual Framework & Model
"fit for purpose"
"congruent"
Evolution of best practice
Skills enhancement
Repertoire building



Systemic
INPUT from Organisation/System
INPUT back to Organisation/System
Client in relation to others
Journey of client
Journey of coaching

Benefits of supervision to coaches:

1. Offers protection to the clients in your care, as client cases are discussed with clinically trained professionals who are quickly able to identify areas of potential concern and offer advice or referral to specialist support if appropriate.
2. Offers coaches the opportunity to **reflect on their work** and identify patterns which may give useful insights to improving their interventions.
3. Offers coaches the opportunity to identify their own personal strengths and weaknesses as a coach in order to **realistically judge** what **limitations** to set with respect to the type of work they undertake.
4. Offers coaches the opportunity **to learn from peers** who have similar cases and experiences to further their development as a coach.
5. Supervision offers coaches the opportunity to keep up to date with professional developments in the field and to continually work **to increase their competency as a coach**.

As a coach you may wish to consider the following when thinking about or seeking supervision for your coaching practice:

- Where are you in your journey as a coach and what do you need from supervision at this point?
e.g. in the early days a coach is more likely to be concerned with the practical elements of coaching whereas a more experienced coach could be more interested in who they are as a coach and understanding how their experiences and perspectives determine what they bring to their coaching practice
- Being explicit about the purpose of supervision will help you select the appropriate supervisor (e.g. therapeutically based, coaching based etc.), the type of supervision (e.g. individual, group, peer) and to determine the frequency of supervision

i-coach academy offers CPD/supervision groups and individual supervision. All our supervision groups are full at the moment but if you are interested and would like more information about either individual or group supervision please contact felicity@i-coachacademy.com.

Events Review

The Psychology of Coaching



L-R: Susan Blow, Eric Parsloe, Jane BonBerard, Bruce Peltier, Julia Wellbelove, Adrian Starkey

Having read Bruce Peltier's book, *The Psychology of Executive Coaching**, which was a recommended text for her Masters, Sue Blow was anxious to know more. In September last year she attended i-coach academy's two day seminar on 'The Psychology of Coaching' delivered by Prof. Peltier himself. Here are her reflections of the day:

'Show up, pay attention, tell the truth, be open to outcomes.' These 4 principles for coaches, quoted by Bruce encapsulate the essence of these two days: an apparently simple message that reveals layer after layer of thoughtful provocation the further you look.

Reviewing an event a few months after it had taken place would normally involve trawling through forgotten notes to try to dredge up something memorable. What distinguished this workshop for me

is the degree to which I have been able to remember and apply so much of the learning. This was not just another interesting academic exercise: this was a master-class with a master.

Bruce, we did try to shut up and listen....we really did. But so involved did we become that it was impossible not to engage in anecdotes and experiences. However, that made the event even more memorable. I learnt from others who attended and I learnt from Bruce: a real and sustained benefit that I would not have got in a larger group. 'Knowledge is co-created through dialogue' and that was certainly the case during this workshop.

The key themes were taken from Bruce's book *The Psychology of Executive Coaching*. Buy, beg or steal a copy: you can't borrow mine. This is a book which is so crammed with pragmatically useful

information that no executive coach should be without it. I now know how restaurant reviewers feel: you can describe the menu, the food, and even other diners, but that can never give more than a faint impression of the experience of the meal.

So, what were the nutritional highlights? To begin, some excellent information on process: assessment, the role of theory, levelling expectations, and learning to recognise, trust and use your own intuition. Then followed some highly calorific stuff on defence mechanisms: first, how to recognise them, and second, using judgement in the way you use that information. There were insightful thoughts on the nature of leadership and the skills of the coach in giving feedback.

The main course: an overview of six key theoretical perspectives: behaviourism, existentialism, systems thinking, cognitive approaches, the person-centred view, and social psychology. A rich series of dishes, indeed, but Bruce's skill in guiding us through avoided any possibility of mental indigestion.

We all took away some 'golden nuggets'; pieces of transformational personal learning. For me, the key was realising that no one theory has the monopoly of wisdom. You use the tool that sheds the best light on the issue at hand. Another key insight was the distinction between confidentiality and discretion: word choice can be crucial when working in a commercial context and total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

This was an exciting, interesting, stimulating and useful two days. Thank you, Bruce, and thank you my fellow attendees. I have been nourished and supported: now all I have to do is apply the learning for the benefit of my clients. They owe you too, Bruce!

