

Dear Friends



This month Coaching Matters focuses on the importance of research for the coaching industry.

In July, 50 people from 16 nations participated in the Global Convention on Coaching in Dublin, which followed a year long

discussion on key issues for the industry. One of the major points raised was a strong desire to see informed research that would clearly differentiate coaching from other fields. A summary of the GCC discussion can be found on page 7.

i-coach academy is taking an active interest in the development of the field through research and this month we have announced our Inaugural Annual

Research Day. The day will provide an opportunity for the industry to hear about the latest research from our student community and to offer feedback regarding ideas and outcomes presented.

This month we have launched a directory on our website of our students' research. We have also published a survey to learn about our communities experience of i-coach academy activities and ideas for future initiatives.

As always a lot is happening, both at i-coach academy and in the coaching industry, which you can read about below. It was great to catch up with many of you at our recent student community summer party. For those who weren't able to make it, I look forward to catching up with you soon.

In this month's issue

News	1
Feature Focus:	3
- MOD Appetite for Coaching	
- Coaching Conversations for Organisational Development	
- Interview with Mary Beth O'Neill	
Research	5
- Coaching Senior Leaders in Career Transitions	
Book Review	6
- Handbook of Coaching Psychology	
Diary of Events	6
Event Reviews	6
- Global Convention on Coaching	

News

Gemma Todd Joins i-coach

Gemma Todd has recently joined the i-coach academy UK team to help head up our academic business.

Gemma joins us from the MBDA, a world leader in missiles and missile system technologies that employs over 10,000 employees in France, the United Kingdom, Italy and Germany. In her previous role Gemma was the Learning & Development Manager for the UK and was also the international project leader for a number of transversal HR projects designed to support the organisation's journey towards full integration of the four national entities. She has also worked as the Staff Development Manager for an Essex-based SME and as a Training Officer and Function Manager for the Bank of England.

In joining i-coach academy Gemma says "I saw a valuable opportunity to bring my 20+ years business management experience to the i-coach academy 'table' to contribute to its continued growth and success. I also saw a personal opportunity to evolve existing skills, acquire new knowledge and, in time, achieve a professional qualification that would enable me to practice as a fee-earning coach."

Gemma will be working closely with Jolene, the faculty members and external partners to ensure i-coach academy is providing the highest possible service to its students and customers. Over the coming weeks and months, her aim is to quickly learn as much as possible to ensure she is operational in the shortest time possible. Longer term, Gemma aims to review and, where appropriate, develop i-coach academy's policies, processes and practices to ensure every aspect of the business aligns with the vision for i-coach academy's future.

"I am fairly certain that there will be times I find my learning curve fairly steep and I have no doubts that my becoming an unconscious competent in all matters pertaining to i-coach academy will generate feelings of confusion and terror within me in equal measure, but as the saying goes "All things are difficult before they are easy" (Thomas Fuller, 1608 – 1661)".

Mee-Yan Recognised for Influential Thinking

Mee-Yan Cheung Judge has been named among the industries most influential thinkers at the recent HR's Most Influential 2008 Awards Ceremony.

The prestigious listing recognises those who demonstrate elements of influence: consistent visibility, originality, the ability to lead others and gain followers, relevance and impact.

This is the first time that Mee-Yan, founder and director of organisation development consultancy Quality and Equality and visiting faculty with i-coach academy, has received this recognition.

i-coach academy congratulates Mee-Yan on this achievement.

Is Regulation Coming?

Press reports in the UK in July have mentioned the concern of psychotherapists and their professional bodies about an attempt by Government to impose a code that dictates how they work with their clients. The consultation document contains 450 rules which psychotherapists would have to comply with, to be introduced by 2011. The regulations would be administered by the Health Professions Council (HPC) which currently regulates a range of health practitioners from chiropractors to physiotherapists. Draft legislation is in progress to regulate psychologists within the HPC.

While therapists disagree on the merits of statutory regulation, the current proposals have provoked a huge reaction, in part because they are seen unworkable, with some of the rules in direct contradiction to the teachings of the profession. Darian Leader of the Centre for Freudian Analysis and Research was quoted in The Times2 supplement: "The real problem is [the Department of Health] seeing psychoanalysis as a medical intervention. They are using a medical paradigm to understand something that is not medical." The government claims that its continuing talking and no decisions have yet been made. A useful summary of the situation can be found in Andrew Billen (2008), Regulate this! The Times, Times2 15 July 2008, pg.5

What does this all mean for coaching? The spectre of regulation has been hovering over the coaching industry for sometime; indeed guidelines for coach training are already being looked at by government training bodies. Once psychoanalysis is regulated, is it only a matter of time before attention is turned to coaching? Certainly psychologists are concerned about being brought under the Health Professions Council, arguing that the majority of psychological approaches are not clinical and do not fit into a medical health related framework. The lack of research and clarity on what coaching is means that it is difficult to predict how the government will move on our field.

