

COACHING

AS A METHOD OF DEVELOPING

HUMAN
POTENTIAL





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CONTENTS

Lidia D. Czarkowska – Introduction	7
Stephen Gilligan, Robert Dilts – Navigating the hero’s journey: principles and processes for a meaningful life	11

PART I

SCIENCE IN THE SERVICE OF COACHING

Lidia D. Czarkowska – Professionalism and process of professionalization in coaching	27
Urszula Sadomska – Continuous self development – the elements of attitude that a coach should always develop	43
Włodzimierz Włodarski – “ADMIT” model – management and influence domain	64
Marta Gabalewicz-Paul – Applying cognitive behavioural approach in coaching	82
Paweł Smółka – Interpersonal skills coaching: an evidence-based approach	93

PART II

COACHING IN THE SERVICE OF ORGANIZATIONS

Maciej Bennewicz – From individual management development to organization systems coaching	111
Zbigniew Brzeziński – Executive coaching in times of crisis and changes – the method of striving for perfection for senior managers at all times	120
Katarzyna Ramirez-Cyzio – Careercoaching – trend or necessity?	136
Lucyna Wiskowska – How coaching unleashes the potential of a team	152
Bożena Wujec – Cross-cultural coaching	162
Olga Rzycka – Manager, coaching, coaching-based management – coach’s insights (subjective approach)	176
Anna Dąbrowska – Strengths and weaknesses of internal coaching	183
Alicja Majka – Systemic coaching for talent development: a case study	192

PART III**BEST PRACTICES**

Kazimierz F. Nalepa – 6 pillars of success in coaching. How is it worth to invest in human potential?	207
Urszula Kuzińska – The work of the coach and the work of the client	225
Patrycja Sznajder – Implementing coaching based on competencies	237
Mirosława Huflejt-Łukasik – The practical meaning of a coaching contract	245
Zbigniew Kieras – The coach's perspective	253
Michał Kułakowski – The control of awareness as a key to increasing the quality of life and unleashing potential	261
AUTHORS	271

Lidia D. Czarkowska

INTRODUCTION

Let's stop and think for a moment about why coaching is gaining so many enthusiasts so fast. Ever since at the turn of the 1970s and 1980s, and in Poland at the beginning of this millennium, coaching came into existence also outside of the sphere of professional sports as a method of working on the development of human potential, its popularity has been increasing rapidly. Coaching in organizations is becoming a standard and the "trend of coaching" is continuously increasing. A significant indicator of this phenomenon is also the rapid increase in the amount of coaches that are registered in the largest global association for the representatives of this profession: The International Coach Federation, which had 1500 registered members in the year 2000 and in 2009 this number has grown to over 15 thousand members. The overall number of specialists that carry out this profession is estimated to be around the 60–70 thousand.

Is coaching something new? Yes and no. We live in an era of infinite choices that the contemporary individual has to face, an era of a wide spectrum of available options, an era of continuous individual decisions. The cultural values of the postmodern era and the lifestyle resulting from them have substantially changed the character of the societies of Europe, North America and the Far East. Our possibilities in life and the available social positions do not depend anymore, like in the feudal times, on our origin, and neither on our assets, like in capitalism, and not even on knowledge, like in modernism. Currently, the foundation of our life chances is an adequate identification, effective development and maximum use of our own potential.

It is not so much about the level of openness of the stratification structure, but rather about standing out in the magnitude of parallel career paths and new "ways" of living, which, on the one hand, give an incredible amount of possibilities of social mobility that were not available in the past generations, and at the same time, on the other hand,

impose responsibility on each of us for the made choices. When we combine this with the phenomenon of a general loosening of social ties (including family) and the tolerance towards many coexisting axiological systems, the high need for coaching becomes more understandable. Individuals do not receive “the only righteous, ready patterns for behavior” anymore by being raised in a given family or in a given culture. They must discover them for themselves and find ways of implementing them.

The basis of the work with a coach is the known since thousands of years Socratic dialogue combined with the gift of mindfulness and acceptance, and, of course, extensive theoretical knowledge in many fields of science as well as techniques and tools derived from the so called “effective practices”. Currently, the scope that can be called the scientific foundation of coaching is becoming gradually clearer, research is carried out on the conditions of its success and practical methods and techniques that are used during coaching work are tested with respect to their effectiveness. For this reason, when I was inviting foreign and Polish experts to collectively work on this book, I paid particular attention to such a selection of specialists (scientists, researchers and coaches-practitioners), so that it would be possible to show the wide spectrum of the various approaches that currently coexist in the field of coaching.

This book is like a kaleidoscope, a multicolored and intriguing puzzle made of colored glass pieces, which dynamically changes depending on the angle in which it is placed. Similarly, the various approaches, concepts, models and practical applications that are contained in this book, throw different lights on coaching, giving it a unique coloring each time. The overall picture of coaching after reading this book also depends on the reader himself, his attitude and experience – his perspective and the criteria that he finds particularly important. Maybe an even more suitable analogy would be to compare this book to a collage, or even a three-dimensional form of it, i.e. an assemblage, because each author presents his own filtered version of the overall notion of coaching as well as an individual, based on practice, context of coaching practices.

The main idea of the book is coaching as a method of discovering and effectively developing human potential. A special article written by the internationally renowned experts Roberta Dilts and Stephen Gilligan entitled *Navigating The Hero's Journey: Principles and Processes for a Meaningful Life* is dedicated to this topic. The essence of coaching is all about accompanying the client in the process of discovering and developing his potential. The authors of the article state the following: “The Hero's Journey is an archetypal path of individual transformation. It is a map that shows the stages of our personal process of evolution.

These stages are revealed time and again in myths and legends in all cultures throughout the history of humanity. While the structure of these stages is universal, the expression is completely unique for each individual. At different times in our lives we are aware of a calling; a push or pull forward. This starts us on a path of learning and growth. Along this path we meet inevitable challenges. Confronting these challenges forces us to evolve in ways and new direction and brings us to a journey of self-discovery. This journey involves crossing a threshold into a new territory outside of our comfort zones, finding the proper guardians (resources), and facing and transforming inner “demons” or “shadows”. As coaches, we accompany our clients on their hero’s journey’s acting as guardians and providing key maps, tools and resources. (...) Gilligan and Dilts will explore ways in which coaches can support their clients during times of major change and transition in their lives including how to:

- More effectively recognize and manage the stages of change they are experiencing.
- Connect with and transform the energetic source of difficult feelings.
- Overcome blocks and move forward on their life paths with more freedom and flexibility.
- Bring more energy, creativity and generativity into their daily lives
- Handle challenging situations with more confidence and ease”.

Source: <http://www.nlpu.com/Hero%27sJourney&5Rhythms.htm>

The topic of coaching as a method of development of human potential can also be found in the successive articles. There it is presented from various theoretical perspectives within the social sciences (sociology, psychology as well as management) and based on practical implementation. In order to give the book a clear and coherent structure, the articles have been categorized into three principal parts: 1) *Science in the service of coaching* – this part contains materials that are based on theoretical deliberations and scientific research, which are useful for coaching practitioners; 2) *Coaching in the service of organizations* – this part contains descriptions of ways of implementing coaching in corporations and using the principles of coaching in management; and 3) *Best practices* – this part contains case studies and here coaches share their own experiences of the methods and tools that they apply both in organizational coaching and in life-coaching.

Before coaching will be institutionalized enough as a method for the development of human potential, so that the professionalization process of the coaching profession can be officially recognized and finalized – let’s continue studying it and deriving inspiration, let’s look for truths and let’s play with its diversity fully using its potential.

Hopefully this book, by presenting a wide range of perspectives, will broaden the spectrum of our possibilities for accompanying clients in the process of finding unique methods for discovering and developing potential, instead of finding the usual excuses not to do so.

Stephen Gilligan, Robert Dilts

NAVIGATING THE HERO'S JOURNEY: PRINCIPLES AND PROCESSES FOR A MEANINGFUL LIFE

One of the hallmarks of successful and effective people is a deep sense of purpose and intention. Without this deep sense, it is easy to get lost in the infinite dramas of everyday life, to be pulled by the many forces trying to use you in one way or another. By sensing and aligning with an inner calling, it is possible to steer one's life course in a meaningful way. One of the best models for describing this path is the "Hero's Journey", first described by the mythologist Joseph Campbell (1949) in his seminal book, *The Hero with a thousand faces*.

Campbell examined stories of heroes, historical and mythical, spanning all ages, cultures, religions and genders. Campbell noted how across many cultures and throughout time there was a common deep structure pattern – that is, a basic myth – about a person who lived an extraordinary life that brought new gifts and transformations to both self and community.

The path of the hero's journey generally follows three steps: (1) living in the garden, (2) exile into the desert, and (3) return to the garden with new gifts. That is, a person starts in the consensus "trance" or "identity box" of the mainstream community; then gets pushed out of the ordinary "box" of reality in ways that force him or her to let go of old maps and forge new resources and understandings. This heroic journey involves crossing a threshold into a new territory outside of his or her comfort zone, finding the proper guardians (resources), and facing and transforming inner "demons" or "shadows" (i.e., major problems). Then, having successfully navigated the trials and tribulations of these thresholds and ordeals, the "re-born" person returns to the community as a different person, with many contributions to make.

There are many well-known examples of the hero's journey – healers like Jesus or Milton Erickson, social change agents like Gandhi or Martin Luther King, artists like Bob Dylan or Picasso; inventors and scientists like Thomas Edison or Carl Jung. Each of these individuals went through long ordeals to transform themselves into a human being that had something extraordinary to contribute.

Of course, there are even more instances of lesser known people who venture on the hero's journey – regular people who move through transformational paths as parents, children, citizens, and workers. The journey may be initiated by failed relationships, physical illness, career challenges, unexpected events, or significant traumas. Whatever the case, the myth of the hero's journey provides a way to understand such crises as doorways into a deep journey of transformation and positive change. The hero's journey is a beautiful guide for anybody interested in living a life with deep meaning and contribution; a life imbued with happiness, helpfulness, health, and healing to self and community alike.

To realize the hero's journey, a person needs maps, tools, and resources. So what we'd like to do in this article is briefly overview how the hero's journey may be navigated. We will first begin with an overview of what we call the Generative Self, which is a model for how to develop and maintain the extraordinary consciousness needed to meet extraordinary challenges. We will then examine what some of the major challenges of the Hero's Journey might be, and suggest some ways in which they can be successfully met. Finally, we will briefly address the relevance of the Hero's Journey for contemporary times.

THE GENERATIVE SELF

The question of identity – “Who are you and in what larger world do you belong?” – is central to both of us (see Gilligan 1987, 1997, 2004; Dilts 1987, 1990, 1996, 2000, 2003). We see identity as multi-leveled and unfolding in a developmental series of “death and rebirth” cycles. We see some experiences as “ordinary” in that in order to navigate them, you can stay within your established identity; you don't have to leave your present frame of reference. You can respond with learned strategies with reasonable expectations of success. Other experiences and challenges are “extra-ordinary”, that is, they move you outside the “box” of your “ordinary” self and thus require “extra-ordinary” responses, that is, experiential understandings and responses beyond what you've done before. In the Hero's Journey, it is especially important to know the difference between these two levels of consciousness.

Generative Self is a process developed from the field of Self-Relations (Gilligan 1997, 2003, 2005). Self-relations emphasizes that the relational response to experiences determines its shape, value, and outcome.

That is, experiences do not exist independent of an experiencer. The experience is being constructed in each ongoing moment by a person or persons. Self-relations examines how a person can optimally relate to a given experience so that positive outcomes may be achieved. Furthermore, it emphasizes how negative experiences reflect unskillful relationships that can be shifted to produce positive outcomes. This work is based in no small part on the legacy of Milton Erickson, who was legendary for his capacity to accept and transform the most difficult patterns of behavior.

In modeling Erickson's generative strategies, Self-Relations distinguishes three Minds: (1) the **Somatic Mind** (as a local embodied intelligence), (2) the **Relational Field Mind** (as a non-local or collective intelligence), and (3) the **Cognitive Mind** as a sort of bridge between the two worlds. SR further emphasizes two levels of each Mind: (a) a Basic Level, concerned with remedial operations, and (b) a Generative Level that occurs when all three Minds are harmonized and aligned. The Generative Self is a sort of subtle meta-field that holds all the basic operations with awareness and skillfulness, while adding other features that transform its form and function in significant ways. SR suggests that while the Basic Levels are sufficient for ordinary adaptive functions, the Generative Levels are needed to navigate and transform the extraordinary states of consciousness that occur, intentionally or unwanted, on the Hero's Journey. Thus, if individuals are going to successfully meet these great challenges, they need to develop some capacity to develop a Generative Self. The next sections suggest a few ways this might happen.

THE SOMATIC MIND AND THE PRINCIPLE OF CENTERING

The Somatic Mind may be considered the ground floor or the platform for the Generative Self. At its Basic Level, the Somatic Mind operates with mammalian instinctual drives for food, sex, territory, and hierarchy. It carries an emotional history that guides its behaviors. In stress, it uses fight/flight/freeze responses. It is especially connected with the limbic system and its mammalian orientation to relational connection (see Lewis, Amini, Lannon 2000); that is, it knows how to "hook up" and be in subtle resonance with others. It does most of this without self-awareness, that is, it responds to a situation in either an instinctual or conditioned (learned) way.

In extraordinary states of consciousness, however, something more is needed. For example, say a loved one dies. Or you really want to make a difference in the world, but don't know how. Or you are under extreme stress at work. Or you are going through a divorce. Or you are traveling in a dangerous neighborhood and feel exceptionally vulnerable. In such

instances, your Somatic Mind needs more capacities. It needs to be able to hold confusion, to experience intense challenges and emotions, to tolerate contradictory emotions, to shift into states of rest, to relax while staying alert, to attune to intuitive and non-rational wisdom, and to take creative action. At such times, a Generative level of Somatic Mind is needed.

One general method for entering this advanced level is the art of centering. Centering is a process of unifying mind and body, in order to quiet and focus the mind, relax and attune the body, and align with the energies of the relational fields. Centering is a form of balancing attention, finding the point where complementary qualities are simultaneously present – e.g., inner/outer, relaxed/focused, intentional/effortless. When this happens, a simple “awareness beyond opposites” may emerge. It is a field of awareness that extends beyond the body, to the environmental field in which the body is operating.

One simple method of centering is to find a quiet place to sit and settle. One can then follow a 4-step cycle of (1) sensing good posture, (2) relaxing the muscles, (3) focusing attention through the solar plexus, and (4) imagining breathing one’s thoughts into a liquid that moves through the body, then out into the world. Repeating these 4 steps (with eyes opened or closed) can help a person shift into a felt sense of quiet, alert awareness. One might then remember an experience of great well-being – e.g., in nature, with a loved one, or by one’s self. As you breathe the memory of well-being through your body, notice where the core feeling of the experience is felt in your body. Most people experience it in their belly, or solar plexus, or heart area. These are different possible “centers” to which one can attune. Many people find it helpful to place their hand gently on the felt center, bringing their awareness more integrated into it.

The process of centering has many values. First, it promotes calm yet alert awareness. Internal dialogue reduces and somatic attunement increases, thereby allowing more effective responsiveness. Second, centering can stabilize attention under stressful conditions. For example, say an aggressive person is talking to you in an intimidating fashion. Centering allows you to give “first attention” (see Gilligan 1997) to your core in a grounded, relaxing way, rather than have it get locked onto a stressful person, memory, or internal image. You can then open and extend your awareness beyond the stressor, so that a spacious feeling of openness beyond the problem is experienced. Third, centering allows unitive, non-dualistic experiencing. The typical “either/or” splits of mind vs. body, self vs. other, good vs. bad dissolve into a more integrated sensing of “what is”. This allows consciousness to align with the life force energy – the “ki” of aikido, “chi” of tai chi, feeling of “the zone”, the grace of “spirit”, etc. This doesn’t mean the capacity for cognitive differentiation is reduced; rather, it is re-connected with its deeper

platform of natural intelligence in a way that promotes the experience of concentrated “flow” (see Csikszentmihalyi 1990) and integrated functioning. Control is replaced by cooperation, domination by resourceful utilization, and clashing by harmonizing. This can be done even under stressful, antagonistic conditions, as the martial art of aikido is able to reliably show.

To reiterate, this access to a Generative Somatic Mind is made available whenever experience takes one outside their normal identity parameters. This can involve either experiences of well-being or experiences of ill-being – e.g., a trauma. In both cases, the disruption of an identity state activates the Generative Somatic Mind and its centers, thereby amplifying non-rational archetypal/emotional processes. If a person is disconnected from Somatic Mind, the resulting experiences may be experienced as frightening, overwhelming, and confusing. **Reactive measures to control such uncomfortable experiences are what create symptomatic experiences.** Alternatively, a centered person can welcome and work with the emerging experiences in ways that transform identity.

THE COGNITIVE MIND AND THE PRINCIPLE OF SPONSORSHIP

The Cognitive Mind constitutes a second type of human intelligence. In healthy development, the cognitive self “transcends yet includes” (see Wilber 1995; Pearce 2002) the somatic self; in unhealthy development, the cognitive self disconnects and opposes the somatic self.

As with the Somatic Mind, two levels of the Cognitive Mind may be distinguished. The Basic Level involves the processes used to navigate the social/psychological world: Plans, strategies, rules, frameworks, schema, social roles, etc. It also holds the shared means of social life, and the fixed values of an individual identity. Generally speaking, it is responsible for social adaptation, control of environment, advancement of self-interest, and maintenance of self-identity. It generally operates by taking a fixed point of view, holding some intention (consciously or unconsciously), then acting to realize those intentions. Obviously, it is a crucial aspect of healthy functioning, one that needs continuous attention and practice. As we say in California, don’t leave home without it!

While this Basic Level is generally sufficient for ordinary circumstances, it will fail to meet the challenges of extraordinary experiences. The Basic Level of Cognitive Mind has difficulty thinking “outside the box.” It gets locked into a particular point of view, and has difficulty allowing creative chaos, multiple points of view, contradictory points of view, or conflict. It cannot easily surrender to “death and rebirth” experiences. For example, say you have a daughter who is entering

adolescence, and all of her “sweet young girl” behaviors are being replaced with hip-hop, intense interest in boys, and a need for greater freedom. Or that you are in multi-cultural environments, where clashing views of religion, freedom, and ethics are being expressed. Or that you attempted to get rid of some undesirable experience or behavior, and it keeps returning with a vengeance. In such contexts, a Generative Level of Cognitive Mind is needed to successfully navigate such experiences and their inherent challenges.

The Generative Level of Cognitive Mind “includes yet transcends” the Basic Level, allowing creative thinking, systemic (i.e., field-based) identity, and resonant intentionality. That is, it maintains rationality, intentionality, strategic planning and acting, and social meanings; but expands beyond it to include something more. This advanced level is more a meta-cognitive principle and process, something self-relations refers to as **sponsorship** (see Gilligan 1997). The principle of sponsorship is the cornerstone of all self-relations work. The word “sponsorship” comes from the Latin “spons”, meaning, “to pledge solemnly”. So sponsorship is a vow to help a person (including one’s self) to use each and every event and experience to awaken to the goodness and gifts of the self, the world, and the connections between the two. Self-relations suggests that experiences that come into a person’s life are not yet fully human; they have no human value until a person is able to sponsor them. This is the creative process of art, culture, therapy, parenting, and self-development: how to receive and absorb the river of life in creative ways. This relational process literally transforms an experience that seems to have no human value into something whose value is evident.

There are many ways to practice sponsorship. The “yin” (receptive) aspect of sponsorship involves receiving, allowing your heart to be opened, bearing witness, providing place or sanctuary, soothing, gently holding, being curious, deep listening, and beholding a presence with the eyes of kindness and understanding. The “yang” (active) aspect includes relentless commitment, fierce attentiveness, providing guidance, proper naming, setting limits and boundaries, challenging self-limitations, and introducing the sponsored experience to other resources. Through a skillful combination of these and related sponsorship processes, an experience or behavior that seems to have no value to the self or community can be transformed from an “it” that should be destroyed to a “thou” than can be listened to, appreciated, and allowed to develop within self and community.

THE FIELD MIND AND THE PRINCIPLE OF FIELD RESONANCE

In addition to the intelligence of the body and of the intellect, a third type of intelligence may be seen: The relational fields in which all

consciousness and identity are embedded. For example, the physical environment may be thought of as a living “Gaia” field of intelligence, at many levels. Family and culture are fields within which each person operates. Art, science, and religion are fields that organize and inform many activities. The collective history of consciousness, what Jung called the “collective unconscious”, may be thought of as a field of archetypal patterns. Many other “fields” may be distinguished: one’s immediate surroundings, personal history, social circles, mood states, physical states, etc. All these are contexts that shape, constrain, guide, and create the texts of local and focal awareness. One would be hard-pressed to deny the tremendous influence of fields on a person’s consciousness.

At the Basic Level, these fields operate primarily as constraints, helpful or unhelpful. They shape, limit, and guide the flow and content of consciousness. At the Basic Level, one can operate within the boundaries established by previous creations. This is not a bad thing, of course: it allows one to not have to re-invent the wheel every day, and permits successful approaches to be replicated. But at the Basic Level, a person’s Somatic and Cognitive Minds are attuned to the Field Mind in set ways, such that only certain types of field-based information are received in certain types of ways.

But when an old pattern or identity needs to be transcended or transformed, or a significant creative effort is desired, the Generative Level of the Field Mind is required. In such instances, a person needs to be able to sense and receive from the Field Mind in many different ways. To achieve this, consciousness must radiate “through and beyond” the surrounding fields, creating an experiential “field of fields” that is beyond any particular content or form. As with the other domains, this Generative Level is a subtle energy meta-field that “transcends yet includes” all of the informational fields of the Basic Level.

For example, in the martial art of aikido, one trains to “Never give your eyes (or Mind) to the attacker”. That is, you let your eyes become soft and extend beyond the antagonist, so that you’re not locked into a reactive mode. It is easy to try this experiment by centering to establish relaxed, attentive awareness. Then orient to some focal point (a person or an object), but let your eyes be soft and let your perceptual awareness open outwards, extending infinitely even as you sense a connection with the perceptual object. You will likely find a different way of sensing the object, one that allows it to be included within your experience, but not limiting your attention. This actually allows you to better sense the subtle details of a person’s movement, while also keeping yourself opened and connected to the larger field. If you continue this experiment, you can begin to sense an implicit space beyond what your conscious attention can focus on; this is an example of opening to the Generative Field. You could train yourself to do this while interacting with a person, or focusing on a subject matter (e.g., a poem to be written, a problem to be

solved). By focusing in this “open field” fashion, you will have the pleasant discovery of being “fed” creatively by fields of information beyond your local self.

MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF THE HERO'S JOURNEY

With the resources of the Generative Self, a person is ready to meet the rigorous challenges of the Hero's Journey. According to Campbell, the fundamental tasks of the hero's journey include:

- *Hearing a calling* that relates to our identity, life purpose or mission. These callings can come in many forms and frequently represent transition points in our lives. Becoming a parent, changing jobs, recovering from a serious illness, producing a creative work, entering a new stage of life, etc., all represent different types of callings. Such callings generally arise as a result of life's changing circumstances and are typically quite challenging (otherwise it would not need to be a “hero's” journey). They typically involve an expansion or evolution of our identities. For example, a very successful businesswoman began to fall into depressive states as she neared 50; these “symptoms” turned out to be a calling for her to expand her life beyond narrow achievement and into a deeper connection with her family and with nature.

It is evident that callings come from the various fields surrounding us and they frequently have a deep archetypal character. Developing the skills of field awareness and opening to the Generative Field is key in being able to clearly receive and be guided by one's calling. For example, the above businesswoman developed great pleasure and further success by listening more to her colleagues and employees.

- *Accepting the calling* leads us to confront a boundary or threshold in our existing abilities or map of the world. We can choose to either accept or try to ignore the calling. Refusing the calling, however, frequently leads to the formation or intensification of problems or symptoms in our lives, precipitating crises that we cannot ignore. For example, a woman who grew up in very hyper-masculine, power-oriented family weathered many years of physical illnesses until a breast cancer proved to be a “wake-up call” for her to more fully claim and develop her calling into the female wisdom traditions.

Committing to a calling involves being able to receive it into your center and maintain a felt sense of connection to both yourself and the larger field around you. In this sense, a calling is thought of as distinct from your ego-identity; it is an energy that you feel tingling or burning in your belly or heart, a touchstone to guide you in each moment, a source of feedback to let you know whether you are “on the path” or straying from it.

- *Crossing the threshold* propels us into some new life “territory” outside of our current comfort zone. This new territory forces us to grow and evolve, and requires us to find support and guidance. According to Campbell, this threshold is generally a “point of no return,” meaning that, once we are across it, we cannot go back to the way things used to be. We must move forward into the unknown. Often such thresholds are represented by “double binds” that suggest that whatever choice we make, the old status quo cannot be maintained. For example, a person’s lifelong strategy of “being independent” resulted in a deep loneliness; however, the fear (and limited understanding) of “being dependent” seemed equally unacceptable. Trembling at the threshold of this double bind led to a new path of “autonomy/connection”.

In addition to centering and opening to the field, crossing the threshold requires sponsorship; both of our potential to be heroes and of the fears and hesitations that arise as we face the threshold.

- *Finding guardians*, mentors or sponsors is something that often comes naturally from having the courage to cross a threshold. As the saying goes, “When the student is ready, the teacher appears”. “Guardians” are the key relationships we develop that support us to build skills, believe in ourselves and stay focused on our objectives. Although a hero’s journey is a very personal journey, it is not something that we can do alone. We need to be open and willing to receive support. For example, a person might sense others who have successfully traversed similar hero’s journeys, and connect with such models in different ways.

Finding guardians also requires that we stay centered and remain open to the field. Because the territory beyond the threshold is new for us, we cannot necessarily know what type of guardianship we will need ahead of time or who those guardians will be. Sometimes guardians will come from surprising places. Thus, we must stay open and available to receiving guidance and support at every step on our journey.

- *Facing a challenge (or “demon”)* is also a natural result of crossing a threshold. A demon is generally something that appears to oppose, tempt or negate us as heroes. It might be another person or group; an addiction or emotional suffering; a traumatic event or severe challenge. Demons,” however, are not necessarily evil or bad; they are simply a type of “energy” that we need to learn to contend with, accept and redirect. Often, demons are simply a reflection of one of our own inner fears and shadows. It is here that we confront “negative sponsorship” – messages, coming from either inside of us or from significant others, that imply, “You should not be here,” “You do not deserve to exist,” “You are incapable”, “You will never be good enough”, “You are unwelcome”, etc. Clearly, facing demons requires all of the

resources of the Generative Self: centering, sponsorship and connection to the Generative Field. The general challenge is how to find a relationship with this “negative other” (Gilligan 1997) that transforms it into a solution or resource.

- *Developing new resources* is necessary to deal with uncertainty and transform the “demon”. A hero’s journey is ultimately a path of learning and self-evolution. The resources that help us to cross the threshold into new territory and transform the demon are the beliefs, capabilities, behavioral skills and tools we are able to put into action in order to deal with complexity, uncertainty and resistance. This is the area where we ourselves must grow in order to develop the flexibility and increased competence necessary to successfully navigate new territory (internal and external) and overcome the obstacles that arise along the way.

The resources necessary to successfully complete a hero’s journey include increased self-awareness, the ability to access, integrate and balance key “archetypal energies” – such as fierceness, tenderness and playfulness – and ultimately lead to an evolution of our consciousness. This evolution involves an expansion of ourselves in a way that includes yet transcends all of the previous dimensions of our being.

- *Completing the task* for which we have been called. Finding a way to fulfill the calling is ultimately achieved by creating a *new map of the world* that incorporates the growth and discoveries brought about by the journey.
- *Finding the way home* as a transformed person, and sharing with others the knowledge and experience gained as a result of the journey. Until we bring our new identity into the world, the journey is not complete. It must be seen and acknowledged in some way, and also be a gift that is given to the community.

MAPPING YOUR HERO’S JOURNEY

While Campbell’s description of steps the hero’s journey begins with hearing and accepting a “calling”, our real life experiences often call us to the hero’s journey by presenting us with the challenge first. The many heroes who emerged as a result of the September 11 terrorist attacks, for instance, were thrown into their journey by a direct confrontation with the “demon”. They had to face their threshold and recognize their calling within the crisis they were facing.

This is also frequently the case in our own lives. It is a crisis that presents the calling. Certainly, dealing with any sort of crisis is a type of hero’s journey in and of itself. To help explore and prepare yourself

for some of the challenges of your own hero's journey, consider the following questions:

- *What is the “demon” (challenge) you are currently facing?* What is a situation in which you feel more of a “victim” than a “hero?” A simple way of finding this is to use the statement, “If only X didn’t exist, my life would be great.” “X” is the “dragon” that the “hero” needs to transform. [Again, this will typically be a situation in which you are confronting some type of self-negating or “negative sponsorship” messages, either from yourself in response to an external challenge, or from a significant other.]
- *What is your “threshold”?* What is the unknown territory, outside of your comfort zone, that either a) the crisis is forcing you into or b) you must enter in order to deal with the crisis? For example, a hard-driving business executive developed an alcohol problem that was affecting his work. Inner work revealed a belief that he always had to perform, and that if he stopped performing he would literally “disappear”. (Such non-rational beliefs, while seemingly silly to the conscious mind, can be very compelling at an unconscious level.) His threshold was learning how to be in the world without having to compulsively perform.
- *Given the demon you are facing and the threshold you must cross, what is the “call to action”—what are you being “called” to do or become?* (It is often useful to answer this question in the form of a symbol or metaphor; e.g., “I am being called to become an eagle/warrior/magician, etc.”)
- *What resources do you have and which do you need to develop more fully in order to face the challenge, cross your threshold and accomplish your calling?*
- *Who are (or will be) your “guardians” for those resources?* When you have identified your guardians, imagine where they would be located physically around you in order to best support you. One by one, put yourself into the shoes of each of the guardians, and look at yourself through their eyes (second position). What message or advice does each guardian have for you? Return to your own perspective (first position) and receive the messages.

What we have presented above is but a general sketch of a deep and fascinating model for achieving profound happiness, health, healing, and helpfulness in the world. In his book *Of Water and Spirit*, Malidoma Somé speaks of his life growing up in a West African village. In that culture, it is assumed that each new baby has crossed from the spirit world into this world in order to bring a gift to the community. He describes a village ritual in which each newborn is brought to the elders, who take several days to commune with the newly arrived spirit. The basic

question the elders ask of the newborn is, “Why have you come here?”. They assume that each person has come with a special mission, and that their life should be organized around honoring and realizing this mission. Based on the response they receive, the elders seek to support the child’s development so that their mission may be realized.

In a similar way, the mythological path of the hero’s journey seeks to honor the deeper value and calling of each person’s life. It assumes that each difficulty, crisis, or setback a person faces is both an opportunity and feedback about the nature of that person’s deeper calling. It also recognizes the need to find the resources, both internally and in the collective field, that will help a person realize their deeper journey. It is this profound appreciation for the dignity and value of each person’s life that draw us to this myth. We have found it exceptionally helpful for coaching and supporting individuals and groups to discover and live a fulfilling and helpful existence. The few notes and suggestions we have made in this paper are taken from workshops we have co-led, and represent the framework for a book we are working on. We hope you find them as helpful as we have, in terms of creating a world that works for all.

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PART I

SCIENCE IN THE SERVICE
OF COACHING

Lidia D. Czarkowska

PROFESSIONALISM AND PROCESS OF PROFESSIONALIZATION IN COACHING

INTRODUCTION

Coaching is a fascinating discipline that enables providing specialist services, which aim at enabling the client to discover, update, develop and fully use his own potential. That is the objective of the work of a coach with his client. When we talk about professionalism in this discipline, the following saying comes to mind:

*A man who works with his hands is a laborer
A man who works with his hands and his brain is a craftsman
But a man who works with his hands and his brain and his
heart is an artist*

Louis Nizer

From my personal perspective – a man who works with his hands and his brain and his heart is a coach. Coaching requires full commitment of the entire person: including brain and heart, mind and intuition, will and enthusiasm. A professional coach can create special conditions for the client (time and space) as well as deliver effective methods (techniques and tools) through his attitude and being completely involved and aware, as a result of which the coaching process will bring the expected and agreed-upon with the client results. However, in order for that to be possible, the coach needs to meet certain requirements, which will illustrate his professionalism, and he needs to follow the fundamental coaching principles.

Professionalism is a big word, which is often misused and consequently liable to a demotion of its original meaning. Nowadays, almost any person offering services starting with representatives of the “great professions” (Goode 1069), as lawyers and doctors all the way through

to seasonal workers that carry out physical work, call themselves *professionals* and advertise their own services as *professional services*. Hence in colloquial language this term does not reflect the meaning that it has within the social sciences, and more precisely, within sociology of professions.

With this article I would like to show what it means to be a professional coach from two separate perspectives: the external perspective (scientific and social) and the internal perspective (personal and coaching).

The first perspective is a logical one and allows viewing the issue of professionalism from an outside perspective through research (quantitative and qualitative) as well as a scientific analysis of the professionalism of coaches and the stages of the professionalization process of this occupation. The result is a sociological description of the determinants of professionalism, and the requirements that a given job has to meet, in this case coaching, in order to become a profession.

The second perspective is intentionally intuitive and internal and is based on the personal and authentic experiences of a coach-practitioner position. From this perspective a mutual reflection will be proposed in order to establish the requirements that a coach should meet through his attitude, in order to deserve the title of a professional in the full sense of the meaning.

THE EXTERNAL PERSPECTIVE: SOCIAL AND SCIENTIFIC

The phenomenon of professionalism can be analyzed using a number of theoretical models – as can be done with the entire social reality, the understanding of which depends on the previously adopted assumptions, in other words, the acknowledged paradigm. In the context of reflecting on professions and the professionalization process with respect to coaching, my suggestion is to adopt a division of the existing types of professional theories (Czarkowska 2010) into 2 main categories (Figure 1): objectivistic theories in accordance with the classical and modern paradigms that were predominant in the society in the 19th and 20th century; and subjectivistic theories, in accordance with the interpretative and postmodern paradigms – which is gaining an increasing number of followers within the social sciences in the 21st century.

Is coaching already a profession? An affirmative or negative answer to that question can only be obtained using a tangible theoretical approach. This article will mostly discuss the essentialistic concepts, on account of the fact that these are the classical concept on professionalism and the by them elaborated standards are still today considered to be the determinants that separate a job from a profession.

The **objectivistic** theories – in accordance with the paradigm standards (Kuhn 1964/1968) – adopt a set of ontological, epistemological and

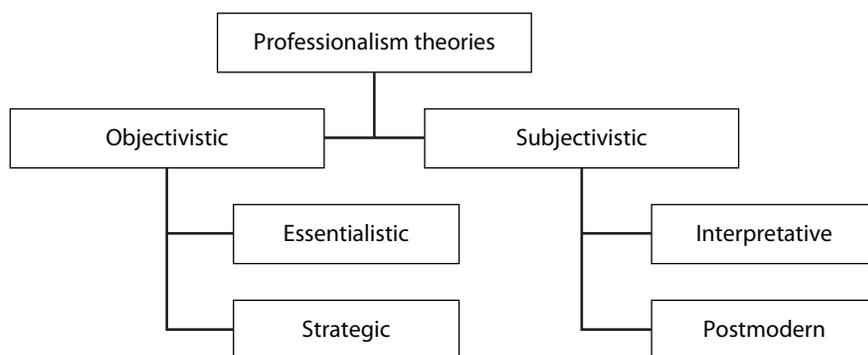


Figure 1. Types of scientific theories of professionalism with respect to coaching

Source: own elaboration.

methodological assumptions, according to which the research of the phenomenon of professionalism should be carried out in a strictly defined way: ontological realism – it instructs to treat a profession as an objectively existing social phenomenon (regardless of the persons involved in its research), an epistemological nomothetic approach – which dictates to search for recurring phenomena, so that a generalization can be made in the form of “laws” based on them, whereas the methodological scientism imposes the employment of empirical, standardized research methods. In order to be able to conclude that coaching is a profession, based on the objectivistic approach, hard empirical evidence needs to be searched for and observable and measurable phenomena need to be found that fulfill the role of indicators. Using such an approach, it is worth taking a closer look at two theories of professionalism: *essentialistic* and *strategic*.

The **essentialistic** theories refer to the historically oldest concepts of professionalism, which were formulated in the fifties of the 20th century, in the “classical” era (Collins 1990). The name alone reflects their most characteristic feature, i.e. defining by seeking the essence – the real meaning of professionalism according to researchers at the time. The definitions within this trend were constructed by naming the most important characteristics (key features) that differentiate professions from a wide multitude of jobs. The most commonly mentioned attributes of professions are (Carr-Saunders, Wilson 1933):

- the functioning of formal professional associations that integrate and on the other hand control the occupational environment;
- the existence of a defined scope of specialist knowledge and professional technical competencies;
- the creation of education paths that ensure the acquisition of the appropriate education (knowledge) as well as specialist training of the practical skills (trainings and internships) (Millerson 1964);

- the application of acknowledged procedures of testing competencies and the admittance of new applicants in the professional sphere using an examination and license system (accreditation);
- the existence and control of observance of a code of ethics that defines the standards that professionals are obliged to meet – with a special focus on the idea of serving the best interest of the client.

Taking into consideration the above list, does the job of a coach deserve to be called a profession? It is worth taking a closer look at the extent to which the above conditions translate into our contemporary reality:

Professional associations

Since many years various coaching groups and associations have been active, whose objective is, on the one hand, to serve the representatives of this profession by creating an expert environment where experiences can be exchanged, and on the other hand, to serve clients by creating professional standards for the provided services and maintaining their high quality. Four out of those associations deserve special attention, due to the value and range of their activities and their presence in Poland. The first one is called The International Coach Federation (ICF) and is the biggest operating professional association on a global scale. It was founded in 1995 and is: “dedicated to advancing the coaching profession by setting high professional standards, providing independent certifications, and building a network of credentialed coaches”¹. Today the ICF has over 15 thousand members in over 90 countries. The Polish department already has over 100 active members. The second largest association is the European Mentoring & Coaching Council (EMCC), which unites coaches from all over Europe and is represented in 18 countries. EMCC promotes good practices, quality and the development of coaching and mentoring across Europe². The other association is the European Coaching Institute (ECI), active in 19 countries and since January 2009 also in Poland. Another thing worth mentioning are the initiatives of the coaching environment that have been developed locally in Poland, such as:

- the Coaching Commission as part of the Polish Chamber of Training Companies, whose aims is: “to create and spread high quality standards of coaching services and coaching itself; spreading good coaching practices and the integration of the coaching environment”³;
- the Polish Coaching Association, whose aim is to “spread the idea of professional coaching in Poland, in accordance with the international

¹ <http://www.coachfederation.org/>

² <http://www.emccouncil.org/>

³ <http://www.w.w.pifs.org.pl/strona/komisja-coachingu.html>

occupational and ethical standards, and the integration of the environment of Polish coaches”⁴;

- the increasing number of coaching organizations and clubs, among which the Coaching Competence Center and the Coaching Club at the Kozminski University⁵.

Knowledge and competencies

The range of theoretical knowledge that is useful in coaching is extremely wide and always open. In order to successfully carry out a coaching process, a coach does not at all have to be an expert in the line of industry of his client. However, he does have to have an extensive knowledge of humanities and social sciences. Coaching as a discipline refers to many sciences, especially: psychology, sociology, anthropology, management, organizational development and leadership. Among the many theoretical inspirations that are useful in coaching are for example: theories on learning, the development of adults, andragogy, change, cognitive behavioral psychology, as well as theories on emotional intelligence, social and spiritual intelligence, systemic thinking, process work, hypnosis and even chaos theories⁶. With such a wide spectrum of knowledge, the academic education of a coach turns out to be a never-ending process of acquiring information that can help in the work with clients.