**The Psychology of Executive Coaching: Peltier, B. (2001) Brunner Routledge, USA*

Reflections from the EMCC Conference 2006

i-coach academy master's student Liz Barnes attended the EMCC Conference held in Cologne, Germany in November 2006 and by all accounts spent some valuable time learning new ideas in the seminars and discussing these with other delegates from around Europe. Here are Liz's thoughts about the conference:

The conference was attended by an interesting and diverse group of approximately 150 delegates which included independent and in-company coaches, researchers and academics as well as buyers from the private and public sectors.

In the first plenary session Volkswagen's very structured coaching process and creation of a pool of freelance coaches who had experienced a 'Milestone Evaluation' was presented. This was to determine whether their coaching delivered the agreed outcomes – and was described as an 'exam' at one point – but I suspect that this was an interesting translation from the German to English! It provided some food for thought and may well be a method more widely used to evaluate coaching in the future.

The interesting topic of 'Health coaching' was also mentioned. This is where an employee, who has had medical screening through the organisation, can receive coaching afterwards, possibly using lab results and further screening, to achieve health goals. The coaching may include the partner as well which I thought was an interesting proposition. This presents

the possibility of a new niche market for coaching but not without some ethical challenges, I'm sure!

In the other plenary session, Randstad, a large international employment agency and also a major buyer of coaching services, discussed how they utilize coaching to get new recruits ready for work in the shortest possible timeframe. The challenge for this business was the complexity of sourcing and employing a wide range of individual coaches to operate in many far flung locations across Germany. A plea for fewer vendors to work with, flat rates and coaches with specialties (HR for example) was made. Some ideas worth discussing here for coaching organisations and potential coaching consortiums.....

One session I particularly enjoyed was on the use of story telling as a tool for coaching. A story was described where the client is the hero and the coach is the 'magical helper' who works with the client on their 'call to action'. Exploration is encouraged as is dealing with resistance, challenges and obstacles along the way, and with the help of some fellow travellers the hero achieves great things. The magical helper encourages the hero to think outside the box – and never gives the hero the answers but simply opens the hero's mind to new possibilities. Parallels with Gandalf in *The Lord of the Rings* were drawn at this point! However – magical helpers can fall in love with their own power and 'go bad' so no matter how much the client may ask you for the answers – resist! Through surmounting a series of obstacles the hero

gains valuable resources and is then able to get to their 'prize'.

I imagined myself as a coach using this story structure to work through a coaching issue. By asking questions I can get clarity on what my clients 'prize' or outcome is and about how much might have to be sacrificed in order to achieve it. I found this session enchanting and will definitely experiment with it.

I also attended a session in which a group of coaches experienced a participative supervision model. A case study was presented by one coach and the other coaches in the group listened. At the end the coaches were able to ask questions – but for clarification only. Then the group of listening coaches reflected on the case study and discussed what each of them would do next if they were the coach. They were encouraged to share the theory or model that influenced their interpretation. The opportunity is then given for the coach of the case study to comment. The conversation between the coaches drew out a rich and diverse range of issues and allowed reflection on different approaches to coaching. Everyone was able to learn from each other. I thought the model definitely worth using for a CPD day and for peer group supervision as well.

I thoroughly enjoyed the sessions I attended but also took great value from the opportunity to meet other delegates and discuss the plethora of new ideas on an informal basis. The conference was extremely worthwhile.

Diary of events

February 19th 2007: Existential Approach to Coaching: This seminar is aimed at professional coaches who want to learn about what the existential perspective can offer their coaching practice and HR professionals who wish to understand more about how this approach can benefit coaching. Leading existential author and educator Prof. Ernesto Spinelli will explore the central themes of existential analysis and help participants to understand the existential approach to coaching versus other approaches to coaching by experimenting with practical skills.

We will be running this seminar again so please register your interest with felicity@i-coachacademy.com if you would like us to email you when the next dates are confirmed.

April 3rd and 4th 2007: EMCC UK Conference at Ashridge Business School. For further information, please visit www.emccouncil.org/conferences.htm

October 2nd – 5th 2007: ICF Australia Conference. Melbourne will be hosting the 4th ICF Australasia Conference.