Coaching practice is commonly focused on providing performance, achieving excellence and achieving growth and development. While coaching practitioners recognise the value of regulation in terms of boundary management, ethical practice and competency to practice, statutory regulation along the lines of that used in psychology and proposed for psychotherapy would be a round peg in a square hole approach - be it at best.

i-coach receives further EMCC European Quality Awards

i-coach academy has recently been notified that we have been successful in our application to have our Certificate and Conversion Programmes accredited by the European Coaching and Mentoring Council (EMCC)

The following programmes have now been accredited by the EMCC with a European Quality Award (EQA):

- PGC in Coaching Practice - at Practitioner Level
- Certificate in Coaching Practice - at Practitioner Level
- Certificate in Coaching Practice and Mastery in Professional Coaching - at Advanced Practitioner Level
- Conversion Module and Mastery in Professional Coaching Practice - at Practitioner Level

i-coach academy has already been awarded an EQA at Master Practitioner Level for their MA Work Based Learning Studies (Professional Coaching i-coach academy) offered in association with Middlesex University.

2008 & Beyond in South Africa



I'm writing this short article on the activities and plans for i-coach academy in South Africa during 2008 on yet another airline flight from Cape Town to Johannesburg. What an exciting year it has proven to be. Like most journeys – including this one – we have had our ups and downs but we are definitely making progress and have some exciting plans for the balance of 2008 and into 2009 that I would like to share with you.

I was privileged to pick up the management of i-coach academy in South Africa in February this year with a mature programme design in place as well as a professional, experienced and stimulating faculty team. This has definitely made my task much easier and I would like to start this note by acknowledging all the excellent work done by Professor Mike van Oudtshoorn, Dr Caroline Horner and the faculty teams in both the UK and South Africa. I feel so privileged to have become a full time part of the i-coach organisation at this point in its own journey.

We have also been privileged to be piloting a partnership with Ndawo Consulting in Johannesburg in running the education programmes from their venue in Houghton. This partnership has given i-coach academy a home in Jozi (a local colloquialism for Johannesburg.....) and also increased exposure to the market in general. A big thank you to Markus Moses the CEO and Nickolette Assy the Coaching Director for making us so welcome and working with us in support of the education programme.

My key focus this year has been to take over the management of the academic programmes in South Africa including co-ordinating the completion of the two Certificate Programmes, which commenced in 2007, assisting with co-ordination for the current Masters students and setting up the programmes for 2008 and 2009. I was privileged to attend the graduation ceremony for the Certificate Programme from February 2007 in April this year. There is something so special about seeing people complete their programme and achieve this milestone towards the realisation of their dreams.

As you may have read in the previous edition, i-coach academy has recently completed a redesign of our education programmes and at the beginning of this year I was privileged to set up and run the first Foundation in Coaching Skills Programme in Johannesburg with Ronel Vermeulen taking the role of Programme Director. We have had 10 students successfully complete the programme and will be running a second programme in Johannesburg commencing in August 2008 with an estimated 15 students. We have also set up a small group in Cape Town and will be completing this programme in August 2008. This programme is an entry level programme primarily aimed at students who are starting out on a coaching journey. It is also ideally suited to those students who wish to add coaching skills to their existing skill set and who don't necessarily wish to work as coaches in a full time capacity.

There is now a new pre-requisite requirement to joining the Certificate Programmes. Prospective students need not attend the Foundation in Coaching Skills Programme but may attend an Induction Day, which offers an opportunity to complete a coaching skills assessment. We will be running two more Induction Days in 2008 giving students access to the next Certificate Programme planned to commence in April 2009. For details email barbara@i-coachacademy.com or see our website.

Following on from the Foundation in Coaching Skills Programme we were able to commence the newly designed Certificate Programme on the 29th May in Johannesburg with a group of 17 students. We have a diverse and eclectic group of wonderful adult learners, which promises to make for a stimulating and insightful learning journey together.

We have also put together a Group Supervision offer with David Sonnenberg for i-coach academy alumni and all practising coaches in South Africa who would like to participate in continued professional development. We will be offering Group Supervision in both Johannesburg and Cape Town. For details visit <http://www.i-coachacademy.com/pages/professional-development/supervision/sa-supervision.php>.

The next Masters in Professional Coaching Practice Programme in South Africa is due to commence at the end of February 2009 and we have a eager group of 17 students waiting in the wings.

So a lot is happening and there are lots of activity and plans for the future. On a personal note to conclude, this has been a fantastic four months for me. I have had some anxious moments and also some amusing times. For those of you who are on your own learning journey you will appreciate the turmoil of deconstruction and reconstruction, of steep learning curves and the anxiety of conscious incompetence.... I really have appreciated the patience and tenacity of my personal coach and supervisor and also Caroline. Caroline is a truly patient soul...I jokingly sent her an email one day to say that my learning curve was so steep I thought it may be doubling back on itself like a loop the loop and I was concerned I may fall off... This of course hasn't happened....

The things that keep us awake at night are often where our best opportunity for learning lies. My sleepless moments – and there have been a few – concern my personal passion which at the moment is about providing the best learning journey we can for the i-coach students and some significant continuous development opportunities for our alumni and the broader coaching profession in South Africa.

I am also passionate about life long learning and about making a significant contribution to the growing profession of coaching in South Africa.

We are, as a profession, I believe in a pioneering phase. We can never be pioneers again in the same profession. Our time is now. My dreams about excellence are about the excellence of education and professional development leading to excellence in coaching services ultimately for the benefit of all players but especially our clients.

I would like to end my note with a challenge to everyone in the i-coach community to do remarkable work together. And as always my sign off will be...

Towards mastery

Blessings,

Barbs

Staff Farewell



After working with i-coach academy for just over a year Marketing Project Manager Nikala Condon is leaving us to return to sunny Australia.