It is a bit easier to specify the scope of specialist skills (practical skills) that are necessary in order to be a coach, although there is no coherent globally adopted coaching competency model yet. Nevertheless, the International Coach Federation (ICF) has defined 11 fundamental competencies that are divided into 4 areas of activity (a more detailed description with the characteristics of the behaviors that determine these competencies can be found on the websites of the ICF⁷). These 11 competencies are:

A. SETTING THE FOUNDATION

- 1) **Meeting the ethical guidelines and professional standards** – the understanding of the coaching ethics and standards and the ability to apply them appropriately in all coaching situations.
- 2) **Establishing the coaching agreement** – the ability to understand what is required in the specific coaching interaction and to come to an agreement with the prospective and new client about the coaching process and relationship.

⁴ <http://www.psc.org.pl/aktualnosci.htm>

⁵ <http://www.absolwenci.kozminski.edu.pl/O-Klubie-Coachingowym.html>

⁶ *The Dublin Declaration on Coaching* (2008) Global Community of Coaches, <http://www.pdf.net/Files/Dublin%20Declaration%20on%20Coaching.pdf>

⁷ <http://pol.icf.org.pl/>

B. CO-CREATING THE RELATIONSHIP

- 3) **Establishing trust and intimacy with the client** – the ability to create a safe, supportive environment that produces ongoing mutual respect and trust.
- 4) **Coaching presence** – the ability to be fully conscious and create a spontaneous relationship with the client, employing a style that is open, flexible and confident.

C. COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY

- 5) **Active listening** – the ability to focus completely on what the client is saying and is not saying, to understand the meaning of what is said in the context of the client's desires, and to support the client's self-expression.
- 6) **Powerful questioning** – the ability to ask questions that reveal the information needed for maximum benefit to the coaching relationship and the client.
- 7) **Direct communication** – the ability to communicate effectively during coaching sessions, and to use a language that has the greatest positive impact on the client.

D. FACILITATING LEARNING AND RESULTS

- 8) **Creating awareness** – the ability to integrate and accurately evaluate multiple sources of information, and to make interpretations that help the client gain awareness and thereby achieve the agreed-upon results.
- 9) **Designing actions** – the ability to create with the client opportunities for ongoing learning, during coaching and in work/life situations, and for taking new actions that will most effectively lead to the agreed-upon coaching results.
- 10) **Planning and goal setting** – the ability to develop and maintain an effective coaching plan with the client.
- 11) **Managing progress and accountability** – the ability to hold attention on what is important for the client, and to leave responsibility with the client to take action.

A similar model was created by the International Association of Coaching (IAC) and this one contains 9 basic competencies of a professional coach: 1) establishing and maintaining a relationship of trust; 2) perceiving, affirming and expanding the client's potential; 3) engaged listening; 4) processing in the present, full attention on the client; 5) expressing, effective communication; 6) clarifying, reduce/eliminate confusion or uncertainty, increase understanding and the confidence of the client; 7) helping the client set and maintain clear intentions; 8) invit-

ing possibility; 9) helping the client create and use supportive systems, structures and tools⁸.

Education paths

Nowadays, in order to become a coach a choice can be made among a wide offer of coaching schools. Just recently, upon instructions from the Polish Chamber of Training Companies, a special report has been prepared by Magdalena Kołodkiewicz entitled: "Schools for coaches"⁹, which indicated that in the year 2008 there were 33 schooling programs for coaches in Poland, of which 22 were conducted by training companies and 11 programs were carried out in the form of postgraduate study programs at 10 universities. Also here the professional associations fulfill an important function. By employing accreditation procedures they perform an evaluation of the programs according to strictly defined criteria with respect to their content and the employed teaching and training methods of coaching competencies.

An interesting thing is that in the USA, for the first time in 2009, according to HR professionals, coaching clients and those who hire coaches, university-based executive education edged out the ICF as 'most qualified to certify a training program' among non-coaches¹⁰.

Accreditation procedures

Professional associations clearly define the formal requirements that have to be met by persons who are applying for accreditation. For example, at present the ICF has a three-level accreditation system. In order to obtain the ACC degree (Associate Certified Coach) you have to complete a minimum of 60 hours of coaching training, conduct 100 documented coaching session hours with at least 8 clients, work for 10 hours with a mentor, obtain credentials from 2 coaches and pass an exam – at the moment around 25 people in Poland have such an accreditation. The PCC degree (Professional Certified Coach – 2 persons in Poland have this degree) requires as many as 125 hours of training, 750 hours of practice with 25 clients, 2 credentials and passing an exam that consist of 3 parts. The highest degree, MCC (Master Certified Coach – 1 person in Poland), means 200 hours of training, 2500 hours of coaching, a minimum of 35 clients, 3 credentials and one master-level exam.

The European Coaching Institute offers as much as 6 levels of accreditation for individual coaches (WECEI, PECEI, CECEI, SECEI, MECEI, FECEI), which are based on the number of training hours and carried out

⁸ <http://www.certifiedcoach.org/learningguide/masteries.htm>

⁹ <http://www.pifs.org.pl/pliki/raport%20szkola%20dla%20coacha.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://www.sherpacoaching.com/SherpaExecutiveCoachingSurvey2009.pdf>

coaching sessions. The full requirements can be found on the website of the association¹¹.

Almost all accreditation programs require regular reaccreditation (with intervals from 1–4 years). In order to obtain a reaccreditation, a constant professional development needs to be demonstrated through active participation in specialist trainings as well as through the continuously realized own coaching practice.

Code of ethics

Naturally, all professional coaching associations have defined codes of ethics. The Standards of Ethical Conduct of the ICF contain 28 rules, which very thoroughly describe the rules of conduct for coaches, both with clients and with respect to the profession itself¹².

However, it is not clear what measures the association can take (besides taking away the member rights) against people that evidently behave in disagreement with the ethical regulations. Being a member of such associations is voluntary. There are many coaches offering services that are not member of any association. Therefore, these organizations by far do not have the same entitlements as, for example, the Polish Chamber of Physicians and Dentists, and they cannot decide to take away the rights to carry out the profession.

Within the **strategic** theories the concept of professionalism was understood in a completely different way. The strategic theories gradually gained popularity in the sixties and seventies of the 20th century and were a sign of a significant change that occurred in the perception of the professional world within the social sciences. This change was called the “wave of revisionism” (Collins 1990) or even a switch to a “cynical perspective” (Brante 1990). The strategic concepts assume that the professionalization process only occurs because the representatives of the given profession strive in this way to guarantee for themselves the realization of two principal strategic goals:

- to achieve a privileged social positions, including the resulting benefits such as power, prestige and a high income (Freidson 1973), and
- to monopolize the market of the provided services by creating a barrier to entry into the profession (licenses and certifications) (Larson 1977).

This idea was expressed very well by Thomas Brante: “Professions are perceived as a tool, a resource, thanks to which their members can achieve a higher income, prestige and power – a sort of collective egoism” (Brante 1990).

¹¹ <http://www.europeancoachinginstitute.org/accreditation/index.php>

¹² <http://pol.icf.org/pl/211-42516ab6eadf1.htm>

Can this theoretical approach be used at all with respect to coaching? The first natural reaction would be to say – of course not! Especially taking into consideration the fundamental rule of serving the client's best interest as well as the fragment from the code of ethics of the ICF: *"I will not knowingly exploit any aspect of the coach-client relationship for my personal, professional or monetary advantage or benefit"*¹³. However, we can enrich our perception of the collective actions in the coaching environment that are undertaken in order to professionalize this discipline with a set of questions concerning the basic intentions: What is the purpose of a given postulate? What is the motive for certain actions? What tangible benefits will a given process bring about and for whom?

The following table shows the significant differences in the perception of issues concerning professionalism between theoreticians that represent the essentialistic approach and the ones that represent the strategic approach:

Table 1. The essentialistic and strategic approach – a list of the essential differences

Profession	Essentialistic approach	Strategic approach
BASIS OF ACTIVITY Foundation of legitimization	FULFILMENT OF VOCATION – PROFESSIONAL MISSION Social trust	PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS Legal acknowledgement of the professional status
ESSENTIAL GOALS (dimensions)	DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS (cognitive dimension)	ADVANCING TO HIGHER SOCIAL GROUPS (political dimension)
	SERVING CLIENTS AND SOCIETY (normative dimension)	MONOPOLIZATION OF SERVICE MARKET (economic dimension)

Source: own elaboration; compare with Czarkowska (2010).

The evidence-based approach, called coaching of the second generation (Smółka 2009), is consistent with the objectivistic theories of professionalism and acknowledges 4 criteria of coaching professionalization, which correspond to the mentioned criteria within the essentialistic and the strategic concepts, being:

- 1) The existence of formal barriers to entry to exercise the profession (the legitimization of qualifying requirements);

¹³ <http://pol.icf.org.pl/211-42516ab6eadf1.htm>, point 17.

- 2) The development of scientific foundations for the conduct of this activity (creating solid empirical knowledge and verifying the practical methods);
- 3) Creating formal education paths on university level (including an examination system: testing knowledge and verifying the practical skills as well as a formal entitlement to carry out the profession);
- 4) The functioning of a formal institution that unites all the practitioners and represents the interests of the profession, taking care of its development and reputation as well as its autonomy by exercising control over the activities of coaches (including the entitlement to take away the rights to exercise the profession) (Grant, Cavanagh 2004).

If the requirements are put that way, the answer to the question of whether coaching is a profession or not, is: Not yet. At this point in time coaching as an occupation is at the beginning phase of the professionalization process. Additionally, taking into consideration the complexity and dynamics of the changes that are taking place in the contemporary world, there is no guarantee that this process will advance correspondingly, like in the case of great “old” professions. Perhaps coaches will turn out to be the representatives of a profession that will qualify to the category of “new professions” – just like IT specialists (Czarkowska 2010).

The primacy of strategic concepts in the sociology of professionalism ended in the eighties and nineties of the previous century, when the main field of interest of researchers shifted from social conflicts to intercultural differences. Along with the shift of focus in the cultural sphere – being a community of shared values - a kind of breakthrough occurred concerning the paradigms of ontology, epistemology and scientifically acknowledged research methods regarding professionalism. Ethnographic methods were introduced and subjectivistic theories of professionalism appeared: **interpretative** (Geertz 1973) and **postmodern** (Hatch 2002) – i.e. science of the 21st century.

These theories adopt the notion of constructivism on an ontological level (Berger, Luckmann 1983), according to which the entire social world is a phenomenon that is socially created by giving it values. The real world is a social world only to such an extent to which people perceiving it give it sense, an intersubjective meaning, which due to the existence of a cultural community functions in a given collectiveness on the basis of memes (Brodie 1997). Professionalism, just like any other social phenomenon – being a product of the human conscience – exists only nominally. This means that it is not possible to research it in an objective manner, free from interpretation. Therefore, according to the interpretative theories the goal of the research process will be to obtain an understanding of this phenomenon, whereas according to the

postmodern theories the goal will be deconstruction of the shared values and the hidden ideas behind them.

The table below shows the difference between the objectivistic and subjectivistic approach, including the acknowledged research methods:

Table 2. Methodological determinants of the objectivistic and subjectivistic approach in science

Acknowledged methods	Experimental, based on polls	Hermeneutic, ethnographic
Level of standardization	High	Low
Assumptions and goals	Apriorism – verification of hypotheses	Aposteriorism – ethnographic description
Essence of deduction	Statistical analysis	Understanding and deconstruction
Relevance criterion	Statistical: that what is most common, typical	Symbolical: that what is important, has meaning, value
Truth criterion	Objective reality (Facts)	Subjective reality (Interpretations)
Essence of truth	Objective truth (correspondence between statements and facts and data)	Authenticity (correspondence between statements and beliefs and values)

Source: own elaboration.

In the interpretative approach, in order to establish whether coaching is a profession, to begin with, all topics need to be formulated for the purpose of *individual in – depth interviews or focus group interviews* and also an observation of the coaches needs to be carried out during their practice. The distinguishing features of real professionals indicated by Edward Gross can be used as an inspiration here, such as Gross (1958):

- 1) To provide unstandardized services (one of a kind, adjustable to the specific needs of the client);
- 2) A high level of personal involvement;
- 3) A wide knowledge and specialized techniques;
- 4) A sense of obligation to deliver high quality services;
- 5) A sense of group identity (affiliation with the community of professionals);
- 6) A strong conviction of the significance of the provided service to society.

Another thing that can be used as an inspiration is the axiological set of four fundamental values associated with professionalism, which according to George Strauss are a guarantee for providing professional services. These are (Strauss 1963):

- 1) Expertise,
- 2) Autonomy,
- 3) Commitment,
- 4) Responsibility.

It would certainly be worth asking the coaches (Czarkowska 2008) themselves, the clients, HR specialists, managers, consultants and all the other interested people in coaching what professionalism means in their opinion and what their personal standards for professionalism in coaching are.

In this case the answer to the question: “Is coaching a profession?” could be: It depends... on the person we ask, the results we obtain from research and the way we interpret these results.

THE INTERNAL PERSPECTIVE: PERSONAL AND COACHING

Among many other possibilities, there is another possible answer to the question whether coaching is a profession and whether a coach is a professional. This time it will not have an external, scientific character, but an internal and personal character. The way to discover the answer is, in line with the coaching style of operating, to ask yourself a list of questions that inspire a further personal exploration.

What are the questions that a coach could ask himself, so that he can, based on the formulated by himself answers, broaden his self-awareness of the self, and more explicitly, of becoming a professional coach and observe all processes of change that come with it. And should he do so repeatedly in case of significant events, breakthroughs in his professional career, or periodically, with more or less defined time intervals or yet in another manner? What should these questions be?

Being coaches we surely know that there is an endless amount of questions that the creative human mind is capable of generating. So in order not do drown in the wide sea of possibilities I suggest we use a model that is inspired by the theory on neurological levels of Robert Dilts (2006).

Starting from the bottom and going up means going through the following 7 questions:

- 1) Where am I?
- 2) What am I doing here?
- 3) What am I capable of?
- 4) What is certain?

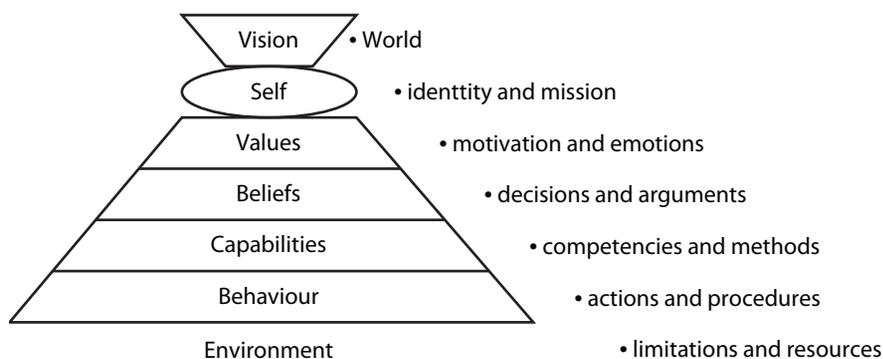


Figure 2. Pyramid of neurological levels and scopes of questions

Source: own elaboration, compare with Dilts (2006).

- 5) What is important?
- 6) Who am I? and finally
- 7) Why am I?

Therefore, on the environmental level in the search for professionalism it is worth asking: In what external circumstances can I best serve my clients? What physical resources do I possess, and what are my limitations? How can I change that? Where and when, from the perspective of my clients, will the coaching work proceed most effectively?

The next level: behaviors – allows taking a closer look at our habits, reflexes and employed procedures and ask ourselves: What am I really good at? What do I still need to work on? What activities should I continue, what activities should I quit and which ones should I modify so that I can become a better coach with each successive session?

On the capabilities level we can continue asking: How can I achieve even better results in the work with my clients? What do I still need to learn, how can I expand my experiences? What new competencies can I develop and what method can I start using?

The answers that we give ourselves in these first three levels easily translate into observable from the outside results. However, looking for answers to the questions from the next levels of the pyramid is particularly important, because of the fact that they are not directly visible from the outside, but can indirectly be found in the way we treat our clients and ourselves.

On the beliefs level it is important to become aware of the following: What do I assume to be true about myself and about my clients? What does professionalism in this field mean to me? Based on what prerequisites do I verify the occurring changes in my professional development? How do I justify progress or the lack of it to myself? What is absolutely forbidden in a professional coaching relationship and how far can I go or

even how brave can I be as a professional coach in provoking my client to overcome boundaries?

The values level enables the discovery of another layer: What is the objective of me being a coach? What is particularly important to me in being a coach? What is even more important? Why do I want to become a professional in this field? What significant results should this bring? What do I want to achieve with that? And on the following level, identity: What kind of person am I becoming thanks to this? Who am I to myself when I work like this? Who do I become to others? And finally the highest level of mission and vision: What is my role in the world? How can I serve others? How will this influence other people, the future, and the world?

An authentic process of going through the successive levels of the pyramid allows achieving a deep self-awareness and an internal motivation and then the only question left to ask is: What else...?

Is a given coach a professional? That is a closed question, a Bernoulli distribution, on a micro scale, and the answer will concern a particular person in a particular time. Is coaching a profession? That is a question on a macro scale and there is no clear-cut answer yet. However, it is certainly worth asking the practical question: How can the professionalization process of coaching benefit both the coaching environment and its clients?

For me personally (and this will not be a scientific statement, but merely an “ideological manifest”), professionalism in coaching comes down to a full – congruence/on all levels of the pyramid. It is simply living the idea of coaching, like I wrote at the beginning of the article, on all levels: skills, beliefs, values and mission coming from vision, therefore with hands and head and heart and... let’s not be afraid to use big words... also with spirit.

Paradoxically, at this point both perspectives come together: scientific and personal, since the oldest scientific descriptions concerning the issue of professionalism (theories of Max Weber and Émile Durkheim) strictly relate this particular type of professions (back then represented only by clergymen, lawyers or doctors) to the idea of vocation and service. Even the Latin word *professio* means the monastic profession, the formal oath to be faithful to your vocation.

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Urszula Sadomska

CONTINUOUS SELF DEVELOPMENT — THE ELEMENTS OF ATTITUDE THAT A COACH SHOULD ALWAYS DEVELOP

In order for a coach to think of himself as a competent professional, he needs to constantly work on his skills and be in an ongoing process of conscious self-development. In this article I shall try to clarify and explain why this is so and how it can affect the work of a coach. Of all the abilities that form the basis of the work of a coach I have chosen three that I believe are important for the self-development of a coach.

Firstly, being open to and interested in new psycho-neurological research, knowledge and the discoveries of scientists (cognitive researchers, neurobiologists, neuroscientist), therefore the need for ongoing experimentation and discovery. Why? Because everything can be useful. Everything can be important when working with people.

Secondly, ongoing self-improvement and working on oneself, especially working on the emotional well-being. Why? Because taking care of all the elements of emotional intelligence is the key to understanding others and the key to developing empathy and intuition.

Thirdly, the development of a sense of humor, joy and simply laughing. Why? Because laughter creates distance in difficult situations. Laughter is a type, or an element, of social intelligence. It means looking after oneself and others.

All those elements come together and are closely related to each other. Of course these are not all the elements – there are many. In order for a coach to think that he is a competent professional he needs to constantly work on his skills and be in an ongoing process of conscious self-development.

EMOTIONS ARE BORN IN THE BRAIN – NEW NEUROLOGICAL DISCOVERIES

Humanity is not suffering from a defect in logical competence, but rather from a defect in the emotions that inform the deployment of logic

Antonio Damasio

The brain is a place of spiritual emotions! The first person to make that statement was the Greek doctor Hippocrates in the 5th century BC. This theory was made official only towards the end of the 18th century by the neuroanatomist Franz Joseph Gali (1758–1828). Nowadays, not the heart but the brain is considered to be the engine of our emotions. Does that seem unbelievable? The renowned neuroscientists Antonio R. Damasio (University of Iowa) cheers us up by saying: “understanding neurobiological mechanisms behind some aspects of cognition and behavior does not diminish the value, beauty, or dignity of that cognition or behavior. It is important to realize that defining emotion and feeling as concrete, cognitively and neuronally, does not diminish their loveliness or horror, or their status in poetry or music. Understanding how we see or speak does not debase what is seen or spoken, what is painted or woven into a theatrical line. Understanding the biological mechanisms behind emotions and feelings is perfectly compatible with a romantic view of their value to human beings”. The brain and emotions developed in parallel during the evolution. The more advanced and complex the brain was, the more varied and diversified the emotions were. But what exactly are those neuronal processes on account of which we feel our emotions?

The neurologist Paul MacLean suggested that our skull holds not one brain, but three, each representing a distinct evolutionary stratum that has formed upon the older layer before it, like an archaeological site. He calls it the “triune brain”:

- The Reptilian Brain – the archipallium or primitive (reptilian) brain, or “Basal Brian”, called by MacLean the “R-complex”, includes the brain stem and the cerebellum and is the oldest brain. This brain controls muscles, balance and autonomic functions, such as breathing and heartbeat.
- The Limbic System – the middle part of the brain. The old mammalian brain residing in the limbic system is concerned with emotions and instincts, feeding, fighting, fleeing, and sexual behavior.
- The Neocortex – also known as the superior or rational (neomammalian) brain. The cortex is divided into left and right hemispheres, the famous left and right brain. The neocortex is responsible for higher-order thinking skills, reason, speech, and sapience.

This triune brain model is in line with the history of the development of the brain. The thesis put forward by Paul McLean is undeniable. It

states that the limbic system controls our emotions and it makes the assumption that there are clearly separate regions in the brain. Currently many brain researchers assume that this organ works like a distribution network. All its regions constantly interact with each other. At the moment we are in the decade of the brain, but this is just the beginning of the real adventure, because compared to physics we are only just at the stage of Galileo. Only just in the last decades the research into the “anatomy of emotions” has progressed significantly on account of the development of computers. Brain scientists can systematize the neuronal interaction in the cortex, establish the rules of processing and carry out simulation experiments. The Director of the Max Planck Institute for Brain Research in Frankfurt am Main, Prof. Dr. Wolf Singer says: “I am not exaggerating when I say that without these counting machines the attempt of explaining the neuronal basics of higher brain processes would not have a chance of success.” Nowadays, the transfer of knowledge is based on reciprocity. Computer experts learn from brain scientists and the other way around. Without computer technology we would not be able to see what regions of the brain are active when the tested persons in the research are formulating sentences or feeling fear, for example. The below presented information on our neurological system of emotions are currently believed to be certain.

The Limbic System

The limbic system is a complex set of structures that lies on both sides of the thalamus, just under the cerebrum and is permanently connected to the areas of the brain that are responsible for thinking. It includes the hypothalamus, the hippocampus, the amygdala, and several other nearby areas. It appears to be primarily responsible for our emotional life, and has a lot to do with the formation of memories. Here emotions are born, processed and remembered. Here every piece of knowledge and every experience are colored with emotion. The limbic system has several functions: the lower part is responsible for the physical expression of emotions and the upper part for conscious emotional experiences. Being the “control center of emotions” it plays an important role in science, because parts of the limbic system are responsible for learning processes and memory. Here every piece of information that is received is evaluated; whether it is important, positive, negative or at least funny. A lot of information is rejected. Only the information that is linked to strong emotions is registered. When it comes to survival, this is the place where our reactions of fighting and running start. For example, if we are threatened by a certain person, we feel fear and the limbic system already sends a “mental note” to our long-term memory. The limbic system is strictly connected to the autonomic nervous system, which constitutes the foundation of our emotional states related to our body.

Its nerve plexus, which reaches all the way down to the chest, stomach and pelvis area makes our emotions physical. The solar plexus is very well known to us. In situations of fear it causes stomach pain. The Latin term “limbus” means “edge” or “border” and was chosen because the parts of the limbic system are arranged in the lower region of the brain, forming a border around the brain stem. The limbic system consists of five major structures in the brain:

- 1) **The Thalamus** acts as a “sorter” for messages going to the cerebrum. The thalamus can tell you, for example, that something cold is touching your body and what kind of object is touching it. In addition to temperature and touch, the thalamus interprets pain and pressure and is also involved in memory. It does not interpret smells.
- 2) **The Hypothalamus** is the body’s control center in difficult situations. It makes sure that the mind and body stay in control and are capable of effort and endurance. It plays an important role in case of pain, anger and aggression.
- 3) **The Hippocampus** processes and preserves all the information that comes from the thalamus and hypothalamus. It sends a sensory impulse, depending on the meaning and significance, to the short-term memory or the long-term memory. It creates traces in the memory and that is why it is extremely important in the learning process as a place of transfer.
- 4) **The Basal Ganglia** are associated with a variety of functions, including motor control and learning. They control the muscles of our face and eyes. We need them to express our emotions.
- 5) **The Amygdalae** are two almond-shaped masses of neurons on either side of the thalamus at the lower end of the hippocampus. These already develop in the sixth week of pregnancy. The amygdalae play a multifunctional role in creating and steering our emotions. The amygdalae process the received information, verify their emotional content and point out the events that threaten our survival. They remember emotions that are important to survive, like fear, and initiate our escape. New research studies indicate that people with damages to the amygdalae lose all sense of fear and the ability to interpret the facial expressions of other people. The amygdalae mainly focus on one question: “Is there anything that I do not like, that offends me or that scares me?”. If the answer is “yes”, then it immediately sends a signal of crisis to all parts of the brain and consequently influences the learning process significantly.

Frontal Lobes

The frontal lobes, phylogenetically the *youngest part* of our brain, are involved in the most advanced functions of the brain, such as thinking, personality and character. Their connection with the limbic system

is not as developed, compared to other communication systems of the brain. Maybe that is the reason why our emotions take over our reason so often. In case of emotional stress, blood flows to the subconscious areas of survival in the limbic system and the blood supply in the frontal lobes decreases. Then it is harder for us to learn and focus our thoughts on a concrete solution.

The chemistry of emotions

Besides the neuronal way of transporting our emotions, we also have a chemical way. After all, our brain is not a solid, dry mass, but a living, moist organ. Besides the flow of blood and water, also a circulation of various hormones and peptides takes place in our brain. These hormones and peptides are excreted into the organism depending in our mood and through the blood circulation they reach our brain. There they transmit calming or alarming signals. The neurochemistry of emotions starts in the limbic system and from there the chemical substances transmit signals from one cell to the other. This happens as follows: at the end of nerve cells, where the synapses are, there is a tiny gap filled with fluid. If the electrical signal that is sent by the neurons gets there, chemical substances are released, which until then were stored in tiny vesicles (bubbles) in the synapses. Today we know that there are around fifty substances in the brain that can influence our emotional life. During aggression norepinephrine is released, during sadness or depression the level of serotonin decreases and in fear adrenalin is activated. As the adrenaline level increases we produce cortisol, which is a substance that significantly holds back the ability to remember and learn. However, if we combine learning with happy emotions, then substances like dopamine, interferon and interleukin are released. These substances help us develop and stabilize the neuronal network, optimize our thinking process and memory. In addition, the brain produces endorphins, in order to transmit happy emotions. The task of the system of these “messenger substances” is connecting remote parts of the brain with each other, so that they become widespread operational entities.

The gut also has emotions

Not other organ reacts so fiercely to mental strain and no organ loses balance as quickly as the digestive system. Could this primitive digestive organ of the shape of a snake have an autonomously functioning brain? Today neurology and gastroenterology confirm what for a long time seemed to be ridiculous: we have a “stomach brain”, and to be more precise, an enteric nervous system. In this system, more than a hundred million nerve cells control our esophagus, stomach, large and small intestine. Already in the fetus the nerve cells migrate to the abdomen

and form an exceptionally intelligent control center in the intestine. The “brain of the stomach” is a powerful chemical factory, which produces and accurately regulates at least 40 hormones. Here 90% of the so called “happiness hormone” is produced – serotonin. That is why medication that is supposed to make you feel better (antidepressants) work not only in the head, but also in the intestine, causing diarrhea or constipation. A when we feel good after eating, it is because of the high concentration of serotonin in our stomach. Medicine has proven a long time ago already that the “brain of the stomach” is the place of intuition. Intuition helps us make decisions, signaling when we feel dear, anger or aggravation. Naturally, the “brain of the stomach” and the “brain of the head” are in constant contact with each other. All reactions and information from the stomach end up in the emotion and memory bank in the head. This journey into the depths of the brain and body has clearly shown that there is not just one center of emotions. For a long time it was believed that the limbic system was the only center of emotions. Now we know that this unilateral theory on the location of our emotions does not correspond to the changeable convolution of brain, hormone and intestine signal connections. Our emotions are always something more than just the sum of their components. The formation of emotions in the brain can be compared to the alignment of players during a soccer game: every team player is necessary and none of them can play the game on his own – just like one center of emotions alone is not capable of generating emotions. In the end, it is not the single player that matters, but the teamwork of all the players. Therefore, for us coaches, it is important to recognize the strong players and to create an ideal interaction of the entire team.

Emotions and Science

“And now let’s talk business and leave emotions for later!” – this is an impossible thing to do. Thinking, feeling and developing are inherently linked to each other, they form a relationship for life. “When experiencing positive emotions, the entire intelligence functions flawlessly and is ready for new experiences. Negative emotions interrupt this process, block the thinking process and cause painful thoughts to constantly come back in slow-motion”. The neurologist Antonio Damasio, in collaboration with his colleagues, proved with his famous experiments that with an emotional disorder it is impossible to behave rationally or to learn. According to Damasio we dispose over emotional markers that inform our thinking about the direction it should take in order to guarantee survival and avoid risk. Due to the fact that emotions are registered physically, the body is a sort of measure and point of reference for the thinking process. Thus, emotions do not hinder thinking. On the contrary, it is our ability to enrich our experiences with emotions that enables reasonable thinking!

In our adult lives, the connection between feeling and remembering is common. For example, if a lecture is conducted by a boring speaker, it hardly generates any emotions in us and we do not remember it quite as well as a lecture conducted by witty lecturer with a good sense of humor. The current research studies on the influence of emotion on memory are confirmed by daily experiences. Remembering all sorts of things works better if it is accompanied by strong emotions. A group of scientists, under the guidance neurologist Manfred Spitzer, researched the ability to remember of people that were shown neutral, negative and positive words. The results were unequivocal: “The words that were remembered the best were the ones that were remembered in a positive emotional context.” Many research studies confirm these strict dependencies between emotion and cognition, feeling and remembering.

However, there is an exception to every rule:

- When emotions are too strong they can obstruct the memory or even “delete” memories. Neurologists call this process emotion-induced amnesia and psychoanalysts call it “elimination”.
- The reinforcing effect of emotion only works when recalling mid-term knowledge, that is to say, after at least two minutes or longer. If we want to check the memory before these two minutes pass, emotions act rather impeding than stimulating.
- We remember positive information better than negative information. Fear and sadness block the memory.
- Emotions primarily support remembering curious and autobiographical information and not so much facts. We remember emotional experiences much better than neutral ones. A big love or the death of a friend are burnt into our memory much more than mathematical equations, for example.

The biological fundamentals of our systems of emotions, thought and actions form the plasticity of the brain. This means that the network of neurons continuously changes and therefore its switching systems collaborate with each other more when they are activated more often. The effect and expression of this complex network are our emotion and memories, which in turn influence the wellbeing of our body. Thus, our emotions are nothing more than the essence of our life experiences imprinted into our bodies. If to stress we react with stomach ulcers, and if we blush when we feel embarrassed or we tighten our cervical muscles as a reaction to fear, it shows the complexity of our organism. Even the eyes react to emotions: admiration, friendship or tenderness make our pupils wider, which makes us more attractive. This means that emotions migrate from the brain to the body and back to the brain. Every time a person has to make a decision, he does not only base this decision on intellectual calculations, but also on subconscious information from the immense catalogue of remembered emotions and reactions of the body.

For coaches:

- Feeling and thinking do not mutually exclude each other. All the information that reaches our sense organs is emotionally loaded and evaluated. Every piece of information generates emotion! It is our ability to emotionally label our experiences that enables us to think reasonably.
- Our memory does not only store the factual part of a piece of information, but also its emotional load. That is why it is easy to make generalizations, as psychologists like to call it.
- Emotions intensify every piece of new information: events and facts that trigger strong emotions are remembered better. And we especially remember everything that is associated with positive emotions.
- In order to create optimal conditions for absorbing a message, we need to avoid negative emotions and replace them with positive ones.
- Extreme or even chronic stress has a negative influence on our memory. Stress hormones reduce the absorption of glucose and consequently decrease the amount of energy that is available to the brain.
- Fear is directly linked to cortisol, which is the hormone that significantly blocks our ability to learn and remember.
- Motivation makes us clever: dopamine is a substance that stimulates us and without which we would not be able to develop. First of all, dopamine stimulates us and makes us focus on what is new and particularly interesting. Second of all, it supports the learning process and remembering good experiences. Under the influence of dopamine we think and react faster, we understand things faster and we are more creative.

Neurons

There are approximately 100 billion brain neurons in 50 different basic shapes. In the brain of a fetus they divide very often and extremely fast: in one minute even 250 thousand neurons can be developed! Each neuron has over a thousand dendritic branches and some neurons in the cerebral cortex may have as many as two hundred thousand synapses. The overall number of all the possible connections in the neuronal network is bigger than the number of all the atoms in the universe as we know it so far. **Glial cells** are non-neuronal cells that provide support and nutrition, maintain homeostasis, form myelin, and provide support and protection for the brain's neurons. There are ten times as many glial cells in the brain than there are nerve cells. The Greek word "glia" means "glue". The glial cells work like sponges; they absorb the toxic substances in the brain. In the development of the brain, the glial cells perform the important function of tracks. Along these tracks the neurons slide to their destined place in the brain. **Development:** At the moment of birth most

neurons are at their destined position in the brain. At this point, step by step, the contact begins with adjacent neurons using the synapses. From this moment on, every little change in the daily life and in the environment will be reflected by changes in the neuronal network. Here the rule applies: “use it or lose it”, which means that if neuronal connections are not used often, they will simply fade away and the ones that are used regularly will become stronger. This plasticity of the brain is maintained until old age. **Experiences are driven by emotions** (de Sousa analyzes this thoroughly). A person always faces a countless amount of experiences of which the suddenness he has to quickly evaluate. It is the emotions that enable the rationality of the human reason. The famous brain scientists Antonio R. Damasio emphasizes that: “The results of my research have convinced me that emotions are an integral component of the machinery of reason”. According to him “humanity is not suffering from a defect in logical competence, but rather from a defect in the emotions that inform the deployment of logic”. According to David Gelernter, who is a professor of computer science, “emotions are not a form of thought, not an additional way to think, not a special cognitive bonus, BUT are fundamental to thought”. Emotions make our thoughts flexible. While our logical reason ponders each thought for a long time, emotions can make instant decisions that are not based on logic. Judgments that are based on emotions come from two other sources: from the genetic programming of our intuition and from our past experiences. “Just like a picture can paint a thousand words, one emotion can often express more than a thousand thoughts”. For a long time the intelligence quotient (IQ) was considered to be the only measure of success. However, an increasing amount of critics doubt that. What does that number of obtained points in an IQ test really tell us? Is a person with 135 points more intelligent than a person that got 105 points? “I do not know anybody that is intelligent in the sense of these tests. I know people that do wise things all the time and sometimes they do something stupid – this depends on the circumstances in which they act”. Goleman, who works with over 500 companies, stated that the emotional intelligence of the employees is involved in the success of the firm to a larger extent than the intelligence quotient and know-how altogether. “Emotional intelligence also means getting to know your own emotions and learn to optimally manage them, regulate your emotions, so that anger becomes effective and fear can be controlled. A person with emotional intelligence can use it to overcome afflictions and difficulties on his own and maintain an optimistic attitude and continue working, for example, despite his frustration”. Emotional intelligence quickly advanced to the category of soft skills in the new economy, where it is believed to be the right key to success. What is new about the concept of “emotional intelligence” is the combination of two worlds, which for a long time were believed to be impossible to unite: abstract emotions and concrete intelligence. That is because in our society the image of individuals that are

guided by their reason, are aware and make decisions on their own still dominates. Emotions are believed to be difficult to comprehend and terrifying. Unlike thought, emotions do not have any content that can be defined and they do not concern any particular object. That is why they are considered to be so vague. The assumption that thought and emotion definitely need to be separated from each other is still deeply rooted in society, but since a long time already it does not correspond to the results of neurological research. What we currently learn from brain research is that reason is woven into the fabric of the emotional structure of humans. The body, thought and emotions are closely connected with each other through the neuronal network and work as a whole. Emotional stimuli influence almost all the areas of the cerebral cortex, which controls our perception and complex processes of thought. The limbic system evaluates and considers everything that we do with the resources of our experience. Our emotions correspond to the visible and measurable physical sensations. For example, when we are happy or excited our heart starts beating faster, our forehead sweats when we are afraid, we drop our shoulders when we are sad, we go pale when something terrifies us and red when we get furious.

For coaches:

- Emotions have the task to keep an organism alive. In this regulatory function their work is biologically determined. This means that in given situations they automatically generate certain reactions. They regulate the inner state of the organism in such a way, so that it can react quickly and appropriately. For example, a faster blood flow to the legs so that we can run in case of danger.
- Their roots lie in the inherent structures of the brain, which have a long history of evolution. In this respect, emotions are also intelligent achievements in the process of adaptation.
- The body is the main stage for emotions. Every feeling is an experience that requires a physical expression in the form of emotion. This can be either visible or not.
- Every emotional state causes hormonal as well as heart and vascular changes, which depend on the type of emotion and on the control behavior of the person.
- Feelings/emotions influence the switching systems of the brain and the body. They generate a concentrated chemical and neuronal action and transmit their information in two ways: through the blood circulation, which transports chemical molecules, or through nerve cells, which transmit electrochemical signals to other neurons or organs.
- So every feeling/emotion is based on the neuronal network and chemical reactions, and accompanied by a characteristic configuration of brainwaves.

- The way in which we form our feelings, how we deal with them and how we accept them, is an expression of science and culture. This results in interesting differences. For example, the Japanese know the emotion “yugan”, which means “aesthetic moment of unity”, and the Native Americans know the emotion “rasa”, which means “admiration without words”. In Europe we do not have corresponding terms for that.

The elements of Emotional Intelligence

The American psychologist and science journalist Daniel Goleman believes that emotional intelligence can be developed. He lists five components of the development of emotional intelligence:

- 1) **Emotional self-awareness.** It is essential to become aware of your own emotions, because people with a high emotional intelligence are able to register their emotions well and are sensitive to changes of their own mood. **“You must be the change you want to see in the world”** – Mahatma Gandhi.

“Self-love is the source of our passions, the origin and principle of all the others, the only one that is born with man and never leaves him as long as he lives. It is primitive, innate, anterior to any other, and of which all the others are in a sense only modifications. Self-love is always good and always in accordance with order. Each of us being charged especially with our own preservation, the first and the most important of our cares is and ought to be to ceaselessly watch over it; and how can we continually watch over it, if we do not take the greatest interest in it? A child’s first sentiment is to love himself”.

- 2) **Emotional self-regulation.** This is about handling your emotions well. Only those that pay enough attention to their emotions can influence them and overcome feelings of anger, fear or depression much faster. Goleman speaks of self-regulation or self-control, based on the Buddhist “Zen”, i.e. keeping yourself in check. He also says: “People who are not good at this, continuously have to fight overwhelming emotions and those that are good at it, are able to move on much faster after failures or stress of the daily life”. Brain scientists have proven with their experiments on animals as well as with their research of people that special regions of the limbic system are responsible for certain systems of emotions:

- The anger-rage system is controlled by the regions of the amygdalae and temporal lobe that are located on the inner side of the brain.
- The fear-anxiety system is controlled by the centre of the amygdalae.
- The panic-sadness system is controlled by the frontal part of the cingulate gyrus (belt ridge on the inner side of both cerebral hemispheres).

However, this does not mean that we are simply marionettes in the machinery of emotions, which we do not have any control over. But it does require a high level of self-control and self-regulation in order to be able to react appropriately to the consciously registered emotion. Thus, it is about the skill to influence mood swings through an inner dialogue and controlling it in such a way that we will not be the victims of our own emotions but able to actively intervene when needed. Each feeling/emotion has its own value and should not be suppressed. Instead, we should learn to deal with all our feelings in an intelligent way in order to maintain our emotional balance and inner stability.