October 11th – 13th: EMCC Conference in Sweden. More details will be available on the website soon at www.emccouncil.org/conferences.htm

October 31st – November 3rd 2007: ICF Annual Conference in Long Beach, California. For further information, please visit www.coachfederation.org.

i-coach academy Summer School: 11th – 13th June, 2007

i-coach academy will again be running a summer school in conjunction with the Center for Organisational Dynamics, University of Pennsylvania. The three day programme offers a mixture of theoretical and practice-based workshops. Participants will learn about the core principles from experts in their field and gain insights to best practice in Organisational Development, Change and Coaching. The conference also provides a unique opportunity to network with and learn from participants from a wide range of backgrounds.

A flyer for this conference will be available shortly, please register your interest with felicity@i-coachacademy.com or telephone Felicity on 0207 224 1774.

Dates for the i-coach academy programmes

The **Certificate in Coaching Practice** is designed for anyone aspiring to coach formally who wishes to develop their approach by building a unique coaching framework and to benchmark themselves with a peer group. This is the first year of the Masters in Professional Coaching and is suitable for new and experienced coaches.

Registration – open now until July 20th. Module One takes place **October 15th - 17th**

The **Masters in Professional Coaching** is for those with an established coaching practice and articulated approach who wish to build a greater repertoire and underpin their work with a wider variety of theoretical perspectives. Entrance to this programme requires completion of the certificate programme or extensive coaching experience and coaching training (i-coach academy Certificate equivalent) plus the completion of a conversion module which includes a professional review.

Registration – open now until 29th June. For those entering through the conversion module, participation in the professional review, which is a requirement for entry to the MA, will be held on the **9th, 10th and 11th July 2007**. Module One takes place **October 23rd to 26th**

For further information on all i-coach academy programmes, please contact Felicity Thomas at felicity@i-coachacademy.com

The 1st BPS Conference on Coaching Psychology 2006

In December last year i-coach academy Masters student Janet Cattini attended the first British Psychological Society Conference on Coaching Psychology – an experience she found valuable as you will see in the her following report:

I suspect that many of the delegates attending the BPS SGCP 1st International Conference on Coaching Psychology in December faced a similar dilemma as me -choosing which of the broad range of sessions to attend. The themes covered by keynote speakers, invited speakers, skills-based sessions, poster sessions, focused research paper streams and roundtable discussions included Ethics, Professional Practice and Supervision; Psychometrics and Coaching; Coaching Competence; Positive Psychology in Coaching Psychology, and Multi-cultural, Diversity and Gender coaching.

In the first session I attended Dr Stober's keynote address affirmed the i-coach academy's approach to encouraging students to develop their own coaching framework. She noted that the evolving profession of coaching currently presents coaching psychologists with an opportunity and a responsibility to articulate frameworks that will guide our thinking about coaching and the processes used. Her proposition was that the medical model, focussing on dysfunction, was not an appropriate framework for coaching which has as its focus healthy and optimal functioning. The alternative explored was a contextual model utilising a number of thematic factors including:

- an explicit outcome/goal
- a rationale for using coaching
- a procedure consistent with the rationale
- a meaningful relationship (there needs to be a good working alliance)
- ability and readiness for change (critical for both client and coach).

In evaluating outcomes, application of this framework looks not at specific ingredients but rather the overarching commonalities and so avoids creating divisions amongst different theoretical approaches.

One of the skills based sessions I attended was Professor Michael Carroll's **Facilitating Learning in Coaching Psychology**. Looking at the role of the coach as a facilitator of learning which translates into action, this session provided the opportunity

to explore in pairs, the way we learn best. The questions that arose from this session were 'How might the differences between client and coach in their preferred ways of learning impact on the client's learning?' and 'How could the difference be accommodated?' Given that it is the coach who needs to accommodate the client, it is important for the coach to actively understand how their client learns best and to provide them with the space to learn/discover, as opposed to imposing their own understanding on the client. (A list of learning interventions that clients and coaches can explore in order to identify those the client would like the coach to employ can be found at www.supervisioncentre.com).

Discussing **What makes a good coach?**, Dr Michael Cavanagh suggested that in addition to the skill sets commonly listed in the literature, there was a need for a meta skill set that constituted our perspective taking capability. He advocated the need for coaches to be able to take the complex perspective in order to formulate a case conceptualisation. That is, to develop a model or representation of what we, as the coach, think is going on for the client, taking account of the systems in which they are operating. This working hypothesis, grounded in a theoretical perspective, is explored with the client and aids the selection and implementation of an appropriate intervention.