Nikala has been in London for the last 14 months on a holiday visa but much to her dismay, and to ours, her visa is now due to expire.

Nikala says she has very much enjoyed her time with i-coach academy.

"It's been wonderful getting to know you all. I sincerely appreciate the support that you have provided for marketing and wish you all the best," she said.

We acknowledge the contribution that Nikala has made to i-coach and wish her well on her travels.

Database Update

By now you should all have received an email from i-coach academy asking you to update your details online as part of our database cleansing activity.

If you did not receive an email or have not updated your contact details please visit www.i-coachacademy.com and select Update Your Details.

Please note, while we have been progressively updating our database over the last 12 months, we still have a number of dated records and we would strongly encourage everyone in our community to invest time in updating their details.

New EMCC E-Journal Editor

Angelique du Toit, senior lecturer at Sunderland Business School and visiting faculty with i-coach academy, has been appointed as the new editor of the International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching.

The journal is a bi-annual publication which is released on the 1st June and the 1st December every year.

Authors who would like to make a contribution to the journal should submit their papers for review to EMCC.Administrator@emcccouncil.org by 30 October for the December edition and by 30 April for the June edition.

Student Research Now Online

With more than 116 graduates and 104 students

globally, i-coach academy's community continues to make a significant contribution to the development of the coaching profession. i-coach academy has now launched an online directory of our student community's research.

There are currently 21 research summary and articles available online. We hope to grow this over the next 12 months so that the directory can operate as a value reference for our community and the industry. To review our research directory visit <http://www.i-coachacademy.com/pages/professional-development/community-research.php>

i-coach Survey on Student Offering

Attached to this newsletter alert is an i-coach academy survey which we ask that you take five minutes to complete.

The purpose of the survey is to help us learn from our community in regards to how our current product offering is perceived and how we can offer an improved service in the future.

Customer communication is a key aspect of the survey.

To complete the survey visit <http://www.i-coachacademy.com>

MOD Appetite for Coaching

Think Ministry of Defence, thinking command and control? Perhaps you should think again.

When Steve Eades, Corporate Services HRBP Team Leader for the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) organised an impact training session for Commercial Executives he did not necessarily expect an overwhelming response to the introductory session on coaching. Yet following the event the Commercial Executives Team expressed an appetite to learn more about coaching. In January 2008, Steve and his team contracted i-coach academy to run a Leadership Coaching Programme with 14 Commercial Directors, a Commercial Director General and Steve himself.

Background

The DE&S Commercial Executive Team are responsible for an annual procurement budget of around £16B. They oversee all major deals on behalf of the MOD for example the purchase of future aircrafts and ships.

As part of a general push in the MOD to develop its future leaders, the DE&S Commercial Executive Team undertook training in early 2007 which included a brief introduction to coaching for leadership development. (Coaching is part of the initiative of the MOD to develop its leaders however it is by no means consistent in all parts of the organisation.) Following the session it emerged that there was an overwhelming appetite among the Commercial Executives to learn more about coaching through formal training.

In late 2007 i-coach academy was selected to develop a customised in-house programme in partnership with the MOD. According to Steve, i-coach academy was chosen because they understood the MOD requirements better than any of the others.

Objectives for the Coaching Programme

At the completion participants should be able to:

- Identify their current leadership style and be aware of the impact of their style on others
- Identify their own and their team members learning and communication styles
- Demonstrate increased insight into their current

approach to coaching and the repertoire they hold

- Demonstrate an understanding of coaching skills and how they relate and differ from mentoring and instructing skills
- Enhance current skills and experiment and apply new skills and techniques within their workplace
- Construct and carry out coaching conversations using but not limited to GROW
- Identify personal preferences and how these influence their coaching style and those they coach
- Identify coachee's individual learning style and motivation in order to adjust their coaching approach
- Understand the limitations of a coaching leadership style
- Build successful peer coaching relationships to further support their personal development and the development of a coaching culture across the DE&S

The Programme

The programme was run over four months. Formal training included an initial two day workshop followed by some applied coaching, learning reviews, individual coaching sessions, buddy coaching and a final wash up. The majority of the time was set aside for participants to apply and practice their newly learned coaching skills in their day to day work.

Experience of i-coach academy

In delivering this programme, i-coach academy worked with a very diverse group from within the MOD.

"Both Caroline Horner and Eunice Aquilina, who delivered the programme, handled the group with exceptional professionalism and with authority which stemmed from their vast knowledge of coaching.

"I have dealt with many coaching consultancies over the years and, from my experience, i-coach academy is one of the more preeminent companies in the field," Steve said.

Programme Success

Increased Skills

Most reported that they are more confident and competent in coaching staff using the techniques they have learned. There is a greater self awareness among participants of their own leadership style. Many remarked that they are less inclined to offer solutions immediately for the coachee letting them explore for themselves possible answers. Participant's listening skills have also greatly improved.

Better Conversations With Staff

Most have seen an increase in meaningful discussions with staff, allowing conversations to develop using a more enquiring style and some remarked that they are more relaxed in allowing staff to reach their own conclusions when problem solving.

Continue With Increasing Their Skills

There is a general recognition that participants should continue with their coaching practice in the workplace, continue with the buddy system and some are considering more formal coaching training.