- 3) **Self motivation.** Putting emotion into action. The perceived emotions have to be used productively. They need to be converted into concrete actions and we need to motivate ourselves. In order to do that, we need to develop an essential emotional skill: the control of stimuli. **“Remember that not getting what you want is sometimes a wonderful stroke of luck”** – Dalai Lama. The diversified orchestra of emotions needs a competent conductor! An important task of the coach is become one himself and then help the client become a conductor of his own emotions. According to Daniel Goleman, in order for a person to learn how to use his emotions to achieve a certain goal, a lot of self-control and motivation is needed. These fundamental emotional skills can only be developed if we learn the following:
- controlling stimuli, which is the foundation of self-control;
 - optimism, which is the foundations of motivation.

I can do it for sure! Anyone who learns to believe in that statement will be able to move mountains. After all, everyone who evaluates his own skills and emotions positively is able to motivate himself. That is why it is important to keep on repeating: I can influence my own thoughts, feelings and actions; I can control them and use them productively. Thus, it is about the skill to perceive both success and failure as something that we can influence and change. Pessimists believe that there is nothing that can be done about failures. Hope and optimism are not inborn character traits, but we can certainly acquire them.

- 4) **Empathy.** An emotionally intelligent person should also have the ability to take notice of others. This means having the skills to correctly identify the emotions of others and to develop compassion. Psychologists call this empathy. **“Do not judge me until you have walked a mile in my moccasins”** – an old Indian saying. Our emotions do not only reflect our personality, but most of all, they are a window to others. That is why, according to Daniel Goleman, emotional intelligence is also “being sensitive to others by recognizing their feelings. Being

able to tune into the hidden signals of others that show us what they need or do not want, so that we can act in their best interest". Only the people that are ready to open up to the act of balance between the world of own feelings and the world of the feelings of others will discover the treasure called empathy. Empathy is particularly valuable, because it is the core of humanity, the core of morality. Already the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau believed that: "So long as the sensibility of a man remains limited to his own individuality, there is nothing moral in his actions. A man that believes himself to be a moral being, must get to know himself through bonds with others, which is a task for life. For this we need the skill of empathizing with the situation of another person, understand his thoughts and feelings, respect them and react to them appropriately. Based on our own experiences we understand the personality of another person". The psychologist Jirina Prekop puts it as follows: "A man becomes *I* through *you*". This emotional development is preceded by many little steps of our consciousness, which Prekop describes as follows: "• I want to empathize with others, understand their feelings. • I compare the feelings of others to my own. Did I go through a similar thing? What did I feel then? • I consciously back away, because "I" and "you" are completely separate things. Another person can experience the same thing in a completely different way. I look at the situation from that perspective and not from mine. • I look for an emotional harmony between us. • Now I know how I can tactfully act and what I can do for the other person to make him feel better".

However, the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau made it clear that our empathy is not infinite: "• People are not able to empathize with those that are happier than they are themselves, but only with those that are less happy. • We complain to others about the suffering that we are also running the risk of going through. • The empathy we show others is not measured by their suffering, but by the feelings we have for the unfortunate person".

When we yawn because we see somebody else yawning, it means our empathy is well-developed. Psychologists from the University of Albany proved that there is a close relationship between the ability to empathize and yawning when others do. By means of surveys they collected the personality traits of the tested people and subsequently they showed them a video of yawning people. People with particularly empathetic characters felt the tiredness of others and started yawning themselves. The insensitive people did not. The same happens with laughter. Neurobiologists explain this phenomenon with the existence of mirror cells in the brain, the amount of which we can increase with practice.

- 5) **Social skills.** Knowing the first four components and having those skills constitutes the foundation of our approach to relationships and

friendship. We know how to organize our social lives competently. **“Of all the things that wisdom provides to help one live one’s entire life in happiness, the greatest by far is the possession of friendship”** – Epikur. “Insects – ants and bees in particular – offer dramatic examples of social cooperation that might easily put to shame the United Nations General Assembly most any day” – a humoristic quote of the neuroscientist Antonio Damasio. He is convinced that the complex social behaviors of many animals are the result of inborn neural mechanisms. Whereas the human social intelligence is not something we are born with. From the moment that we are born we have to live with the conflict between our egotistical needs and the strong longing for establishing relationships with others, a community to which we can belong. Contrary to the constant hunt for more pleasure, the golden rule of the overall good is: “Do as you would be done by”. There is one thing that we have in common with the bee and the ant: we are social creatures. Aristotle called it “zoon politikon”. No matter what, we always need a community to fall back on. The psychologist Manfred Spitzer believes that: “A learning person is not like a rodent, which develops conditional behaviors the more food it gets for particular behaviors. Human learning has always taken place in a community, and collective activity has always been the most significant enhancer. Just like speech can only be learned in a community of speaking people through speaking and understanding, social behaviors can only be learned in a community in which and with which we can interact. A community is stable when it is organized in such a way that every entity wants for itself what is also best for the community as a whole - the community being like a vehicle”. Before a person reaches that high level of emotional intelligence, he has to have at least a minimum of self-control and – according to the American cognitive psychologist Howard Gardner – acquire four skills:

- The ability to organize groups: initiate and coordinate the efforts of various people to reach toward common goals.
- The ability to negotiate solutions: a unique talent for mediating. Not only can these individuals resolve conflicts when they occur, but in many cases, they are capable of keeping the lid on trouble when it’s brewing. People who are skilled at negotiation focus on solutions and actions, rather than on problems and roadblocks.
- The ability to make personal connections: sense and relate to other people’s feelings. The ability to make personal connections, recognize and respond in appropriate ways to the feelings and concerns of others.
- The ability to perform social analyses: the skill of knowing and understanding how other people are feeling. This can lead to easy intimacy or, at the very least, the ability to build rapport quickly.

According to Daniel Goleman, these four elements “undergird popularity, leadership, and interpersonal effectiveness. People who

excel in these skills do well at anything that relies on interacting smoothly with others; they are social stars. Those who have these skills can develop interpersonal relationships, mobilize and inspire others, to thrive in intimate relationships, and to persuade and influence others and create a relaxed work atmosphere". People with social skills are good at working in groups and motivate others, but they can also recognize false friends and intrigues. Above all, they know the fundamental rules of social life, according to which emotions are contagious. We pass on moods to each other and take over the moods of others, as if they were a social virus. In the interaction between two people, the mood of the person that is expressing his or her emotions more intensively is passed on to the more passive person. Thus, it is also about an emotional synchronization. If people adjust to the moods of others or can easily drag others into their own mood, then the interactions on an emotional level proceed quite smoothly. One of the biggest achievements when it comes to social skills is without a doubt the skill to constructively solve conflicts in a way that makes all the involved parties happy. Besides that, it is commonly known that people in groups can motivate and support each other to such an extent that the achievements resulting from intelligence are much higher than the sum of their individual intelligence quotients. Here we are dealing with a higher level of intelligence, namely social intelligence, which means that individual brains collaborate with each other and at that moment work as one big brain. Nowadays, most of the philosophies of companies are based on the so-called soft skills, i.e. the ability to work in a team and leadership. The skill to deal with people is becoming increasingly more important in the free market. Hierarchies are becoming flatter and the possibilities of every employee and every employer have to be utilized to a greater extent. Only people that can lead themselves can also lead others. Therefore, the condition for success in managing and leading is a high level of social skills.

For coaches:

- Simply asking "please be nice to each other" is not enough. Only life can teach us the rules of social competencies! In given situations we learn where our limits lie and about social behaviors.
- In order to achieve this, we need a lot of room to maneuver and a wide scope of experience.
- We should delegate more tasks and responsibilities.
- We should acknowledge social competence as one of the most important values in life. We should respect others, show them understanding and love. This is reinforced by self-awareness and the ability to work in a team.

- We should not praise only the best ones in the group, because this will cause others to feel bad.
- A group can be motivated only when we show enthusiasm ourselves. Enthusiasm is contagious. If we convey our message with passion, the group will catch on. This is called the “pedagogical Eros”, the love for our job. Being emotional creatures ourselves, we are the strongest medium of social competence, stronger than a book!
- We should not fall into doubt.
- We should organize meetings that require active participation: conferences and discussion, during which everyone will have the chance to express their desires and new ideas, in the participation of which they should be involved as much as possible. Other places where social competencies can be trained are sports clubs, hobby clubs, religious and political groups and in business integration meetings and the organization of development workshops.

Laughter – “What soap is to the body, laughter is to the soul”
– Yiddish Proverb.

Many researchers believe that laughter is the oldest form of communication, a sort of nonverbal Esperanto, a universal language that unites all people. Our ancestors probably laughed long before they started to speak. This is because the speech centers are located in the younger – in terms of the history of development – part of the cerebral cortex, whereas laughter is controlled by the older part of the brain. Laughter is inherent. Babies and small children smile the most, namely around forty times a day, while adults only smile fifteen times a day.

**WHAT SHOULD WE KNOW ABOUT GELOLOGY
(FROM THE GREEK WORD „GELOS”, WHICH MEANS LAUGHTER)**

Since the seventies of the past century scientists study the physical and spiritual ways that laughter can influence the “homo ridens” – the laughing man. The incentive to start this type of research was the ill back of the journalist Norman Cousins. When nothing was stopping the intense pain, besides taking medicine he also gave himself some laughter therapy. He watched comedies and read funny books. After ten months the pain was gone. This medical case attracted the attention of professor William F. Fry from Stanford, who currently is considered the father of gelotology (science of laughter). In 1964 he founded the Humor Research Institute and was mocked by many colleagues because of it. Nowadays the Science of Pleasure is a globally recognized field of knowledge. Fry conducted many experiments, starting with himself, and he concluded that the activity of the cells that are responsible for the immune system of an organism significantly increases during laughter. His studies of the immune system were very popular all over the world.

Even if brain scientists are still searching for the “center of humor”, one thing remains certain: in order to understand humor and enjoy it, we need a few skills.

The behavioral biologist dr. Haug-Schnabel from the University of Freiburg mentions the following:

- The mental and social development needs to be advanced to such an extent that the things that are funny are not perceived as a deviation from what is normal.
- Not everything that is being said should be taken seriously. Sometimes words are said just for fun. We need to know how to listen and hear the intention of the spoken words, their message.
- An inner sovereignty is important, because we need to be able to take distance and not feel personally attacked.
- To be able to laugh we need to understand the perspective of the joke or funny incident, which distorts reality. Then the humor will pleasantly tickle our mind.

Our energy is expressed through tears and laughter. Already in the Jewish book of wisdom, the Sirach, which exists over 2200 years, it is written that: “A joyous heart is the life of a man, and joy prolongs his days”. After all, we all know that “laughter is health!” And there are many research studies to show for it. **Laughter:** • it increases the heart rate and the blood pressure; • it increases the amount of antibodies (also known as immunoglobulin) and makes the immune system work better; • it raises the pain threshold and makes the brain more alert; • it intensifies the movements of our diaphragm, which massages the inner organs and improves digestion; • it increases the level of oxygen in our blood and the volume of our lungs; • 240 of the 630 muscles of our bodies are being used when we laugh; • laughing reduces the production of the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol; • it increases the excretion of the “happiness hormone” (endorphins) and thus makes us feel better; • it lifts mental blocks and overcomes entrenched ways of thinking! Under the influence of “positive biochemistry” our mind is more creative and open to new solutions when we laugh.

“Therapeutic humor” is being taken seriously in medicine for a long time already. One of the forerunners of this idea was the neurologist and psycho-gerontologist Rolf Hirsch. As the head of a hospital department he applied humor when treating elderly people, i.e. geriatrics. Also Michael Christensen, the founder of the Big Apple Circus Clown Care hospital program (Big Apple Circus, New York) knew that laughter can be very effective. Since the middle of the eighties sixty clowns are active in the children’s departments in clinics in New York and Boston. In 1994, following the New York example, Laura Fernandez created the association of the “Clown Doctors”. Ernst J. Kophard conquered the hearts of children as a clown at first, later he became a professor of psychomotrics. Currently the market of laughter is flourishing and a lot of seminars are given on a wide range of subjects: starting with laughter therapy all the way through to laughter yoga. This last method, developed

in 1995 by the Indian doctor Madan Kataria, is based on the principles of yoga and on research results in the area of gelotology. Thus, it is globally accepted that humor is a medicine that has no risks or side effects! Smiling or laughing builds bridges between “I” and “You”. This social function was described by the French philosopher Henri Bergson: “It seems that laughter needs an echo. Our laughter is always the laughter of a group. However spontaneous it seems, laughter always implies a kind of secret freemasonry, or even complicity, with other laughers, real or imaginary”. According to Bergson laughter was a social test; in a poetic way he compared it to the waves of the sea: “The billows clash and collide with each other, as they strive to find their level. A fringe of snow-white foam, feathery and frolicsome, follows their changing outlines. From time to time, the receding wave leaves behind a remnant of foam on the sandy beach. Laughter comes into being in the self- same fashion. It indicates a slight revolt on the surface of social life. It instantly adopts the changing forms of the disturbance. It, also, is a froth with a saline base. Like froth, it sparkles”. Our will does not control laughter. Laughing is like a reflex. Once it is provoked, it becomes autonomous. Laughter can also bring relief, for example after being hurt or treated unfairly. It can also indicate victory, for example after overcoming our fear of our boss. Laughter allows us to maintain distance, also in the face of very serious or sad events. Laughter relaxes. Maybe that is why Johann Wolfgang von Goethe said: “When I have guests, I always like the person that is cheerful and is having a good time the most”. Goleman: “A positive and open expression lets our brain know that we are in a relaxed and therefore safe atmosphere and prepares it to process positive information”. “Perhaps we, being human and taught seriousness, particularly have the tendency to confuse depth of thought with melancholy”. However, already the philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer noticed that there is a connection between sense of humor and seriousness: “The more capable of complete seriousness a person is, the more heartily can he laugh”. The Roman poet Horace (65–8 BC) stated that: “Jest and laughter often settle important matters better than seriousness and rigor”. The writer Erich Kastner said that “Humor is the umbrella of wise men”.

For coaches:

- Adults, especially those with a higher social status, have the tendency to take life too seriously. This way they make it even more complicated that it already is.
- Gelotology and biofeedback research results should make all the serious directors and managers with a somber outlook on the future and without any sense of humor think twice. By being this way they are not only harming others, they are also, or most of all, harming themselves!

- We should give a good example of a good sense of humor: make sure that others know that you can be a good laugh, that you are a person to roll on the floor with laughing, that you can appreciate funny situations and handle them well.
- We should avoid all forms of irony and sarcasm in relationships with others.
- We should remember that laughter is the shortest distance between two people.

“A day without laughter is a day wasted” – Charlie Chaplin.

AND FINALLY, FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE HEART

In the era of increasing resources of knowledge (yearly scientists publish six million professional articles in the world, which gives a daily amount of seventeen thousand) it is about time for us coaches to focus on our most important skills, which is to support with head and heart. If we perform our tasks using our head and heart in the spirit of old reformers, and additionally take into account the research results in the field of the biology of the brain, then we lose nothing, but gain a whole lot. The knowledge society that believes it knows everything as long as the information flow proceeds smoothly, finally demonstrates how little it has understood. This is because it erroneously believes that the more information flows there are, the larger the common knowledge and understanding. The manager Daniel Goeudevert warns us: “We have so much information that we run the risk of drowning in the excess of it. Or perhaps that is the reason why we lack so much lived knowledge, experienced feelings and sound values. More and more people die of emotional hunger! Knowledge that is not placed in the moral culture of humanity is barbaric”. When the philosopher Max Scheler said: “knowledge is existence”, he was talking about a live exchange of views, an emotional encounter and involvement. This is only possible in the real lives of real people. In the small world of factual knowledge found on the internet, the horizons of experience are very limited. Those who receive everything at home do not need to travel and consequently stay inexperienced. At the beginning of the 21st century we are facing decisive questions: when will we achieve the “boiling point” of the overwhelming amount of information? How much longer will our emotions be able to handle the spiral of “a little bit more”? When will emotional coldness become violence? Will we notice in time that it is not the absorption of enormous amounts of knowledge that guarantees our future, but our ability or entirely integrate our body, mind and spirit? It is about the question of values. And if a person is defined only by his success, career and wealth, then he no longer has values and is under constant pressure. And where there is

no meaning and pressure prevails, fear, violence and depression thrive. Probably every one of us has experienced in their lives that achieving success is required by our society of “stepping on people”, but it is not enough to lead a happy life. Peter-Matthias Gaede says: “Calculating the value of people in terms of money is nothing new. The same goes for the criteria that this calculation is based on. Was the manager that was burnt on September 11th in the North Tower of the New York World Trade Center more valuable than his messenger, who lost his life in the South Tower? That was the reason for enormous disputes between the relatives of the victims that were waiting for damages, for who a famous lawyer was preparing various estimates. Is human capital possible to measure? According to research that was carried for the German Bank Institute it is. According to this research the value of an average German person is 230,000 Euros, based on prime costs and production investments for the average human material of German origin. To imagine that what makes a person human, i.e. own opinions, stubbornness, not always optimizing and calculating, will be perceived as a wrong investment is quite scary. But to calculate life into cents obviously does not outrage anyone. It is about time that we realize that human capital is not a stock market value. Otherwise what the British writer Oscar Wilde warned us about will happen: “Modern cynicism is knowing the price of every-thing and the value of nothing.” Optimal development means own initiative and emotional involvement, and not the consumption of facts. Our role as coaches is very important here. We should start developing further and move on from the phase of the man of reason and finally reach for awareness. We should finally realize that reason never deserved the respect it gets, because it is incapable of giving us a satisfactory answer to all the questions that really matter. We should use the optimal tool that has been with us since ages: feelings.

Rarely do we hear from directors that they have “emotionally talented employees”. It is much more common to hear of “mathematical or technical” skills. In this respect our educational system has a big deficit – being the awareness of one’s own inner potential, the power of one’s inner foundation and developing the skill do be in control of oneself. Already the linguist Wilhelm von Humboldt demanded the kind of development that makes a person what he is supposed to be, i.e. human. This does not mean that education should not include professional knowledge and only be about pleasant social contacts involving social science, without any effort. “There is no education without effort” said Roman Herzog in his famous speech. As long as we will continue measuring the education level of a person by what he knows by heart or by his intelligence quotient, we will live with the false believe that the masters of memorizing techniques and test geniuses are educated people. **I do not want to appeal to your reason. I want to “capture your hearts”** – Mahatma Gandhi. The leader of the Indian freedom movement was

right. By using only our brains, wisdom and acuity of the mind we cannot achieve much. In order to unleash our inner development and outer changes, the energy of the heart is just as important. Every change begins with optimism and, most of all, in ourselves. “If you want to establish order in a country, you first have to establish order in the provinces. If you want to establish order in the provinces, you first have to establish order in the cities. If you want to establish order in the cities, you first have to establish order in families. If you want to establish order in families, you first have to establish order in your own family. If you want to establish order in your own family, you first have to get yourself in order” – Confucius (551–479 BC). “When the father habitually tries to resemble the child and is afraid of his sons, and the son likens himself to the father and feels no awe or fear of his parents, so that he may be forsooth a free man. And the resident alien feels himself equal to the citizen and the citizen to him, and the foreigner likewise. The teacher in such case fears and fawns upon the pupils, and the pupils pay no heed to the teacher or to their overseers either. And in general the young ape their elders and vie with them in speech and action, while the old, accommodating themselves to the young, are full of pleasantry and graciousness, imitating the young for fear they may be thought disagreeable and authoritative. They finally pay no heed even to the laws written or unwritten, so that forsooth they may have no master anywhere over them. This is the fine and vigorous root from which tyranny grows, in my opinion” – Plato (427 BC).

Włodzimierz Włodarski

“ADMIT” MODEL – MANAGEMENT AND INFLUENCE DOMAIN

Managing people differs significantly from managing other resources such as money, real estate or information. It is worth being aware of this difference because if we are not, managing people becomes difficult, frustrating, incomprehensible and does not seem to be based on any patterns and schemes. There are many vague and ambiguous spots in the area of managing people that cause troubles and leads to ineffective solutions and actions.

The main goal of its article is to establish the foundations and specify the rules necessary in human management. I would like to explain the basic assumptions that result in effective or ineffective human management. Boundaries of power and freedom are so important that it is worth learning to recognize them in a more conscious and precise way.

My **goal** is to show that a typical management approach – as applied to other resources – is not sufficient and successful with respect to people. Human interactions are more meaningful nowadays and create conditions that are essential to human functioning and achieving unusual results.

A coaching approach to developing individuals and groups is one of the most important available tools to influence personal change and changes in our their lives.

In this article we will look for answers to the following **questions**:

- Is using coercion towards people necessary and substantiated?
- What are the boundaries of power? What can you order people to do and what can you forbid them to do?
- What scope of power and influence is acceptable?
- What are the types of influence and what are their characteristics?
- How is coaching different from management? And what are the consequences of this difference?

DIFFERENT MANAGEMENT STYLES

Companies that are focused on the external world, clients, organizational processes, money management, compliance with regulations and everyday struggle find it difficult to pay attention to and respect a human aspect of business.

Daniel Goleman gives many arguments in favor of the thesis that the best managers, as opposed to those less successful ones, not only have knowledge of the area they work in, but also know how to treat other people and themselves i.e. have human competences. These competences skills are key factors in manager's career, promotion and dismissal. Those who were dismissed, despite being great specialists in their fields, had two features in common:

- *Rigidity*: they could not adjust their style of action to changes in the organization's interpersonal sphere or they could not pick up signals about what they should change in themselves. They neither were able to listen nor to learn.
- *Inability to deal with people*: too severe judgments, insensitivity to other people's problems or excessive demands that created walls between them and the people who they worked with (Goleman 1999: 67).

The more developed the company is, the more open to people, their resources, creativity, emotions, ability to influence others it has to be. Comparison of effective and ineffective bosses allows to specify key characteristics needed for effective interactions with other people (see Table 1).

The data shows that in order to work effectively with people it is not enough to have knowledge, to be a professional, to be precise and logical and have other "external" skills. What is needed are competences that allow a person to ignite "internal" resources of other individuals, teams and organizations. Available research on the subject shows that:

- 1) Personal advisors say: "You get work – in 70 percent – because of your professional knowledge and – in 30 percent – because of social skills. You lose it – in 70 percent because – of lack of social skills and – in 30 percent – because of qualifications".
- 2) Managers, salesmen and company owners spent on average 80 percent of their time communicating with employees, clients and business partners.
- 3) Almost 70 percent of core performance competencies are social skills.
- 4) In 90 percent, leadership is about interpersonal skills, especially skills connected with inspiring other people and influencing them.
- 5) It is estimated that around 40 percent of employees are not able to cooperate effectively i.e. support one another in development by sharing knowledge and using personal and common experiences.

Table 1. Personal characteristics of effective and ineffective managers

Ineffective managers	Effective managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ rigid towards people, closed to people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ open to people, curious, flexible in interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ are not aware of their impact on other people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ listen to people and learn with them
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ are separated from people, are overly criticizing and insensitive, leave people with their problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ presence and good contact, tolerance and support in interactions with others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ have difficulties in dealing with problems such as bad mood, lacking self control in anger management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ are effective in stress management, believe in their own abilities and can be relied on
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ are defensive when criticized: deny by hiding their mistakes or blame others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ take responsibility for failures, admit to mistakes, correct them, do not brood on failures, go ahead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ are overambitious, achieve success at other people expense, are only interested in their own well-being, have egoistic goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ take into consideration people and their circumstances, common good is what counts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ are tough, arrogant, intimidating subordinates, bending people to their will 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ sensitive and open to other people and their way of thinking, tactful and respectful towards others despite their functions or job roles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ are manipulative, they do not create strong relations with people and talk only about facts and tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ appreciate differences, build good relations with people who act differently and have different needs

Source: own elaboration based on Goleman (2007: 332).

- 6) Up to 25 percent of the population in working age might be socially incompetent. The remaining part of the population has a significant “reserve” – abilities to improve their interpersonal competencies. The research shows that in the case of certain quite peculiar social skills (e.g. asking questions) the deficit applies to the half of the population.

WHAT CAN YOU ORDER PEOPLE TO DO?

It seems that people are not fully aware of their power over other people and the possibilities that are the result of this. It is interesting to know what can you order people to do and what can you forbid them and what

can you not. Very often, people faced with that question answer either that you can order everything or that you cannot order anything.

M. Gerber (2007: 153) writes that very often managers, small company owners, etc, ask him *How can I make people do what I want?*, to what he always replies *You can't do that! You can't make your people do anything.*

Power and influence, correction and free will, "have to and can" are with people all the time, at work and at home. They are in them and between them. Strength in managing people is valued, although not as much as it used to be. The ability to put the heat on somebody, to exact obedience, to maintain discipline and be despotic are highly respected and people pay heed to people who behave like that.

People who are tempted by power give a lot of attention to generally accepted managerial behaviors such as supervision, verifying and controlling what employees do. People who have power can control other people i.e. can order them to do or refrain from doing something. Having influence does not mean that you can order somebody to do something or forbid them to do something else, but paradoxically this type of impact makes people do something or refrain from something because they want or do not want it.

People are tempted to force other people to do certain things because they need to control and dominate other people and the entire world in order to be sure that they are right and that the situation is clear. In many such cases the power is only illusory.

Those who prefer to influence people rather than force them assume that the world is uncontrollable, that everything changes constantly, that actions are not one-dimensional and that there is no guarantee that situations will unravel the way we want. But – despite all these "flaws" – what we have is good and valuable.

P. Sztompka writes:

"Even the most cruel tyrant must at some point understand that using violence he is only able to fully control the body, but not the mind with its thoughts, intentions, ideas and dreams. Even in the situation of the greatest submission people always have choice: give in or resist, comply or stand up to, follow orders or ignore them (in the end martyrs, heroes and saints are like everybody else). Hence, attempts to exercise absolute control usually fail"

Sztompka (2007: 66).

V. Frankl said the same using different words:

„It is obvious that orders, tasks and instructions will not yield certain things such as the «faith, hope and love» triad. These three notions cannot be attributed with «command qualities». Faith, hope and love cannot appear on demand, because they are not subject to will. I cannot

force myself by an act of will to hope, believe or love and I cannot force myself to want something. In my opinion, there is no better example to explain this problem than a laughter phenomenon that is typical for humans: You cannot force someone to laugh, you must tell him a joke!”

Frankl (1997: 17–18, after: Downs 2003: 172).

Becoming aware of the boundaries of power and influence is a great asset for managers, parents and consultants. Table 2 contains several relevant examples.

Table 2. Examples Of Power And Influence

I can order and forbid	I cannot order and forbid
somebody to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ work during working hours ■ comply with law ■ abide by social norms ■ dress properly ■ behave properly ■ do their tasks ■ carry out orders ■ drink alcohol ■ have private talks ■ get better qualifications 	somebody to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ think ■ feel, love ■ have biological responses ■ evaluate and draw conclusions ■ do what is best for them ■ be creative ■ think like me ■ be better ■ make friends ■ have a certain worldview ■ spend free time with me

CREATING A SYSTEM – ADMIT MODEL

Asking the question “What can be ordered and forbidden?” in human relations gives us a chance to take a closer look on several domains that together add up to a management and influence domain available to everybody who manages people.

There are four domains to be considered. The first domain – *human resources administration* (AD) – is marked out by legal and administrative compulsion, establishing rules and regulations and making individuals, groups and companies abide by them. In this domain, coercion, at least originally, is universal and there are no exceptions to the rule. Order and obedience are the highest values and if you do not comply with this you may expect punishment. If you are not comfortable with the word “obedience” you can talk about duties. Awards are not expected and if given they are highly suspicious. Try not to pay your taxes on time and see what happens. There are law codes that apply to different areas of life: labor law, civil law or road traffic law. In this domain, people are treated like things and they can communicate with authorities only in a formal written way. This domain is characterized by formality

and legal and social rigorism – individual treatment is impossible. It is governed by “tough law, but law” rule. The system is threatened by freedom of choice or anarchy. In its negative form this domain leads to being heartless and callous.

The second domain is about *management* (M) understood as setting goals, pursuing them, motivating and checking results. It is based on economic coercion, power and budgeting. If you have a budget you can act and rule. Profit is the main value. If you have it you succeed, if you do not have it you lose. In business thinking, which rules here, everything is subordinated to tangible, final results. What cannot be measured is of little value. This domain is dominated by a manager, who, if results are visible, is given free hand. Unquestionably, of the highest value here is the generated economic capital.

In this system, people are treated like merchandise that has a specific market value. There are rewards and punishments – the carrot and stick approach is quite popular. Very frequently, one may hear *Show me the money* phrase. Return on investment is what counts. Threats are of three kinds: first, if there are no result the activity ceases; second, people might be exploited; third, moral norms might not be met and greed may cause people to achieve profit at all costs.

The third and fourth quarters create an entirely different world and type of thinking. The third domain deals with *the domain of influence and mutual interactions* (I). It is about the inner world of people, their inner resources and psyche. People become valuable because they are seen as unique individuals with their own thoughts, feelings, experiences and behavior and not perceived through the lenses of business and profits. This domain is filled with human relations and bonds that are usually spontaneous and voluntary.

The character of interactions changes. They become more personal, because people meet face to face to talk to one another. Their relations are based on partnership and devoid of elements of domination. Mutual communication is what counts. Authenticity and natural integrity resulting from human inner life are important characteristics of this domain. Personal influence, direct relations and communication are the basis for creating an authentic authority, building cooperation, understanding, manifesting one’s feelings and experiences and being an example to other people. Here is the place for leadership and coaching, for talking about human and social capital. This quarter’s motto might be: *Everybody has their own world, we can share them with other people*. A negative trend – in this domain – might be detachment from life and esotericism. Threats have to do with manipulation and games. From a social point of view, negative aspects may result from a combination of in-groups and coteries and cronyism.

The fourth domain addresses the tolerance for *natural rights of individuals* (T). On the one hand, it determines how far people can interfere

with private life of other people and functioning of institutions and on the other, it creates an inalienable value of human existence. Respecting privacy and intimacy of other people, human rights, right to opinion and changing it, right to success, right to experience life in one's own way, right to make mistakes have to be taken into consideration and have to be respected by people who manage other people. Natural rights point to human autonomy and worth and have nothing to do with usefulness or external advantages. This domain is about people and being tolerant to all their possible aspects. From the capital point of view, this domain deals with the capital of personal rights.

In this domain, it is important to be aware of these rights, which are strongly highlighted by the assertive trend and the Charter of Human Rights. Autonomy and freedom of people is the imperative value of human existence. The motto for this quarter might be: *I have the right to be myself*. The negative side of this attitude might be isolation and loneliness: *It's every man for himself*. And the threat might be equating attitudes and behaviors or not respecting these rights.

I will be referring to the model of domains of regulating human behavior as the ADMIT model. Table 3 contains description of domains.

Let's take a look at this matrix using the example of a learning process. The first quarter is about coercion and schooling obligation imposed by administration. In the second quarter, we can create something resembling management of one's professional career and specify one's inputs and effects of education. In the third, we can motivate ourselves to intensive learning, better understanding and authentic development and in the fourth we can respect the right of a student to make mistakes and have his own pace of acquiring skills.

We can do a similar maneuver with work performance. In the first quarter, we can imagine that labor law contains provisions concerning due diligence on the part of an employee and employer's obligation to ensure proper working conditions and respect an eight-hour working day. In the second quarter, we can manage employee's performance by specifying performance norms, position occupation or incentive systems, in the third quarter we can brainstorm employees about performance or together with them look for improvements and solutions to problems. In the fourth quarter, we can become aware of the fact that employees under certain conditions might be tired and have to have breaks and that human performance differs from person to person and depends on many different factors that are frequently uncontrollable and unmanageable.

Using this model we can structure other aspects of human behavior connected with values, e.g.: honesty, respect for authorities, human achievements and management processes such as building company's or organization's vision, creating good atmosphere at work and consider different situations, e.g.: conflicts, taking offence, involvement, cooperation, support, listening, explaining, etc.

Table 3. Management And Influence Domain – ADMIT Model

It can be ordered and forbidden	law, rules and regulations	effective behaviors	External world, measurable, fixed and defined, people as objects
	I. ADMINISTRATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ legislation ■ legal coercion ■ administrative orders and bans ■ regulations ■ obedience ■ obligation ■ people as objects ■ capital of laws and regulations 	II. MANAGEMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ effectiveness-oriented ■ budgeting ■ manager’s rule ■ goal setting ■ „stick and carrot” ■ formal authority ■ profit ■ person as a „commodity” ■ economic capital 	
It neither can be ordered nor forbidden	IV. TOLERANCE FOR RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ rights of human nature ■ people as subjects ■ autonomy ■ natural individual rights ■ the human as value in itself ■ capital of personal rights 	III. IMPACT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ real authority ■ one’s own example ■ building relations ■ partnership ■ communication ■ direct relations ■ personal influence ■ coaching ■ leadership ■ the human as a person ■ human and social capital 	Internal world of humans, process and flow, people as subjects
	natural, symmetrical and conditional laws in conflict	personal and interpersonal effectiveness	

Source: own elaboration.

POWER VERSUS INFLUENCE

Power is a necessary element of organizational work and very often results from a formal position, which is connected with a certain title, set of duties, certain possibilities of action and controlling certain resources. However, both the title and the set of duties are not the true sources of power. The true power consists in the possibility of acting and controlling resources desired or needed by other people, for example: tasks for subordinates, consents for certain types of works, accepting budgets, working or holiday schedules, managing money, promotions and salary

rises, employing and dismissing, purchasing materials and equipment, access to and dissemination of information.

T. Gordon (2000: 33) highlights the fact that the superior must have abilities connected with performing tasks (planning, organizing skills) as well as interpersonal competencies (locating and eliminating sources of employee disappointment). The effective leader is focused on tasks and people at the same time. The effective manager may not solely be an “interpersonal specialist” (paying attention to employees’ needs) or solely a “performance specialist” (focusing on organization’s needs). He has to be both. What is more, the effective manager must be flexible and sensitive to know where and when to apply these markedly different skills to fulfill needs of people and the organization.

The skills one needs to have to satisfy group’s needs are behaviors that enhance self-respect of group members and their self-esteem and behaviors that increase group integrity and foster team spirit. On the other hand, the skills necessary to satisfy organization’s needs cover behaviors that motivate productivity and reaching group’s goals and behaviors that help team members to achieve goals connected with planning, organizing, motivating and supplying different means.

There are, however, certain inconveniences and limitations linked with the notion of power. The fact that you are a manager – noticed T. Gordon – does not make you *someone*, because as a boss you do not automatically receive respect and acknowledgement from the members of your group (Gordon 2000: 22). From my conversations with managers, I concluded that earning trust of their teams took them from one year to year and half. Another unfavorable observable aspect of power is that in its very formal version power has a destructive influence on relation with people, what in longer perspective impacts performance and productivity. T. Gordon states that commandeering and ordering in human relations blocks true human engagement and motivation for action. The more power, the less influence. Figure 1 illustrates the relation between power and influence.

A mathematician would say that both these factors are inversely proportional and of course he would be right. The more coercion one uses the less influence he wields. The more influence, the less management – stated Jack Welch. The Polish translation of the title of a book about Jack Welch *Who leads does not have to manage* fully supports his statement.



Figure 1. Relation Between Power And Influence

Source: Gordon, Burch (2001: 98).

T. Gordon writes:

“I asked many people the same question: «You can chose between power and influence and you can have only one, which do you prefer?» After some thinking and discussion people would invariably chose influence. One of the persons put it this way: «The only power I want is the power to influence people. Every other type of power involves too much loss of time and energy»”

(Gordon, Burch 2001: 98).

Steering the influence process is like watering plants in a garden. We can turn off water if we do not want the process to take place (water will be flowing somewhere else). We can let it flow freely in order to see the results of its free flow or we can direct water somewhere else unblocking and supplying different areas. We can pour water into a watering pot to pour it precisely into certain spots. But we cannot do only one thing: we cannot create water.

INNER WORLD

Human inner world is not owned by psychologists. Although each and every one of us owns their own psyche, this resource is highly underestimated, disregarded and misunderstood. The inner world is a world existing in our minds. The outer world is usually considered to be more valuable and more objective. It is also believe that is easier to change the outer world than the inner one, since the latter is subjective, difficult to measure and to perceive and hence bewildering. Thus, it is not surprising that many people are cautious when it comes to its analysis.

It is impossible, however, not to notice that your own psyche assist you wherever you go and keeps following you every minute of your life. You have to learn to use this resource, because very often it is the only resource you have in a given point in time. Many structures of inner experience decide of you success e.g. possibilities or limitations that you perceive are only mental constructs of your mind. The same concerns visions and goals, ideas, emotions, ideas, perceptions, feelings and intentions. This resource has been long depreciated and underestimated.

Figure 2 presents sets of opinions about the inner and outer world.

T. Amabile and S. Kramer did an extensive research on how employees experience their inner life at work and how this activity impacts organizations' effectiveness. They tested almost 240 white collar employees from 26 project teams, whose task was to fill in diary-reports. The conclusions concerned several aspects (Amabile, Kramer 2007).

First, it turned out that employee's inner life is a continuous process and resembles a complex system of perceptions, emotions and motivations.

THE INNER WORLD AS REALITY

According to E. de Bono

It is the inner world that makes life worth living.

1. The inner world has always been overshadowed by the outer "objective" world.
2. The inner world has its own logic and truth, which are different from the logic and truth of the outer world.
3. The inner world logic is the "logic liquid as water" rather than the "logic hard as rock" of the outer world.
4. The inner world gives us new possibilities, creativity, hypotheses and ideas.
5. The inner world beliefs cannot be changed using the outer world logic. It is necessary to use the notions of the inner world of a given person.
6. The inner world seen from outside seems to be strange and incomprehensible, but just accept that it is what it is and that you need to learn it.
7. Inner experiments and experiences are as important as experiments carried out in the outer world.
8. Traditional thinking* is ineffective when applied to the inner world. We need to create a model that would allow for direct use of sensations.
9. Values, metaphors, models exist in the inner world.
10. Change in the external world does not take place if the consciousness of a particular person is not changed. In other words, nothing will change without your personal transformation.

* Traditional thinking focuses on criticizing, judging, analyzing and searching for truth, which have small creative potential. This type of thinking assumes that the "truth" exists and awaits discovery.

Figure 2. Outer Versus Inner World

Source: De Bono (1998: 142–143).

Second, the majority of managers do not tune to the inner life of their subordinates and do not appreciate its constant influence on work effectiveness. Generally, managers have vague idea about what their employees go through internally and what causes these feelings and emotions.

Third, employee's effectiveness is highly dependent on his inner life. People work more productively when they experience positive emotions, strong inner motivation (passion) and when they positively perceive their work, team, leaders and organization. Positive emotions foster creativity, negative emotions lower it. In all tested teams, the probability of a creative idea was 50 percent higher on these days when people were in good moods i.e. had a good inner state.

Fourth, there is a phenomenon called the rule of inner motives creativity. It says that more ideas are generated when employees are motivated by their own interest in work, joy and satisfaction they have from doing it and challenges that are connected with the work they do and not when there is external pressure or rewards.

Fifth, appreciation from the boss without progress had no positive impact on employee's inner life and leads to cynism. On the other hand, when people's work progress is not recognized or even worse – they experience criticism about trivial issues – anger and sadness appears. Far and away, the best boosts to inner work life were episodes in which people knew they had done good work and managers appropriately recognized that work.

Another important aspect is the ability to see the inner potential i.e. psychic characteristics and resources that help us go through the most difficult periods in our lives and make optimum use of available possibilities. If we want to effectively deal with quick changes and develop as individuals and organizations, we need to start precisely from this potential (Pritchett 2008: 15).

We need to mention here neuro-linguistic programming – NLP, which added to the understanding of inner life and experiences by making use of many unique approaches and techniques. NLP deals with the meaning of the subjective, inner experience of an individual. *Experience* is usually defined as:

- Present experiencing of an event or situation, contacts with external world, one's own actions, etc.
- Events, situations, contacts with the external world or individual's own actions, which – as it is assumed – leave an imprint.
- An imprint of experienced events, situations, contacts, feelings or action in memory.
- The effect, especially permanent one, of experienced events, situations and interactions in the psyche, behavior and individual's actions (such as in the following expressions: an experienced man, life experience, etc.).
- Knowledge, especially practical one, acquired on the basis of one's own experiences, behaviors, situations or events (an experienced mother, an experienced employee).
- Totality of psychic phenomena in a given moment, treated in the same way as they are directly experienced by a given person (introspective psychology approach).