From the master class on **Strengths and the Coaching Psychology Engagement**, delivered by Dr Alex Linley I had the opportunity to practice *listening* for strengths and to experience some of the key indicators that emerge when people talk about using their strengths, e.g. sense of confidence, up-lift in voice, more elaborate language, forward looking and optimistic, to name but a few. I am not entirely sure I understand how a strength differs from a skill...it is something for me to revisit. (Access to strengths measures can be found at the website of the Centre for Applied Positive Psychology: www.capp.eu.org)

Janet found this event extremely worthwhile and would encourage colleagues to attend this year's event (the dates of which should be announced next month so check the website at www.sgcp.co.uk). Apart from the great networking opportunities, Janet felt there was something to offer all coaching practitioners whatever their theoretical persuasion.

Events in South Africa

Mentoring and Coaching Conference 2007 – South Africa

14th – 16th March 2007
at The Vineyard Hotel and Spa, Cape Town

Speakers at this conference include eight i-coach academy alumni who completed their masters or doctorate qualifications through i-coach academy to Middlesex University, UK.

Eunice Aquilina from the i-coach academy faculty will also be presenting on the rise of coaching and the role of the internal coach and Prof David Lane will be presenting as a representative of the International Centre for the Study of Coaching at Middlesex University.

There is a 20% discount if you mention your link to i-coach academy on the registration form

For more information and a brochure please visit the website at: www.kr.co.za

i-coach academy's partner in South Africa, **USB-ED** is hosting two seminars in South Africa by New York innovative change consultant **Judith Glaser**. Judith will be talking about her new book 'The DNA of Leadership' and how to reap the rewards of evolving the genetic code of your organization. The dates are:

15th March 2007 at Gallagher Estate, Midrand
20th March 2007 at Spier, Capetown

For further details contact the event organizer on
+27 (0)83 463 4090 or +27 (0)21 930 1726
Or email kershoff@mweb.co.za

Research Results

Coaching to support Knowledge Sharing

i-coach academy continually seeks to contribute to the development of the coaching profession and actively support all those who are currently researching the field. The following article has been adapted from a paper published in the *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*; Vol.3, No. 2, Autumn 2005 by Sue Blow. The *International Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring Journal* is an online journal and back-dated issues can be found at <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/education/ijebcm/home.html>

As part of her Masters' Degree at Oxford Brookes, Sue set out to study whether coaching could have an impact on knowledge sharing in an organisation. We believe her findings are compelling and useful – both to coaches coaching senior people and to organisations as they consider the implications of their coaching investment.

Introduction

Knowledge is the life-blood of organisations. However, the larger those organisations grow, the harder it becomes to share that knowledge. The purpose of my study was to try to find out if coaching strategies have a part to play in the exploration and transmission of expertise. Organisations need to manage information and ensure that it is accessible. If people cannot easily find what they need to know, they cannot make good decisions. Management information systems are excellent for data storage and retrieval, but they are not designed to cope with the intuitive 'know-how' that is the accumulation of long experience and practice. However, if the brightest and best find it difficult to explain what they know, then their knowledge is effectively lost to others. I wanted to find out if the social process inherent in the coaching relationship could help share knowledge effectively and enjoyably: 'knowledge is not a 'thing' or a system, but an ephemeral process of relation' (Stacey, 2001, p.2.)

Background

Much of my work is with senior people. Part of my role is to help them to think through the implications of their decisions, and to help them to work more effectively with others. Often, they find their decision making process hard to explain. They use words and phrases such as 'intuition', 'experience' 'gut feel', 'I just know what to do, I don't have to think about it'.

I began working in this area because I wanted to achieve three objectives:

1. To broaden people's ideas of what coaching can achieve. There is still a strong element of problem, rather than opportunity focus in both the study and practice of coaching
2. To find out if a coaching approach could help experts to understand their own 'unconscious competence' more clearly
3. To improve my own practice and understanding, and to share that with others.