Embedding the Practice

In terms of embedding a coaching leadership style in the business many suggested that it would be difficult to do so without keeping this at the forefront of the Commercial Executive Board agenda. Time and work pressures can sometimes conflict with the intention to continue with coaching. It was suggested that all senior DE&S leaders should be encouraged to develop these skills as well. Many felt that coaching skills should be cascaded down the commercial management chain.

Personal Benefits

Many found that by using coaching they were able to make better use of their own time as their staff were taking greater ownership of problems thus allowing them to spend more time on strategic business issues.

Other Comments

One participant said, "A rare opportunity to learn something genuinely new and useful."

Moving Forward

Plans are now being put in place to filter this training down in the DE&S Commercial world.

Feature Focus

Coaching Conversations for Organisational Development



i-coach academy Faculty Member, Eunice Aquilina's research *How Coaching Conversations Contribute to Organisation Development* has been described as 'one of the most important contributions to coaching and OD literature to date'. Her

research shows that when coaching is integrated across an organisation (specifically the BBC) through a critical mass of leaders, it can act as a catalyst for seismic change and sustained growth.

Here Eunice shares her findings with Coaching Matters.

Organisational Context

In 2000, the BBC embarked on a radical programme of change, designed to make it "the most creative organisation in the world". Great leadership was seen as the "critical fuel" which would propel the MIH programme. Coaching would be the spark to ignite that fuel. The coaching proposition aimed to support leaders

Key findings

- Leaders in the BBC showed an outward and increasing spiral of shift in thinking and acting;
- Through this journey leaders in the BBC recognised an increased potential/capacity in their self as a leader and others;
- Leaders now have an expanded conversational repertoire leading to improved team performance;
- Single, double and triple loop learning was evident throughout the process;
- A wider perspective on leadership was developed, an ability to step back, to be strategic and see the unseen;
- Leaders were able to use coaching as a participative conversation both for themselves within the coaching and outside with their wider network;
- A methodology to track learning in and from practice has been developed.

to discover and develop a positive, individual approach and focus on the leadership practice in context. Coaching was positioned to support leaders to work on their self as a leader as well as who they were in relation to others and the wider system within the context and challenges of the BBC.

The Research

The research included both quantitative and qualitative elements. An on-line questionnaire went to 515 leaders who had worked with a coach and completed their four sessions during the survey period 2005 – 2006. A further 10% of the 515 leaders were invited to participate in a one to one interview.

The research adopted an appreciative inquiry stance making the assumption that coaching is valued as a developmental intervention and leaders are already contributing as leaders.

Online Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to explore the applicability of coaching to individual, team and business challenges. It also looked at whether

continued overleaf

respondents were doing anything differently as a result of the coaching and what they would want to use coaching for should they be offered it again. Some of the key findings included:

- 36% reported that their experience of coaching helped them to lead better in uncertainty
- 45% of leaders reported that coaching had been largely successful in helping them to manage individual performance
- 51% reported that coaching had been largely or completely successful in helping them to develop strategies for the future
- 87% of leaders endorsed the contribution of coaching
- 91% said that they would work with a coach again on issues about their leadership style, confidence in a leadership role and managing poor performance

What Emerged from the Leaders Own Stories About Coaching?

The different stories showed that through the coaching relationship, coachees were co-creating an outward and increasing spiral of shift in thinking and acting more likely to build sustained change. They had identified how they were creating new or revised realities for themselves. The data also identified what the coachees had "privileged" in the coaching conversation, or in other words what was an important focus to them in the coaching. Who they were as a leader was a key focus. Working with new ideas about leadership by applying them to real time issues enabled them to reconstruct, in a personally meaningful way, their leadership role. They recognised how this was personal learning, specific to them and yet in the context of the organisation, so they were learning in and from practice. At the same time, they realised this was a personal journey that led to recognising an increased potential and capacity in ones self as a leader.

The nature of the learning from the coaching conversations was evident at all three levels of single, double and even triple loop learning.

Leaders' reported how they had shifted from controlling to open; from dominating to accepting; and from feeling overwhelmed to being calm and confident. The cumulative effect of these shifts with so many leaders learning in and from their practise has the potential to shift the nature of leadership for the BBC.

Implications of This Research

Through my inquiry, a number of key themes surfaced. Coaching should be situated in the context, culture and challenges of the organisation. What is the organisation for, what's its purpose and what is the environment in which it operates? How do things happen within this organisation, how are things done? And what are the particular challenges facing the organisation, what is the organisation seeking to achieve? My inquiry has reinforced the need to clearly articulate the coaching proposition and to engage both the coaches and the coachee in this through an orientation process. The coaching conversations help leaders deconstruct their mental models of leadership and reconstruct new or improved ways of leading, including self-led learning. It is this which is likely to leverage sustained change. Furthermore, when multiplied across an organisation through a critical mass of leaders it has the capacity to generate organisational learning by creating the know-how both to sustain leadership effectiveness and support further change.

Interview with Mary Beth O'Neill

In September i-coach academy is bringing internationally renowned executive coach and bestselling author, Mary Beth O'Neill to London to facilitate a two day seminar. Here Mary Beth talks to Coaching Matters about coaching in the current economy, her unique approach and why people should attend her seminar.

1. What was your professional background prior to becoming a coaching? Why did you choose to pursue a career as an executive coaching?