It is also assumed that "experience" may be both conscious and unconscious. It can be seen in ways and mechanisms in which our experience influences our behavior. If we have practical experience in a certain field, the knowledge about how to do things does not have to be verbalized: our hands (nerves, muscles, joints, fingers, our body) "knows" how

to do them. We learn them by modeling and exercising rather than by following a verbal instruction.

This is a description of the inner experience in NLP given by R. Bandler:

Most studies of the learning process have been „objective“. What NLP does is to explore subjective experiences of the process by which people learn things. “Objective” studies usually study people who have the problem; NLP studies the subjective experience of people who have the solution. If you study dyslexia, you will learn a lot about dyslexia. But if you want to teach kids how to learn, it makes sense to study people who can read well.

When we made up the name “Neuro-Linguistic Programming” a lot of people said, “It sounds like «mind-contro»”, as if that were something bad. I said “Yes, of course”. If you do not begin to use and control your own brain, then you have to just leave it to a chance.

Bandler (1985: 118).

INFLUENCE

Specifying influence is not that simple. The notion “management” is understood quite well. To understand what is influence we have to stop and think. It would consist of all actions undertaken out of free will and such actions that give choice to other people or employees. Influencing ourselves and other people is a process that leads to changes in behavior, opinions or feelings on the basis of what other people do, think or feel. It is a voluntary process of receiving information.

There is no room for forcing people to produce a reaction or behavior that is in line with your expectations. You may expect refusal, criticism, dislike, reluctance and misunderstanding. It is a difficult moment for the manager. It is worth learning that every answer you get may be seen in a positive light, as a signal that you intercept to generate positive and negative results and commence the process of communication i.e. influence. You need to accept that in order to influence people you need to be open to their influence. Do not expect that if you stay unreceptive of other people’s influence they will attentively listen to you.

The next rule is that if you want people to do what you want, first you need to demonstrate it yourself. If you want them to be diligent, be diligent yourself, if you want them to be punctual – finish meetings on time, if you want them to be involved go ahead yourself. Only then you will be credible. There is not room for that in management. There you can require something you do not know and you do not do yourself because tasks and competences are divided and nobody is a jack-of-all-trades.

Figure 3 contains different rules concerning influence. They are the basis of good and permanent human relations.

- It is related to individual's inner life and interpersonal influence.
- It is a process that is based on partnership or on accepted authority.
- It is a dialog and exchange – it is not a monologue.
- People's inner life goes on constantly.
- Often, it is the recipient who gives meaning to influence not the speaker.
- It is a spontaneous and unpredictable process – we cannot be 100 percent sure what happens in a communication process.
- One cannot choose not to communicate.
- When in contact with other people, we influence one another and in a way we start all over gain.
- To change people, you need to change yourself first.
- The inner world influences the outer world.
- Imagination is more powerful than knowledge.
- Management has its end, influence stays.
- The logic of human influence is different than the logic of things.
- The unconsciousness influences our behavior at least to the same degree as the consciousness.

Figure 3. Influence Characteristics

CONTENTS OF THE THIRD DOMAIN

When asked how they influence employees and when they need abilities connected with influencing their subordinates managers give many different answers.

Some of them say that a normal **informal conversation** is an example of influence. It may involve **support** when employees need it, so that they do not feel left all alone with problems at work.

Presence and support in situations that are difficult for an employee is the next type of influence. It is especially important in unexpected or personal situations: noticing person's private life, general readiness to get involved, staying after hours if the need arises.

Formulating company's **goals** and **rules** concerning company's functioning and ones requirements i.e. explaining and clarifying, making aware of the importance, showing directions and methods for solving problems, setting behavior standards.

Certain part of actions concerns **motivating** employees, showing possible behaviors and defining areas of employees' initiatives, convincing people to take one's own decisions or searching for solutions.

Respecting values in interpersonal relations surfaces as showing respect, acknowledging employee's position, taking care of good atmosphere at work and as relations based on partnership principle.

Table 4. Types Of Influence Highly Valued By Employees

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ showing enthusiasm ■ supporting other people ■ recognizing individual effort ■ listening to employees' ideas and problems ■ providing directions ■ demonstrating personal integral and honesty ■ practicing what s/he preaches ■ encouraging teamwork ■ willingly giving feedback ■ developing other people ■ promoting other people's self esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ seeking to understand things before making judgment ■ treating mistakes as learning opportunities ■ allowing employees to take decisions concerning their tasks ■ encouraging new ways of doing things ■ promoting understanding of key issues ■ seeing future challenges ■ agreeing targets ■ taking decisions ■ minimizing anxiety
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Source: Armstrong (2001: 35).

Facilitating discussion and meetings is another example of influence, supported by practicing what one preaches and exchanging experiences. Table 4 contains data on influence factors valued by employees gathered in an Industrial Society survey.

Still, we can structure influence by considering its content and areas of interest. This type of influence (self-influence and influence on other people) may pertain to many areas as but certain are of high importance. These may be:

- positive mental and emotional approach,
- dealing with emotions, crisis and stress,
- interpersonal abilities, especially in crisis situations,
- negotiations,
- leadership,
- coaching,
- team work,
- dealing with differences: cultural or differences among people,
- tolerance for rights and values of individuals.

The essence of these skills is in proving their indirect and direct impact on social, individual, tangible and financial results of a company. Now, it is more obvious than ever that this social and psychological mixture influences business results. None of your thoughts lives in your head for free. Each of them is either an investment or a cost (Eker 2007: 45). Becoming aware of this relationship affects individual development, emotional life and establishing relations with other people. These are areas of individual and group effectiveness that are not included in company's balance sheets and financial reports. Unfortunately, so far, nobody has managed to completely systematize types of influence.

COACHING AS AN EXAMPLE OF INFLUENCE

The turning point for coaching was a book by Timothy Gallwey titled *The Inner Game of Tennis* (1974), in which he discerned the outer game from the inner game that a player is playing with himself. The outer game is played on an external arena and has to do with observable behavior that can be filmed and analyzed. The inner game takes place within the mind of a person and is about your mental attitude to what you are doing. It is about your approach, self-trust, ability to concentrate and deal with inner conflicts, etc.

The inner game is played out constantly in our minds. The game we participate in the real world does not matter. What is important is the fact that being aware of this inner game may help us succeed in the outer game.

T. Gallwey was not happy with the results of his trainees, who could not successfully deal with too many remarks pointing to mistakes and describing ways to improve the performance. One day, he noticed that if he demonstrated the hit several times without talking about it and making critical remarks, his pupils achieved better results than when they listened to normal instructions. This applied both to amateurs and experienced players.

It seemed that by analyzing the moves his pupils played worse than when they did not "think" and just modeled what they saw like children who learn to play a new game. Having discovered that, he limited the instructions to a necessary minimum and the results went up.

Gallwey concluded that people have an inner instructor or a critic that constantly tells them what to do: "look at you feet", "slow down", "now speed up", "observe the ball", "breathe evenly". This inner critic influences our performance no less than any other "outer" judge or referee.

T. Gallwey wrote this book to help people learn how to get results in sport by setting a good mindset and finding one's own way to succeed. The instructor has become a coach. He is no longer a supplier of solutions and training methods but an inspirer that mines for player's best resources and skills, because the most important game is not played on the tennis court with the real opponent but in player's mind with his attitudes, weaknesses and limiting concepts. In the 1990s, coaching as a method of working with managers started to enter the world of business, in which change and development are not only needed, but in fact necessary – especially the world we live in today.

Although Gallwey was a tennis coach, he used the underlying ideas of sports coaching in many other areas, so that they could be later used on a wider scale. In coaching, the most important learning assumption is that coach helps the coachee in achieving his best in a non-judgmental

Table 5. Two Worlds

Manager's role	Coach's role
being interested in the world of profits	being interested in the inner world of human beings and their mutual relations
concentrating on rules, reigns	influencing
focusing on systems and structures	focusing on people
using facts, figures and merit	using subjective world as a basis
preoccupying with technology and tactics	preoccupying with psyche
taking care of business results	noticing individual and relational effects (attitudes, emotions, etc.)
evaluating – frequently on a 0–1 scale	being free from judgment
only evident changes count	there are no changes without changes in people
what should be done to have results?	what will you do to achieve success?
looking for profits	seeing people
needing action algorithms	feeling good in an intangible and limitless world
organizing everything, being responsible for all the difficult tasks	being present, helping others to be effective and responsible
being ready all the time	being open
everything can be changed	inner change precedes external change
reacting to: “show me the money!”	accepting: “everybody has its own world”
people have to do tasks at all costs	human perspective impacts the result
the more force the better	the less force the better
people have to think the way I want	people think what they want
being a hero	helping others to be heroes
knowing everything	we might not know for some time
overcoming resistance and barriers	dissolving resistance
wondering: Can I waste people's potential?	wondering: Can I do not take care of visible results?

Source: own elaboration.

way. Timothy Gallwey wrote several other books about the inner game, in which our own limitations and weaknesses are the real opponents. The inner game is played to change our mental habits that make it difficult to achieve the desired skills and results.

Hence, it is interesting to juxtapose the role of the manager with the role of the coach to highlight main differences in their approach to people – the approach that in fact has the same goal: achievement of desirable results (see Table 5).

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Marta Gabalewicz-Paul

APPLYING COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL APPROACH IN COACHING

INTRODUCTION

In the first century AD, the Greek stoic philosopher Epictetus stated that “people are disturbed not by the things that happen, but by the opinion they have about those things” – i.e., our own thoughts and opinions shape our feelings about and reactions to an event, not the event itself. This is why people react differently to the same situation and this is why one person may react differently to the same situation depending on his or her viewpoint. Accepting this principle opens up new perspectives and approaches to everyday events. People can learn to become observers of their own thoughts and can assess whether those thoughts help them achieve their life and work goals or not.

Five centuries earlier another Greek philosopher, Socrates, stated that “the highest form of human excellence is to question oneself and others” and invented a form of philosophical enquiry called a “Socratic dialogue”. The Socratic Dialogue is a series of questions asked to help people determine their underlying beliefs and the validity of such beliefs. The Socratic Method is a method of eliminating hypotheses - better hypotheses are found by steadily identifying and eliminating those that lead to contradictions.

In the 1960s, two leading theorists, researchers and therapists, Aaron Beck and Albert Ellis, capitalized on these findings. They observed that there was a systematic bias in the way that people with depression and anxiety interpreted their experiences. By helping patients reveal in a Socratic dialogue these biased negative interpretations and change them they could produce an almost immediate decrease of symptoms. Consequently, they realized that people often engage in an “internal dialogue” with themselves consisting of “automatic thoughts”, which

influence feelings and behaviour. They identified that many people have *negative* automatic thoughts, which are unhelpful to their goals. When people change the way they think, the way they feel also improves, which positively affects their behavioural strategies as well (Beck 1997). Individuals are not always conscious of these automatic thoughts, but they can learn to identify them, understand them and change them in a way that can support their wellbeing. Beck's model is known as *cognitive therapy* while Ellis's is called *rational emotive behaviour therapy*; collectively, they fall under the name of *cognitive behavioural therapy* (CBT).

Before moving on, it is important to add what CBT is not. Firstly, CBT is not a course in positive thinking. It teaches how to look at things the way they actually are, free from distortions. Secondly, CBT does not say that problems are created solely by one's thinking. It highlights that how we think about events has an enormous effect on how we deal with them. And finally, CBT does not ignore emotions; on the contrary, it explains their origin and consequences and shows that the route to emotional change is through cognitive and behavioural work (Neenan 2008).

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is nowadays one of the most widely researched and best validated psychotherapeutic approaches. It is the psychological treatment of choice for a wide range of psychological problems (Salkovskis 1996). A report by the London School of Economics, published in June 2006, commented that CBT is so attractive, that the UK government has decided to invest £170 million in training new CBT therapists, so that the National Healthcare Service can offer this form of therapy to an additional 1 million people in the near future.

COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL COACHING

Does the success of CBT mean that its strategies and techniques can help not only patients with clinical disorders but also clients striving for personal and professional growth? Beck and Ellis were eager to move CBT out of the counselor's office in order to reach a wider audience and there is an ever growing evidence base showing that CBT methods can indeed help people in having happier and more productive lives. Dr. Martin Seligman, a psychologist working at the University of Pennsylvania, applied the cognitive behavioural methodology to develop resilience, hope, and optimism in clients. Dr. David Burns, a psychiatrist at the Stanford University School of Medicine wrote the book "Feeling Good", which influenced therapists and coaches to apply cognitive behavioural psychology with people who wanted to experience personal growth. Their work and that of many other cognitive behavioural psychologists is the foundation of what can now be called *cognitive behavioural coaching* (CBC).

The CBT therapist and CBC practitioner Michael Neenan (a professor at the Goldsmiths College) reported a rapid growth of CBC in both workplace and personal coaching over the past five years. He, now an author of more than 20 books on CBT and many articles on CBC, is one of the many leaders in educating on the application of CBC. A short list of some famous others include:

- Stephen Palmer – an honorary professor of psychology at the City University UK and now the director of the first university-based coaching psychology unit to be set up in the UK;
- Gladeana McMahon – considered one of the UK’s ‘Top Ten Coaches’, one of the UK founders of *Cognitive Behavioural Coaching*, and one of the founders of the *Association for Coaching*, currently a co-director of the Centre for Coaching in the Psychology Department of the University of East London;
- Windy Dryden – another UK founder of *Cognitive Behavioural Coaching* and a professor at the Goldsmiths College, author (together with Michael Neenan) of “Life coaching – a cognitive-behavioural approach”.

They all point to the fact that since thoughts and behaviours are a part of every human endeavor, cognitive behavioural techniques can be applied to address almost any situation clients bring to their coaching sessions.

CBC can be defined as a cooperation between client and coach, where the coach supports the client in reaching the specific goals identified at the beginning, by helping the client develop constructive thoughts and behaviours that support actions towards the identified goals (Whitten 2009). CBC helps clients to identify, examine and change unhelpful thoughts and beliefs, develop productive behaviours and become more skilled at emotional management. According to Neenan CBC is a “twin-track approach” to goal achievement, which works on a psychological and practical level. The psychological track helps to remove the psychological barriers to change, while the practical track helps clients develop a sequence of goal-directed action steps (Neenan 2008). Just like any other type of coaching, CBC primarily aims to help individuals develop action plans for change, but what makes it unique is that it encourages them “to increase self-awareness of their thinking, moods and emotions” (Becket 2000).

My personal experience is that supporting clients in reaching their personal or business goals by solely following popular and simple coaching models might be insufficient when the thing that blocks clients are their negative thoughts and limiting, self-defeating beliefs (e.g. “It would be awful to make a mistake”), which lead to troublesome emotions (e.g. strong anxiety) and counterproductive behaviours (e.g. procrastination, avoidance). Cognitive behavioural coaching helps clients

to identify, examine and change such thoughts and beliefs, develop productive behaviours and become more skilled at emotional management (McMahon 2007).

COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL COACHING PRINCIPLES

CBC is time-limited, goal-directed and focused on the here and now (historical material is used only to provide valuable lessons for current behaviour and decision-making). It is non-directive, built on the assumption that the client has the answers, so the client is the best person to take decisions. A CB coach does not tell the client what to think or do, but provides the right kind of questions to take the client from the current position towards the thoughts and actions that help reaching the goals. The CBC process is collaborative rather than confrontational. However, it may be challenging, because Socratic questions aim to provoke insights (Neenan, Palmer 2001). CBC is “psycho-educative” in nature, which means that one of the goals of coaching is to help the individual develop the necessary skills to become his own coach. As the coachee becomes aware of his own thinking style, strengths and limitations, develops new ways of thinking and alternative ways of behaving, he becomes more adaptable and more effective in dealing with challenges.

A session conducted in the CBC manner will start with the coach checking how the client has been doing since the previous meeting and whether he or she is bringing something important to the session. The coach then refers back to the contract, letting the client choose one of the listed items to work on during the session. The client’s issue is discussed and clarified, the goal for the issue is established (clear, specific, measurable and within the client’s control to achieve), options for change are discussed, an action plan is developed, and the client’s responsibility for implementing this plan is established. Then the client is helped designing a homework assignment, which will help him or her move further in the coaching process and to say what the value of the session was. Finally, the session ends with the coach asking for specific feedback on how the client has experienced the session: what has been helpful and what has not. This information helps the coach customize coaching to the client’s preferences. During the next session the progress with the action plans is reviewed. As mentioned before, most of the work is done using a Socratic dialogue, which means that the tool the coach mainly uses is questioning.

THE COGNITIVE MODEL

As stated earlier, cognitive behavioural coaching is based on the cognitive model, which says that people’s emotions and behaviours are

influenced by their perceptions of events. In other words, it is not the situation itself that determines what people feel and do, but how they understand it. For example, a manager who believes an act of non-compliance is a proof that he lacks managerial talent will feel and act differently than a manager who sees non-compliance as a consequence of miscommunication. Therefore, the cognitive behavioural coach is interested both in the situation the client is confronted with and in the *meaning* the client attaches to it. If the meaning is negative, but adequate to the situation and helpful, a problem solving approach in coaching will be sufficient. But if this meaning does not take into account reality, is not logical or is unhelpful, the problem solving approach might be ineffective. An intervention dealing with the psychological block should take place at first. In CBC the framework for understanding and dealing with psychological blocks is the ABCDE model developed by Albert Ellis.

Before explaining the model, let's consider what makes one person regard a situation differently from another person? What decides *how* a situation will be perceived by a person? The answer is: the core beliefs a person has. Already in early childhood people try to make sense of the world, try to organize their experiences, understand and put a sense to them. This is how beliefs develop. Because this happens early in childhood, when cognitive skills are limited and experience is scarce, the accuracy and functionality of core beliefs may vary. However, because they operate almost from the beginning of one's existence, they become fundamental for who a person is (that is why they are called *core* beliefs) and generally stay unarticulated and stable in adult life (Beck 1997). Among these beliefs the most important are those about yourself, other people and the world (the so-called Beck's cognitive triad). For example, as a result of early experiences people may develop:

- beliefs about themselves: "I am competent" or "I am incompetent";
- beliefs about other people "People are trustworthy" or "People are untrustworthy";
- beliefs about the world: "The world is a safe place" or "The world is a dangerous place".

A manager whose core belief is "I am incompetent" will have a greater tendency to regard an act of non-compliance as his managerial failure, whereas a manager with the belief "I am competent" will rather explain the same situation as a result of miscommunication. The core beliefs that people have also explain the life rules they follow. For example, a person believing he/she is incompetent might develop one of the following life rules: "work harder than others", "avoid challenges", "do not speak in public", etc.

Core beliefs may operate a lot of the time, but most often they are activated only in some situations. When they are activated, people tend to interpret situations according to their beliefs, even though the rational

basis says the contrary is true. People tend to disregard or discount information that is inconsistent with their core beliefs. In this way core beliefs might be maintained even if they are untrue or unhelpful. And even if not activated directly, core beliefs produce corresponding “negative automatic thoughts”, also called an “internal dialogue”, which is a chat that is constantly present in our mind and affects our emotions and behaviours.

The ABCDE model provides a structure to identify and dispute unhelpful core beliefs, negative automatic thoughts and life rules and change them, where relevant. ABCDE is an acronym from:

Activating event – the situation a client is confronted with, an objective description of it (e.g. the boss reminding me that he is waiting for my report).

Belief or expectation – the way the event is perceived, which may include negative automatic thoughts, life rules and core beliefs (e.g. the boss is disappointed that I have not finished the report yet and I expect that when I finally give it to him, he will find it poor and my incompetence will be disclosed)

Consequences:

- 1) emotional (e.g. intense anxiety)
- 2) behavioural (e.g. avoiding the boss, working over hours improving the report, getting behind with other projects)
- 3) physical (e.g. continual tension, headaches, stomachaches)
- 4) cognitive (e.g. negative catastrophic thoughts and images about being punished or fired)

Disputing the belief or expectation – this means investigating if the belief is:

- 1) evidence-based (what is the evidence that the boss is disappointed? what is the evidence that I am incompetent? are there any facts saying the opposite is true?)
- 2) logical (just because the report is not as perfect as I wanted it to be, how does that logically mean that I am incompetent?)
- 3) pragmatic (does thinking I am incompetent help me finish the report on time?)

Exchanging thoughts – developing new, more adequate, rational and constructive beliefs and expectations (e.g. the boss is reminding me about the report, because he is interested in my findings, but the deadline is in two days. I have worked on the report intensely for a long time now and although it can still be improved I have included the required information and I have suggested a couple of solutions. I have done what was expected from me. It is time to close this project and move on).

Obviously, what happens on a daily basis are steps A, B, C. People are constantly interpreting events (according to their core beliefs) and this

triggers specific consequences for them in all four areas (emotional, behavioural, physical and cognitive). Most often these consequences lead to strengthening of the core belief that lies at the bottom of the interpretation of the event (e.g. avoiding the boss, not meeting the deadline for the report, getting behind with other projects and consistently working over hours may indeed make the boss think his employee is incompetent). Steps D and E may take place during a cognitive-behavioural coaching session.

Another fundamental issue for CBC is the connection between the four areas of human existence: thoughts, emotions, body, and behaviour. CBC accepts and widely capitalizes on the finding that these four areas are strongly interlinked and one affects all others. Our thoughts influence our emotions (e.g. if I expect that my request will be rejected, I might feel nervous, frustrated or sad), but also our physiology (recent findings in neuroscience allow us to see the brain in action and find that stressful thoughts release cortisol, adrenaline, and noradrenaline, which means that in stress the body becomes rigid, one has butterflies in the stomach, sweaty hands, etc.) and our behaviour (e.g. if I expect to be rejected I might give up and not express my request at all). Just as our thinking impacts our physiology, our physiology impacts our thinking (when adrenaline is high, perception is focused and cognitive functions are limited, so only some kinds of thoughts are available, e.g. a stressed person will more likely have negative than positive thoughts), but also our emotions and behaviours. This is why the CB approach does not just address the mind, but it is a holistic approach addressing all four areas of the human existence. What makes it different is the focus on the thoughts and beliefs

Zeus and Skiffington (2002) suggest that focusing on clients' beliefs plays a critical role in all types of coaching. This is true, and at the same time it is also true that working with beliefs to produce a change is not easy. Many coaches are unsure how to help clients restructure their unconstructive beliefs. CBC offers coaches an in-depth understanding of how self-defeating beliefs are developed and then maintained and provides a wide range of tried and tested methods for promoting belief change.

COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

One of the main aims of CB interventions in coaching is helping individuals identify and understand the impact of their thinking style (Neenan, Dryden 2003). As mentioned earlier, this makes sense if the client's thinking style is irrational, not logical or unconstructive with respect to the goals. A CB coach will help the client review how he/she approaches a situation and how this influences his/her reactions. Among

the numerous CB interventions there are many that can be successfully implemented in coaching. Some basic ones are outlined below.

Teaching the cognitive model

One of the basic CB interventions is sharing the cognitive model with the client. This may include teaching the client how to distinguish between thoughts, emotions, physiological reactions and behaviour. Although the client may be aware of some of the thoughts going on in his/her head, many of the thoughts are unconscious and go unnoticed. Thus, the client is taught to stop and to reflect on his/her thinking habits. The client is taught to recognize the thoughts, initially ex-post during a session (e.g. what did this fact made you think about? what did it mean to you?) and later also in real life. Finally, the ABCDE model is introduced so that the client can understand how thinking affects reactions and how it explains the current situation.

Teaching thinking errors

The client is taught a list of the most common cognitive distortions (also called thinking traps) and is also asked to start identifying the types of cognitive distortions he/she engages in. Once the client learns to identify the distortions in his/her thinking, he/she can then assess the accuracy of thoughts and change them into more correct ones.

Common Cognitive Distortions include:

- All or nothing thinking – things are either black or white, no shades of grey are noticed;
- Overgeneralization – drawing conclusions on the basis of a single incident or insufficient evidence;
- Mental filter – only the negative aspects of a situation are noticed;
- Catastrophizing – assuming the worst and, if it occurs, an inability to deal with it;
- Musts and should – rigid rules imposed on oneself and/or others;
- Perfectionism – striving for standards that are beyond reach or reason (Neenan 2008).

Working with thoughts (the cognitive component)

There are three types of challenges that are used to help the client re-evaluate thinking and put thoughts into perspective (Simos 2002). Their aim is to help the individual engage in realistic thinking. A CB coach needs to ask the client whether his/her thoughts are:

- **Evidence-based:** is the belief realistic and supported by facts (e.g. “Where is the evidence that you must not make an error?” or “Where is the evidence that you are incompetent?”).

- **Logical:** does the belief make sense, does it contain a thinking error (e. g. “Just because you would like to never make an error, how does it logically follow that you must not make one?” or “How does it logically follow that because you are not perfect you are incompetent?”).
- **Pragmatic:** is keeping the belief helpful, does this belief produce the reactions needed to achieve one’s goal, are the costs greater than the benefits? (e.g. “Even if it were true that making an error is awful, do you feel better or worse believing that, and does it stop you from making mistakes?” or “How helpful is it to you to think you are incompetent?”).

Conducting experiments (the behavioural component)

The clients are encouraged to treat their thoughts as hypotheses, not facts (unless they can be verified). Carrying out experiments allows clients to test the validity of their predictions and generate new ideas and behaviours (Neenean 2008). For example, a manager thought that if she delegated some of her work it would be done poorly, she would have to correct it and this, would add extra burdens to an existing heavy workload. However, by taking the risk of delegating she quickly learned this was a way of developing her employees’ skills while reducing her own workload.

The result of the cognitive and behavioural work done in sessions is a change in the thinking habits of the clients, their core beliefs and rules for living. This not only helps clients achieve the goals defined in their coaching contracts but also leads to a solid and stable personal growth.

CASE STUDY

Helen¹, a manager in a financial department of an international company, was offered coaching by the Human Resources Department. Although she was regarded as extremely capable, she was also seen as coercive, impulsive and sometimes even aggressive, which had a negative impact on her prospects for a career growth. One of the objectives of her coaching was to develop better communication skills in order to be more effective in managing her team.

A coaching contract of nine coaching sessions was agreed upon. Her contract initially included the following two outcomes: developing an understanding of her own interpersonal style and of the people in her team, and identifying and developing the relevant skills associated with effective communication.

¹ The name of the client and some other details have been changed.

A popular assessment tool was used to identify Helen's personality type and she realized that her type has the tendency for an excessive control, directive leadership and pursuing results at the expense of relationships. A 360° feedback was also conducted to confront Helen with her colleagues' opinions on her performance. She developed an awareness of her style of communication and its impact on others and was able to create an action plan. This is usually sufficient for an individual to engage in remedial behaviours and produce positive results, but not in the case of Helen.

The surprisingly little progress at the beginning of the coaching process, despite the client's good understanding of what the coaching is about, her strong motivation and the good client-coach relationship, suggested that some psychological blocks were present. Thus, the focus of the coaching sessions became the understanding of her thinking style. Two core beliefs were identified: "people are stupid and lazy" and "a good manager should treat the company as his/her own business", which, explained better Helen's, excessive control, constant criticism, unwillingness to cooperate with team members and to invest in their development, and the tendency to take individual ownership of all projects. Cognitive behavioural work, including learning the ABCDE model, challenging Helen's thinking and testing alternative beliefs through experiments resulted in more realistic beliefs and more adequate behaviours. Additionally, it turned out that Helen had an extremely unhealthy lifestyle, which affected her physiology and emotional stability, decreasing her capacity to deal with frustrations. Some of the changes she implemented were: limiting smoking, exercising daily, going for a walk at lunch time, doing breathing exercises at work, making some time for herself at home, and improving her diet. All these measures had a positive effect on her physiology and emotional regulation and resulted in better self-control and a greater effectiveness in reaching her coaching goals.

By the end of the coaching contract Helen managed to modify her behaviour and communication style to one that placed more emphasis on building relationships, sharing knowledge, acknowledging progress and accepting mistakes as a part of the learning process.

The feedback received from others in the organization at the end of the coaching process demonstrated a positive change in the way that Helen related to people and the way she was regarded. Her chances for promotion increased.

CONCLUSIONS

It seems that CBC is a powerful way to help clients reach their potential by focusing on both the psychological and practical aspects of goal

achievement. Clients can learn that many obstacles to change are psychologically constructed and possible to overcome, which will open up new perspectives for them to pursue a more fulfilling life.

Like many coaching approaches (NLP coaching, Gestalt coaching, Ericksonian coaching, etc.), CBC is adapted from therapy for use in coaching. The effectiveness of CBT as a remedial intervention and the recent studies on CBC effectiveness give credibility to CBC. Provided coaches make their boundaries clear and remember that therapy is about helping someone with a block, but coaching is about developing from a solid base, they can successfully implement the impressive plentitude and variety of CBT tools and techniques in their coaching practice.

CBC can be used as a main approach to coaching, as part of another approach or in an eclectic way together with other approaches. The pragmatic attitude towards CBT means it is one of the many tools coaches should have in their toolkit box and should use and drop it when appropriate. The focus should be on the clients and their objectives, rather than the method. What matters is that coaches are competent and flexible in supporting their client's growth.

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Paweł Smółka

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS COACHING: AN EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH

The practice of coaching, as one of the methods of developing human potential, is characterized with a great deal of variety or even arbitrariness (Ives 2008). This is why every precise definition of coaching must be, by necessity, incomplete, because it will for sure not (and even should not) take into consideration all the elements of coaching, and it will be highly specialized, because it will describe in detail only one aspect (or some aspects) of coaching and distinguish it (them) from others. However, the incompleteness and specialization of any precise definition of coaching is not its flaw, but virtue. It enables to see coaching not from a descriptive viewpoint, which tries to describe common features of all approaches to coaching, including the ones that are based on erroneous grounds, but from the normative viewpoint, which proposes theoretically sound, verified in practice, and hence worthy of popularization approaches to coaching. One of these approaches is an evidence-based approach, which is a basis for a dynamic development of all professions involving helping other people, including counselling, psychotherapy and coaching (Stober, Wildflower and Drake 2006). The article describes interpersonal skills coaching as an example of an evidence-based approach to coaching.

Before the formal and methodological aspects of interpersonal skills coaching as an example of an evidence-based approach to coaching will be discussed, it is worth taking a closer look at the ways in which coaching is understood by people who are involved in it from the perspective of practice, theoretical deliberations and empirical research. Their point of view constitutes the groundwork for the development of the evidence-based approach to coaching.

While searching for a definition of coaching that would, on the one hand, be general enough, include many various coaching approaches and, on the other hand, accurate enough, including the essence and the characteristics of coaching, the suggestion of Sara Thorpe and Jackie

Clifford should be mentioned, who define coaching as follows: “the process of helping someone enhance or improve their performance through reflection on how they apply a specific skill and/or knowledge” (2004: 17). This definition indicates three important matters that are crucial in coaching. Firstly, it emphasizes the individual character of coaching – helping a given person. As a result of this individualized approach, coaching becomes not only an exclusive form of development support, but also the potentially most effective form of support, because it creates the possibility of tailoring the method of support optimally to the needs and expectations of the person in question. Secondly, the definition points out that coaching is supposed to enhance and improve performance. This part of the definition separates coaching from training, which is about gaining new skills and therefore preparing for performance. Similarly, it can be said that this definition also separates coaching from psychotherapy and counseling, which aim at restoring the ability to perform that is lost due to struggling with a mental illness or on account of going through an emotional crisis. Furthermore, the term “performance” clearly indicates that coaching concerns the goal-and-task-oriented activity of a person; it helps him achieve goals that are important to him or tasks that he has been assigned more effectively. Thirdly, it indicates that the fundamental mechanism of change (i.e. enhancing and improving performance) is the involvement of the person in question in the reflection on how he applies his knowledge and/or skills. Thus, coaching encourages the idea of reflexive practice – it helps learning from own experiences. In the context of this definition, it is also worth mentioning that coaching can be considered in terms of post-training support, that is, as a tool that supports the transfer of skills that are developed during training (within the safe walls of the training room) to real life situations (Smółka 2009a). This means that coaching begins where training ends. Training prepares for performance, while coaching helps perfecting the performance, put the newly developed skills into practice and learn to use them as tools for achieving defined goals in concrete, real situations.

There are many types of coaching. Within the coaching psychology *three types* of coaching are usually distinguished: skills coaching, performance coaching and developmental coaching. Skills coaching and performance coaching are often described as one type of coaching, i.e. skills/performance coaching, on account of the fact that they have a lot in common (Smółka 2009b; compare to Cavanagh and Grant 2006). The essence of skills/performance coaching is perfecting the effectiveness of functioning, which requires the person involved to reflect on the optimal use of his or her knowledge and/or skills, as well as, if needed, working on the improvement of the required competencies. In this context, coaching can at times be treated as an individual training, especially when the main goal is to improve a set of skills. Whereas developmental coaching

is about self-awareness, as well as recognizing and using your own potential. The typical question that is asked in developmental coaching is: “what do I really want?”, as well as variations of it, like: “who do I want to be?”, “how do I want to behave?”. The answer to these questions lies in the reevaluation of the current goals and the way of achieving them, as well as adjusting the objectives to the needs and expectations of the client. In this context, developmental coaching can be treated as a motivational support, which is the support in choosing a path for further performance by getting involved in activities that are internally motivating for the client, because they are in accordance with his needs and expectations.

The diversity of the different coaching approaches is partly the result of the diversity of “paradigms” that coaching practice is based on (Ives 2008), as well as the multidimensionality of the client-coach relationship (Popovic and Boniwell 2007). These “paradigms”, i.e. the fundamental principles that coaching is based on, can be divided into three dichotomic categories. Any coaching approach can be described using each of those three categories. The first category concerns the difference between a directive and non-directive style of coaching, i.e. the extent to which the coach shares his own experience and knowledge with the client and the extent to which the coach controls the topics of conversation with the client. Then second category concerns coaching that focuses on matters to do with personal development or the search for solutions to particular problems and divides the different approaches into holistic, relatively unstructured ones, of which the aim is to support self-awareness and self actualization and relatively highly structured and specific ones, which help solving well-defined problems (achieving specific goals). The third category divides the different coaching approaches into therapy-oriented ones and those that focus on increasing the effectiveness of functioning. Therapeutic coaching helps the client understand himself and, above all, his “inner life”. In this approach, increasing self-awareness, restoring inner (emotional) balance and the ability to function efficiently are the actual goals. Whereas the coaching approaches that focus on increasing the effectiveness of functioning see the increase of self-awareness and self-understanding as tools for making functioning efficient and introducing beneficial changes in the current way of functioning.

Apart from the differences in the main paradigms of coaching, it is also worth taking a closer look at the different dimensions of the client-coach relationship. Three essential dimensions of this relationship can be distinguished (Popovic and Boniwell 2007). Firstly, this relationship can be based on “being with the client” or “performing with the client”. A coach that “is with the client” facilitates the self-cognition process and lets the client self-express himself, whereas a coach that “performs with the client” motivates him to plan ahead and take concrete action.

Secondly, the relationship can focus on the existing patterns of thinking, experiencing and performing or it can focus on the desired patterns of thinking, experiencing and performing. A coach who concentrates on the existing patterns helps the client get to know himself and solve possible inner conflicts, as well as make optimal use of his own resources (knowledge, skills, experience). Whereas a coach who focuses on the desired patterns motivates the client to improve his skills, develop new competencies and change habits. Thirdly, the relationship can focus on intrapsychic issues or on interpersonal matter and matters related to the environment of the client. A coach who focuses on intrapsychic issues helps the client understand and change (if needed) his inner life, including beliefs, emotions, needs and expectations. Whereas a coach who focuses on interpersonal matters and matters related to the environment, helps the client become aware of his own behaviors and strategies in particular situations, which he chooses, provokes, plans and co-creates.

Coaching models provide an outline for its practice, but the final form of the client-coach relationship and the way the coach supports the client is determined by the needs and expectations of the client. Therefore, the coach should be competent enough to support the client in various ways. Nonetheless, every specific coaching model should clearly define the target group and specify the scope of goals, substantiated by the model guidelines. Despite the differences between the various coaching models, metamodels are suggested, which aim to capture the essence of coaching by indicating the characteristic features for all the coaching approaches (Stober and Grant 2006a). It is worth taking a closer look at two of those features, i.e. common areas. Every approach indicates that the client-coach relationship is supposed to help the client in achieving goals that are important to him. Additionally, an indication is given of the recommended methods, procedures and techniques of helping the client in the achievement of the goals selected by him. The goals that the client wants to achieve can be diversified. However a few categories can be distinguished, which give a foundation for describing the various coaching types. An example of a goal is the wish to improve skills. Depending on the type of skills that the client wants to work on during the coaching process, a set of good methods, techniques and procedures of change can be distinguished, which will effectively help perfecting this specific type of skills. In this context, the source of the set of criteria for evaluating the “goodness” and the validity of the methods that the coach uses in the process of helping the client become significant. Nowadays, in the case of many relationships of support, namely in the work of psychotherapists, psychologists and also coaches, it is emphasized that the guidelines of the evidence-based approach, which is considered to be the expression of a dynamically advancing professionalization of all the “supportive” professions, should constitute the recommended source of criteria (Stober and Grant, 2006b).

The evidence-based approach is based on consciously and responsibly applying current knowledge and theoretically justified and/or empirically verified methods, including the coach's own experience in working with clients as well as the predispositions, preferences, expectations and life situation of the client, during the process of providing help or support and deciding on the optimal working method with a given client. Therefore, the evidence-based approach requires from the coach that he reflects on his own practice and its roots in recognized theoretical concepts and in the results of reliable scientific research studies, his own experience of working with clients, as well as the profound understanding of the situation of a given client (Stober and Grant 2006; Stober, Wildflower and Drake 2006). If a coach adopts the evidence-based approach into his own practice, the quality of his coaching practice will significantly increase. This is because it involves the requirement of reflective practice, which enables deriving advantage from one's own experience and, additionally, requires being up to date with the results of research studies on good practices and the effectiveness of particular methods of providing help and support. Furthermore, this approach is based on creatively applying own experience and knowledge, adequately to the situation of a given client. Thus, the evidence-based approach means moving away from the standard models of working with the client. At the same time, this approach suggests that practice should not have an arbitrary character and that the latest, reliable knowledge, scientific research results, the experience of the coach in his work with clients as well as the predispositions, expectations and life situation of the client determine the limits of "experimenting" with the methods of providing help and support in the personal development process and achievement of goals that are important to the client (Smółka 2009a).

Currently, the catalog of original concepts and empirical research results concerning coaching, despite the dynamic development, is still relatively small (Greif 2007). This means that for the evidence-based approach to coaching the adaptation of knowledge from related disciplines, especially psychology, is currently very significant. Thus not only concepts and research directly concerning coaching (developed within coaching psychology) can be inspirational for its practice, but also the knowledge found in other disciplines, such as positive psychology, personality psychology, social psychology, and educational psychology. In the case of a specialty coaching such as the interpersonal skills coaching, the empirical findings of personality psychologists as well as social psychologists that focus on the research of the nature and determinants of social competencies are an inspiration for the coaching methods (Smółka 2008a).

The coaching of interpersonal skills is, in short, a method of improving interpersonal skills. The structure of this method reflects the characteristic features of coaching as a development support method as well

as the distinctive determinants of the development of interpersonal skills (Smółka 2009c). The interpersonal skills coaching, described in this article, is an example of the evidence-based approach in the coaching practice, because it is on a formal as well as methodological levels based on theoretically justified concepts as well as on the results of empirical research concerning the essence and determinants of interpersonal skills.