Methodology

The methodology was qualitative and phenomenological. My study population of nineteen comprised seven 'experts', six coaches and six coachees. Each expert was a subject specialist (who had never been coached); the coachees were senior people who had considerable experience of being coached, and the coaches all work at board level in commercial and voluntary sectors and with individuals with great expertise in their fields.

The data was gathered using semi-structured interviews, both in person and on the telephone, and via email questionnaire. For the analysis, I followed the process described by Moustakas (1994). This involved analysing each set of responses in depth, without prejudice and in isolation. Each interview tape was transcribed in full, including all repetition, pauses and ums and errs. This meant that I had both the words and the speech patterns to explore and interpret.

It was a complex and time consuming process. It was also utterly fascinating. I was surprised at the way that the concepts of intentionality, time, structure, texture and the meaning of language informed and challenged the script analysis. I learnt as much about

my own thinking and analytical capabilities as I did about the data. In order to capture that, I developed a 'shadow methodology' whereby I continually reflected on my own learning and documented the results as I worked through the study.

The nature of intuition

Before describing the results of the study, it is probably helpful to try to identify what is meant by the word 'intuition'. Intuitive decision making by people with consummate skill and expertise was at the heart of the study. Yet trying to get a clear idea of what intuition actually means, was exceptionally difficult. It has both technical and general connotations. Words used as synonyms for intuition included experiences, reactions, patterns, knowledge, instinct, expertise and tacit knowledge.

'That's a great deal to make one word mean' said Alice in a thoughtful tone. 'When I make a word do a lot of work like that,' said Humpty Dumpty, 'I always pay it extra'. (Carroll, [1929] p 246)

In the context of expert knowledge, intuition is definitely a word that deserves to be paid extra: it works extremely hard. Some authorities use 'tacit' and 'intuitive' knowledge interchangeably. Others see a clear distinction between the two, with 'tacit' having a specific academic meaning to describe something that is, by its very nature unknowable.

Such debate was properly part of the study. It was important to explore the language used in the tape transcripts and to try to establish the real meaning that specific words had for each individual. However, there comes a point at which engaging in semantic debate about precise word definition becomes counter-productive. From the perspective of coaching practice it is far more revealing to explore with coachees what words mean for them than to play defining games. Examples, anecdotes and stories are more revealing than precise dictionary definitions, and ultimately more helpful when it comes to helping people to decide what they are actually going to do about all their knowledge.

Results of the study

There were three main themes:

1. The nature of expert intuitive understanding
2. The role of the coach as interpreter (Babel Fish)
3. Words, and the meaning of words (The Humpty Dumpty principle)

1. The nature of intuitive understanding

Coaches can help experts in two important ways: they can help them to understand the nature of their own intuitive insight more clearly, and they can help them to think through the implications of how to communicate that insight to others. The respondents were divided in their feelings about intuition. Some viewed it with trust and respect, others with apprehension. Those that trusted their intuition and acted upon it without thinking, recognised that it was precious, had developed over time, and that to examine it too closely was to risk losing it. Those that were fearful of intuition acknowledged it but felt that it had to be rationalised and supported by data before being communicated to others. One expert had been acting effectively and profitably on his intuition for years, but in his new consultancy role, found he was having to 'back-fill' his judgement with (to him) needless data in order to be credible with his clients.

One surprising finding, and one that has implications for coaching practice, is that two experts of the seven found that they used intuition differently in different areas of their work. One described a reliable intuitive grasp that he could consciously work to improve, and another that 'just happens'. Isenberg (1987) argues that intuition can be used in five distinct ways. The inference here is that coaches would need to probe for examples and illustrations to be sure that they understand what 'intuition' means for their coachees, how they use it in practice and what the implications are for making decisions and communicating them to others.

2. The role of the coach as interpreter (Babel Fish)

Another important role for a coach is to help experts think through the 'politics of acceptance'. By this,

I mean the strategies, tactics and language of communication in order to ensure that intuitive insights, and the decisions that derive from them, are framed in a way that the receiver can accept and act on.

The Babel Fish was created by Douglas Adams in 'The Hitch-hikers' Guide to the Galaxy'. (Adams, 1977) It translates all alien tongues. Some experts communicate in ways inexplicable to their colleagues, without realising it. This theme explored the ways in which a coach could help translate deep, specialist knowledge and alien jargon into something that others can recognise and work with. There were four sub-themes:

- how coaching can help individuals 'surface' knowledge from their unconscious competence into their conscious competence
- how a coach can help an expert break down complex concepts into simpler constructs
- how an expert's own learning became internalised
- how to pass on knowledge in ways that others find useful and easy to apply.