I was a director of training and development for Sheraton Hotels. Before that I was an external organisation development consultant. I found that to do effective process consulting, it was necessary to talk with the sponsor about their leadership challenges. Otherwise, those very same challenges could derail the project. So I was having coaching conversations with executives before it was called coaching. And as a director of training, I found that managers were much more passive about their learning in training sessions than they were when they came into my office privately to talk about a problem they were having with an employee. I found myself developing a coaching practice within my organisation because that's where the motivated learners were.

2. What is unique about your approach to coaching?

It keeps three dynamics always in play and integrated:
a) The executive's personal development as a leader
b) The systemic patterns at play that improve or detract from effective teamwork and leadership, and
c) The results the leader and the team need to achieve for the organisation.

3. You say that you model 'equips clients facing leadership dilemmas in organisations to enhance their leadership skills and deliver results'. Can you share a little more on how your approach assists leaders to do this?

Everyone has a list of "needs improvement" areas for their leadership. Or you might say, everyone has that list of "New Year's resolutions" about their leadership that they should address, for example, "I need to be more open to input," or "I should be more decisive," or "I need to give better presentations." These lists remain dormant just like the typical New Year's resolution lists of losing weight and exercising more. I work with an executive to choose those leadership challenges that, if addressed, will create a significant improvement in the results they get for the organisation while achieving higher levels of teamwork and initiative. Their areas of leadership which need improvement are customised to their specific organisational challenges.

4. One area which you are well known for is live action coaching. In your opinion what are the benefits of this approach?

Live action coaching can address at once all three of the areas I mentioned earlier – individual leader development, shifting systemic patterns between the leader and the team, and achieving business outcomes. I think of it as kinaesthetic learning, both for the leader and the team. While they are right in the middle of their work with each other, on their actual business problems, they receive coaching suggestions. This is learning that they are more likely to retain because it changes how they interact while they work. That's the kinaesthetic part. Live action coaches can help a leader and team to interact in more successful ways. They can bring that learning to other business problems and issues.

5. How do most clients respond to a live action coaching scenario?

Tentatively at first. It takes them a bit to see that the live action coaches are not there to facilitate the meeting or even to give them feedback during the action. Live



action coaching makes suggestions and asks questions that help everyone stay on their goal of improving their effectiveness as a team member. It involves quite a bit of prep work, particularly for the leader, before walking into the first live action session. Once they see that the live interventions are to help them stay on course with their goals, then they take bigger steps in changing their behaviour to be more productive.

6. Can you share an example of one of the more difficult cases where you have worked with a leader facing a major dilemma and helped them to turn the organisation around to achieve significant results?

One situation was a health care organization that was in a financial crisis and the new CEO had to turn the organisation around in many areas in order to achieve fiscal stability. Besides the financial crisis, the CEO faced an ineffective executive team and pockets of open resistance in some of the departments below the executive level. He needed to change his default style of leadership, mobilise the executive team, and get the whole organisation on board with changes in how they dealt with their finances, programs, and interactions with each other. I brought in my colleague, Roger Taylor, and we had live action coached business meetings with the CEO and executive team, as well as 1-1 coaching of the CEO. The results were a stunning turnaround of the organisation, both in how they mobilised commitment to the new direction and in achieving the financial turnaround. The CEO calculated a 10-1 benefit-to-cost ratio on the funds dedicated to the coaching effort.

7. What are some of your major clients that the British market would recognise?

Nike and Microsoft.

8. With the current credit crunch have you seen organisations demanding more of their leaders and an increase in leaders facing major leadership dilemmas?

This is now at least the third significant economic downturn in the last 25 years that I've witnessed organisations facing. Each time leaders face more demands and greater leadership dilemmas. Coaching that can help leaders develop themselves while they achieve results is the coaching that will be seen as a strategic partner to the business community.

9. Why would you encourage people attend your event?

The workshop will cover my 3-in-1 model to coaching, which provides a way to be a strategic business partner even in an economic downturn.

Participants will have a chance to apply the model to a real situation they face. Coaches will benefit because they will learn the tools I use as a coach every day. Leaders will benefit because these are exactly the tools I put into leaders' hands so that they can lead their teams to greater initiative and results.

For information and to register visit <http://www.i-coachacademy.com/pages/events/feature-event-coaching-executives-to-lead-with-backbone-and-heart35.php>

Research

Coaching Senior Leaders in Career Transitions

By Penny Jones, Founder of Azurite and i-coach academy MA alumni

Today's organisations are subject to continual change and re-organisation. As a result, many graduates entering the workplace now face in excess of eight transitions throughout their career, including change well into their days as senior leaders. Having personally experienced a range of significant career transitions during 20 years of leadership in the public sector, i-coach academy graduate Penny Jones established her coaching practice Azurite in 2007 with a specific interest in supporting clients in transition.

For her Masters Research Penny chose to explore senior leaders in transition and the extent to which they were:

- Aware of the transition as a process that needed focus;
- The opportunity for personal and leadership development; and
- Whether coaching was used or considered supportive during this time.

Below Penny presents her research.

The current literature reflects the prevalence of 'the sink or swim approach' to transitions in most organisations but suggests that there are those who see the benefits for the organisation and individuals from supporting the process of transition.

The personal assumptions that this research aimed to test included:

- The assumption that transitions are predictable and individuals can learn from previous experiences and develop skills to improve their management of them
- The assumption that accessing support can enable more effective transitions for highly visible senior leaders in unknown territory
- The assumption that coaching can support both of the above by providing important reflective learning conversations with appropriate challenge and identified protected time in a safe environment.