Interpersonal skills can be defined as the goal-directed behaviors that an individual consciously uses in face-to-face interactions, which are effective in bringing about a desired state of affairs (Hayes 2002). When developed to an appropriate level, interpersonal skills become essential in achieving goals in interactions and through interactions with others. At the same time, interpersonal skills, also called social skills or soft skills in this context, constitute a significant element of the professional potential of an individual and occupy an important position on the map of professional competencies (Smółka 2008a). Interpersonal skills are important for effective functioning not only in managerial functions, but also in sales departments, customer service, training (including performing coaching sessions), and also in functions that on account of the work organization, i.e. in the form of teamwork, require often contacts with others, i.e. co-workers. Furthermore, it is emphasized that a professional career can be perceived as a social project – the effect of interacting with people and organizations that need the competencies that are represented by the given person, as well as the result of belonging to a team of which the members inspire each other mutually to continue developing professionally and help each other get involved in lucrative ventures and projects. In this context, professional success depends to a great extent on the interpersonal skills of an individual, especially in the area of building networks of useful social contacts and self-promotion. Putting it briefly, interpersonal skills are important for professional success, they constitute an important element of professional potential and working on their improvement is a form of investment in one's own professional development.

However, in order to improve interpersonal skills effectively, their specificity needs to be taken into account. One of the characteristic features of this type of skills is their hierarchical structure (Hayes 2002). At least two levels of this hierarchy can be distinguished. The first, base level includes the basic interpersonal skills, i.e. particular social behaviors that are the components of complex social behaviors, interpersonal strategies and scripts, which constitute the second level of the hierarchy. The basic interpersonal skills include, among other things, the ability to interpret gestures and facial expressions of others. Developing the basic skills requires adequate briefing and training. That is why coaching is not the right method of perfecting the basic skills. Coaching is a method of supporting development by getting the client involved in reflection

on how he applies the skills that he has. Coaching can be applied only when the basic skills are developed at least on a minimal level and the objective of the client is to further improve them (and not start from the basics). Thus coaching is about the client reflecting of how he is applying his basic interpersonal skills and thinking about how he can apply them more effectively and adequately in order to achieve defined goals in interaction and through interaction with others. In this context, the principal goal of interpersonal skills coaching is inspiring the client to reflect on the way in which he interacts with others and his social relations and how he takes on various types of interpersonal challenges, and motivating him to replace the habitual, often unreflective, ineffective and inadequate way of functioning in social situations with a more strategic approach that takes into account the specificity of a given situation as well as personal objectives (Smółka 2009c).

However, interpersonal skills do not only have a hierarchical structure, they also have a contextual nature (Smółka 2008a). This means that the effective functioning in one context (one type of social situation) does not necessarily have to be equally effective in a different context (a different types of social situation). Thus improving interpersonal skills and style of functioning in social interactions has to include the context of applying the developed skills – we improve given skills so that we can function more effectively in a particular situation or a particular type of social situation. In order to evaluate the efficacy of functioning in a particular social situation, usually three criteria are applied, namely: effectiveness, appropriateness and satisfaction. Thus, the effective functioning in a particular situation or a particular type of situation involves the effective attainment of a selected goal or assigned task in a socially appropriate manner (i.e. appropriate to the norms and standards that apply in that particular situation) and at the same time feeling satisfaction from the undertaken action (or at least not feeling excessive costs, like a paralyzing stage fright for example, resulting from the choice of action) as well as giving satisfaction to the interlocutors, team members or audience by making a positive impression on them. Taking into account the contextual nature of interpersonal skills, we can make the statement that interpersonal fitness is the scope of situations in which we can function effectively, appropriately and satisfactory. In this sense, interpersonal skills coaching involves the improvement of the interpersonal fitness of the client. The better this fitness, the broader the scope of social situations (interpersonal challenges) in which the client is able to perform effectively and appropriately, getting satisfaction from his own actions and creating the desired image of himself among the people he interacts with (Smółka 2009c).

Perfecting the interpersonal fitness usually also involves working on solving the so-called fundamental interpersonal dilemma – a situation that can be the result of a conflict between the two fundamental

motives for social behavior (Rose-Krasnor 1997; Smółka 2008b). One of the key motives for social behavior is the aspiration to establish useful interpersonal relationships that are characterized by mutual acceptance and goodwill. The second important motive for social behavior is to build authority and increasing status, i.e. moving up in the hierarchy of the group that we belong to and we identify ourselves with. Behaviors that enable the achievement of our interpersonal goals that involve the above-mentioned motives usually go together – in order to establish authority in a team, we first need to build good relationships with its members and if we want to develop a network of useful contacts, we need to show a certain amount of assertiveness that facilitates self-presentation and self-promotion. However, at times the behaviors that enable the realization of one of these motives are in conflict with the behaviors that are necessary for the realization of the other motive. Thus, the solution of this fundamental interpersonal dilemma comes down to finding a balance between establishing useful relations (and therefore living in harmony with others, interacting with them and taking their needs into consideration) and establishing authority and increasing status (and therefore rising above them and primarily achieving personal goals in the interaction with others). Improving interpersonal skills and participating in coaching facilitate finding favorable solutions for the fundamental interpersonal dilemma, because both give the opportunity to reflect in our own social behaviors as well as goals and values that we want to achieve in the interaction with others.

The way we function in social interactions depends to a certain extent on our personality predispositions, which determine the way in which we prefer to assume interpersonal challenges and the willingness to get involved in social situations (Daly 2002). Furthermore, some of the social behaviors that our characteristic style of interpersonal functioning is composed of are inborn or are a direct expression of characteristics that are genetically determined (Beatty, McCroskey and Valencic 2001). This has important implications for the method of improving interpersonal skills. Therefore, it appears that interpersonal skills coaching should be preceded by the assessment of the personality predispositions of the client and establishing the preferred by and characteristic for him style of interpersonal functioning in social interactions. In this context, interpersonal skills coaching becomes a two-phased process. At first the coach helps the client evaluate his abilities and willingness to assume various interpersonal challenges (which is determined by the personality predispositions of the client). Subsequently, the coach engages the client in reflection on the choice of an appropriate for him “interpersonal niche”, i.e. the professional role that will be in accordance with his predispositions. Only then the time comes for perfecting the interpersonal skills that are essential for an effective functioning in the role that matches the predispositions of the client (Smółka 2009c).

The specificity of interpersonal skills also comes from the fact that they create strong habits, which are directly linked to the sense of personal identity (Cherniss 2000). This means that we behave in the interaction with others in a particular way not only because we believe it is effective and appropriate, but also because we believe it to be in accordance with how we perceive ourselves. Therefore, the improvement of interpersonal skills is not only a change of interpersonal behaviors and habits, but also a change of the way we perceive ourselves and the modification of our attitude towards certain interpersonal challenges. Therefore, limiting interpersonal skills coaching only to working on behaviors will be an ineffective and partial solution. It should be emphasized that personality predispositions influence the way in which we behave and perceive ourselves, to a great extent due to the situations we choose that we are willing to get involved in, i.e. the selection of experiences that we go through and that become the basis for defining who we think we are. Also the fact that we believe some social (professional) roles or interpersonal challenges to be inconsistent with our own predispositions can simply be the result of getting accustomed to a certain way of interpersonal functioning (Smółka 2009c). In this context, interpersonal skills coaching is a method of breaking interpersonal habits and the routine way of perceiving ourselves, which will make us open to various possibilities of realizing our potential.

Breaking interpersonal habits as well as the routine way of perceiving ourselves in order to improve our interpersonal skills and improving our interpersonal fitness requires opening up to an entirely different way of making use of our daily social experiences. The daily interaction with others is for most people the only or the most important opportunity to improve the needed social skills (Argyle 1999). Daily practice in interactions with other may, but does not have to, effectively contribute to the development and improvement of selected social skills. Research shows that some people, despite many years of experience in assuming certain interpersonal challenges or performing professional functions that require often social interactions, still commit many mistakes or function relatively ineffectively (way below the potential possibilities). This means that daily interaction with others becomes an effective training of the needed interpersonal skills only when a number of conditions are met. Only then will daily interactions become a natural social training that can effectively contribute to improving our interpersonal fitness. The basic conditions for making effective use of daily interaction as a natural training of interpersonal skills include (Smółka 2008a):

- seeing every social interaction (both sociable and business) as a training situation in which we intensively train certain social behaviors; it is up to us whether we will (mostly unreflectively) reinforce (at times) ineffective and inappropriate interpersonal habits, or whether we will practice new, more effective and appropriate social behaviors;

- getting involved in social interaction with a clearly defined goal that we want to achieve or task that we have to perform, including a plan of action – a thought out method of achieving the goals or carrying out the task; obtaining feedback concerning the achieved results (i.e. the degree of goal achievement or task performance) and the quality (way) of our performance is also essential; monitoring results and the way of our interpersonal functioning enables us not only to introduce appropriate changes in our behavior as we go, but also to draw conclusions from our own social experiences, thanks to which it is easier to plan appropriate interpersonal strategies for future interactions.

Working with a coach, a person that will help us plan adequately intensive and diversified social experiences, prepare for interpersonal challenges and draw constructive conclusions from the results and quality of our functioning in given social situations and roles, can facilitate the process of utilizing the natural social training to improve interpersonal skills. The role of a coach does not only have a strategic (support in planning social experiences) and analytical character (stimulating to reflect on social experiences), but is also motivational. Many people will be able to use natural training more effectively as soon as they know that they can count on the support of a coach and the by him performed monitoring of the progress in the achievement of the established interpersonal goals. Thus, with the implementation of a few rules, daily social interaction can effectively contribute to improving the needed interpersonal skills. Skillfully using natural social training is the key to developing interpersonal fitness significantly. In this context, interpersonal skills coaching can be defined as a series of individual meetings, during which the coach supports the client in effectively making use of his everyday social experiences in order to improve interpersonal skills as well as interpersonal fitness (Smółka 2009c).

When discussing the formal aspects of interpersonal skills coaching, its specific characteristics should be presented against the information about coaching that is given at the beginning of this article. Thus, it should be emphasized that interpersonal skills coaching improves interpersonal skills and interpersonal fitness by engaging the client in reflection on how he applies his social knowledge and social skills. This type of coaching should be seen as a form of post-training support, in the sense that it requires the client to master basic interpersonal skills at least on a minimal level during the natural training (i.e. daily practical experience) or during specialized interpersonal training. With coaching clients learn to use the already developed skills more effectively as a tool for achieving certain goals in given social situations. In other words, the target group of interpersonal skills coaching are people that already function quite efficiently in social interactions, but have the potential and ambition to be even better at it and achieve above average results in

interactions and through interactions with others. Interpersonal skills coaching is an example of skills/performance coaching, which, in relation to the “paradigms” of the coaching practice, is a type of directive coaching, which is structured and focused on helping the client achieve well-defined interpersonal goals and concentrates on increasing the effectiveness of functioning in social interactions. The characteristic features of the model client-coach relationship in this type of coaching is the focus on “performing with the client” and concentrating on the desired performing patterns as well as considering interpersonal matters and those related to the environment in which the client performs, rather than focusing on intrapsychic issues. Interpersonal skills coaching is a type of specialty coaching that is based on the concepts and results of research on the nature and determinants of social competencies that are developed within psychology. Thus, the methodology of interpersonal skills coaching is based on the adaptation of knowledge and research results from the area of psychology and that is how it corresponds to the idea of the evidence-based approach. Therefore, interpersonal skills coaching should be acknowledged as an example of evidence-based coaching (Smółka 2009c).

Making a quick reference to the methodology of interpersonal skills coaching¹ (Smółka, 2008a, 2009c), it should be emphasized that interpersonal skills coaching is a series of meetings, a systematic process of perfecting the interpersonal skills and improving the interpersonal fitness of the client. A series of meetings (focused on achieving a chosen interpersonal goal) usually includes four to twelve sessions and lasts, depending on the frequency of the sessions, one to nine months. The sessions take place in the form of individual meetings, of which the objectives and process answer the needs and expectations of the client. The model structure of these sessions makes it possible to adjust the work of the coach to the needs and expectations of the client, but also guarantees a sequence and form that is optimal for an effective improvement of the interpersonal skills by way of natural training. The model structure of the sessions looks as follows:

- 1) *Focus on success (resources or experience)*. The key question is: *What is the client capable of already and can he do this really well or just well enough?* Every session starts with an analysis of the interpersonal strengths of the client or his successes in performing planned tasks during the period between the sessions. This increases the self-confidence of the client, which in turn helps him effectively use his own experiences and constructively face difficulties and challenges along the way.

¹ The book edited by Smółka (2009b, chapters 8 and 9) contains information about the impressions of clients and how they received coaching sessions that were based on the described method.

- 2) *Challenge analysis*. The key questions are: *What does the client want to work on? What precisely does he still want to learn?* The challenge analysis helps specifying the goal that has to be achieved during the coaching sessions. This goal should reflect the needs and expectations of the client, as well as take into account his interpersonal strengths, predispositions and the specific social situation or interpersonal challenge that the client is planning to undertake.
- 3) *Planning the interpersonal strategy*. The key question is: *What exactly does the client want to do?* The last part of the session focuses on planning the activities that the client wants to try out during daily social situations, i.e. in the process of the natural training. The goal is to plan such activities that will enable the client make more effective use of his skills or create convenient opportunities for their further development, so he will be able to undertake interpersonal challenges more effectively, appropriately and with a higher level of satisfaction and at the same time create a desired image of himself among the people that he interacts with.

The session can take place in the office of the coach or of the client (i.e. his workplace), on neutral ground chosen by the client (for example a conference room in a hotel) or it can even be virtual (remote) and take place by phone or video chat (tele-coaching or e-coaching). The coaching sessions can also take on the form of real-time first-hand observation (shadow coaching). With shadow coaching, the coach accompanies the client with undertaking interpersonal challenges, he observes the behavior of the client in real situations and subsequently he gives him useful advice and feedback. The relatively highly structured process of the sessions makes it possible to use the presented methodology in the form of *self-coaching*, i.e. working on the improvement of interpersonal skills individually (Smółka 2008c). In this case, the client engages in reflection on how he is applying his social knowledge and skills individually, by asking himself clearly defined questions in an established sequence, in line with the above-mentioned procedure.

The methodology of interpersonal skills coaching emphasizes the importance of improving these skills directly in real situations (for example at work). Thus, the support of the coach involves helping the client plan social experiences (their appropriate kind, level of difficulty and intensity as well as schedule), prepare to undertake given interpersonal challenges and analyze the results and quality of the functioning of the client in given social situations and roles in combination with drawing constructive conclusions from these situations so that the client can make his behavior more effective in future interaction with others. The techniques that coaches use to support their clients can be divided into four categories:

- *Analyzing resources.* The key question is: *What resources does the client have?* This type of techniques are applied in order to identify the interpersonal strengths of the client, which is useful when changing the way he perceives himself. The techniques of analyzing resources include, among others, structured interviews, especially behavioral (for the analysis of useful behaviors that the client already has) and biographical (for the analysis of the characteristics of the social training that the client has already had), motivational interviews (to identify the goals and values that the client wants to achieve in social interactions) and psychometric tests (mostly to evaluate the personality predispositions of the client).
- *Analyzing the situation (challenge).* The key question is: *What is the client up against?* This type of techniques help the client understand the requirements of a given social role or situation, so that he can be better prepared to function in them and also modify his way of perceiving a certain type of interpersonal challenges. The techniques of analyzing the situation include, among others, the functional analysis of the social situation in terms of the interpersonal game, i.e. the goals, roles and rules (do's and don't's) as well as scripts (procedures) that are characteristic for a given situation.
- *Planning experience.* The key question is: *What does the client want to do?* This type of techniques are used when planning interpersonal strategies, i.e. more effective and appropriate ways of undertaking interpersonal challenges, which take into account the resources of the client as well as the specific situation. These techniques are also useful for breaking habits, i.e. inadequate patterns of functioning in social interactions. By applying these techniques, the client will prepare for making optimal use of daily social interactions in the process of improving his own interpersonal skills. An example of a technique of planning experience is the so-called implementation intention.
- *Analyzing experience.* The key question is: *What has the client learned?* This type of techniques helps reinforcing the effects of learning by analyzing the results and quality of the functioning of the client in selected and previously planned social situations. These techniques help making an estimate of what the client already knows and is capable of and what he still needs to work on. These techniques also help monitor the progress, identify mistakes and draw conclusions regarding the new ways of making use of the already improved skills or eliminate mistakes that are still being made. The techniques of analyzing experience include all the techniques that help obtaining and analyzing feedback, including the multisource evaluation (360 degree feedback), the nomination method (sociometry), participant observation (including shadow coaching), as well as the analysis of a social situation from the perspective of its participants and in terms

of the so-called points of choice, i.e. the crucial moments of the development of the situation, in which our decisions (behaviors) have a particularly strong influence on the course of the interaction.

The working style of a coach depends on what the client needs at that particular moment in order to improve his skills. The working style can be either consultative and directive (an instructive style, which consists in the coach sharing his own experience and knowledge with the client), or supportive (this style emphasizes the importance of stimulating the client to creatively use his own knowledge and experience in an independent way).

Summing up, interpersonal skills coaching is a form of specialized coaching that both on a formal and methodological level refers to concepts and results of empirical research in the area of psychology. For this reason, it can be acknowledged as an example of evidence-based coaching, which is considered to be the expression of a dynamically advancing professionalization of all the professions that concern helping others, including supporting the development of their potential.

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PART II

COACHING IN THE SERVICE
OF ORGANIZATIONS

Maciej Bennewicz

FROM INDIVIDUAL MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT TO ORGANIZATION SYSTEMS COACHING

THE POLISH ROAD TO COACHING

The nineties in Poland were characterized by a vast development of competence trainings. Capitalism was born and with it the need to perfect the existing methods of management, marketing, sales, distribution, etc. Many of those terms had never been used in Polish business before. Before, during the time of the command economy, it was difficult to talk about marketing, sales models or project management. Therefore, after years of being isolated from contemporary knowledge in the field of management and work psychology, an intense training of the Polish staff commenced. The industry sector, but also the service sector, especially financial services, lacked a modern, well-managed personnel. There were also insufficient processes and models that would organize management processes – from human resources all the way through to project thinking, sales models and development strategies for companies. The foreign companies, banks and other market mechanisms (like the stock market) that started entering the Polish market introduced new standards and often even enforced such processes. Over time the needs of the individual consumer market, and especially the B2B sector, generated a competitive pressure. Soon organizations realized that competitiveness depends to a great extent on the workforce. Investing in employees became a must. Meanwhile, the training that focused on the development of skills was no longer sufficient and was not fulfilling its role as much as it had used to. Certainly, where new knowledge and skills were needed, education would still carry out its task appropriately. However, it was observed that often the key factor that decided whether

a given business venture would be successful or not, was not so much the skill itself, but the attitude.

Attitude is related to deeper predispositions, such as habits, stereotypes, behavioral patterns, and even psychological dependencies. The success of implementing new models, managing projects or result-oriented management depends to a great extent on the proactivity of leaders and, correspondingly, teams. The new generation that entered the economy in the 20th century already possessed the required business skills, or at least learned them rapidly. If any constraints appeared and along with them needs, it was in the area of a more profound, personal motivation. As one of my coaching clients, a manager of a large bank, once said: real motivation must kindle the imagination. Such a change of attitudes, which were entrenched in the outdated economy of the Peoples' Republic of Poland (PRL) and, in a broader sense, in the cultural model of a world of deficiencies and the necessity of catching up with the standards of western Europe, created a strong need for business to support the answer to new questions concerning management style and effectiveness. The question of how to do it was not so hard to answer. Such a level of competency can be achieved on account of technologies and the skills to use these technologies, which Poles are very good at. The real challenge for business turned out to be the question: for what purpose and using which inner and outer motivations do we develop management processes? Where are we headed as people and as organizations? Coaching is the chance to obtain the answer to such questions.

COACHING AS A METHOD

Coaching is not a typical competence training. Competence training focuses on the skills of a manager, on what he knows or should learn or improve. In other words, an employer that requests training offers his employee the following: I make sure you acquire new skills (like negotiating agreements with contractors using method X) or enhance your competencies, so that you can work efficiently with Excel, etc.

Such teaching gives effects in the form of acquiring new skills, but it mostly does not make sure that these skills are entrenched in practice.

Often training does not give the expected results. I call this the smoker's dilemma, who theoretically knows the dangers of smoking tobacco, he knows what all the slogans against smoking that are placed on the packages mean and yet he still smokes. 80% of the Polish smokers have the skill to comprehensively read and analyze texts. Therefore, everything that is a rational, educating argument against smoking can be conveyed through processes of training, informing and communicating. However, providing various arguments concerning the dangers of smoking and even the skill to analyze information rarely helps quitting.

So why do smokers smoke? It is a pattern and a habit that no slogan can break.

If the objective is to change a habit, attitude, to quit the addiction to an old pattern and finally to achieve above-average results, coaching shall play its part. It is necessary to reach the deeper motivations, the source of the attitude of a manager (his beliefs and values), in order for a change to be possible through internalization. In other words, by acknowledging certain new behaviors to be your own as well as the reasons for applying them, i.e. values. Without the element of internalization, motivation is merely a more or less strong form of external pressure resulting from impulsive needs. Such motivation lasts as long as the pressure is applied or the external motivator is increased. A permanent change, which brings better results, requires other methods. This concerns not so much the tools, but rather the form of dialogue and the influence on the personal motivations of managers. That is how coaching works.

The strongest roots of coaching can be found in sports. Timothy Gallwey, a trainer and the author of the book *The inner game of tennis*, is one of the pioneers of coaching. He discovered, which is confirmed by contemporary neurophysiology and neurodiagnostics, that virtual training, activating your own inner motivation, even before the competitor goes out on the tracks, court or mat, helps achieving bigger, better, faster and longer-lasting effects in practice. Our brain, putting it colloquially, *does not care* whether it reads information coming from the real world or from our imagination. In each case, the signal is transmitted to muscles, changing their biochemistry and giving the expected result, which is the growth of muscle mass or decreasing the muscle tension, bigger strength and endurance, flexibility and reaction speed to stimuli. Primarily, sports and consequently rehabilitation of people after accidents and injuries were the main users of coaching techniques. When people noticed that psychological factors in motivation were decisive when it came to obtaining above-average results, coaching started to become universal.

Coaching that is based on methods, algorithms, solid techniques and guidance can be very supportive for people that play individual sports, but also for people that have to undergo rehabilitation, in the marketing department and on the design table. Partnership coaching takes it a bit further. It is more of a facilitation, where we talk about the “disappearing coach”, therefore a more discreet companion of change, a guide that will show the client the path to achieving goals, taking care only of the parameters of this development journey. The resources that are necessary for the change or for obtaining the goals and the methods are chosen by the coachee himself. The road may seem longer, but the effect of internalization that is activated, which means an internal change and the needed skills, beliefs, methods, means (in general resources) for that change, is a very long-lasting effect that gives immediate results. Here

a coach is more like a Sherpa in the Himalayas, who supports the traveler with his knowledge, experience and resistance, rather than a guru, teacher or leader. This coaching method is often called *mentoring*. Professor David Clutterbuck adds leading by example and experience gained in a given industry or discipline to the competencies that a coach/mentor should have. Robert Dilts, on the other hand, calls the participation in the personal development of the client and the motivation to make a life change – *sponsoring*. Coaching as a development technique has many sources, and therefore just as many approaches, concepts and definitions, just like psychotherapy. These differences can even be quite significant. For example, in one of the models touching the client during a session means violating the ethical code, whereas in another coaching model it is the basic coaching technique. Coaching is in fact a syncretic discipline that originates in the field of sports, medicine, academics and business, so it also derives from experimental, cognitive-behavioral psychology, psychotherapy, sociology, cultural anthropology, neurophysiology, neuro-linguistics, good craft works, project management and, of course, mnemotechnics.

That is why the European organization, which is represented by the EMCC (European Mentoring & Coaching Council), after many years of debate on defining notions gave up the idea of searching for an unambiguous definition of coaching, mentoring or sponsoring, saying it was an ineffective and unrealistic solution when there are so many models, methods and roads leading to coaching. Instead it opted for the competence approach. The elaboration of a set of basic and advanced competencies that a coach or mentor should possess and demonstrate turned out to be an inventive solution, as well as defining the actual process as a mechanism of support, aid and developing the goals of the client, leading to the expected/assumed result. The ethical code that a professional trainer should abide by was created in a similar way. On account of this approach, the mechanism that initially differentiated approaches, and therefore also the environment of coaches and mentors, became a mechanism that integrated and opened people up to new possibilities, a mechanism that was unifying and inviting instead of individualizing, separating and concentrating on the differences. Unfortunately, not all Polish environments associated with professional coaching understand the dangers of separating and differentiating, meaning they are ignoring the competency perspective that unifies and sets a framework for development. For example: we can try and define the profession of a manager as the person who organizes and controls the work of personnel consisting of a minimum of 3 people, monitoring the effects of their work. This will always be an incomplete definition or a too narrow one. However, the role of a manager can also be described as a set of competencies that a managers should have (like being communicative, the ability to delegate powers, creativity, etc.). The competence model makes

it possible to create clear, comparable and reproducible dimensions irrespective of the type of industry, the applied methods, scope of activity or other profession related parameters. When training personal development this works perfectly regardless of the applied model of work. For the sake of this article I will further use the word coaching to describe the mechanisms that, in my opinion, are contained in this term.

COACHING AS A TOOL FOR PERSONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. POTENTIAL AND DANGERS

Coaching has made it possible to stimulate personal motivations, activate the individual development path and discover the restricting beliefs that effectively block performance as well as those mechanisms that create our personal success strategies. On the one hand, coaching gives a possibility to work with attitude, and on the other hand, it mobilizes individuals or teams to make better use of the resources already at hand. Thus it is a very attractive way of development, giving the appropriate conditions for change and simultaneously guaranteeing that the goals can be achieved relatively fast. In my opinion, this kind of guarantee accounts for the popularity of and trend for coaching but also for the abuses that take place in coaching.

Unfortunately, on account of the popularity of the term and the effectiveness of the method, a very wide range of education for adults is being called coaching, often incorrectly. In many companies, the routine responsibilities of managers are starting to be called coaching. Decent behavior of a manager, evaluation interviews, project control, maximizing sales, conflicts, competency training, or even a simple conversation of a boss with his employee are also called coaching. This is a great loss for this business as well as for coaching itself. Additionally, there are hundreds of “manipulators” and amateur coaches that after a three-day training claim to be “professional coaches” competent to change human lives. Another danger is the lack of appropriate skills and competencies, including not using the ethical standards as a basis.

Thus it can be said that the popularity of this relatively new discipline comes with a danger. The EMCC has adopted the goal to educate business clients and to create and spread ethical and competency standards in the field of coaching. One of the most urgent tasks of the environment of professional coaches is to solidify the business awareness concerning the criteria for choosing a coach or coaching company as well as for the evaluation of the coaching effect. Without this element, business as well as individual clients will have to take chances, risking a low service quality as well as building a “black PR” based on extreme and unprofessional situations, which happened in the environment of

NLP, for example. Behind the façade of neuro-linguistic programming series of trainings emerge, which teach how to, for example, recognize the needs of others in order to communicate more effectively, as well as how to manipulate emotions in order to receive, for example, sexual favors. Similar dangers can be found in coaching. That is why it is necessary to continuously pay attention to the standards, create professional environments and communication with the recipients concerning standards and ethics.

A correct analysis of the management, project, handling or service situation in organizations as well as clear communication concerning the methods and the achievable effects make it possible to apply coaching or similar models as a skillful method in those organizational spheres and in such a way that will modify organizational processes as effectively as possible through the attitude of managers or the actions of a team that has participated in group coaching. An analysis of the situation at the beginning of the coaching process is how the effective work of a coach should commence. The lack of such preliminary knowledge is a mistake resulting from hastiness and “using” coaching in situations of crisis, not taking into account the process and mechanisms of change, which gives the opposite effect, similarly to calling all nonconforming actions in the behavior of managers coaching, especially manipulation, pressure or reprimanding.

Let’s recap. Business needs information and education concerning the necessary limiting parameters of coaching (when, for whom, who, in what situations, what kind of process preparation?) as well as the conditions for an effective coaching process (how do we work and why do we work that way?) and evaluation (how will progress and results be measured)?

A well-prepared coaching process aimed at managers is a faster and cheaper way of training the management staff, especially if the staff is educated and motivated. It is better to have an individual trainer for one’s “own use” that accurately guides the competency development than to undergo even the best training programs, which are always rather general. Individual coaching stimulates radically and almost entirely eliminates the unfavorable phenomena that occur in group trainings, such as: resistance, rivalry in the group or with the trainer, tiredness from absorbing trips, etc. Coaching also brings solid results in a short amount of time, because it affects the deeper, inner motivation and adjusts the training tools to the character, requirements and work pace of a given person. It also refers directly to the realities of the work and tasks of a manager in his professional environment. For example, for the first time in the history of the American automobile industry, in the company Ford trade unions in cooperation with the board of directors are elaborating a restructuring plan as well as plans for dismissing employees and closing down establishments. This is the effect of coaching. We say, build bridges instead of negotiating conflicts.

TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN THE COACHING METHOD

Coaching interacts very strongly with the organizational culture. Various coaching methods are applied for different situations, for example, when motivation to change is needed or when a coherent campaign for a new product needs to be built, when a new production line is implemented, a new project is initiated or work attitudes need to be researched. A coach can remain flexible with respect to the current needs of an organization and a given manager, and in case of group coaching, to the way of operating of whole teams, departments and often also the boards of directors of companies. We often have the pleasure and honor to consult and train top management, in order to support the development strategies of companies, reengineering, restructuring as well as vertical and horizontal communication in organizations. In some firms this will be change management, in others implementing new products, for example internet products. However, the coach will always be a facilitator and a moderator. He does not have a formal or substantive position, but works as a supporting catalyst, a process navigator that gives feedback, giving information concerning the communication process or the obstacles on the way to achieving the goals.

At present, a number of trends can be observed in Poland, which are related to coaching needs in executive and business coaching.

The first trend: the support and development of new management models in the view of a dynamically changing labor market and market situation, meaning, keeping up with the requirements of personal processes in companies as well as directly business ones.

The second trend: the support and development of the creativity of employees, both in the sales and the marketing department, and the search for unconventional methods to support sales, new markets and new marketing models; and also creating mechanisms that will reach the non-clients, so the segments or recipients that so far were not interested or omitted in the product or service offer.

The third trend: this trend is related to the development of individual management competencies (for example, leadership, motivational and enforcement skills) or team competencies (for example, conciliation, interaction and communication skills), often measured using grading systems or development center methods. This movement also reveals needs related to balancing the requirements of the professional life with the needs of the personal life – this is also called life coaching.

Furthermore, in the era of the financial and economic crisis, of which the long-term effects are still difficult to foresee, coaching services are prospering, to a great extent even, especially in the financial and bank sector, which in Poland is also doing relatively well. This is an interesting and optimistic trend compared to other economic mechanisms.

Coaching constitutes an interesting offer, especially in uncertain or crisis situations. All innovations, changes and even modifications and discoveries were the result of a deficit, rather than stabilization. Crises force people to take action. However, often these are ad-hoc actions, like putting out a fire or crisis intervention. So if there is a deficiency, it is a deficiency in affiliation of coaching activities with the system of learning organizations, which usually includes employee evaluation systems, motivational systems, training systems, building career and succession paths, internship systems, talent management, non-financial motivations, etc. The more these systems and processes are dispersed, the worse for the organization; the less they are connected and interdependent, the more significant information is lost concerning the development of the staff, the needs of the personnel, already carried out trainings or coaching, leaders and talents that are important to the organization and whose loss would be very harmful or pricey to the organization, etc. Therefore, compatibility and a well thought out entirety, on account of which, for example as a result of a yearly assessment, we discover talents and subsequently invest knowledge as well as coaching in eminent leaders, and we motivate them making use of the cafeteria system, is a model most beneficial to the organization.

ORGANIZATION SYSTEMS COACHING

The organization where I am the director of development often undertakes projects that aim at improving incompetent or ineffective management systems of human resources and workers' potential. Improving mostly means simplifying. Due to inappropriate decisions of some of the HR representatives or due to conflicts from the past, and sometimes coincidental changes and implementations in companies, human resources management is often chaotic or dispersed. Given domains have evolved to be very complicated and therefore incomprehensible for the personnel, especially models of which the functionality decreased, the less they are interconnected with each other. Often the final beneficiaries, thus the employees, are completely omitted when designing and implementing these models. They simply receive a ready to use product, which they do not know how to use, or what it is for.

Therefore, the general rule that always brings benefits is: if you do something in the field of human resources management get the people concerned involved in your project from the very beginning, because these people are the resources. If they know the objectives of the project and understand what benefits it will bring, then they will also support this change from the very beginning.

Additionally, simplicity is much better than complex and even very sophisticated models, which, in effect, organizations are not able to

consume, utilize, process or very often even understand. After director X successors may come, who will throw out excessively complicated tools and will start creating new ones. This is a fatal practice for organizations, since it holds back continuity.

It is also worthwhile to unite all HR systems into one and, most of all, inform both management and the personnel what the common benefit of that will be. What consequences will it have for us if the employee evaluation systems will be combined with talent management and coaching aimed at the pre-eminent employees? The model of putting out fires unfortunately aims coaching at people with poorer evaluations or that “cause problems”, rather than the best employees. This is also a common mistake, when organizations focus all attention on the weaknesses and dysfunctionalities, rather than promoting and further developing the best practices and the pre-eminent employees.

The bonding element for a company in these kind of processes on a macro level can be a system-oriented coaching approach and, in the future, advanced coaching models, thanks to which creative audit together with feedback will be possible on all levels of the organization as well as the establishment of cascading goals. In this way, an organization can learn a lot about itself with the help of external coaches (audit, feedback, research) and subsequently draws conclusions (system or process-oriented) in order to apply the most appropriate changes, best corresponding to the business profile and organizational culture, models and methods of change that aim at achieving certain goals as well as results that are adjusted to each level of the organization.

Coaching is a great motivational tool for change that leads to above-average results. It is worth considering what is “best” for people and at the same time for the organization in which we work, because only when we build bridges instead of negotiating conflicts can a change really be durable and functional in a wide range and will coaching fulfill its system function.

Zbigniew Brzeziński

EXECUTIVE COACHING IN TIMES OF CRISIS AND CHANGES - THE METHOD OF STRIVING FOR PERFECTION FOR SENIOR MANAGERS AT ALL TIMES

*Nothing shapes our lives so much
as the questions we ask, refuse to ask,
or never think of asking*

Sam Keen

A NON-OPTIMISTIC BEGINNING

“May you live in interesting times”. This Chinese curse has come true yet again. Indeed we are living in “interesting” times, that is to say, in difficult times, a turbulent environment, in times more challenging than ever before. The demands – which keep on increasing and often cannot be lived up to – are mostly aimed at: children, youth, managers; and they are getting higher and more. Regarding managers, the recent years showed a global trend of the term of office of CEO’s getting shorter. This is the result of, among other things, the increasing demands that I mentioned before. However, corporate governance is hardly a surprise. Nowadays, in the era of killer competition, the expectations from managers are so high that often it happens that they are not dismissed by the supervisory boards, but they decide to leave themselves. Since the nineties of the past century, the time that a CEO of a corporation carried out his function has decreased drastically. In many firms, even those had to leave that were considered to be the stars of business. This shows that nobody is timeless and good under all circumstances.

Change does not tolerate routine and repeatability. Those who do well in an organized environment, all of a sudden do not cope anymore when changes need to be introduced. There are hunters and there are farmers; adopting a partnership management style or a paramilitary one. There are thousands of possibilities and it is not always easy to make a decision on your own regarding what path to choose, or one simply does not possess the appropriate competencies that will allow for a change of action. However, as in most situations, a way out can be found here as well. It is not a miracle solution for everything, but it does, if applied correctly, increase the chance that the situation in the organization will start changing.

A LIGHT IN THE TUNNEL

Observing all kinds of organizations, one can notice an alarming phenomenon. It is especially noticeable in times of crises and changes. It is not just about the fact that often the first expenses to be cut (mostly completely) are those spent on the development of people, but also about the fact that the higher in the organization structure, the more often development is forgotten about or simply ignored. Senior managers assume that since they already went through so much training, finished Executive MBA studies at the best universities in the world and possess such a load of experience, further development is merely a waste of time, which can be effectively used for other activities. Of course, not all managers think that way, but unfortunately an overwhelming majority does. Besides, perhaps participating every once in a while in large mass conferences with a worldly speaker (which is treated more like a social event and the wish to show oneself in “the place to be”), they do not do anything at all in the area of self-development. As Peter F. Drucker once said, in order to manage others, you first need to know how to manage yourself. Going a step further and paraphrasing this thought, it can be said that it is impossible to take care of the development of others, if you do not take care of your own development. And indeed it is the managers of organizations that in fact are in charge of the development of their subordinates. However, an excuse why it is not a good time for development can always be found. And a crisis only makes this easier, because it can be blamed for virtually everything, which is extremely easy. And when there is no crisis, the argument is used that this is not a good time, because of changes, increased sales, a fusion with another company, etc. In order to substantiate this theory, I can give the example of one of the largest IT companies in our region that since years has practically done nothing in the area of development. The managers of that company believe that the situation is good, that the people are competent enough and that investing in coaching activities is a complete waste of time and

money. And even if something will be done about it, it can be done internally. After all, that is what the HR department is for! Consequently, the problems only become bigger. An additional problem is that the quality of services in the field of development has decreased dramatically over the past years (which is a result of people taking on the roles of trainers, coaches and consultants without an appropriate preparation, business and life experience, and most importantly, talent, which would allow taking real responsibility for the development of others). Therefore, it is no surprise that many decision-makers are simply discouraged to make use of traditional forms of development, such as training, because they do not see calculable effects (often also due to their own fault, because training obviously does not end the moment you leave the training room and it needs to be continued at the place of work). That is also the reason why they do not see the need to invest in themselves, because they simply do not believe in the “educational solutions” that they have seen so far.

So, is there a way to turn this trend around? The answer to this question lies in individualized forms of development, which are still greatly underestimated (also due to the fact that they are often unknown, or gotten to known in the wrong way, which understandably can simply discourage further continuation). A method that creates good conditions for development in accordance with one’s own needs and expectations is coaching, and in case of the executive staff – executive coaching. Coaching works well not only in times of prosperity and the lack of the burden of larger problems, but also (and maybe most of all) fulfills its role in difficult times, when support is needed (which we often do not want to accept). Why is this method so effective?

THE METHOD

The introduction to this article is the sentences taken from the philosophy of Kaizen¹, which optimally fits the subject and allows answering the question (indeed, another question, since it is questions that are the essence of the discussed method!); what is the core of executive coaching? Is it about achieving great results in a short amount of time? Yes, also. However, this depends on the adopted business model. On the market, there are aggressive firms, whose activities are characterized by a yearly 2-digit growth (like GE Money Bank, for example) and there are also such firms whose objective is a steady, balanced development (like Nestle, for example). In practice, many companies can be found

¹ Kaizen – (jap. *kai* – change, *zen* – good) Japanese philosophy, according to which implementing even minor changes can bring great effects as a result. A never-ending improvement process.

that achieve great success, either using one or the other approach. However, in order for this to be possible, these companies need real leaders who will follow this way of thinking. However, both approaches need – putting it briefly – the appropriate competencies.

Leadership is – putting it briefly – a set of skills that are necessary to manage people (like Peter F. Drucker always said, management is all about people). That is a truism. However, the work of a CEO, board member or director-general, his role and the goals that are ahead of him are not just about managing the social capital of a company. Reality is a lot more complex. Sometimes (actually very often) a complete change of the way of thinking is required, as well as a change of habits and customs that generally help us in life. Do not understand this in the wrong way, there is nothing negative in the actual concept of paradigms. It is paradigms that allow us to function normally and not wonder every day about what to do in order to, for example, brush our teeth. However, in the same way that these kind of anchors help us in our everyday lives, they can also be disastrous for those that operate in a volatile environment, which is exactly what situations related to contemporary management are. The role of a coach (and here we approach an extremely important issue) is to focus on what was noticed very early by the founder of the Matsushita concern – Konosuke Matsushita. Throughout his entire life – and it was a long life – he followed one rule; he repeated: *I look for minds that do not stick*². Because coaching is all about not being afraid of change.

THE NEED

The more you achieve, the more you need. Such a theory perfectly fits those people that have already achieved a lot in life, or even more. So does this mean that they do not need support, on account of having achieved so many, often splendid, things? Is their further development not possible? Can they not try to achieve even more ambitious goals? And finally, is it not so that their environment and expectations change and therefore also their role? Will the situation always be the same?