Once an expert has been helped to 'surface' internalised expertise it becomes explicit. It can then be 'translated' in ways others can grasp. Just because someone is brilliant at something it does not follow that they can hand that knowledge on directly: it needs the help of a Babel Fish to enable the process.

3. Words - and the meaning of words (the Humpty Dumpty principle)

'When I use a word' said Humpty Dumpty, 'it means what I choose it to mean, neither more and no less'. (Carroll, [1929])

How words are defined and how they are used in practice can be very different. Both researchers and coaches need to be able to define terms, clarify assumptions and identify where issues with terminology could lie. The implications for coaching practice are that, as part of knowledge transfer within organisations, coaches could help experts explain their 'know-how'.

Conclusions

If organisational knowledge is lost, locked away in decision-making 'silos', or used in ways that cannot be explained to others, then the organisation itself loses value. Skilful coaches can help by exploring the nature of expertise, helping to translate it for others, supporting thinking in terms of the context and the subtleties of getting ideas accepted, and ensuring that meaning is made clear before communicating it to others.

However, there is also an important human context. Coaching is a social activity and 'knowledge is co-created through dialogue'. A surprising number of respondents in the study mentioned the loneliness of their position: of not being able to engage easily with others and to share...and give away...what they know. There is evidence from this study that coaching could:

- help talented people feel less isolated; that their knowledge is interesting and worth handing on
- help experts find better ways to teach others
- encourage people to think more carefully about the use of words and their potential impact in a range of situations.

Knowledge transfer in organisations is a social process. Coaching is a supportive, social activity. The results from this study suggest that coaching strategies could help some experts to think more clearly about their own intuitive knowledge and unconscious competence. The result could well be improved knowledge transfer and the re-invention of fewer organisational wheels.

References;

Carroll, L. (1929) *Alice through the Looking Glass* London, Collins

Moustakas, C. (1994), *Phenomenological Research Methods* London, Sage

Stacey, R.D. (2001) *Complex Responsive Processes in Organisations* London and New York, Routledge

Book Reviews

Psychological Dimensions of Executive Coaching

Peter Bluckert, Open University Press, 2006

It feels like a new book on coaching and how to do it appears every week - but this text adds a useful perspective. The book is part of the Coaching in Practice Series for new and experienced coaches and Peter Bluckert invites us to extend our thinking further. The book is aimed at quite a wide market but the easy to read style and clarity of expression means you can get the grasp of his ideas and propositions quite quickly.

The first half of the book is simple to assimilate and contains some very useful tips and hints for coaches. For example the chapter on coaching process would be extremely helpful for those starting off their coaching career. Further chapters include a neat differentiation of different types of coaching: skills and performance, personal development, leadership and meaning-making. In each of these Bluckert carefully lays out what the coach might experience and using brief case studies helps provide a framework for action. In line with the title though, the writer constantly refers back to the psychological aspects of coaching and especially the view that good coaches are highly self aware and use that sense of self to inform their practice.

In addition, as he develops his theory, Bluckert pulls from Goleman's work on Emotional Intelligence both in respect of clients and coaches themselves. This allows him to then move on to consider what kind of background best equips coaches and eventually settles on the view that a business or organisational background coupled with some psychological training as underpinning is probably the ideal. Nonetheless, this book is marked in its ability to be balanced since it draws on Bluckert's personal experience as a coach and a trainer of coaches.

The book's strength lies in exploring more deeply what Bluckert calls "psychological mindedness", a concept borrowed from the field of psychotherapy and now used in the coaching literature. By this he means "people's capacity to reflect on themselves, others and the relationship between". It is rooted in a curiosity about how people tick and why we behave as we do." (p87) This is a journey for many coaches and is critical to their personal and professional development. Bluckert goes on to explore this concept further by describing in detail the desirable proficiencies for psychologically oriented coaching. As a practising coach I found this very useful and indeed it would also be useful for executive clients deciding who to select to coach them. In relation to the development of coaches Bluckert is a proponent of a broad development agenda where supervision is fundamental part of the entire process.