Objectives

The objectives of this study were to explore:

- The experience of, and learning from, the transition;
- The consciousness of the transition as both a process and a learning opportunity;

- The range of support senior leaders put in place to assist their transition; and
- The role and value of coaching within that support.

Methodology

A total of 15 people were interviewed from the private, not-for-profit and public sectors organisations all providing services to the public. All had experienced significant career transitions, some along side other life transitions. The senior leaders included Chairs, Chief Executives and Directors or the equivalent. A different perspective was provided by three Search and Recruitment Executives.

A range of qualitative mechanisms were used to gather information and evidence for this research including a literature review, guided interviews and post interview questionnaires.

Results

A number of key findings resulted from the interviews and questionnaires including:

- The transition experience was affected by the individual's experience of other previous transitions, parallel personal transitions, level of preparation, lack of choice and control
- Participants consistently expressed feelings of being "out of their comfort zone" and "alone"
- All participants demonstrated learning from the transition but at different times. Learning came through reflection but few participants prioritised time for reflection or built in opportunities for personal challenge
- All participants had accessed support of some kind and were retrospectively aware of benefits and gaps of their arrangements. The scale of support was generally in line with their level of preparation and preference
- The majority of participants had used and valued coaching but only a minority used this to support their transition
- Lack of choice of coach, approach and the timing of coaching can impact negatively on the relationship.

Conclusions

Only a minority recognised the transition as a process itself needing focus and management and that this process could be used as a positive learning opportunity.

The key determinant in how transitions were experienced was the extent to which the person in transition felt they had a conscious choice and could be in control of the process.

Those who positively chose their transition and those who had significantly more experience had greater awareness of the process and what it meant for them. This enabled those participants to plan accordingly, some working with coaches.

Those participants who were reacting to the transition generally planned less, felt less prepared, prioritised themselves less; and when coaching was used it became a key support mechanism particularly through the "letting go" phase of the transition.

For some participants a greater awareness of the need to manage the transition process and the associated learning would have resulted in the use of coaching at that time.

Organisations failed to acknowledge that leaders in career transitions are often managing the consequences of parallel personal transitions.

Recommendations

Leaders of organisations, mentors and coaches need to actively promote awareness of the transition as a process for focus and an opportunity for personal and leadership development.

The transition is something that needs to be managed and supported so highly visible leaders in career transitions, which are often in 'unknown territory', can thrive rather than "sink or swim".

Coaching should be valued as a learning partnership that can provide the protected time, space and appropriate challenge to support leaders in transition. For information on Azurite Coaching visit www.azuritecoaching.com

Watch this space for research summaries from other students who will be presenting at our Inaugural Annual Research Day in November, including Tamsin Slyce and Louise Buckle who's research will be featured in the next edition.

i-coach academy Inaugural Annual Research Day

'An exciting opportunity to hear about the latest research and its implications for the industry from our student community'

4 November 2008, Central London, £100 + VAT

With more than 116 graduates and 104 students across the globe, i-coach academy's community continues to make a significant contribution to the development of the profession through research. The Inaugural Annual Research Presentation Day will be designed to incorporate conversation and debate so that attendees and presenters will benefit from feedback regarding research ideas and outcomes presented. This is a great way to ensure that you stay informed on the latest developments in an evolving coaching industry.

Hear About:

- * Coaching and selection
- * Increasing awareness in the coaching environment
- * Coaching to support leaders in uncertainty
- * Coaching leaders in transitions and much more.

For information and to book your place visit <http://www.i-coachacademy.com/pages/events/annual-research-presentation-day--i-coach-academy-ma-community34.php>.

To share what you would be keen to learn more about in research, please complete the i-coach academy survey released with this edition of Coaching Matters.

i-coachacademy
developing the professional coach
www.i-coachacademy.com

Programme Dates

i-coach academy still has spaces on our academic programmes. If you are interested in registering for a programme or know anyone who may also be interested please visit our website www.i-coachacademy.com or call 0207 317 1882 for further details.

Foundation in Coaching Skills (London)
Commencing - 24 September 2008

Certificate in Coaching Practice (London)
Commencing - 6 October 2008

Conversion Module (London)
(Option for entry directly into second year MA)
Commencing - 6 October 2008

Masters in Professional Coaching (London)
Commencing - 20 January 2009

Certificate in Coaching Supervision (London)
Commencing - March 2009

Foundation in Coaching Skills (South Africa)
Commencing - 4 February 2009

Masters in Professional Coaching (South Africa)
Commencing 2009

Certificate in Coaching Practice (South Africa)
Commencing - 22 April 2009

Event Dates

Coaching Executives to Lead with Backbone & Heart
Facilitator: Mary Beth O'Neill
11 - 12 September 2008
London

Constructive Coaching: Using Personal Construct Psychology Methods in Your Coaching Practice
Facilitator: Nick Reed
30 September 2008
London

Integrating Internal and External Resources
Facilitator: Dr Caroline Horner
2 October 2008
London

A Conversation on Coaching Supervision
Facilitator: Dr Alison Strasser
8 October 2008
London

The Question of Time in Coaching
Facilitator: Dr Alison Strasser
9 October 2008
London

Inaugural Annual Research Presentation Day
MA & Doctorate Community
4 November 2008
London