The answers to these questions are not obvious. Maybe they have already reached the peak of their capabilities? Maybe now, more than ever, they need external support?

A friend of mine, a senior manager, had a saying: “it is never so bad that it could not be worse, and it is never so good that it could not be

² Jap. *Torawarenai sunao-na kokoro* – by applying this method and choosing people according to it, who challenge the status quo, Matsushita created one of the most innovative companies in the World, which delivered many brands to the electronics market, among which many famous ones, like Panasonic, Technics or National.

better". All you have to do is ask the people that work in Japanese companies (but of course not only in those), in order to find out that achieving perfection (whether it is in business or in any other sphere of life) is in most cases the result of little steps, small changes, minor improvements, dealing with successive problems, challenging the status quo, etc. This is what *kaizen* is based on; the implementation of minor changes that can – if done consistently – bring great results.

This is comparable to the development of managers, especially senior managers. They do not need background and a great amount of knowledge (although many might say that this is a highly debatable issue in most cases), or to build a foundation. Here very often something is needed what automobile fans call *fine tuning*; sometimes minor changes give a complete different effect than the original state of things. How to achieve that? Above all, the conscious and voluntary decision needs to be made that we want to further improve our competencies and that a given formula is in line with our expectations. The worst we can do is to get involved in something without asking any questions and not entirely understanding it.

AN INDIVIDUAL SOLUTION FOR EVERY TIME

What else can we give someone that has spent dozens of years in business and knows “everything” about it? What can be offered to those that have participated in dozens of trainings for managers, graduated from renowned business schools and have executive MBA degrees, have gone through all possible levels, from the bottom of the organization all the way to the top and have participated in many complex projects that turned out to be a success? What can be offered to those that have also failed a number of times and have come out stronger and gained the possibility to reach the maximum potential of their managerial competencies? What can be done, especially today, when managing a company is not an easy task, euphemistically speaking?

The range of personalized solutions is quite limited and contains just a few possibilities. One of them is executive coaching.

It needs to be understood that working on the development of leadership, especially in particular circumstances (like a crisis or changes), does not only entail working on given competencies. It is indeed true that executive coaching is partly about competencies, but developing those is relatively easy. However, a permanent change can only occur if the development process goes beyond the area of competencies and into the sphere of the motivation of the client, his way of thinking, his beliefs, habits or even image. Even though executive coaching is primarily about helping achieving business goals, the client should also – if the process is executed well – go through tangible and positive changes in

his non-professional sphere, because in many cases coaching also influences the way a person acts in his private life and improves the general quality of life of the client, as well as its particular elements. This is of course a side effect, but it influences the general functioning of a manager significantly. After all, there are not many Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde's, and especially in the business sector such personalities are not really desirable. Unless the situation requires it.

HOLDING THE WRONG END OF THE STICK

The history of coaching started in the eighties of the 20th century (although in an informal and undefined way it is used, intuitively, since much longer; one can say that Alexander the Great already applied coaching, who was known for the fact that he slept in the same camp together with his soldiers, suffering the same discomforts as they did). Coaching is a young “discipline” and maybe that is the reason why there are still so many ambiguities, so much mysteriousness and mistaken interpretations³. Very often, especially in Poland, coaching is mistaken for other forms of development. There are many factors that cause this situation. The most important factors are trends, wrong interpretations or the wish to sell an “educational product” under a different, in this case catchy and, most of all, trendy name.

Consequently, the term *executing coaching* is often used for:

- therapy and other psychological and parapsychological services,
- all kinds of trainings,
- counseling and individual consults,
- mentoring,
- feedback.

and a few other solutions (among which, outrageously enough, manipulation, which is often used by people from some sort of psychological or other movements that have little or nothing to do with psychology). It is not as bad if that term is used just for coaching in general or a variation of it, like life coaching, although obviously also then the client will not be getting what he asked for. As a matter of fact, this should be blamed on the market of “educational” services, where there is such confusion that it is hardly a surprise that the client himself has a problem with naming the service that he really needs. The amount of different movements and

³ This reminds me a bit of the situation from the beginning of the nineties, which clearly showed the lack of understanding on this subject. One of the CEO's of a big company that I was talking with said: “Yes, we are employing this marketing, yes we are”. And to the question: ‘And when did you last carry out a marketing research?’ He answered with great honesty: “What for?”.

schools alone is already really confusing. This field of knowledge is so young that everybody tries to declare themselves the originator of it or at least get some credit for it – to be a constructor who has his own share in creating something new, which, despite its young age, has a world-wide range. However, it also needs to be admitted that some people have actually managed to do a lot of beneficial things for the cause, and just as many (sometimes even not knowingly) are just sabotaging.

In practice, which at the moment is definitely ahead of the theory, the coaching of senior managers probably does not have one universal definition, which would allow describing it in an unambiguous way. However, this does not mean that it is not treated as one of the most “advanced” and maybe even sophisticated methods of perfecting leadership competencies. Despite the fact that sometimes it may even be controversial, it can (if carried out appropriately) bring the most lasting effects in the long term. Another condition is that both the coach and the client have to be well prepared and they have to “want” it.

Conservative people in the area of executive coaching (among which the author himself) are not very inclined to tolerate all sorts of mixes of different forms of support in the process, or rather in its mainstream. This does not mean that they condemn the use of other forms of development. However, if a client decides on coaching, then he should receive exactly that, and not something else. Based on actual facts, it can be said that such an approach, which to some may seem old-fashioned, brings the best results. The competencies of a coach are not easily questioned. Sometimes, for the benefit of the client, an already proven technique can be used, which is good, but certainly not during the session. For such actions, there is always time between the sessions. Where training or feedback starts (also very important), coaching ends. An intermediate solution with respect to all *executives* can be the formula *executive coaching & feedback* – a way of work in which coaching will be supplemented (and not mixed) with elements of feedback, or in some cases even consultations. However, these elements need to be clearly separated from one another in a way that each piece of the *puzzle* will be supporting the development process of the leadership skills and will not have a destructive influence.

So what is coaching exactly? Putting it simply, it is a process in which the coach knows the questions and the client the answers and where the responsibility throughout the entire process remains on the client’s side. According to Mary Beth O’Neill, it is a process in which the coach (O’Neill 2005):

- shares his assumptions, expectations and metaphors with the manager;
- stimulates the manager to organize his way of thinking, imagination, planning and expectations;
- encourages the manager to act and learn as well as he possibly can;

- develops the skills of the manager in handling difficult situations.

A coach can only achieve this when he is naturally curious and manages to make his client curious as well.

A lot of myths are created around coaching. This happens because of corporations that misrepresent and employ it incorrectly, as well as the fact that all of a sudden a great amount of people are offering training services and call themselves coaches, even though often they do not even know the basics, and finally the general low level of knowledge on the subject. Robert Hargrove talks about the 4 main myths that I will shortly mention here below (Hargrove 2006):

- MYTH I: Coaching is the last resort for losers.
- MYTH II: Coaching is about finding and filling gaps.
- MYTH III: Coaching concerns the development of particular people.
- MYTH IV: Coaching is an isolated event that accompanies the yearly performance evaluation.

Meanwhile, the truth is far from that (Hargrove 2006: 14–16):

- TRUTH I: Coaching is for those that have achieved success and who want to increase their advantage.
- TRUTH II: Coaching is about creating the future and not only about filling gaps.
- TRUTH III: Coaching combines performance, development and cooperation.
- TRUTH IV: Coaching is a continuous, but not never-ending process.

The above mentioned myths and truths have a universal character and fit perfectly in the landscape of the work environment of people that hold the highest managerial positions.

YET ANOTHER TREND FOR SUCCESS?

It can most certainly be said today that we are dealing with a trend of coaching (just like it happens with everything that comes from the USA, where coaching was popularized originally, although as usual, different sources give different origins). It happens more and more often that at the head of organizations we encounter leaders that, as a result of their position, or within the package of being a manager, “receive” their very own personal coach. Very often I have encountered the opinion that if someone holds a particular, high position in the corporate hierarchy, he simply **has** to have a personal coach. It seems almost like an obligation, as if it would be improper to do it differently. On the other hand, which is a bit of a paradox, many managers do not want to hear of it. Those managers perceive receiving the support of a coach as damaging

to their reputation and it seems like they are ashamed of the whole subject. After all, how does it look if a successful person asks for help? What for? Isn't he the best? This reminds me of the communist times, where a visit to a psychologist (who was perceived the same way as a psychiatrist) was considered to be something extremely shameful (completely different than nowadays). In one of the big global companies this led to a situation where the board members demanded that the coaching process would be kept confidential. Were they too afraid that someone would think that "they were not completely sane"? Isn't putting it that way ridiculous? Unless, of course, it involves "security".

Fortunately, the above-mentioned case, as well as other similar ones are becoming more and more marginal. Clients are starting to notice the solid and undeniable benefits of coaching for themselves as well as for the organization that they are managing.

This trend also has another side to it, namely the fact that new coaching schools are popping up everywhere like mushrooms. However, one needs to be aware of the fact that a fast education of a coach on an executive level is simply not possible. This requires years of practice, a certain level of development and a wide range of experience. Especially since present-day managers, particularly in difficult times, often have a chaotic private sphere. This requires the utmost subtlety from the coach, who needs to be just as careful as an instrument tuner or a microsurgeon.

WHERE ARE THE BENEFITS?

Without question, executive coaching is a rather sophisticated development method. At the same time, it is a very rigorous process that requires consistency of both partners throughout the entire process. However, those that decide to undergo it will not regret doing so.

Some of the key benefits of executive coaching are:

- definitely a greater effectiveness of operations,
- a durable increase of personal effectiveness and a long-term perspective,
- a full clarity concerning the goals and values,
- the elimination of all reservations regarding a more effective learning process,
- a generation of trust,
- independency in finding solutions and the possibility of choosing a way,
- an increased life quality and balance,
- an increased flexibility of operations,
- a stimulation of creativity,
- becoming a role model for others.

Executive coaching can be applied independently, but also as an element that supports another type of development activity. With respect to coaching, the phrase “too much” does not apply. However, it is neither the only right way of development nor a Bushido code of a business Samurai. However, it is undisputable that in the long run it works perfectly. Especially, since it is highly individualized, unlike other forms of development. Even the best training does not give the possibility of satisfying all the needs of an even extremely homogeneous group. Everybody is different; everybody has different experiences and needs; everybody comes across different problems. And when the topic of development is brought up, as well as what we would like to improve in ourselves (which managerial competencies), then very individualized needs are voiced.

The role of a coach (not just the executive coach, but any coach) is to identify these needs together with the client, and then to satisfy them. This is virtually only possible in a one-on-one situation. Thus, it is about time that coaching finds its own standard place in development programs for managerial staff; especially for senior managers. Because when it comes to all other things, they have already been there, done that...

DOES IT WORK? AND HOW?

Vince Lombardi, one of the best trainers in history of American football has elaborated a set of rules that – even though taken from the sports world⁴ - can work perfectly well in the work of managers (especially in difficult times!). He noticed that the thing that makes us approach success (but of course does not guarantee it) is, among other things, the following (Lombardi 2005):

- to ask ourselves difficult questions,
- to abide by our own system of values,
- to independently form our own character,
- to comprehend the big picture,
- to be fully committed,
- to give it all,
- to be prepared to make sacrifices,
- to become psychologically resistant,
- to find an equilibrium between pride and humility,
- to go by the rules that we preach,
- to encourage teamwork,
- to help people believe in themselves,
- to pass our enthusiasm for the mission on to others,
- to be competent in what we do,

⁴ It needs to be remembered that coaching has its roots in sports.

- to demand independency,
- to show respect to authority,
- to not give mechanical reactions,
- to reach higher and higher,
- only victory counts.

The idea of executive coaching is not about putting short-term standardized operations away in a box. It is not about spectacular, one-time results, which are characterized by their fleetingness. Crises come and go. However, the fact that a crisis is about to end does not mean that it will not come back anymore. And then the need will appear again for that what coaching gives, which is the almost automatic utilization of the developed skills. That is exactly the power of coaching. That is why an increasing amount of board members join the group of permanent “owners” of a personal coach. And they achieve the (often repeated) above-average results. Just take a look at the list of achievements of the late Mariusz Łukasiewicz – “the main architect” of the creation of Lukas Bank, who abolished the myth of “the banks of marble”. It is a shame however, that he did not manage to achieve a balanced life in general, which he paid the highest price for. That is a real pity, because managers like that are still a rarity in Poland.

And just like Łukasiewicz, excellent leaders follow the previously mentioned *kaizen* philosophy, because they believe that making improvements and changes for the better does not only concern the product or service, but also themselves. Moreover, they assume that perfecting themselves is an ongoing continuous process, and not a one-time ad-hoc operation. Naturally, sometimes a correction needs to be made and intervention is needed. However, essentially it is all about pursuing perfection, which – and that is the bad news – is (unfortunately) unattainable. We will always be able to find something in our actions, way of thinking or behavior that can be improved or changed. Like the Polish say it: it is not about catching the rabbit, but about the pursuit itself. This might sound a bit cliché, but is it not what this is really all about? If we come to think about it, is development not a never-ending process? According to one of the *kaizen* principles improvement never ends. Change never ends. And more difficult times in the life of the company will come for sure, even if we are not aware of it. Crises are characterized by the fact that they come as a surprise. However, clever people can prepare for the arrival of a crisis. Investing in our own development is one of the ways that lead to higher security.

Obviously it is not about an “eternal bond” with the coach and “love till death do us part”. It is more about showing a way of thinking that a good executive coach should introduce to the client, who in turn should adopt it and cultivate it. The idea of working with a manager is obtaining the effect that the manager will start asking himself minor and

greater questions. After all, the main goal of every executive coach is primarily to trigger in the client the skill of reflection, therefore asking himself questions, independently and without any help from the outside. Making a client dependent on the coach is not the hard part. However, there should be no dependency. What the client should depend on is the skill to use what the coach is giving him. The only thing needed is a little bit of courage; the courage to make a start. According to a Chinese proverb, *Even the longest journey starts with a single step* (Lao Tse). Managers – especially the A-type ones (which is the majority) – very often expect immediate results, right here and right now. And in time of a crisis the pressure for results is unbelievable. With that kind of attitude (unless it can be changed), it is not even worth beginning to work using this method. The client needs to believe that it will bring results and accept this working method. Otherwise it is completely pointless. The best methods are those (no matter what they are) that we believe to be effective. We can change, if such will be our belief and if we program our mind the right way.

It is comparable to cases that are described in medical literature. Many studies have been carried out observing sick people, for example people that had cancer. Often enough it was observed that those patients that were given placebo instead of real medication, but had great faith in getting better, got healthy, unlike those that had a defensive attitude, despite receiving even the most advanced treatments. Of course one can always say that it is a matter of coincidence. However, many research results that are described in serious publications indicate that our way of thinking and our beliefs greatly influence what will happen to us. That is why one should not give up and surrender, even if the worst “Egyptian plagues” would fall upon the company. Unfortunately, this is exactly what happens most of the time. The power of change lies in our minds. If we were to ask rally drivers about their experiences, they would say that they focus their sight on the place where they should be in order to avoid collision. We should take their example. We should focus on where we want to be and not on where we are at the moment. Both in situations of crisis and in coaching, because both situations have a common factor. It is about making a change. It does not matter at all that it concerns slightly different changes.

If the attitude is not right (and the coach will not notice this and/or decides to “guide” the client anyway), the result will be comparable to the situation described in a popular Polish joke in the seventies and eighties about a construction worker that was running around with an empty wheelbarrow. Finally someone stopped him and asked what was going on. In all his honesty he replied: there is so much work⁵ that I do not have the time to load it.

⁵ I have censored the original phrase that was used here.

The wheelbarrows of the contemporary managers might not be empty, but it often happens that they are loaded with the wrong things. Especially when business ceases to be “cakes and ale” and requires a lot of hard work, commitment and extraordinary competencies. The same can be said for development. One can participate in the most expensive trainings and seminars all over the world, conducted by the best speakers and trainers. However, besides a general inspiration and maybe a strengthening of the universal competencies, does a real change occur? Maybe it does, but the risk is quite high. Of course, investing in the development of the managerial staff using all kinds of methods is not a bad thing. However, in practice none of them is as system-oriented and/or as made-to-measure, hitting the right spot, as coaching is. Those that try it once will adopt that way of thinking for the rest of their lives; even if, after a while, they will take over the role of asking questions or the role of a coach, or if they employ auto-coaching, which is a method of inspiring yourself independently and development through asking yourself questions.

Surely, the fear of the unknown may appear, but – in the words of Lance Armstrong, who has just defeated cancer – *fear is a priceless lesson*. Of course it should not paralyze you. However, if the fear is controlled and in appropriate amounts it can become a drive force in the actions of every manager. In order to be effective, a right combination of attitude (positive, combined with faith) and fear (not anxiety or phobia) is required. Such a combination does not guarantee (too many variables) success, but it is certainly a great step in the right direction.

INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION

Coaching is hard work that requires a lot of discipline and nobody is going to do it for the managers (the client of the coach). Often enough a lesson has to be learned from hard and maybe even traumatic experiences⁶. The process of perfecting competencies can be painful, but after all, the most extreme temperatures are needed to harden the best steel from which, for example, the razor-sharp *katanas*⁷ were and still are being made. It needs to be learned to look at a company and the surrounding reality in a holistic manner. Additionally, talents need to be

⁶ Many world-class researchers of leadership are in agreement when it comes to the results of their observations, which show that the majority of the most effective CEO's are people that have suffered spectacular failures in the past or, for example, traumatic family experiences from which they have drawn conclusions and which have not weakened them, but have become their force.

⁷ Katana – a traditional Japanese sword of which the production process is very long and protected with numerous restrictions.

perfected continuously (preferably natural predispositions)⁸. It is also worthwhile – what Ireneusz Durlik talked about, allegedly one of the best (not only in Poland) management professors – to apply the principle *Keep your head up high in the clouds, but always keep your feet firmly on the ground*. It is important to know your own value, but you should not forget about the so-called “window and mirror strategy”⁹. We cannot act differently than how we preach. That is how all the great leaders that have made the biggest impression on history operated, such as Jesus Christ, Gandhi or Alexander the Great. But simultaneously it is important to keep your distance, just like Alexander the Great did¹⁰. Coaching means breaking patterns and introducing changes, preferably simplifying ones¹¹. And finally, it is also very important to have faith in your own capabilities, which can be achieved by simply doing that what we are good at. Naturally, all activity is developing, but we cannot be experts in everything¹². A good coaching process is one that allows us to become experts in those areas that are in line with our natural predispositions. A good coach is one that challenges us. According to one of the best European experts in the field of management, professor Fredmund Malik from Switzerland, management is mostly about challenges. I know that many (including coaches) simply do not agree with this statement, or will even dispute it. But what is business really all about? A coach has to be demanding and challenge the client in order to change his way of thinking. This notion may be risky, or even dangerous, but in fact all other managerial activities need to acknowledge the primacy of challenge over, for example, support.

An executive coach is like a sculptor that takes a piece of wood or a rock into his hands. He does not change the structure of the material, but thanks to methodical work, the work of the hammer and chisel, he gives the material the appropriate, desired shape. Sometimes the tools

⁸ Stephen Covey – this management guru talks about „sharpening the saw” (the last of the 7 habits of highly effective people), which means continuously perfecting yourself, searching for new, fathomless areas of knowledge; constantly improving your skills.

⁹ According to this principle, in case of a mistake, you need to look for the blame in yourself first (look in the mirror); and in case of success, it usually is not just the result of your work. Then you should look around you and search for those that contributed to the success (look out of the window).

¹⁰ Alexander the Great was known for the fact that he slept together with his soldiers and therefore suffered the same discomforts, but at the same time he managed to keep a certain distance; he did not allow his soldiers to become too friendly with him.

¹¹ Small children have the ability to find extremely simple solutions for sometimes very complicated problems. Of course, in their case these are not decisive problems, but it shows that their way of thinking (or maybe not thinking at all) is the way to go.

¹² Jack Welch, who was the manager of General Electric for many years, always said that if a company does not have a chance to be the best or second best on a particular market, there is no point of it being there at all.

break, other times the material gets damaged. But in practically all cases the damages can be repaired – a new tool can be used (i.e. chose the most appropriate techniques for a given situation); the damage can be repaired or the sculpture can be given a slightly different shape in that particular spot. In the second case, it will of course depend on the client and his motivation, willingness, determination, the skill not to give up in case of failure, which is a natural element in the improvement process. It will often turn out that the places where the material was repaired are stronger than in case no damage had occurred in the first place.

And finally, if nothing else convinces us, it is worth remembering the following: turning to coaching when the problem has already evolved and the wound has become infected, is not the best solution. However, there are some people that prefer intervention coaching. Nonetheless, systematic work and preparing for possible crises, rather than reacting when the crisis is already in full progress, definitely brings the best results (it is better to prevent than to cure¹³). Unfortunately too many managers – if they turn to coaching at all – have that kind of approach. They expect instant – between one day and the next – results. Coaching will not provide that. But it will most certainly teach humility. Humility with respect to the surrounding world and one's own restrictions. And if that is not enough, they can always go on an expedition to one of the highest mountains tops. It does not have to be the Himalayas, of course. Much smaller mountains can teach humility and show us our place on earth. This is just another thing that can change our way of thinking for good¹⁴. Let's join those that, like Matsushita and his people (or, if you prefer, 5-year old children), constantly ask the question: WHY¹⁵? No other question will be necessary anymore. As Peter F. Drucker (the late father of contemporary management) used to say: doing the *right thing* is more important than doing the thing right.

One thing is certain, executive coaching has a future; it surely is a solution, which for managers is perfectly in line with the since a while popular idea of *longlife learning*¹⁶. Every manager that is not satisfied with

¹³ It is a shame that so few doctor follow this principle.

¹⁴ I highly recommend the book "Leadership Moment" by Michael Useem.

¹⁵ The Japanese management techniques encourage asking the question "why" five times. If every time we are able to give a convincing answer (for example, why we should do something, why we should make such a decision), then we will decrease the risk of failure.

¹⁶ This is a concept that has been developing since a while in the world, according to which a person not only learns throughout his entire life, but should even search for all possibilities for a constant improvement of his widely understood competencies. Nowadays it is not enough to learn one thing just once, because – according to a fellow trainer – we are like milk of which the expiry date is not that long. According to research on knowledge, of the things that we know now, 50% will be out of date already in 10–11 months.

his educational history (which unfortunately does not happen a lot) will find this to be an excellent source of inspiration, important questions and the development of crucial competencies. Even those competencies that they were not aware of so far.

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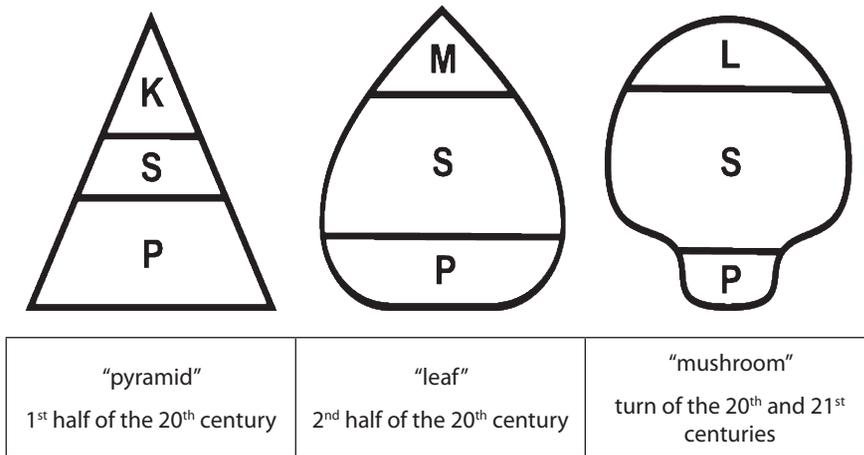
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Katarzyna Ramirez-Cyzio

CAREER COACHING – TREND OR NECESSITY?

In the market economy, we have to face the continuously changing and full of contradictions outside environment and the inescapable need of constantly adapting to this environment – defying dangers and making use of chances resulting from them. The technological progress and new technologies, as well as the rapid information flow were and still are the reason for changes in the employment structure in many sectors of the economy. Knowledge, alongside capital, labor and land, has become an equally important production factor. Automation processes and the global industry based on knowledge and services influence the employment structure changes as well as management style. Oleksyn (1999) defined three employment structures that have been changing throughout the 19th and 20th century (see Figure 1).

As can be seen in Figure 1, the changes in the employment structure concern both quantity (a decreasing amount of trained people and an increasing amount of specialists) and quality (broadening of the area of activity of specialists). “The second important thing in terms of quality has become the change of managerial functions – the evolution from *director-economist* towards *director-manager* (...), at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries (...) the demand for *directors-managers* has decreased to be replaced by the demand for *directors-leaders*” (Oleksyn 1996: 17) Such changes require a significant increase in the level of skills of the employees, so that their competencies can be used for the achievement of organizational goals. In the world of a knowledge-based economy the challenge to turn available information into useful knowledge increases. It is a matter of managing knowledge, a matter of creativity and innovativeness. “The new economy believes knowledge to be the most important endogenous production factor and the most essential input for the functioning of the *engine of capitalism*” (Kukliński 2001). Therefore, the “new economy” does not only influence individual industries, but virtually the entire society. Consequently, the question arises: in what way



P – People trained to perform a set of activities (both industrial and white collar positions)
 S – Specialists (authentic ones, so not just titular)
 K – directors
 M – managers
 L – leaders

Figure 1. The evolution of the employment-qualification structures in highly developed countries in the 20th century

Source: Oleksyn (1999: 17).

does the paradigm of the functioning of a company change in the “new economy” and how does this influence professional development? This is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The shift in the paradigm of organizational functioning

The shift in the paradigm of organizational functioning	
The old economy	The new economy
■ industrial age	■ information age
■ production	■ services
■ financial capital	■ intellectual capital
■ assets	■ ability to learn
■ quantitative status of employment	■ quality of personnel
■ market share	■ propinquity of clients
■ strength of the organization	■ flexibility of the organization

Source: own elaboration based on literature on the subject.

These changes mean that the control, supervision and rigid administration and production procedures will be replaced with delegating responsibility and decision-making to the employees. Instead of a hierarchy and maintaining rigorous rules, the development of people has become the main focus. Understanding the processes that take place, collaboration and involvement, teamwork and flat hierarchies are the pillars of the new production and organization concepts in companies.

In such a situation, the significance of workgroups and project teams increases. Organizations transform their rigid linear structures into matrix and project structures, consequently giving individual employees a wider range of responsibility. Nowadays, many firms realize that in order to achieve ambitious market and financial objectives they need perfect organizational and position processes. However, these objectives cannot be achieved by individual employees. Companies more and more often create teams that realize the key economic processes, like product development, customer service or production processes. In order to achieve these objectives organizations search for people that are able to meet the established requirements. Thus, the “essential (...) question arises concerning the relation between the qualifications that one obtains throughout the education process and the requirements of the labor market” (Kwiatkowski 2002: 5).

The competitive position, i.e. chance for employment, is higher if you are able to predict, analyze the future and guide your own development, because an “employer looks for people with knowledge, skills, experience and desired attitudes” (Drogosz, Zabłocka 1997: 61). The foundation of many deliberations on professional development is the assumption that people develop throughout their entire lives. Based on literature on the subject¹, the remaining principles can be defined that are important when creating plans for professional education:

- professional development is a continuous and dynamic process;
- professional development depends on background, skills (mental and physical), character traits, interests, values, needs, economic conditions (personal, environmental and national), professional models, health, influence of the environment; thus there is no single factor that determines the direction of the professional development of a person on its own;
- the professional development of a person can be speeded up by stimulating and developing interests;
- the development of an individual and the professional development of a person are a process that includes feedback, which may mean that non-professional activity also influences professional development – it speeds it up and enriches it;
- professional development should meet the person’s needs;

¹ See Czarnecki, Gladding, Strelau, Oldham, Morris.

- the choice of profession is more accurate when the person involved knows themselves well, which directly results from the following point;
- professional development depends on the type of personality.

The professional development of an individual is also subject to a number of determinants, such as:

- historical determinants – the professional development of an individual depends on the time he is living in, the history of the region, its traditions, customs, etc.;
- political determinants – related to the historical determinants and can be described very well using the example of the political transformations of the eighties in Poland, when after the change of the regime the structure of the existing professions changed;
- economic determinants – the influence of economic factors on the professional development of particular individuals is becoming increasingly visible (for example, the lack of means for further education often causes a change of the original career plans);
- technical determinants – this factor has a clear influence on the professional development of particular individuals, because technological development does not only facilitate the access to new knowledge and new technologies, but also “creates” new professions;
- cultural determinants – entrenched cultural patterns are one of the most important determinants of professional development;
- social determinants – the influence of family and environment on modeling the image of one’s future profession is very significant;

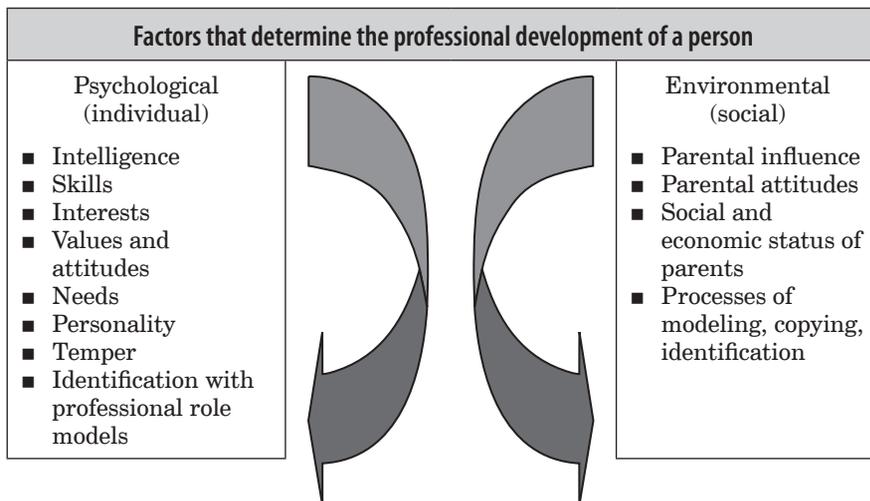


Figure 2. Factors that determine professional development

Source: own elaboration based on literature on the subject.

often people copy patterns from their environment in the process of planning their own professional development;

- biological determinants – health is very important in the process of professional development; biological constraints can have a decisive influence on the process of choosing a profession, the possibility for education or the access to new technologies;
- psychological determinants – psychological factors, i.e. personality traits and temper, are fundamental in the professional development of an individual (Gladding 1994).

Thus, it can be said that professional development is a process that leads to the choice of a certain profession, obtaining the necessary qualification in order to be able to practice the profession, getting employment in that profession and subsequently achieving stabilization as well as the highest possible for that particular person level of professionalism. This is an individual process and has a determined direction. The professional development of a person is visible in his behaviors and characteristics that are observable and measurable. According to Czarnecki (Parzęcki, Symela, Zawadzki 1995: 11) exceptional results of professional development are:

- social and professional maturity of the youth;
- educational and professional achievements of the youth;
- social and professional qualifications of graduates;
- social and professional value of graduates;
- social and professional successes of the employed;
- professional personality of the employed.

Professional development enables a person to find his own place in society and in the hierarchy of professions. When considering the behavior of an individual when choosing a profession, bearing in mind the possibilities of development when employed, one needs to consider all the factors. This is particularly important in the situation of the continuously changing aspects of work and organizational functioning. Globalization, including the economic crisis, the rapidly changing job requirements and employment reductions cause that nowadays people have to face the insecurity of their professional situation on a daily basis. Many employed people run the risk of a sudden change of the course of their professional career, whereas young people have to face the reality of the difficult labor market. And even though the entrance of Poland into the EU has broadened the labor market in a way, these changes are too difficult and too fast for many people. “Globalization creates the possibility of an individual approach to professional education. Everybody looks for information and receives it from the global communication space individually and everybody uses and processes it in their own way. Each person marks out his own educational and professional path” – writes Urszula Jeruszka (2003: 203), and she is probably right in

a broad perspective, but it is this possibility of an individual approach, making your own choices, that constitutes the biggest difficulty in Poland. The specific experiences of the functioning of a socialist market and subsequently the sudden economic changes have caused that two groups of employees have emerged:

- active ones, open to the world and new experiences, often well educated, who speak foreign languages;
- passive ones that are attached to their own, often outdated, competencies, ways of thinking and acting, irrespective of the level of education.

In this division the age of an employee does not matter. Both among young employed persons and among those that already have quite some professional experience we can find active as well as passive employees. The question arises of how to help both groups in finding their own way in the jungle of global information, how to find what is most important to each of them individually in their professional work. Due to the sudden changes that take place in the environment, the lack of support of the often lost in the new reality parents, teachers and close ones, people often feel lonesome in the search of their own professional paths. However, more active people with high qualifications are subject to the necessity of making fast decisions in order to effectively manage their own career, often neglecting their personal life and dreams.

The mentioned division and its effects that are noticeable on a social as well as individual and psychological level, are the result of the fact that career counseling for adults did not exist in Poland practically until the nineties of the 20th century (Paszowska-Rogacz 2009: 15). The early years of the regime change, the need to get accustomed to the new realities of the market, in the situation of unemployment, was a period of learning for those who lost their job and for counselors who were supposed to support them in this new situation. Nowadays, career counseling for adults in Poland has good traditions and has elaborated good methods. In the last two decades new learning centers in this area of science have been established and the existing ones are reinforced (Lodz, Warsaw, Poznan). Whereas career counseling for young people already existed in the interwar period and primarily consisted in carrying out tests that would support the decision-making process concerning the choice of profession. And even though there still are not enough system-based solutions and common standards among the institutions that deal with career counseling, slowly but steadily the quality of the work of the counselors is improving. Unfortunately, in Poland career counseling is still associated with the situation of unemployment. This is because most people meet with a counselor for the first time when they register as unemployed. Slowly this situation is changing, because more and more young people that already start managing their careers in high

school meet with a counselor, often one working in the commercial market. A career counselor helps young people and adults in their choice of career, education and training by giving advice. The works of A. Kargulowa define counseling as “an activity focused on helping in development by taking part in solving problems that an individual may encounter during carrying out activities” (Sarżyńska 2007: 12). The definition suggested by S. Gladding describes career counseling as “a relatively short-lived and interpersonal activity that is based on defined theoretical foundations and concentrates on helping mentally healthy individuals with solving development and situational problems” (Sarżyńska 2007: 13). The realization of tasks resulting from counseling is, according to Gladding, the responsibility of the counselors, which have to obtain the appropriate licenses to be able to practice their profession. The definition of R. Lamb sees career counseling as a process. “A process in which a career counselor and the client work together so that the last one will be able to obtain a better understanding of himself and knowledge on the labor world and so that he will be able to realistically choose, change or adapt to the requirements of the job” (Lamb 2004: 13). The realization of this process and the responsibility for its progress the career counselor takes upon himself. Career counseling focuses on four fundamental areas that are presented in Figure 3 and discussed below.

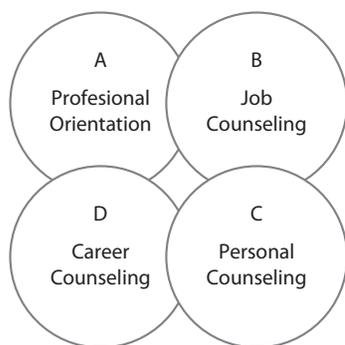


Figure 3. The principal areas of counseling

Source: Paszkowska-Rogacz (2008: 175).

A. Professional orientation mainly focuses on young people that stand before the choice of their further education and career path. A young person “has to chooses out of a vast number of schools and professions and it has to be a good choice, because only then can the education be completed successfully, will there be a will to learn and a future professional career” (Markowska 2002: 11). Thus, professional orientation should above all provide information concerning the educational and professional perspectives.

- B.** Job counseling involves people that find themselves in a situation at their job in which they are running the risk of a professional burn-out, working under the pressure of time, stress or improper interpersonal relationships and those people that get little satisfaction from their job. The role of the counselor is to support the client in searching the reasons for the above-mentioned situations and analyzing the effectiveness of the activities of the client in his work environment.
- C.** Personal counseling is meant for people that want to get to know themselves better and their own emotions, in order to increase the control over their own lives. The counselor mainly focuses on activities that make the clients believe in themselves and their own power to make things happen.
- D.** Career counseling primarily concerns people that have lost their job or are planning to change it. It is about the client discovering his own professional potential, preferences and capacity and the goal is to make a decision concerning the choice of profession, position, business.

Brzeziński and Kowalik (2000: 54) divide the course of the counseling process into four stages:

- preparatory,
- introductory,
- essential,
- final.

The preparatory stage takes place already before any contact with the client. The counselor studies the documentation. He plans goals and conversation topics. He prepares for performing an observation.

The introductory stage aims at explaining to the client how the meetings will be organized and what rules should be followed. The counselor starts the conversation trying to overcome any possible animosity or apprehension of the client.

The essential stage includes two sub-stages, which will consist of psychological tests and defining the problems. The psychological tests aim at defining the professional preferences of the client, which will subsequently be thoroughly discussed. Defining the problems aims at establishing the needs of the client and finding satisfying solutions.

The final stage focuses on defining the essence of the problem of the client and establishing further actions.

The authors indicate that during the conversation the counselor should obtain information about, among other things, the life problems and expectations of the client. The fundamental work tool of the counselor talking with the client. These conversations can be on various levels of direct involvement, from giving simple instructions, orders and advice to a liberal support of the client with introspection so that he can

make a decision autonomously. One of the popular models of conversations with clients is the model of Egan (modified by Lines), which defines three stages:

- identification and classification of the problem of the client;
- elaborating a plan of action in collaboration with the client and with his consent;
- establishing a detailed strategy.

This type of counseling was fulfilling its role in the period of regime change, when most employees were learning to function in a market economy, with the new the market laws, and the employers were taking their first steps in managing companies in a free market. This knowledge was adopted in Poland quite fast. However, clients of counselors, due to their experience with directive counseling, fell into the trap of acquired helplessness – by looking for help they believe that someone will take over the responsibility for their life, that they will still be able to talk about their difficult problems, that someone will give them advice, will do things for them, will teach them. However, the world is moving forward and more and more often we experience that not the problem is important, but the goal. The goal, not the problem – that is the fundamental approach nowadays. It also enforces a change of approach towards career, job and personal counseling as well as professional orientation. That is why coaching is gaining popularity in Poland.

Coaching appeared in Western Europe and the USA at the end of the eighties of the 20th century and in Poland only after the year 2002. Coaching derived information from sports coaches and psychologists. Eric Parsloe came up with the following definition for coaching: “A planned, two-way process in which one develops one’s skills and enhances specific capacities through accurate assessment, well-directed practice and constant feedback” (Parsloe 2000: 10). Nowadays, coaching primarily means teamwork of both sides of the coach-client relation. The work should be based on trust and mutual respect, open-heartedness and tolerance for differences of opinion. The work needs to focus on the developmental needs of the client and support his strengths, potential and resources. The client should be allowed to make responsible decisions on his own. The work with the client should enable a process of continuous learning and gaining new experiences. Thus, coaching builds a synergic partnership in which both parties influence each other mutually. This partnership enables increasing the level of motivation and the will for active participation. Coaching that is carried out based on an agreed personal development plan increases the effectiveness of the client in the performed tasks, which increases his competitiveness in the open labor market and creates attitudes that are open to change. According to literature on the methodology of training and managing personnel, coaching can also mean the system of providing feedback in

the processes of evaluating an employee. Here coaching is treated as the most open form of exchanging information between the person that is being evaluated and the person evaluating. The authors, Sara Thorpe and Jackie Clifford, use the following definition of coaching: “*The process of helping someone enhance or improve their performance through reflection on how they apply a specific skill and/or knowledge*” (Thorpe, Clifford 2004: 12).

