Tools and Techniques for Coaching in Unpredictable Times

West Midlands Coaching Pool
6th Annual Conference
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6th Annual Conference 11 November 2013
Tools and techniques for coaching in unpredictable times

Thanks to our exhibitors:

Thanks to our speakers:

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the impact of executive coaching

WEST MIDLANDS COACHING POOL ANNUAL CONFERENCE

11 November 2013

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The impact of executive coaching

• What works?

• What works for whom?

• What works for whom and when?

• How is the impact of coaching changing?

• How is the practice of leadership changing?
1. trends in helping conversations

- **1890**: Breuer, Freud
- **1900-1930**: Psychoanalysis
- **1935**: Behaviorism (Skinner)
- **1950**: Rational-Emotive (Ellis)
- **1960**: Cognitive (Beck)
- **1955**: Paradoxical (Watzlawick)
- **1974**: Client-Centred (Farrelly)
- **1985**: Solution Focused (De Shazer)

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Research in helping conversations

Best Estimate 1992
(Michael Lambert)

Best Estimate 2001
(Bruce Wampold)

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Research in Helping Conversations

Ten commandments backed up by research:
1. *primum non nocere ... in dubio abstine*
2. have faith: any professional approach works
3. commit yourself fully (even to your model)
4. feed the hope of your client
5. view the relationship through the eyes of the client
6. build that relationship
7. dare to swap therapist / coach
8. take good care of yourself
9. remain fresh and receptive
10. don’t worry about the specifics (ie your model, or the specific things you say or do)

In short, a lot of evidence for a *relational* stance!
2. trends in executive coaching

What are global trends for executive coaches in the 21st Century?

- A move from ‘stigma’ to ‘status’
- A huge increase in popularity
- Developing a ‘profession’ and first steps towards a research body
- Accreditation, supervision, qualification programmes
- Much interest in the question of ‘what works for whom’

Would you agree?
Would you challenge some of these?
Have I missed important trends?
1993-2013
Twenty years of coaching research
Illustrating the rise of common factors in coaching outcome research

1. Field studies into client reports without a control group: huge effects
   McGovern et al. (2001), Levenson (2009), Wasylyshyn et al. (2006), Kombarakaran et al. (2008), Schlosser et al. (2006), Grant & Cavanagh (2007)

2. Field studies with objective measures, without a control group: large effects

3. Field studies with objective measures and a control group: tiny effects
   Smither et al. (2003), Sue-Chan & Latham (2004) and Evers et al. (2006). Largest of these was Smither et al., 2003: 1202 senior managers of which 404 were coached

4. Comparing conditions: evidence for client conscientiousness, openness, stability; self-efficacy, relationship, and technique
   Scoular & Linley (2006), Stewart et al. (2008), Boyce et al. (2010), Baron & Morin (2009 and 2010) and De Haan et al. (2011 and 2013)

“ROI = 545 %!”
and so what about ‘Hawthorne’…?
The ‘greatest ever’ research programme in coaching outcome research

- An ‘open source’ approach started by Ashridge, VU & Sydney Univ.
- Collecting as many measurements of real live coaching sessions as we can.
- First time that organisational coaching sponsors are involved in outcome research.
The ‘active ingredients’ are common factors:

The **Relationship** (but **only** as seen by client)

The **Person** of Helper (warmth, status, empathy, health, freshness, etc.)

**Technique or Approach:** zero impact

**So no need for matching of coach to client!**

**Ideology of Helper** (conviction, allegiance)

**Hope** (in other words, the ‘placebo’ effect)

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What we know from the sponsors

I: Quantitative findings:
- Sponsors generally view executive coaching as an effective intervention
- Sponsor scores correlate with clients’ scores on the effectiveness of their coaching, but not with coaches’ scores

II: Qualitative findings:
- We have asked coaches, clients and organisational sponsors to name one critical moment: an exciting, tense or significant moment that they remember from the coaching journey.
- We received 49 matching descriptions in total.
- Comparison of these critical-moment descriptions with hundreds of such descriptions by coaches and clients shows key differences:
Perspectives on coaching

Clients notice mostly ‘realisations’

Inexperienced coaches notice mostly ‘doubt’

Experienced coaches notice mostly ‘anxiety’

Sponsors notice mostly ‘observable actions’

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3. trends in leadership practice

What are global trends for executive coaching clients in the 21st Century?

- A need to bring ever more personal and emotional sides of oneself to the table: leading self before leading others
- Hence a growing interest in ‘happiness’, ‘mindfulness’ and ‘the dark side’.
- Pressure on results and an ‘evidence base’
- Very slowly increasing understanding of what leadership is, how to achieve results, and what makes leaders impactful
- The demise of ‘transformational’ leadership
- More questions being asked about bonuses, golden parachutes, shirking of responsibilities etc.
References I

References II


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Any Questions?
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