Supervision Dates

Group Supervision - London
Supervisor: Prof. Ernesto Spinelli
Commencing: 13 October

Group Supervision - South Africa
Supervisor: David Sonnenberg
Commencing: July
Johannesburg & Cape Town

Book Review

Handbook of Coaching Psychology

Stephen Palmer & Dr Alison Whybrow (Eds.)
Hove: Routledge, 2007
Reviewed by: Dr Siobhain O'Riordan

The Handbook of Coaching Psychology provides a significant and comprehensive contribution to this field. Rich in content and offering a wealth of information it is both an essential guide for practitioners and a thorough academic literature resource. The Handbook effectively introduces the essence of coaching psychology to the reader with the important elements and fundamental principles being highlighted throughout. It is an accessible text that draws together leading national and international experts in the field to provide insights on the frameworks, psychological theories and practice of coaching psychology.

The introduction sets the scene by exploring the differences between coaching psychology and coaching, before moving on to a consideration of the origins of coaching psychology and more recent developments in the profession. By drawing on evidence from the sports literature from the first part of the last century the historic roots of 'a psychology of coaching' are well-established.

The Handbook is divided into four parts, taking the reader on a journey through: perspectives and research in coaching psychology; coaching psychology approaches; understanding relationships, diversity and development in coaching and coaching psychology; and sustainable practice.

Part I provides an analysis of the development of this field and sets out the current context of coaching and coaching psychology. Part II offers insights into eleven different psychological approaches used in coaching practice. This authoritative consideration is well-informed and the range includes already established approaches such as cognitive behavioural coaching, solution focused coaching and neuro-linguistic programming. The collection is also extended upon to introduce and consider perhaps less well known approaches such as narrative coaching and an existential approach to coaching psychology. Each model and framework is presented in an independent chapter and serves to invite the reader to broaden their understanding and appreciation of the variety of potential approaches and applications within a coaching psychology and coaching context.

Part III focuses on topics such as the coach-client relationship and professional boundaries. By drawing

Event Reviews

Coaching and Mental Health – Recognising a Mental Health Problem vs. an Unusual Personality

Review by Paul Ellis, i-coach academy alumni

Andrew Buckley has written one of the few books to directly address coaching and mental health issues and on 15 July he ran a CPD event with i-coach academy on this issue. While there is considerable literature on related issues in counselling and psychotherapy the issue is normally covered in boundary management interventions on coaching courses. Andrew's event provided an opportunity to learn in more detail about this issue, and given the event was sold out, indicates that this is an issue which many coaches are keen to learn more on.

Andrew provided a rational, down-to-earth approach based on his years of experience as a coach and a counsellor, supported by his research. The key messages helped to de-bunk some of the concerns that the audience had, as he pointed out that while the

upon the existing literature and evidence from allied fields such as counselling, diversity and psychometrics a practical emphasis informs practitioners' current and continuing professional development. Two chapters on sustainable practice, change management and coaching psychology supervision, are the two chapters provided in Part IV. The appendix section is a useful resource and relates to professional bodies, coaching and coaching psychology related journals and university-based coaching psychology units and centres.

Overall, whilst different authors have contributed individual chapters each is well-crafted and they are complementary. This presents a well integrated and flowing book that meets the requirements of academic rigour. Each chapter makes a significant and engaging contribution to this up-to-date consideration of coaching psychology, evidence-based practice and related topics. There is a wealth of case studies and examples to illustrate practical applications of the frameworks and psychological theories. All of which is presented in a thoughtful, readable and straightforward style.

The Handbook of Coaching Psychology is a welcome and much needed addition to the literature providing an excellent resource for both experienced practitioners and those who are newer to the field. My view is that it effectively delivers on providing the reader with an opportunity to share in the best theory and practice of coaching psychology, successfully blending together practical guidance grounded within a theoretical and research-based context. Having read the Handbook, I now continually find myself re-visiting it as an invaluable source of reference. The breadth and depth of the Handbook of Coaching Psychology means it is essential reading for the coaching psychologist, coach, those working in related areas and indeed anyone interested in learning more about this emerging area of professional practice.

Faculty Contributions

Faculty members Prof. Ernesto Spinelli and Halina Brunning (visiting faculty) and Director Dr Caroline Horner are contributing authors in the Handbook of Coaching Psychology. Dr Alison Whybrow is co-editor.

incidence of mental illness is high, it rarely manifests itself as a severe illness such as schizophrenia or mania. When a mental disorder does present itself, he emphasised that the only question the coach had to ask themselves was: "Is coaching appropriate?" If it isn't then the coach should not seek to establish what is wrong (which is the purview of medical diagnosis) or offer to help (as coaches are not trained to help in this area). Instead the coach should seek help from the many professionals in this field, using the client organisation to facilitate this. For those concerned about breach of client confidence he suggested that the rule of malfeasance, do the least harm was the key here, so get help rather than intervene and risk doing more damage.

Overall this was a clear, thoughtful, well presented event, which helped deepen the understanding of what is a critical, but thankfully rare issue. Further reading: A Guide to Coaching and Mental Health, Andrew Buckley and Carole Buckley, Routledge 2006.

Event Reviews Cont.

Global Coaching Convention - Dublin 2008

By Dr Caroline Horner

For the last year, nearly 250 people from 23 countries across the world have been involved in the Global Coaching Convention (GCC). This year long process aimed to bring together all those involved in coaching (consumers, practitioners, educators and industry bodies) in a collaborative dialogue to understand the key issues of these stakeholders and to generate a series of future scenarios based on different ways to resolve key questions.