The term coaching is mostly understood as and used to describe the technique of guiding a development process in a “one-on-one” setup, of which the goals are the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Therefore, based on the definitions in the literature on the subject, it can be concluded that coaching is a uniform collection of methods, techniques and tools. Unfortunately, practice shows that the discrepancies in the area of coaching are significant. The list below represents a selection of coaching types that are most common in the market:

Business Coaching, Career Coaching, Co-Active Coaching, Corporate Coaching, Executive Coaching, Executive & Corporate Coaching, Job Coaching, Life Coaching, Leadership Coaching, Personal Coaching, Personal Crisis Coaching, Proactive Coaching, Provocative Coaching, Smart Coaching, Strategic Business Coaching, Team Coaching, Work-Life Balance Coaching, Zen Coaching

It is not hard to notice that the listed examples are related to the widely understood topic of individuals functioning in the work environment and in the labor market. All of them, based on an analysis of the process structure, consist of four basic stages:

- Stage I – defining,
- Stage II – planning,
- Stage III – realization,
- Stage IV – verification.

Stage I consists in defining or becoming aware of the mutual expectations of the client and the coach. It is based on a conversation, an analysis of the work environment and the opinions of the closest environment. At this stage, the goal of the undertaken actions is to define the set of competencies and resources of the client and to examine the preferences concerning the choice of methods, techniques and styles of learning.

Stage II is called planning and aims at establishing a personal development plan (in short: PDP) of the client. A good preparation of the PDP is crucial for the entire process, because the subsequent actions of the coach are based on that plan. Answering the following questions can be helpful when creating a good PDP:

- What does the client want to achieve?
- How should he do that?
- Where does he want to meet with the coach?

- What is the schedule going to look like?
- Who or what will be involved in realizing the program?
- Who will make the decisions and who will the PDP be consulted with?

Stage III is the realization of the process, based on the accepted by the client and coach schedule. The function of the schedule is primarily to maintain a certain discipline. Achieving the goals indicated in the PDP depends mostly on the attitude of the client, whether he will consistently carry on realizing the program or whether he will interrupt it or abandon it completely. All the mistakes that are made at the stage of defining (Stage I) and planning (Stage II) have a direct influence on the obtained results. Usually this is also the moment when the restrictive life experiences, beliefs and attitudes of the client emerge.

Stage IV is the final stage of the process, i.e. verification. The task of the client is to establish to what extent the defined goals in the PDP are achieved and to what extent they are in accordance with expectations and future plans. The measurable positive effect of the process should be an increase in effectiveness, expressed by, among others, a positive change of attitude and an increase in the level of self-awareness.

The described four basic stages of coaching, depending on the style of work of the coach, are often extended by adding additional elements. Their presence and significance in the PDP mostly result from the preferences of the client concerning the areas he wants to work on – for example, focusing on the development of managerial skills, planning the career path or increasing competitiveness in the labor market. It should be emphasized here that regardless of the focus on a certain area, coaching is an investment that will bring benefits in the long run. The results are hard to verify based on numerical measurements or on an analysis of data. Coaching is based on subjective, often intuitive evaluations of the client. It is interpreted by the environment based on observations of the expressed attitude, the built relationships in interpersonal contacts and the change of behaviors.

An example of coaching that focuses on the functioning of a person in the changing and highly competitive labor market is job coaching. Job coaching is based on the experience of career coaching in countries of the European Union like Denmark, Germany or The United Kingdom. The basic program for job coaching was designed in The Netherlands as a result of a diagnosis of the causes of people losing their jobs, while still being at their productive age. The people working on this program came to the conclusion that a combination of internal and external factors, both economic and social, creates an advantageous or disadvantageous work environment in which a person is or is not able to find his own place. The assumptions of job coaching were built based on the methodology of Individual Placement and Support. Job coaching

includes activities that aim to prepare a person for the entrance or return to the labor market as well as to give support in maintaining the professional activity for as long as possible. The first area of focus concerns primarily people that are searching for a job, returning to the labor market, unemployed for a long time, that run the risk to be excluded or that are disabled. The second area concerns people that are running the risk of losing their job, for example as a consequence of the lack of certain competencies, their competencies becoming outdated or because of reaching the age of 45+.

The process of job coaching is based on three stages that have been defined as follows:

- Stage A – diagnosis,
- Stage B – realization,
- Stage C – solidification.

Stage A entails a diagnosis of the external and internal determinants as well as the ones of the economic and social environment of the client. At this stage, the task of the coach is primarily to provide help for the client with defining his current professional situation, evaluating his competencies in the context of preferred and expected work (a balance of competencies), evaluating resources (predispositions and professional preferences, experience, knowledge the client is unaware of, personality, temper, hierarchy of values) as well as defining goals that have to be achieved in the future. At this stage the coach should be preparing a Personal Development Plan (PDP) with the client.

Stage B consists in the individual work of the client in accordance with the PDP. It should be remembered here that the principal goal is not finding work but undertaking it. That is why it is the task of the coach to build a positive attitude towards work, to increase stress resistance, to teach the client how to handle change, believe in himself and his own abilities, to teach effective interpersonal communication and searching for an equilibrium between professional and private life. At this stage the client should receive at least two job offers.

Stage C is called solidification, i.e. choosing an offer that is the most favorable in the opinion of the client, taking the job and maintaining the position in the labor market. At this stage the coach supports the client in two areas. Firstly, he helps the client adapt to the new environment. He also helps the client achieve full effectiveness in realizing his professional tasks and build his own position in the organizational structure. Secondly, he prepares the client so that he can function on his own.

The process structure of job coaching includes elements from the past, the current situation and the future of the client. It is based on potential, gained experience and personal professional preferences. The goal of the process is the client getting a job as fast as possible. However, it should be remembered that this goal can only be achieved if the client

takes on an attitude that will guarantee him an active, independent and responsible position in the labor market. And this position should be maintained, regardless of the changing economic and social conditions.

Career coaching is becoming an important element of building careers and professional paths. It particularly focuses on those people that want to consciously plan and develop their professional career. Career coaching focuses on the needs, competencies, resources and values of the client. It enables an objective diagnosis of the current professional situation from the perspective of the already obtained position and the planned future. It indicates potential development possibilities, as well as the chances and risks. It enables the search for favorable solutions and building a competitive advantage in the labor market. Career coaching creates new possibilities for professional development. It can be realized in the following areas:

- area of entry,
- area of internal change,
- area of external change.

The area of entry means getting a job as a result of a planned and consistently realized educational path. The level of education has significance in this area only to the extent to which the standards of the given position require it, for example a lawyer needs higher education, i.e. law school, a car mechanic needs to have a certificate from a technical school.

The area of internal change means horizontal change (a different position at the same level) or a vertical change (promotion) in the organizational structure. A balance of competencies is important here in order to see where there is an excess or deficit.

The area of external change means going from one organization to another, but in the same industry, or a complete change of professional profile. The activities undertaken in this area are characterized by a thorough analysis of resources (predispositions, preferences, potential).

The career coaching process aims at finding optimal solutions. Most of the time it concerns the following issues:

- creating a career development strategy,
- identifying boundaries, strengths and weaknesses,
- establishing long and short term career plans,
- networking for the purpose of career building,
- marketing yourself in the labor market.

The difference between career coaching and career counseling primarily consists in the fact that career coaching does not provide advice throughout the process. The role of a coach consists in stimulating the client to find favorable solutions on his own.

The differences between the discussed processes that are directly related to the professional development of a person are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. A list of coaching and counseling activities

	Professional Orientation	Career Counseling	Job Counseling	Job Coaching	Career Coaching
Responsibility for the realization of the process	Counselor	Counselor	Counselor	Client/Coach	Client/Coach
Suggesting solutions	Counselor	Counselor/Client	Counselor/Client	Client	Client
Goal of the process	Choosing a profession, obtaining information about possible options	Starting a job (professional activation)	Fighting a professional burnout, getting satisfaction from work	Starting a job (professional activation)	Choosing a profession, changing jobs, establishing a plan for professional development
Client	All participants of the labor market	The unemployed People looking for a job People returning to the labor market People running the risk to be excluded The disabled	The unemployed	The unemployed People looking for a job People returning to the labor market People running the risk to be excluded The disabled	Active participants of the labor market

Source: own elaboration.

The growing interest in career counseling and coaching results from the fact that “currently (...) the choice of profession is not seen as a one-time act, but as a continuous decision-making process, a process of successive guesses, which starts in early childhood and continues throughout the entire life a person” (Wojtasik 1997: 5). Nowadays, people encounter an increasing amount of career options and their level of skills is also increasing. People want to make aware career choices. Due to globalization, economic and social crises, the broadening of the labor markets on the one hand and the decrease in the number of jobs on the other hand, and the need to make career choices on every step of the development of our professional career, traditional counseling evolved into job and career coaching. The present labor market needs employees that will know their own professional capacity, their strengths and weaknesses, resources and competencies and that will know how to use them for the benefit of the organization. That is why career counseling, career coaching as well as job coaching will be an essential element in an effectively functioning labor market.

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Lucyna Wiskowska

HOW COACHING UNLEASHES THE POTENTIAL OF A TEAM

Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results

Andrew Carnegie

Nobody needs to be convinced of the value of teams in organizations and how significant the influence of teamwork is for the success of a company. However, often we observe that individual members of a team put their own personal interest before the team values, of which they are a part. This was they get “disconnected” from the team, as if on their own request, and they lose sight of the common vision of the team, in the words of Andrew Carnegie.

Organizations are starting to increasingly appreciate the value of teamwork and try to support the development of teams in various ways. The most common reason why people search for support is the lack of trust and motivation in a team. One of the favorite (and at the same time most enjoyable) solutions that they look for is Team Building. The purpose of such events is the increase of trust inside a team. In the case of Team Building, various exercises in which our personal safety depends on others, and therefore we step out of our comfort zone in that respect, are supposed to reinforce trust. However, this does not translate directly into the trust that we have in our co-workers on a professional level. The mutual trust of co-workers needs to be earned and usually concerns less basic needs than the need for safety. In teamwork we talk about the need for respect, recognition and self-realization. These elements are built on the basis of common experiences that constitute the history of the relationships in a given team and thus create a unique identity of each team. This identity exists, whether we are aware of it or not and new members of the team grow into it by continuing co-creating it.

Training and events like team building do not influence the identity of a team, but they show that there are other possibilities, and give a sense of power and competence during the training. However, when we return to our daily professional activities, we go back to our old, familiar relationships in the team.

So how do we achieve a sustainable change in a team?

What do we need to focus on in order to reinforce the trust between particular members of a team?

The answer to the questions above is team coaching, which is a method that influences the system of teams in organizations. Team coaching involves getting through to the essence, i.e. identity, of a team, including the entire potential that it contains.

The effectiveness of this method is based on the ability to connect three elements:

- 1) REVEALING THE CARDS – becoming aware through the team members “what kind of system they constitute”, including all its positive and negative aspects. “Taking a look in the mirror of truth.”
- 2) WHAT ARE WE PLAYING? – the decision of a team concerning the changes it wants to implement in the further functioning of the team; creating a team development plan.
- 3) NEW HAND – the process of implementing the changes in the real-life professional environment.

In the successive parts of this article I will try and explain what team coaching is about, based on the method and diagnostics of the American company Team Coaching International™ (TCI™). This is just one of the many existing methods of working with teams. However, this method is comprehensible, interesting and based on research and can therefore be perfectly used as an example.

WHAT DETERMINES TEAM EFFECTIVENESS?

From the point of view of organizations, teams exist to produce results. Results are the measure that determines the effectiveness of a team or the lack of it. They are a goal that influences each aspect of the life of a team, from its very beginning and throughout its entire activity.

Therefore, it is worth asking the question: what distinguishes teams that bring results from those that are less effective? This is the question that the experts of Team Coaching International™ have asked themselves. The answer to this question was captured in a methodology that effectively supports team development all over the world.

The TCI™ methodology is based on the newest findings in the field of emotional intelligence, positive psychology, change management and team research carried out at the best global universities. According to

research, teams that are most successful at producing results are teams that have developed an **ability to be sustainable over time**. Teams can achieve sustainable effectiveness by developing a balance between reinforcing the **productivity** strengths and **positivity** strengths of the team.

Usually, organizations focus only on increasing productivity, because this is what directly influences results. However, research shows that organizations that put emphasis on a positive attitude also increase their productivity.

The TCI™ methodology is based on those two vectors (productivity and positivity). Naturally, the objective is to achieve a high productivity as well as a high positivity.

The Figure 1 shows typical behaviors that are present in teams, depending on the level of productivity and positivity.

High performance teams exhibit both high productivity and high positivity

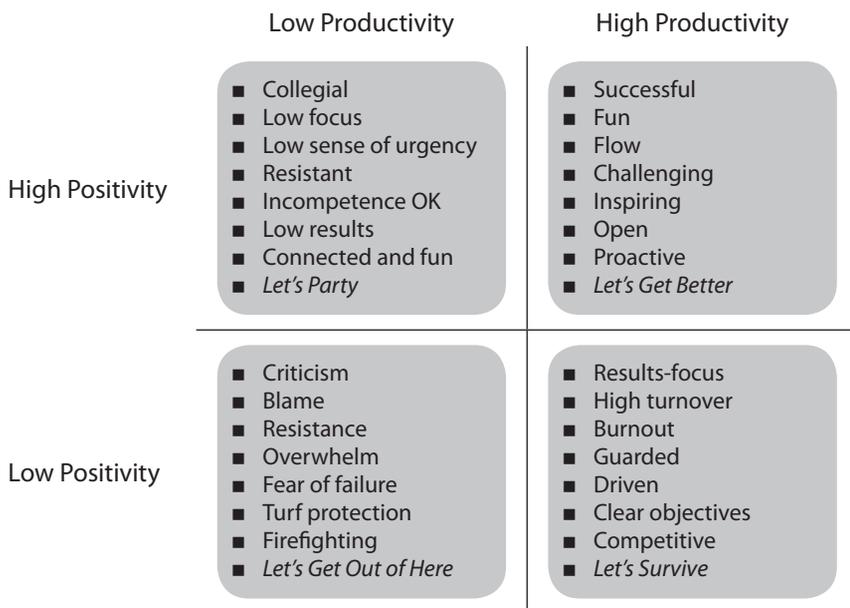


Figure 1. Team dynamics – the TCI model

Source: Team Coaching International materials.

TEAM ASSESSMENT – THE METHOD OF TEAM COACHING INTERNATIONAL™

The coaching process starts by carrying out an assessment, in which all the team members participate. Each participant receives access to the diagnostic system, where he or she is supposed to answer a number

of questions about the team. This Team Diagnostic™ assessment tool is available in several languages, including Polish.

The team is assessed on two levels, one of which concerns the team's evaluation of their own performance skills that influence productivity; the other concerns the level of perceived positivity by the team. In other words, productivity describes the ability to accomplish the tasks that are required from the team, whereas positivity includes the processes and relationships that are needed for team performance.

The report puts emphasis on the strengths of the researched team. This is the fundamental principle of the adopted Team Diagnostic™ assessment model.

The Team Diagnostic™ assessment model defines seven competencies that drive team productivity and seven that build team positivity.

The result of this team assessment is one report for the entire team, which is discussed at the beginning of the workshop – the first phase of working with the team.

The Team Diagnostic™ tool makes it possible to introduce five additional questions for each team. The consultant, together with the team representatives and sponsors define the areas that are crucial for a given team and elaborate the additional questions based on that. The answers

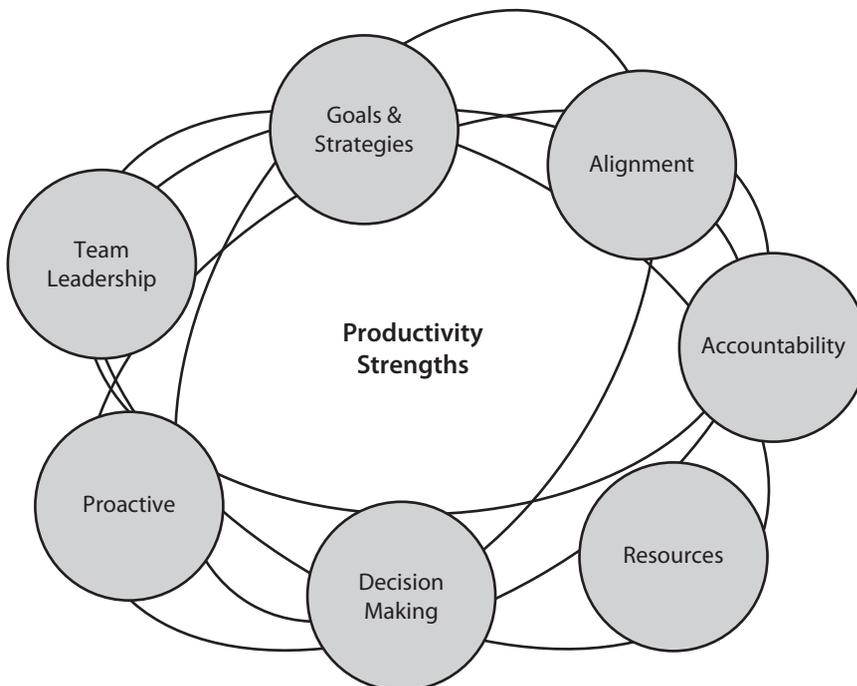


Figure 2. Team Diagnostic™ model – What drives team productivity?

Source: Team Coaching International materials.

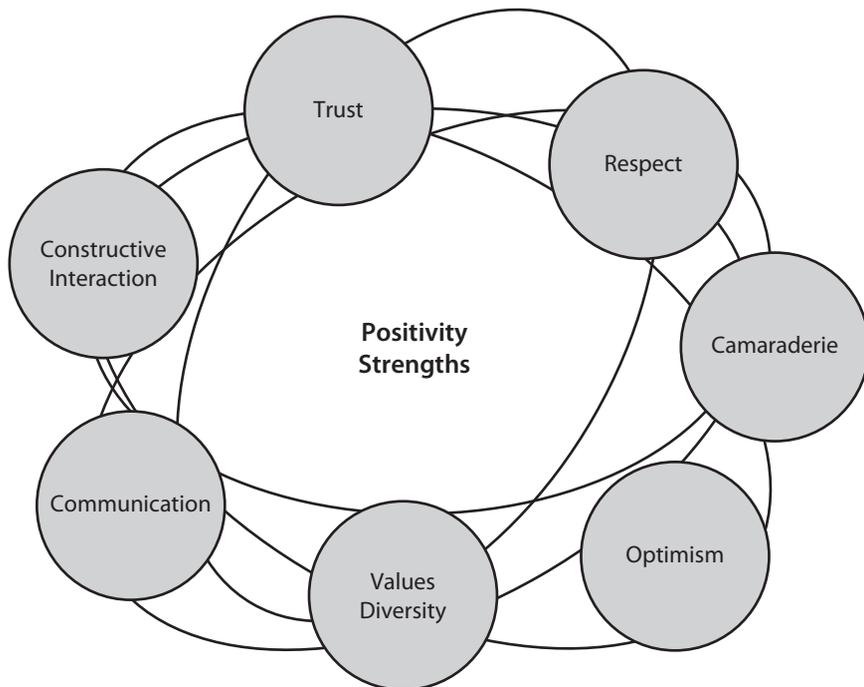


Figure 3. Team Diagnostic™ model – What builds team positivity?

Source: Team Coaching International materials.

to those questions can be crucial in helping the team effectively. If the additional questions are formulated well, they are in most cases extremely useful and significantly increase the knowledge about the team.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT BEFORE STARTING THE ACTUAL TEAM COACHING?

Before deciding to proceed to the process of coaching, it is worth considering whether it is the appropriate method in the given organization and for the given team. In order for a coaching process to be effective, both the quality of the coaching process and a thorough preparation for it (the knowledge of the consultant regarding the team as well as the preparation of the team itself) are important. In the preparation stage, both parties need to take into account the possibility that the decision can be made to withdraw from the coaching process or replace it with a different method. The questions listed below can be useful in the preparation stage:

1) Is this group of people indeed a team?

Not every group of people that work in the same organization is a team, even if they are all assigned to the same task. Sometimes companies want to create “teams” from two independent departments in

order to improve their collaboration and this improvement becomes a common objective for the two separate teams. However, this is only possible if besides this common objective there is also a common purpose of existence of both teams as one; a goal that will bring measurable results in the future. The collaboration itself is not the goal, but the means to create something more, like added value for the organization. Only working on a common, well-defined goal constitutes the foundation for team commitment. Only teams that have a common goal (created for the team) and jointly established rules of collaboration can reach full commitment in working on this goal and achieve above-average results. A well-defined goal that constitutes a challenge for the team is also the greatest motivation for the team members. Here we talk about goals “defined by measurable results”, as opposed to goals “based on performance”. In practice, there are not many teams that have a common understanding of the goals and elaborated rules of collaboration. However, before engaging in the team coaching process, the consultant needs to make sure that such a goal does exist (even if it is not known to everyone), if it is realistic and possible to achieve by that particular group of people. Working on the purpose of existence of a particular team is a very important element of the coaching process.

- 2) Does the team have any influence on the proposed changes?
When considering the expectations that an organization has from the team, it is important to separate those expectations that the team can influence and those that do not depend on the team. We should remember that in team coaching we mainly work on the level of interrelationships in a team, which is the place of influence on commitment, motivation and trust. During the process the team decides on the rules of collaboration and functioning. However, it needs to be clear what decisions the team can and cannot make. For example, in case a team and its leader make a decision that will later be questioned by senior management, then obviously the team will not be able to get involved in the execution of the established plan. That is why it is important to examine the scope of influence of a given team on their own changes.
- 3) Is the team ready for additional work and to invest additional time?
It is important to make the team aware at the very beginning of the fact that team coaching requires additional work and a conscious commitment. If the team is not prepared to do so and expects something in the form of team building, then the coaching process might disappoint them and cause resistance. It is important that the team is given the possibility to dedicate time to the coaching process and that is why initiating team coaching in a very busy time for the team decreases the chances of success, so then it might be better to postpone the coaching process.

- 4) What can obstruct the process of change?
 Asking this question still at the stage of preparation enables examining all the possible obstacles that might influence team development. We should not stop at the first answer, but keep on looking for all the possible difficulties that we might come across during the coaching process. It is better to postpone coaching or not implement it at all, if we find out, for example, that the company is planning organizational changes that will influence the team structure and its members. Knowledge about potential obstacles also makes it possible to plan the workshop appropriately by including that information in the process. When asking this question the coach should pay careful attention to the openheartedness and sincerity of the answers. There may be important reasons why such information is not revealed. However, even if only one person in the team has any knowledge concerning potential obstacles in working with the team, then, even if this information is never revealed, it will influence the entire system, i.e. the team. Other team members will sense that “something is in the air” and that “something” will significantly influence the level of trust in the team. An experienced coach usually senses such signals in time. It is important that the coach is bold enough to react appropriately and not ignore or not pay enough attention to the issue.
- 5) Is the team leader committed to change?
 Ideally the team leader initiates the coaching process and is fully committed to its preparation and progress. However, this does not always happen. It is obvious that team coaching concerns all the team members, including the leader. However, the physical presence during teamwork does not automatically mean full commitment. Addressing the issue of the commitment of the leader before the process begins, gives him the chance to change his attitude and prepare for the process. As previously mentioned, the coaching process is like a “mirror” for the team, which shows the whole truth about the team, especially concerning the relationships, but also commitment. Luckily, the commitment in team coaching increases dynamically.

THE TEAM COACHING PROCESS

The fundamental idea in team coaching is the belief that each team has “inner team wisdom”. While working with teams, coaches often make reference to that wisdom. This wisdom enables the team members to find new solutions that will make team work more effective and even to refer to it themselves, if they had not done so up to now. This wisdom also increases the commitment of all the members to working on team development.

Hence, coaching work entails gradually uncovering the existing areas of team functioning, simultaneously supporting the team in the

independent search for new solutions and final decision-making concerning the change of the way it is functioning. Here the role of a coach that “persistently” makes reference to the wisdom of the team is very important. This role has to be based on the great faith of the coach in the potential of the team that he is working with.

For most teams, this kind of work means a certain discomfort, especially at the beginning of the process. We are used to being given ready solutions and usually we do not spend much time searching for other methods of functioning than the ones we are currently applying. We are functioning according to familiar mechanisms regardless of their effectiveness and we do not even think about them, surrendering to the pressure of time and expectations for particular results. Changing these habits and reflecting on the relationships in the team as well as understanding their influence on the performance of the team is not an easy thing to do. Very often teams expect that the coach will give them ready solution and they communicate this strongly and even aggressively, despite the previous explanations concerning what the coaching process is all about. Here the attitude of the coach is important, who has to guard the wisdom of the team as well as believe in and be enthusiastic about new ways of applying the knowledge and experience of the team. In this process the team will also learn to see itself in a wider perspective, as a system. And most importantly, this “lesson” will maintain its results in the future, when the team will be functioning in its daily environment and collaborating in the accomplishment of tasks without the help of a coach. This is the moment where “I, as a part of the team” becomes “us, as a team”.

The team coaching process based on the TCI™ method includes 5 stages:

- 1) Identifying needs – a meeting with the team that will clarify its situation to the coach. The information that the coach acquires from this meeting, he will use to appropriately design the coaching workshop. During this meeting the additional questions for the team assessment survey are established.
- 2) Team evaluation – the answers to the questions in the survey are provided individually and anonymously by the members of the team, after which one general report is elaborated for the team. Besides the obvious outcome of this stage, which are the survey results, there is another side-effect – this is the first analysis of the condition of the team, which will prepare the team for the coaching process and the topics that will be discussed.
- 3) Workshop – this usually takes 1.5 to 2 days. This is the most important element of the process, where the team discovers its power and way of influencing, makes a decision concerning change and creates a team development plan. The workshop is the drive of the entire process and it is worth making an effort ensuring that all team members will be present and able to fully participate.

- 4) Continuation of the coaching process – this is the stage of implementing the decisions of the team in everyday life. The shorter than before coaching sessions take place regularly and support change. At this stage the commitment and trust of the team is developed. Every “little step” of the team towards a better collaboration is worth taking notice of, because it is small successes that constitute the foundation of a solid team that brings sustainable results.
- 5) Final team evaluation – after finalizing the process it is worth performing another team evaluation, which will measure the progress of its development. It is advisable to carry out such an evaluation no sooner than a year after initializing the process, so that the changes that have occurred in the functioning of the team will be “recorded” as permanent.

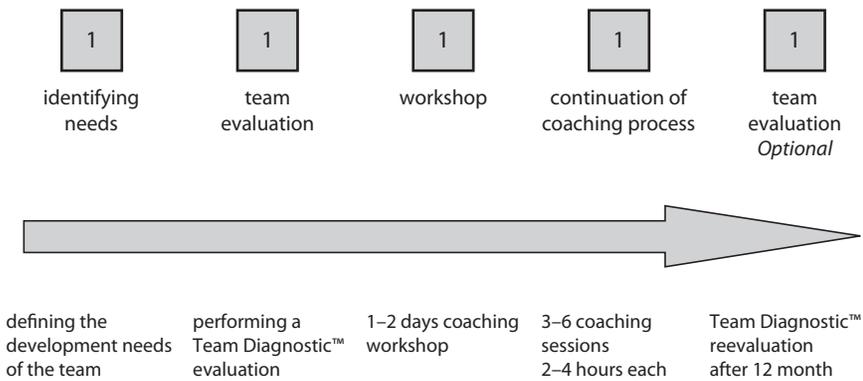


Figure 4. The process

HOW DO WE KNOW IF A PROCESS IS EFFECTIVE?

The quality of a process can be judged by its fruits. Let’s go back for a moment to the “card game comparison” and see how to recognize the effectiveness of a process in all three of the elements:

1) REVEALING THE CARDS

Here we do not verify the effectiveness by an analysis whether all the cards have been revealed and whether we have not missed something. Having faith in the “team wisdom”, we trust that all the matters that were most important for the team were revealed. What is important here, is the extent to which the things that the team has found out about itself is in line with the actual situation in the team and whether the team can effectively apply the knowledge it has gained.

2) WHAT ARE WE PLAYING?

The effectiveness of this element we can see in the ability to translate the knowledge about the team into new ways of performing. This is

not just about giving it a name and planning, but mostly about the commitment in creating new solutions. We also examine whether the degree of commitment of all members of the team is similar.

3) NEW HAND

When implementing changes in the real-life environment of the team, the results of the venture are most visible. We can see to what extent the team is consistently implementing the newly undertaken commitments and actively searching for possibilities for introducing new solutions. However, the effectiveness of this stage does not only depend on the team, but also on the attitude and support of the organization with respect to the changes. That is why, already during the preparation stage, possible difficulties coming from the organization have to be taken into account. The team should widely communicate in its environment what changes it is introducing and gain an as large as possible group of supporters.

As can be deduced from the above, the methods the coach applies or his personality do not come up at all in the evaluation of the value of team coaching. This is because it is the team that is the value and subject of the process. If the role of the coach is dominant in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the process, no matter how positive, then it means that the focus has been shifted from the team to the coach, which is a serious disturbance of the process. The coach has to unleash the potential of the team, and in order to do that he has to remain in the shadow. Of course there are moments in the process that the coach, as a “guard of the process” comes out of the shadow and intervenes appropriately, but he knows when to withdraw again, so that the spotlight can fall on the team. The methods and personality of the coach are very important, however, a wise and experienced coach does not have to show them off.

Team coaching always leads to changes. It focuses on areas that are usually ignored, despite the fact that they exist and influence the teamwork. It also opens the team members up to each other and helps establishing a new team culture. It is true that most teams are evaluated in terms of their **productivity** and measurable results, but by concentrating only on those determinants they gradually lose their satisfaction from the performed work and lose the motivation to collaborate. The **attitude** towards co-workers and tasks is the drive for sustainable and effective performance – effective not only in terms of measurable results, but also in terms of the minimal costs that the team incurs when performing their tasks. A truly effective team does not only motivate to **perform**, but mostly to be part of it. Thus, we should evaluate teams in terms of productivity, but keeping focus on supporting them in their positive attitude to each other.

Bożena Wujec

CROSS-CULTURAL COACHING

INTRODUCTION

The main goal of this article is to explain the concept of cross-cultural coaching: the concepts and models that can be useful in the multicultural business environment. Firstly, the reasons are given why the author has chosen to write about this topic. Secondly, the most important terms will be defined and the most useful models of cross-cultural coaching will be presented. Finally, the author will describe some of her own experiences working as a coach in the European and Asian cultural environment.

Due to technological progress and changes in mobile communication, the first decade of the 21st century has brought us a Flat World (Friedman 2005). Overcoming long distances is no longer a major problem. Large global corporations locate their branches all over the world. Multicultural teams work on complex IT, financial or research projects and interact daily with each other, despite being located on different continents. Managers that are assigned to new projects often move to other countries, not only to manage the actual project, but also the culturally different groups of people. The success of such complex projects is influenced by many factors, which becomes a substantial challenge in the multicultural context. The members of the project do not only speak different languages, have different skin colors and professional competencies, but they also have various ways of organizing work and perceiving time, different levels of commitment, as well as different priorities and value systems.

DOES CULTURE MATTER?

Does culture really matter? The world answered confirmatively to this question in the eighties of the 20th century, when some American researchers in the area of economy, culture and anthropology started

developing an interest in culture as a possible factor explaining political and economic differences in the development of societies. In 1999 this discussion took on the form of a conference entitled *Cultural Values and Human Progress* (Harrison, Huntington 2003: 12), which took place at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in Cambridge, MA, in April 1999. The symposium was sponsored by the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies. It was agreed upon that values and attitudes that are culturally determined are an important factor that either facilitates or hinders the development tendencies of countries and societies, influencing their wealth or poverty. Cultural difference significantly increase the complexity of management and that is why support, research or development programs need to include cultural issues in order to be effective (Harrison, Huntington 2003: 38–41)¹.

However, does culture also matter in coaching? The opinions are quite varied in this area. According to D. Peterson, based on years of practical experience, the pattern of the types of people and their problems is universal, and culture, which of course should not be ignored, is just an additional distinguishing factor (Peterson 2007: 261). Other researchers indicate that, even though managers indeed perceive business challenges through the prism of the country and culture in which they function, it is not a foundation for creating a new, separate form of cultural coaching (Lowman 2007: 297). They believe that multicultural coaching is based on the general principles of coaching and only the challenges it concerns have a cross-cultural difference specificity (Rosinski, Abbot 2006: 256). A coach taking into account cultural matters, which influence the situation of the client, can significantly influence the coaching results (Rosinski, Abbot 2006: 257).

The range of issues concerning cultural differences that are discussed in coaching is quite wide. It includes the standard business and personal topics in the context of a foreign culture. These topics will be presented later in this article using various theoretical models that can be found in the literature on the subject. Multicultural corporations, international joint ventures and multicultural project teams are often the places where culture is the foundation or context of coaching. In non-business areas, these are usually intercultural scientific research projects, charity and humanitarian projects, as well as intercontinental projects in the area of the protection of the environment and natural heritage. In Europe expatriate coaching is very common, which concerns, for example, foreigners in the Polish business culture or Polish people working abroad.

¹ This conference is also famous for its controversial discussion on cultural relativism and the ambivalent understanding of progress and development that the West is imposing on the rest of the world. However, most of the authors (F. Fukuyama, M. Porter, L. Harrison) agree that some cultures are more helpful than others.

Not only managers soak in the culture in which they function. Inter-cultural coaching also concerns the coach. The coach needs to know the given culture and he has to know how to function in it. The way a coach perceives a given culture, his personal views and attitude can either enhance the coaching process or obstruct it (Peterson 2007: 261).

What does cross-cultural coaching look like in Poland? The coaching environment in Poland is changing quite rapidly. Globalization does not just involve our presence in Europe anymore, but also on other continents, especially Asia. In Poland, the demand is developing for coaches that know how to function in multicultural environments. The professional experience of the author shows that the environment is somewhat enforcing the expansion of the coaching practice with this kind of service, which results in the enjoyable need to extend the knowledge with the areas that have been research for many years, but not yet very familiar in Poland.

According to the European Coaching Survey from 2008 (Figure 1), coaching in Poland is still at the initial stage of development (Tulpa, Bresser 2009: 25). It is socially accepted and the educational interest in this area is increasing, but there still are not many firms that decide to apply coaching in their employee development programs. In some countries coaching is a powerful business, with a wide implementation of cultural aspects (for example The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Sweden). Among the Polish coaches (just like in Macedonia and Switzerland), the concept of cultural coaching is not very well-known (Tulpa, Bresser 2009: 21). However, looking at the increase and dynamic development of coaching in Poland, this will most likely change over the next few years.

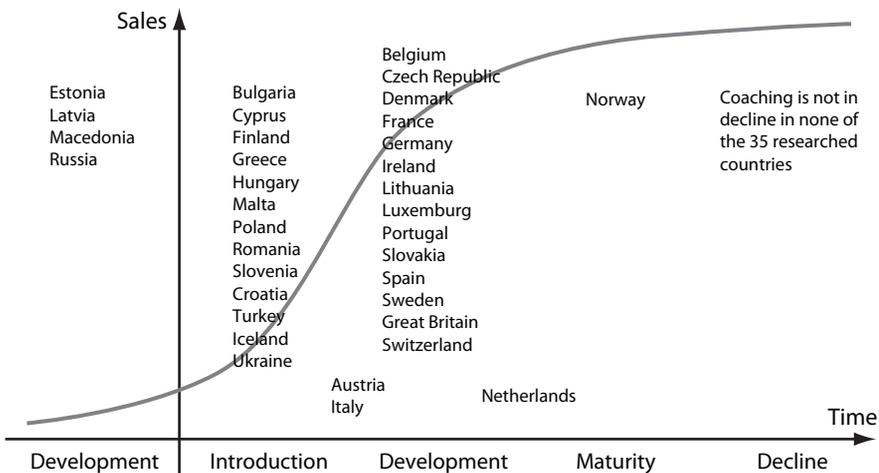


Figure 1. Coaching Life Cycle

European Coaching Survey, 2008.

Source: Tulpa, Bresser (2009).

CULTURAL TERMINOLOGY

In the wide understanding of culture, terms are included like: race, ethnicity, nationality and cultural differences. Further in this article, the terms cultural coaching, multicultural coaching and cross-cultural coaching will be used interchangeably.

- **Race** – refers to the biological differences between people, mainly the ones that are visible with the bare eye, like skin color, color of the eyes and hair, shape of the skull, face and nose.
- **Ethnicity** – being part of an ethnic group, which entails being geographically present in the group, deriving from its history, culture and tradition.
- **Nationality** – being part of a nation, usually determined by the origin of the ancestor; citizenship.
- **Culture** – the entire spiritual and material wealth of a society; its ideas, habits, beliefs, values, traditions, food, clothing, music, sense of humor and religions that the society is based on and that define the way it functions². The concept *culture* has many different meanings, depending on the discipline. For a coach, the most useful anthropological definition of culture is the one that includes all aspects of the life of a given society, its values, practices and symbols, institutions and interpersonal relations (Harrison, Huntington 2003).
- **Cultural differences** – the differences resulting from perceiving the world from different perspectives. In various ways, our culture defines what we pay attention to and what we ignore. Stepping out of your own perspective and seeing the world through the eyes of others is very valuable and good for personal, professional and social development (Rosinski, Abbott 2006: 255).

CROSS-CULTURAL COACHING MODELS

Since culture is a complex notion, researchers have since long tried to present it using theoretical models that show the categories of differences between cultures. According to research of the author, there are three cross-cultural coaching models, which are particularly useful during intervention: The Cultural Orientations Framework, The Model of Developing Cultural Sensitivity and the concept of Cultural Competence. These will be presented at the end of this chapter. Due to the fact that these models were developed based on the previous work of researchers like Hofstede (1980, 1991), Hall (1976), Trompenaars (1993), Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997), their findings will be presented firstly.

² *Dictionary of the Polish language*, <http://sjp.pwn.pl> (15.04.2009).

One of the best known and useful models is the division of culture into a **high context culture and low context culture** (Hall 1976). Due to the fact that information is directly linked to language, and therefore culture, the way in which it is organized and communicated is extremely important. High context culture is where special attention is paid to nonverbal forms of communication and there is a common context for interpersonal interaction – a common history and collection of behaviors. In a low context culture it is assumed that words convey meaning and body language is less important, which is why a verbal style of communication is preferred. The high context cultures include: the Middle and Far East, Mediterranean countries, Africa, Latin America, Middle and Eastern Europe.

Low context cultures include: Australia, North America, Scandinavia, Germany, Switzerland (Hall 1976: 15). Therefore, a coach should adapt his style of communication to the environment (for example while giving feedback), avoid misunderstandings (in a low context culture), and pay attention to nonverbal communication (in high context cultures).

Over the years, a few interesting metaphors for culture have been developed, which defined the structure of multicultural models. Researchers compared culture to “the icing on the cake”, cultural waves, or they described it as multilayered, like an onion. They believed culture to be a system that can be taken apart, layer by layer, in order to get to the essence (Hofstede 1980: 23). This type of models is based on values, which are often hidden, of people from outside as well as inside the culture. Those are the unofficial rules and norms of conduct, which are hidden in these layers and strongly influence the behaviors of individuals. Hofstede suggested a model of cultural dimensions in the work environment, which consists of five elements:

- 1) **Power distance** (the relations between superiors and their subordinates, authority and citizens).
- 2) **Collectivism and Individualism** (the proportions between the welfare of individuals and the welfare of groups).
- 3) **Femininity and Masculinity** (the distribution of roles between the genders). In feminine cultures the behaviors of both genders are similar and closer to the feminine pole, whereas in masculine cultures the roles are differentiated.
- 4) **Uncertainty Avoidance** (the level of tolerance for unforeseeable social relations and uncertainty of the future).
- 5) **Long-term or short-term orientation** (focusing on the present and the past – *tradition*, or on the future – *forethought* (Hofstede 1991).