The final part of the book is about using a Gestalt perspective to support people through change. Bluckert's clear style helps explain some of the fundamentals of Gestalt and how it can be usefully applied in coaching, most usefully I think in the idea of self regulation and the use of the cycle of experience. For many clients the idea of being in and working with the present will be challenging but probably fruitful, along with encouraging thinking about energy sources. Bluckert is careful to remind readers that professional coaches will recognise when presenting psychologies are beyond their competence but he does encourage coaches to use some of

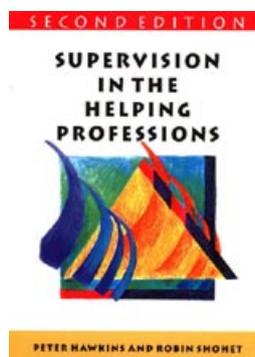
the practices grounded in Gestalt such as achieving closure, retroreflection and introspection.

The book ends with a thoughtful section on the 'use of self as instrument of change'. The author encourages coaches to explore their own responses to what clients are saying and indeed to express that as a way of deepening their understanding of the coach/client relationship. It is this I think that raises this text above others-it challenges from a well considered perspective.

This book review was written for Coaching Matters by Isobel Gowan who is an independent coach, OD Consultant and an avid reader.

Supervision in the helping professions – Peter Hawkins and Robin Shohet

Open University Press, 2000



This book examines in detail all aspects of supervision and defines a process model of supervision. It is intended for helpers in all walks of life and many examples are drawn from the therapeutic professions; however the principles apply equally well to the coaching profession. The book is process centred and takes a

detailed look at the interaction between the client, the worker and the supervisor. Specifically, it uncovers how the relationship between the worker and the client emerges during supervision both in the content brought by the worker and the process that develops between the worker and supervisor.

The book is divided into four parts, and each part will be summarised briefly here:

Part 1 – Supervisees perspective

The question is posed 'why be a helper?' and is explored in some detail in Chapter 2. The importance of being in touch with our own shadow, the difference between being a 'helper' and a 'channel for help' and issues of attachment are all examined. Our motivation for helping and the role of our own needs in choosing to do what we do is explored. A key theme is the importance of self awareness and of having adequate support for ourselves

Part 2 – Supervisors perspective

The task of the supervisor is defined as 'helping the supervisee feel received, valued and understood on the assumption that only then will he feel safe enough and open enough to review and challenge himself'. The functions of supervision are defined as educative, supportive and managerial - and each is explored. Different types of supervision and different supervisory arrangements and styles are described, e.g. Rogerian, psychoanalytic, or behavioural. It is suggested that supervisees are on a developmental path and it is

important not to become egotistical in thinking we are responsible for the development of others: 'a man once saw a butterfly struggling to emerge from its cocoon, too slowly for his liking, so he began to blow on it gently. The warmth of his breath speeded up the process alright. But what emerged was not a butterfly but a creature with mangled wings'.

The authors go on to explain their seven eyed model of supervision, looking at the seven different foci the supervisor may have in the process. They then explore the issues around supervisor training and development.

Part 3 – Other forms of supervision

Group, team and peer group supervision are explored, and the advantages and disadvantages of each are discussed. There is useful material for exploring team dynamics including suggested questions that all members of a group can be asked to answer, e.g. 'what I avoid talking about here is....' 'what I find hard to admit about my work is....' There are also a number of case studies involving networks of professionals needing supervision which is very useful.

Part 4 – Organisational supervision

Supervision flourishes best in a learning and development culture. This statement is based on the belief that a great deal of the work in all helping professions is about creating the environment and relationships in which clients learn about themselves. The authors describe a consultancy approach to developing supervision practice and policy in organisations using appreciative enquiry and force field analysis.

The book concludes with a discussion about the 'wounded helper'. The key message is that in many helping professions the most difficult challenge is to meet the client in their pain and helplessness, rather than addressing the symptoms of pain and somehow trying to make everything better – and quickly.

The key to good supervision is the quality of the relationship. A good supervisory relationship is the best way to ensure we stay open to ourselves and our clients

This review was written by Pattie Horrocks who is an independent coach. Pattie completed the i-coach academy conversion programme in August 2006

Editorial Note

If you have read a book recently that you think would be of interest to those in the i-coach academy community we would welcome hearing your suggestions or receiving a contribution to the newsletter from you. Please contact Felicity at felicity@i-coachacademy.com with your suggestions.