The model for this process draws from the Mont Fleur process which was adopted by leaders of the opposing factions in South Africa to collectively discuss the future for South Africa at the end of Apartheid. More information on the process can be found on <http://www.coachingconvention.org/Files/The%20Process.pdf>

For the GCC, this work culminated in the actual Convention in Dublin from 7- 11 July, attended by over 50 people from 16 nations, including representatives of organisations such as the ICF and EMCC. i-coach academy takes an active interest in the development of field of coaching and were one of the sponsors of the event as well as an attending participant.

The GCC work was organised across ten Working Groups who gathered data from their members around the world, on a diverse range of topics which covered: Mapping the Field; Research Agenda; Knowledge Base for Coaching; Training Guidelines; Evaluation of Coaching Interventions; Core Competences; Code of Ethics; Selection of Coaches; Professional Status; and Coaching and Society.

The Convention process, modelled around an Appreciative Inquiry approach, involved examining the multiple scenarios generated from each working

group before looking for common themes and patterns across the areas of investigation. The papers provided a snapshot of what is currently happening in coaching across the world today. The common themes that emerged were probably to be expected including; the diversity of approaches, lack of commonality; the range of training and education offered.

The dialogue generated further insight into the participants concerns for the future of coaching. Themes from the discussion included:

- A strong desire to see more informed research which would differentiate coaching from areas such as psychology, so that coaching was seen as informed by, but separate from this field
- Concern that if the coaching industry doesn't start to work together, governments may introduce legislation, so now was the time to drive towards professionalisation
- Questions were raised over the standards of education and training, and that unless a move was made to articulate the importance of better standards at a high level (Masters Degree level was the highest mentioned) then the industry may suffer in the long term from poor quality coaching
- The centrality of ethics and how that underpins many of the working groups. Would it be possible to have a universal code of ethics on a global scale?

The outcome of all this work has been a Dublin Declaration, which will be published on the GCC website soon. A draft of the Declaration can be viewed at <http://www.i-coachacademy.com/media/newsletter/Dublin%20Declaration%20on%20Coaching%20Draft.pdf>

Such declarations have long been used by third sector organisations to call for action from the wider community. The convention itself has no structure



or employees, so it is up to the coaching community worldwide to decide whether they wish to build on what is effectively a 'line in the sand' on the state of coaching today. The Declaration will include a brief document for each of the 10 working groups, a distillation of the findings during the convention and proposed possible ways forward.

It remains to be seen what will become of this work, however some participants were already discussing the possibilities of a follow-on Convention in a few years time. The GCC was an honest attempt by people committed to coaching to bring together, in coaching style, the various stakeholders, and provides a basis for any future attempts to bring cohesion to what is at times a fragmented industry.

Exploring the Interdependency Between the Person, the Role and the Organisation

By Sam Humphrey, i-coach academy alumni

This workshop would certainly not win prizes for snappiest title, but it was a fantastic event that mixed theory and practice astonishingly well.

Halina Brunning's workshop was a delicious tasting menu of the many delights she explores in her much acclaimed book, Executive Coaching – Systems Psychodynamic Perspective.

When I was at school, the lessons I liked best were the ones that allowed me not only to learn something but to be able to show my family what I had learned. Home economics was the best example of that. My teacher – who made Miss Jean Brodie look positively soft – would talk us through the theory of the recipe we were to make that day and support us through the practical elements, help us reflect on how we could have done it better and encouraged us to try it at home, maybe even experimenting with some alternative ingredients, (Kolb would be proud of how closely we followed the learning cycle).

The best bit for me, was being able to take my creation home to my family and show them what I had learned. Not only could they see, touch and smell it, they could taste it too! As if that wasn't enough (and for the green

tuna bake, it was) I could also give them the recipe and they could have a go at it themselves.

This was my experience of Halina Brunning's workshop. A day of structured learning that I got to take home, show my family and let them taste it too – fantastic. The day started with an introduction to some of the theory we would be working with. Ms Brunning was a master of sound bites and used generous numbers of snippets, metaphors and stories to add depth to the assumptions and models we would be working within throughout the day.

There were no half measures on the day, it had been organised to the minute – a refreshing change to the elastic time keeping I seem to come across so often now at work. Our group was small, therefore intimate, which allowed deeper dives into the practical work. Ms Brunning led us through a plethora of experiential activities including case studies, paired and group exercises and some individual activity too.

I particularly enjoyed the Working Life Biography exercise which is a fantastic activity to help one look at the prevailing patterns in one's working life. The exercise allowed my partner and I to map out the role(s) we had played throughout the significant periods of our working lives. In doing so, we gained insights into the patterns and themes we find ourselves subconsciously or consciously creating. This exercise certainly gave me some useful reflections and enabled me to think in a more informed way about whether or not I consciously

continue some of these themes and patterns, amplify them or try to create different ones.

The best bit about the day was how immediately applicable it all was. I have had great success with a client whom I encouraged to draw out his Working Life Biography, the results of which were for him deliciously epiphanous.

I thought Ms Brunning served up a fantastic day and left me hungry for more.

ICF European Coaching Conference



i-coach academy was an exhibitor at the recent ICF European Coaching Conference in Geneva.