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner came up with another multicultural model that consists of the following dimensions:

- 1) **Universalism vs. Particularism** (rules vs. relations)

- 2) **Individualism vs. Communitarianism** (attitude towards individuals and groups)
- 3) **Specific cultures vs. Diffuse cultures** (the world is perceived as a whole or as consisting of elements)
- 4) **Affective cultures vs. Neutral cultures** (emotion vs. cognition)
- 5) **Achievement vs. Ascription** (active or passive obtainment of status)
- 6) **Sequential cultures vs. Synchronic cultures** (do things one at a time or multitasking)
- 7) **Internal control vs. External control** (individual work or cooperation) (Trompenaars, Hampden-Turner 1997).

One of the ways of defining to what extent values are different or similar between cultures is examining how people handle universal challenges that they come across. This ability is called **Cultural Orientation**. P. Rosinski suggested his own answer to these challenges, and based on the findings of the previously mentioned researchers he elaborated his own model, which is called the **Cultural Orientations Framework**. Model 1 includes a wide range of matters (orientations) that are the main topics or context of coaching (Rosinski, Abbot 2006: 259–260). Its principal idea is not the selection of one cultural orientation, but the idea that opposites complement each other, that their synthesis is possible as well as their use to develop the potential of an individual (Rosinski, Abbot 2006: 259-260). That is why Rosinski suggested the following four steps for dealing with cultural differences:

- 1) Recognizing and accepting the differences, which does not mean agreeing or surrendering to them;
- 2) Adapting to the differences, which does not mean taking them over or incorporating them;
- 3) Integrating the differences, maintaining many points of reference, without creating chaos for yourself resulting from the many possibilities;
- 4) Making use of the differences, synergy, achieving cohesion in the differences (Passmore, Low 2009: 8).

These pointers are extremely valuable for business practice, just as the following model, the **Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity**, developed by M. Bennet. This model described the following levels of sensitivity of a cultural entity:

- 1) **Denial** (denying that cultural differences exist),
- 2) **Defense** (feeling superior, depreciation or taking over the culture),
- 3) **Minimization** (focusing on the similarities),
- 4) **Acceptation**,
- 5) **Adaptation**,
- 6) **Integration** (Bennett 1993).

Model 1. Cultural Orientations Framework

Categories	Dimensions	Description
Sense of Power and Responsibility	Control/ Harmony/ Humility	<p>Control: People have a determinant power and responsibility to forge the life they want.</p> <p>Harmony: Strive for balance and harmony with nature.</p> <p>Humility: Accept inevitable natural limitations.</p>
Time Management Approaches	Scarce/ Plentiful	<p>Scarce: Time is a scarce resource. Manage it carefully!</p> <p>Plentiful: Time is abundant. Relax!</p>
	Monochronic/ Polychronic	<p>Monochronic: Concentrate on one activity and/or relationship at a time.</p> <p>Polychronic: Concentrate simultaneously on multiple tasks and/or relationships.</p>
	Past/Present/ Future	<p>Past: Learn from the past. The present is essentially a continuation or a repetition of past occurrences.</p> <p>Present: Focus on the “here and now” and short-term benefits.</p> <p>Future: Have a bias toward long-term benefits. Promote a far-reaching vision.</p>
Definitions of Identity and Purpose	Being/Doing	<p>Being: Stress living itself and the development of talents and relationships.</p> <p>Doing: Focus on accomplishments and visible achievements.</p>
	Individualistic/ Collectivistic	<p>Individualistic: Emphasize individual attributes and projects.</p> <p>Collectivistic: Emphasize affiliation with a group.</p>
	Hierarchy/ Equality	<p>Hierarchy: Society and organizations must be socially stratified to function properly.</p> <p>Equality: People are equals who often happen to play different roles.</p>
	Universalist/ Particularist	<p>Universalist: All cases should be treated in the same universal manner. Adopt common processes for consistency and economies of scale.</p> <p>Particularist: Emphasize particular circumstances. Favor decentralization and tailored solutions.</p>
Organizational Arrangements	Stability/ Change	<p>Stability: Value a static and orderly environment. Encourage efficiency through systematic and disciplined work. Minimize change and ambiguity, perceived as disruptive.</p> <p>Change: Value a dynamic and flexible environment. Promote effectiveness through adaptability and innovation. Avoid routine, perceived as boring.</p>
	Competitive/ Collaborative	<p>Competitive: Promote success and progress through competitive stimulation.</p> <p>Collaborative: Promote success and progress through mutual support, sharing of best practices and solidarity.</p>

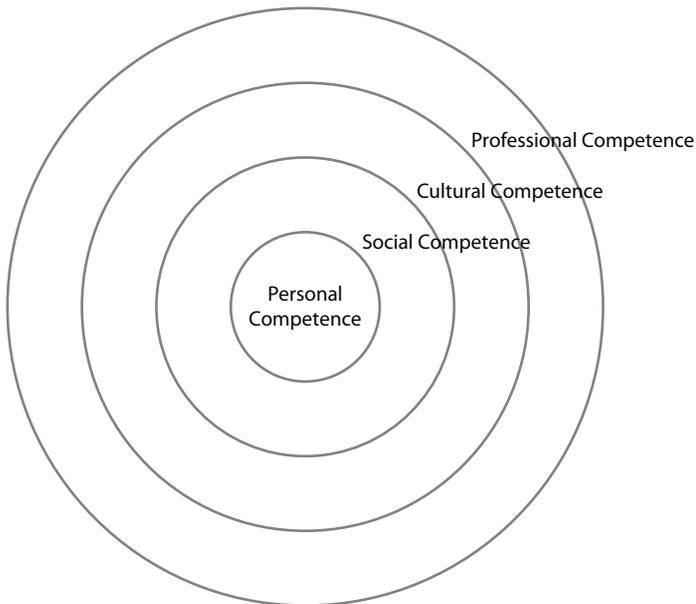
Notions of Territory and Boundaries	Protective/ Sharing	<p>Protective: Protect yourself by keeping personal life and feelings private (mental boundaries), and by minimizing intrusions in physical space (physical boundaries)</p> <p>Sharing: Build closer relationships by sharing your psychological and physical domains.</p>
	High Context/ Low Context	<p>High Context: Rely on implicit communication. Appreciate the meaning of gestures, posture, voice and context.</p> <p>Low Context: Rely on explicit communication. Favor clear and detailed instructions.</p>
Communication Patterns	Direct/Indirect	<p>Direct: In a conflict or with a tough message to deliver, get your point across clearly at the risk of offending or hurting.</p> <p>Indirect: In a conflict or with a tough message to deliver, favor maintaining a cordial relationship at the risk of misunderstanding.</p>
	Affective/ Neutral	<p>Affective: Display emotions and warmth when communicating. Establishing and maintaining personal and social connections is the key.</p> <p>Neutral: Stress conciseness, precision and detachment when communicating.</p>
	Formal/ Informal	<p>Formal: Observe strict protocols and rituals.</p> <p>Informal: Favor familiarity and spontaneity.</p>
Modes of Thinking	Deductive/ Inductive	<p>Deductive: Emphasize concepts, theories and general principles. Then, through logical reasoning, derive practical applications and solutions.</p> <p>Inductive: Start with experiences, concrete situations and cases. Then, using intuition, formulate general models and theories.</p>
	Analytical/ Systemic	<p>Analytical: Separate a whole into its constituent elements. Dissect a problem into smaller chunks.</p> <p>Systemic: Assemble the parts into a cohesive whole. Explore connections between elements and focus on the whole system.</p>

Source: Rosinski (2003).

Thanks to both these models the level of sensitivity of a manager or team (in case of group coaching) can be diagnosed quite effectively and the appropriate intervention can be applied. Based on the assumptions of these models, the author has developed her own model of Cross-Cultural Development Strategy, which is presented further on in this article, after the case study.

One of the newest (2007) models is the **Universal Integrated Framework**, developed by Law, Ireland and Hussein, based on the coaching practice in Africa, Asia and Europe. This model includes the following aspects:

- 1) **Continuous professional development** (the coach achieving professional perfection),
- 2) **Appreciation the cultural environment**,
- 3) **Fluidity** (conducting both coaching and mentoring),
- 4) **Cross-cultural Emotional Intelligence**,
- 5) **Communication methods and feedback mechanism** (Passmore, Low 2009: 10).



Model 2. Universal Integrated Framework – a pragmatic model

Source: Passmore, Low (2009).

According to the author, the concept of Cultural Social Intelligence (Passmore, Low 2009: 12) is the most practical to apply in this complex model. Even though the concept of Emotional Intelligence was popularized by Goleman (1995) a long time ago already, its cultural dimension

is still not fully developed. The practical form of the model elaborated by Law, Ireland and Hussein (Model 2) includes the following dimensions:

- 1) **Personal Competence** (how we manage ourselves). This dimension consists of two elements:
 - Self-awareness – accepting and respecting oneself, being aware of your own emotions and those of others, as well as identifying own resources and intuition.
 - Self-regulation – the skill to manager/regulate your own emotions and motivation.
- 2) **Social Competence** (how we manage relationships). This dimension consists of two elements:
 - Empathy – being aware of the feelings, needs and concerns of others.
 - Social skills – influencing others, cooperation, being a leader, managing team spirit, solving conflicts.
- 3) **Cultural Competence** (how we manage organizational change). This dimension consists of two elements:
 - Awareness of other cultures (Enlightenment)
 - Management of organizational cultures (Champion)

Cultural competence measures the extent to which coaches inquire into or respond openly to other cultures, ideas and values; and their willingness to challenges and question their own assumptions as well as those of others.
- 4) **Professional Competence** (knowledge and approach of the coach). This dimension consists of two elements:
 - Reflective practice – giving and receiving feedback.
 - Continued professional development (Passmore, Low 2009: 13).

The above presented model with the division into separate competence groups can be extremely useful in the professional practice of a coach. The experience of the author indicates that quite often people that work in a multicultural team are completely unaware of the cultural characteristics of their co-workers and the challenges that result from the differences they perceive as personal or professional flaws. When managers that work in Europe come across a lack of punctuality, for example when starting a teleconference with their Asian partners, they perceive this as a lack of commitment or a wrong attitude (i.e. low personal competence), instead of seeing it as a cultural issue, being a different European and Asian perception of time. That is why it is important to stimulate cultural awareness and be aware of the fact that cultural competencies can be developed, just like other professional competencies. Coaching can significantly raise the awareness of the team members in that respect and broaden their perception of the world.

CASE STUDY – INDIA

In the years 2007-2009, an international non-government organization, in agreement with the Government of India and academic research centers, carried out an extensive research project. The project group included people from Europe (Austria, Germany, Poland), India and Australia. The research was lead by a German researcher – Christopher.

Christopher, being German, a scientist and entrepreneur, originating from a low context culture, expected the work to be done on time, according to procedures and the previously established schedule. His management style was directive, maintaining distance, communicating only on a professional level and not establishing any direct, emotional relationships. He did not participate in the typically Indian parties in the evening, being a part of the Indian culture. The main problem was that he did not know how to deal with the high level of and at times unexpected absence of his Indian personnel, a low level of focus on results, a lack of a good organization of tasks of the subcontractors and a general delay. This caused stress and tension in the relationships, which did not benefit the progress of the research.

The task of the coach was to point out to Christopher that most of the problems were not the result of a lack in professional or personal competence and also not due to a low level of commitment. The coach explained the characteristics of the Indian culture to Christopher, the typical Asian way of thinking, including the illogicality, perception of time and high context communication. He also explained that accepting this culture did not mean approving the lack of results. In consequence, Christopher elaborated a personal development plan, and he also focused on searching methods of staff organization and motivation that would be in line with their culture. The schedule of coaching meetings was very tight at the beginning. During the first month sessions took place daily. This way, besides elaborating long-term development plans, they could react quickly to current events of the daily life.

Christopher understood the Indian culture quite quickly and with time even started liking it. He learned to “be”, to reduce stress and to maintain open relationships. He dedicated a lot of time to teaching the Indian people how to plan, focus and strive for a goal, which was his own spontaneous initiative. He implemented into his own life the high value of multigenerational family relationships, which is typically Asian, and he learned do freely express his emotions. With time he gained the trust of the local people and was asked to mediate in a few legal cases that were going on for years. On account of these mediations being a success, he is now invited to participate in successive international projects in India and Latin America.

The result of this type of cross-cultural coaching interventions and studies of the findings of previous researchers is the presented below **Cross-Cultural Development Strategy Model** elaborated by the author:

1) **Identification of the situation** (are we dealing with cultural differences?)

During the introductory coaching stage it is important to define what type of competence requires developing. A lack of understanding of the cultural foundation of the problems can result in a low culture of collaboration and commitment, which is reflected in the results. Identifying that we are dealing with cultural differences will cause the focus to shift from individual conflicts towards the search for solutions that will satisfy both parties.

2) **Identification of differences** (describing the differences and challenges they create)

The previously described models can help here, especially the Rosinski model. They organize the issues, which makes it easier to describe and analyze them, and draw conclusions. However, there is also the risk that based on these models we will make wrong, stereotypical assumptions. So we should use them carefully.

3) **Mutual cultural education**

Cultural education is the initial stage of broadening our perception of the world. Increasing the knowledge on the history and cultural heritage, great achievements and advantage in the area of development and taboos of the culture in which we are working is very useful. This education does not only involve cross-cultural communication trainings or coaching. Promoting culture can also take place in the form of conferences, cultural festivals, creating a cultural knowledge management system, etc.

4) **Elaboration of a strategy** (approach, communication, modus operandi)

Knowing and accepting a culture is not enough, because this does not solve the existing problems. In multicultural companies business standards still apply, which define the service and delivery quality. So the next stage is to elaborate effective solutions that will facilitate collaboration.

5) **A thorough understanding of the other culture**

Thoroughly understanding the other culture means achieving a master level of functioning in a multicultural context. It means understanding the foundation of the differences, the skill to use them in business practice and also, at times, adopting some behaviors or approaches on account of their better functionality in life.

ISSUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A particularly important issue for further research in the area of cross-cultural coaching involves the ethical issues, which a coach should consider in the cultural context in which he is currently working. All the important ethical standards that are being discussed on a European or American level should be combined with the framework of cultural differences and levels of cultural sensitivity. Special attention should be paid to the matter of truthfulness of the coach, his way of providing feedback, defining areas for development and other methods that, if incorrectly applied, can significantly contribute to the ineffectiveness of the coaching intervention³.

When considering more detailed aspects of culture, it is impossible to overlook another issue. Differences exist not only within one nation (for example *north-south*), but also result from other factors like: gender, sexual orientation, age, religion and level of education. Even though there is no model that would include these elements, in business practice they are quite common. In the literature on the subject this is called *diversity* (Magala 2005), which means looking at differences not only from a cultural perspective, but also including the above-mentioned factors. A coach should not ignore the issue of diversity or treat it as a taboo, no matter what his own preferences are.

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³ In Asian countries direct feedback is not usually given and neither are things refused directly. It is frowned upon when people admit to their mistakes or when they indicate their own competencies. Compare: Sood (2009: 127–133).

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Olga Rzycka

MANAGER, COACHING, COACHING- BASED MANAGEMENT – COACH'S INSIGHTS (SUBJECTIVE APPROACH)

CHANGES IN THE BUSINESS WORLD

Technological advancement makes many people suffer from information overload. The conditions we live in today are radically different than those that were the business reality twenty years ago. Management and business patterns that were worked out in the past are inadequate today. The need for effective knowledge management and implementation of innovations is increasing. The definition of business is changing. It no longer means supplying products and services, but rather creating clients' experiences. The challenge is to ensure loyalty of clients and employees. Both groups are more and more aware of their worth and have greater choice possibilities.

Nothing will happen in a company without people. The company will not sell anything, it will not create new products, it will not deliver them to the market, it will not have a good customer care system. It is all done by people. Either they do it good, or not. If a company really wants to appear on the market it has to make sure that the way people function within its structures is quite unique. The company may achieve this by building a strong organizational culture, in which interpersonal relations are conducive to employees' involvement and activity.

Present-day companies need talented and creative individuals. They need people who learn, think, interpret and use existing and available information. Modern companies need people who can read data, create connections, see patterns, create networks, quickly react and adapt to new circumstances. And every organization, of course, wants to have – and retain – the best people on the market. How can it be done? Coaching

is one of the possibilities. People have to adapt to changing conditions in an effective way and here is the place for coach's support. The coach enables a person to adapt using the potential the person already has. Faced with changes and novelties people have hard time drawing this potential out by themselves.

CHALLENGES

Profound social changes, new technologies, globalization, growing diversity of working environment greatly influence the management process. On the one hand, vehicles, airplanes, telephones, cell phones, faxes, pagers, electronic mail, radio and television get us closer together. We can communicate with someone who is far away. We can do it faster and more frequently. It opens up new perspectives, new choices, new ways of acting. On the other hand, all these new possibilities and speed may make us feel overdone and overburdened. These things make us feel as if we could not do everything that is needed to be done.

In the contemporary world, managers are only a fraction of people who try to make sense of the world that is difficult to apprehend. They take decisions and responsibility for them although it is impossible to foresee all the possible consequences of complicated maneuvers. Moreover, they do not even have all the necessary pieces of information that are needed to take these decisions. They do feel a temptation to control the world, but the world they function in is to 'liquid' to be controlled.

More and more managers realize that keeping valuable employees requires something more than good money. These employees need acknowledgement, recognition, open communication and they need to grow and develop personally.

TRENDS IN MANAGING

What the manager should do in our dynamic, one might say "crazy", world? The manager should do both provide a sense of stability and introduce changes. He should see a metapicture i.e. have a broader perspective, but do not ignore details; be aware of what is going in the present, but also focus on the future and see the place he or the company wants to reach. On the one side, right now it is popular to arrange repeated activities for employees, on the other it is important to inspire them and improvise. Managers act in hierarchical situations and in situations that need flexibility. Managers control working environment, but they also release employees' potential, by giving them as much freedom as the latter need to spread wings. They co-create group identity and

they approach each person individually. They focus on long-term planning, because their people need to know where they should go. Nevertheless, company's reality requires of them to act quickly and adapt to existing circumstances.

It would be useful for the manager to know how to act more quickly and wisely; to be flexible with the reality; to think; to be reflexive in dealing with what is going on and to draw conclusions; to develop his self-awareness i.e. to get to know himself better; to create widespread and diversified networks; to create such working environments in which people and teams are able to reach the peaks of their possibilities, can be content with what they are doing and what they are giving the company and other people. What else should the manager do? He should be able to make his personal life meaningful and worth living.

MANAGER'S TASKS

Observing managers I work with, I see that very often they have to cope with complicated, decentralized, global and generally speaking unpredictable situations. They have to find their way around the world and to do this they need flexibility and ability to adapt to unpredictable situations.

If a company is to have a competitive advantage on the market, managers have to reduce the time needed for production and provision of services. However, they cannot make compromises. They have to have both: reduced costs and high quality. What is required of them can be summarized as:

- Complete more tasks and produce more with a reduced number of people in the same time unit.
- Communicate, get information, manage different organizational processes and effectively use new technologies.

And then the question arises: "How am I supposed to do it?". In order to answer this question the manager will need another person – somebody who is neutral to manager's situation, somebody who is trustworthy and encourages people to overcome their limitations and go beyond learnt and schematic behavior. This is the place for an experienced coach.

WHAT INFLUENCES THE CONTEMPORARY MANAGER?

The contemporary manager is influenced by:

- Greatly increased information availability – the manager may not be the sole or central brain in a team and may not be the source of the

best solutions and answers. There is a need for cooperation of specialized professionals.

- Market change dynamics – the need for constant change („change or die”);
- The need for quick and difficult decisions;
- The need for creativity and fostering team spirit;
- Better educated employees, with different needs and aspirations, who cannot be coerced to be quiet when power is overused.

It is not a coincidence that coaching “has hatched” right now. Coaching gives managers time to stop and think what they really want, what they dream of and what is important for them.

SELF-AWARENESS

The majority of managers who I know and who are successful look for honest feedback about their strengths and weaknesses and information about how other people perceive them. Once they have it, they can analyze their managing style and improve their methods for solving problems, building teams, getting support and reaching goals. Simply speaking – they can change. Successful managers invest in development and in self-awareness. They know how to change the way they act and think using what they have learnt. Successful managers learn from the results of their actions. What is more, they take care of their employees’ self-awareness, because they know that it directly influences results, career opportunities and satisfaction from work.

CHANGE OF THE MANAGEMENT PARADIGM

In the current reality, in order to create teams that achieve great results managers must replace typical managerial behavior such as: supervising, checking, monitoring and controlling with new behavior such as coaching and communication. In other words, managers must change the paradigm of management.

Paradigm is a basic mental model (mind, thinking model) that provides foundation for statements and opinions that are generally considered right or obvious in a given area of knowledge. It is a set of concepts and theories that a given area is founded on. It might even be called a binding worldview. A change of paradigm means a change in “game rules”.

Paradoxically, sometimes in order to achieve results the manager must first let go of control. It is in great contrast with a current

management paradigm that has been preached and practiced for a long time. In this paradigm, whether you call it order, directive or autocratic paradigm, the manager by definition takes good decisions. Employee's role is only to do as the manager wishes. Employee's reasoning and judging abilities are not taken into consideration and are not even expected. In this classical paradigm, the employee is a person to abide by the decisions taken by somebody else. We have been slowly steering away from this model, but its remnants still exist and are very popular. Strict hierarchy and relations based on the assumption that "I, the manager, am at the top and you, the employee, are down there and I will tell you what you should do" are becoming outdated.

So the question is "Where are we going?". We are going towards partnership. We are going in the direction where both the manager, as the company's representative, and the employee are autonomous parties of a contract under which they provide services to each other. It is this partnership that counts. And this partnerships have been established for common good and exists to create common value. In this type of relation, unlike in other types, both sides are able to achieve positive results.

In the context of the changes mentioned above, a solution that can work well in the future is the coaching-like management style – transformation of a "traditional manager" into a "manager-coach". The coaching-like management style is the answer to the need for the ability to quickly adapt to changes. And is one of the methods that enable managers to effectively deal with business requirements.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COACHING DONE BY THE MANAGER AND BY THE COACH?

The main assumption of coaching done by the external coach is a full partnership between the coach and coachee. This kind of relation is quite symmetrical. The coach has no power over the coachee and is in no way wiser than the coachee. In the case of the manager-coach, the relation is not quite symmetrical and equal, although the partnership is the ideal situation. Usually, the manager as well as the coachee sees this inequality. The employee always knows that the manager has certain power over him. It might prove a hindrance with respect to coaching goals and the manager somehow must remove it. One of the possible solutions is that the manager will work on relations with his subordinates every day, so that they do not mirror the "master- servant" model.

In the case of external coaching, the coachee sees his coach for the first time and their relation starts to be created. In the managerial

coaching, both sides have already created sets of beliefs concerning the relation. Coaching does not being in a void and the relation is being build on the common history and experience. The manager and the coachee trust each other or are suspicious of each other. There are emotions and feelings.

In classical coaching, there is the main goal and a certain number of sessions. Each session is devoted to a particular issue that gets us closer to the goal. This process has a clear beginning and end. When it is finished there is time for the process review and the coach and coachee say good bye and cease meeting each other. Managerial coaching might look the same. A manager may meet his employee every two or three weeks for individual sessions. But it may also be that the manager-coach coaches when the need arises in everyday situations and does not set coaching meetings. Simply, the manager may talk to employees making use of coaching assumptions and methods. It might be an never ending process if the manager and his employee work within one structure. If this is the case, it is worth to set some milestones so that both persons can see what was achieved by the coachee.

Coaching done be the manager has a lot of advantages.

- It is focused on achieving business goals.
- The manager-coach knows the results attained by the coachee and knows how other people feel about the coachee.
- The relation between the manger and the coachee takes place constantly and therefore coaching interventions might be quick.
- Coaching done by the manager is available to all his employees.

It is important to remember that the manager-coach does not give orders and does not control members of his team but supports them in achieving the results using their own judgment and initiatives. The manager-coach does not restrict his focus to organizational tasks but strives to find the alignment organization's and employee's goals. The manager-coach seeks to release internal motivation of each and every person by supporting all team members, cooperating with them with respect to goal setting and facilitating involvement by generating ideas and solutions. According to the new paradigm, employees are responsible for their own involvement, decisions and actions at work.

A traditional manager focuses on what is not working and tries to find out why the problem has happened. The manager-coach focuses on development, solutions and possibilities. He supports the team to be self-managed. He shows choice possibilities and prods employees to develop in order to find fulfillment and become self-conscious. The new manager fosters creative thinking and challenges people. He listens, asks questions, supports and cooperates.

WHAT IS THE POINT IN IMPLEMENTING THE COACHING-LIKE MANAGEMENT STYLE?

The coaching-like management style is implemented to improve working atmosphere and conditions. In the end, people will be more effective and in turn the company will earn more money. They will be better at winning new clients, more effective at creating more attractive products and selling them to clients. By implementing the coaching-like management style the company will also create new behaviors that will result in a higher level of client satisfaction and client retention.

Good luck.

Anna Dąbrowska

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF INTERNAL COACHING

An internal coach is simply a person that coaches in the company he works in. This type of coach, thus, is constantly in the company and his method of work has a long term impact both on the organization itself and the people who work there and on the way he is perceived in that company. The internal coach has a unique chance to cooperate with the HR department and managers and to create long-term training programs and actively support people working in that company in their development. There are even more possibilities if coaching work can be interconnected with training work.

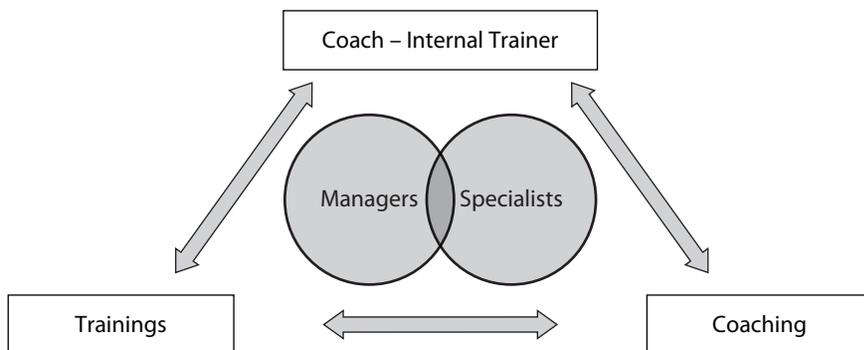


Figure 1.

Internal coaching has a lot of advantages:

- Company gets a very effective method of employee development and at the same time cuts down costs of employing external coaches.
- It becomes more readily accessible for lower level managers and specialists since it ceases to be an “exclusive” (i.e. expensive) form of development reserved only for the top management.

- The internal coach has an extensive knowledge about the company and better understands company's internal processes.
- Accessibility of the internal coach reduces waiting time for a coaching session and makes it possible to quickly handle current difficulties and problems and increases employee effectiveness.
- Coaching may also complement training programs in the company.

If, however, coaching is to bring desired results several important issues must be addressed:

- 1) Inconsistent understanding of the term "coaching" at the workplace.
- 2) When to use coaching?
- 3) Who to coach? And how to recruit clients?
- 4) Setting out cooperation guidelines with coachee's superior.
- 5) Keeping the coaching process going: continuity and regularity.

I will address all topics individually and share my experience.

Issue 1: Inconsistent Understanding Of The Term "Coaching" At The Workplace

When I talk to managers, I frequently ask them "What is coaching to you?" I am faced with many different answers to this question and the three most frequent are:

- First, **coaching** is understood as **on the job training** for people who are new to the job or their working style does not meet the expectations of their managers and they need to be trained individually. Coaching is to give the coachee specific skills necessary for the job. As such, coaching may apply to different positions in the company: receptionists, customer service consultants or specialists who were promoted to the position of a manager and do not have necessary experience.
- Second, **coaching** is understood as a **method of work quality control** and employee skill verification. From this point of view, the coach is responsible for evaluating employee's performance by observing the coachee at work. This may be done directly (e.g. in the case of salespersons the coach accompanies them to clients) or indirectly (e.g. in the case of call center employees the coach listens to coachee's recorded telephone conversations). This type of coaching is found in sales and customer care departments. The coach appraises performance frequently using specially designed tools and then has coaching sessions with employees to show them what they do wrong and remind them of what their guidelines at work should be. In certain cases, the coach may assist the coachee in learning particular skills.

- Third, **coaching** is understood as a way “to fix” an employee that causes problems. Very often, managers ask for coaching for their employee, because the person does not meet their expectations and they would like to make the person aware of their unaccepted behaviour and change it through coaching. In this case, the problem is that the manager does not talk directly to the employee and does not give the employee feedback and expects the coach to do it for him in an indirect way.

All the above approaches defined as coaching definitely have as their goal employee development, but in my opinion they are not coaching.

For me, coaching is a process as a result of which the coachee improves in functioning, activates all necessary resources, finds solutions improving the quality of their professional, and private life and achieves desired goals.

Recently, I have had a conversation about coaching. After hearing my long definition of coaching with lots of examples, the person gave the shortest, and at the same time very accurate, definition I have ever heard: **coaching = developing**. I understand coaching from a development point of view with the assumption that it is focused on seeking and finding solutions based on coachees’ potential.

Conclusions From Internal Coach’s Experience

- The internal coach does not only run coaching sessions but also engages in a several-stage work with managers and the HR staff to unify the understanding of coaching.
- Frequently, when a company employs the internal coach that understands coaching as a development process it turns out that the company has to change the name for its evaluation, control and instructing activities it has been using so far.
- A very effective way to promote coaching is to give presentations to management and talk individually to managers that would like to have their subordinates coached.
- A good solution is also to have a coaching training for the HR people that will supply them with basic knowledge about a coaching process that is understood as a development process.

Issue 2: When To Use Coaching?

The coaching defined as a process as a result of which the coachee improves the quality of their functioning assumes that the coachee has already achieved some level of development. This in turn, makes it necessary to fit the coaching in coachee’s future development process in the organization. Coaching does not solely touch upon work, however,

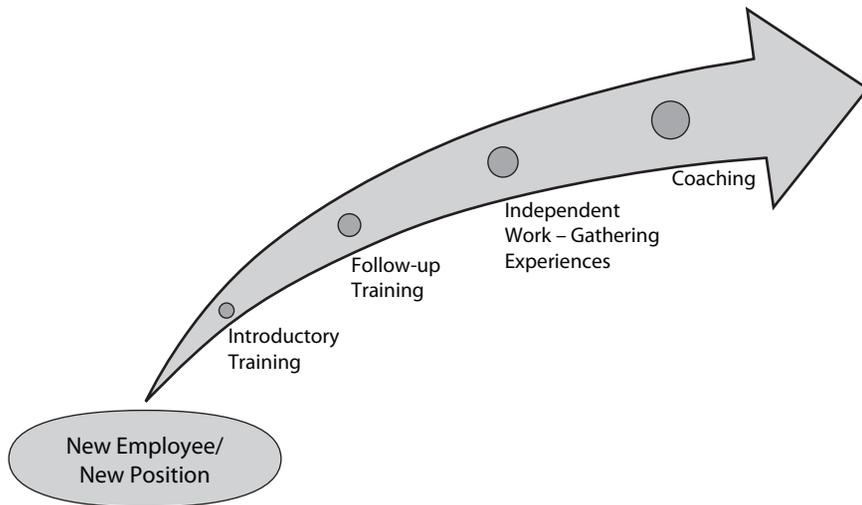


Figure 2. Coaching in the employee development process in the organization (after Marylin Atkinson)

career and professional development are a very important and dominating topic and the goal of coaching sessions.

If a coaching process starts too early several risks may be involved:

- 1) It is impossible to avoid elements of training and instruction since the coachee does not have knowledge necessary for the job.
- 2) The employee does not have enough time to adapt to the new position – the process is disturbed, because the coachee does not have answers to many questions because of the lack of basic knowledge that should be acquired during introductory trainings and follow-up trainings.
- 3) Coaching is used to discover rules and functioning principles that have been already discovered and written down for a given position. This means that the coachee spends a lot of time discovering the reality and this makes coaching less effective than training.

Conclusions From Internal Coach's Experience

- Being an internal coach one has to specifically diagnose employee development moment and choose an adequate development form.
- It is necessary to distinguish between the trainer and coach roles and define when the employee is to get training and when coaching. It is also important to differentiate between these two development processes.
- In a coaching contract, it is necessary to clearly define what coaching is and specify precise coaching goals.
- A good cooperation between the coach, the management and the HR department is an important and very supportive factor in creating employee development programs.

Issue 3: Who To Coach? How To Recruit Clients?

„I am done with flu – I can start my coaching...”, this is what one of the managers willing to commence his coaching said. He had been considering this for quite a long time before he made a decision. Of course, it is a joke, but the topic of choosing coaching clients in an organization is a very serious undertaking. This topic would be the one of the first issues the internal coach will have to deal with. ‘Recruitment’ will be a cyclical process constituting an important element of the internal coach’s work.

The first question the internal coach must answer (very often in cooperation with the HR department) is to whom coaching is available in the company. Is coaching reserved only for managers? Can specialists also take advantage of this form of development? It is wise to create a transparent internal coaching recruitment system and share it with those responsible for choosing coaching clients.

Once the target group is clearly defined the manner of choosing clients has to be considered.

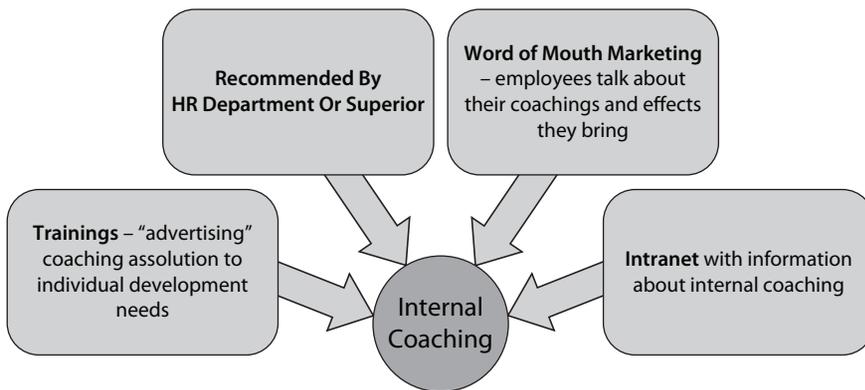


Figure 3. Methods of recruiting clients for internal coaching

There are many factors that interfere with the process of recruiting employees for the internal coaching:

- Inconsistent understanding of the term – mentioned above;
- Using coaching without taking into consideration the diagnosis of employee’s development needs;
- Incomplete and diversified knowledge among employees concerning coaching as a development process;
- Difficulties in disseminating information – spreading information about internal coaching is a slow process even if it is promoted in the intranet and among the management.

The recruitment does not end once there are employees willing to get coached. Employees’ expectations with respect to coaching are also very

important, because very often they influence the entire process. Knowing their expectations allows to set up a strong contract and helps to understand what motivates a person to work and to make changes.

Coachees' expectations fall into several categories as shown on Figure 4.

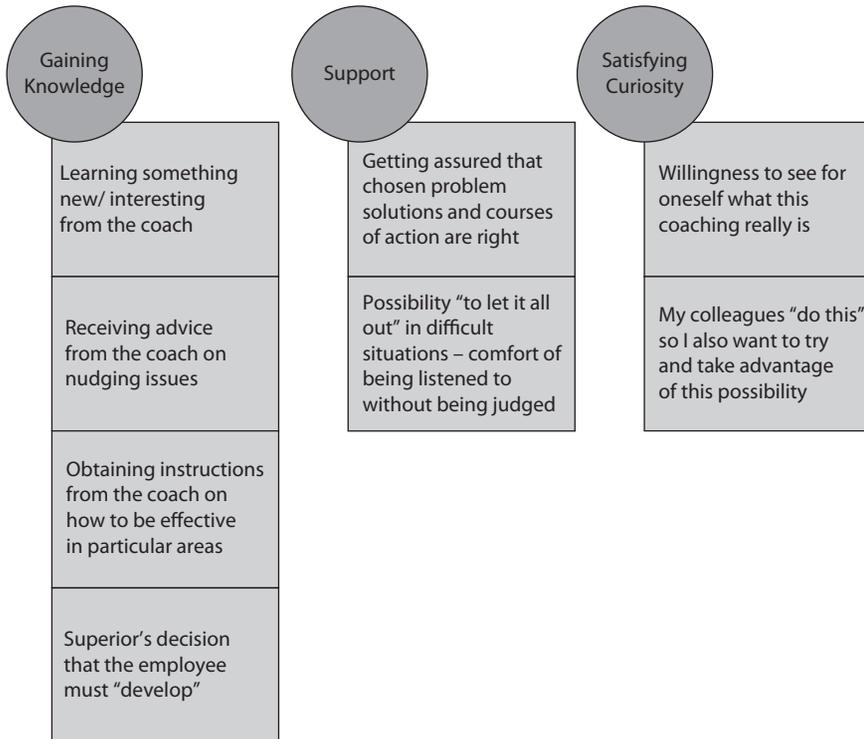


Figure 4. Categories of coachees' expectations

It is clear from the above chart that in many cases expectations are the first source of motivation to participate in coaching and take advantage of its benefits.

Conclusions From Internal Coach's Experience

- Coaching is still a relatively unknown development form; employees do not take advantage of it, because they are not aware of what it is.
- Recruitment for coaching should be a system work and a well described process.
- Diversification of coachee recruitment methods allows to get the message across to a larger number of people.
- Recruitment process should be closely linked with educating people on coaching, i.e.: what it is, how the process looks like and what methods are used during sessions.

- Improving HR staff's, managers' and employees' knowledge about coaching has a direct influence on who applies for coaching and what are their expectations towards coaching.
- Internal coaches should stress principles they use in their coaching, especially the principle of confidentiality. It makes coachees feel safe and encourages people to try this method of work.

Issue 4: Setting Out Cooperation Guidelines With Coachee's Superior

From the internal coach's perspective the quality of cooperation with coachee's superior is very important. We have to remember that the internal coach works within the organization and often times the success of coaching as a form of development depends on how well the coach cooperates with managers. Irrespective of the fact who makes the decision that a person is to be coached (the HR department, his superior or the manager himself) the quality of cooperation is to be taken care of.

There are several issues and questions to be discussed with every manager:

- 1) Permission to be coached during working hours;
- 2) Agreeing coaching hours that are compatible with employees' tasks, department's/company's work flow;
- 3) Informing about coaching principles that the coach applies in his work; the principle of session confidentiality is especially important because upfront the manager becomes aware that he will not be informed about the content of coaching sessions and the coachee feels safe to deal with any arising subject.

In addition, when the manager sends an employee to coaching it is worth to actively include him in the process by:

- 1) Gathering information about the reason the person has been sent to coaching;
- 2) Obtaining knowledge about expectations towards coaching;
- 3) Getting briefed about employee's behavior patterns;
- 4) Getting prepared to a three-party meeting, during which areas of work are established by the manager and accepted by the employee;
- 5) Discussing the ways the manager is going to support observable changes in employee's behavior that result from coaching;
- 6) Discussing how the manager is to give feedback on employee's work, especially focusing on these observable changes;
- 7) Setting the date for a review meeting, on which the manager will evaluate the effects of coaching after the completion of the coaching process.

Very often, coaching as a form of development is recommended by an HR person and this situation also calls for a good cooperation with the

manager. Ideally, coaching is the answer to employee’s diagnosed development needs. The manager usually plays an important role in this process by showing the areas that need to be changed by the employee. Threats resulting from the lack of cooperation include:

- The superior negates coaching as a form of development. As a consequence he forbids his employee to participate in sessions and the process is interrupted.
- The superior understands neither the idea behind coaching nor the method of work during sessions and for example demands that the employee demonstrates new knowledge and skills.
- The superior does not support the employee in implementing changes into his behavior patterns and in this way weakens his motivation.

Conclusions from internal coach’s experience

- Cooperation with the manager, especially at the beginning of the coaching process, lays strong foundations for the process and strengthens it.
- Three-party meetings and the manager’s support in the coaching process are important elements supporting coachee’s motivation for work and change.
- Cooperation with the coachee’s superior does not mean breaking confidentiality of the session.
- Engaging managers in the process of supporting coaching actions requires giving them knowledge and skills in the area.

Issue 5: Keeping The Coaching Process Going: Continuity And Regularity

It is the coachee who is responsible for the coaching process and regular meetings. This is very popular principle with respect to coaching and it should be upheld in internal coaching as well. The reality, however,

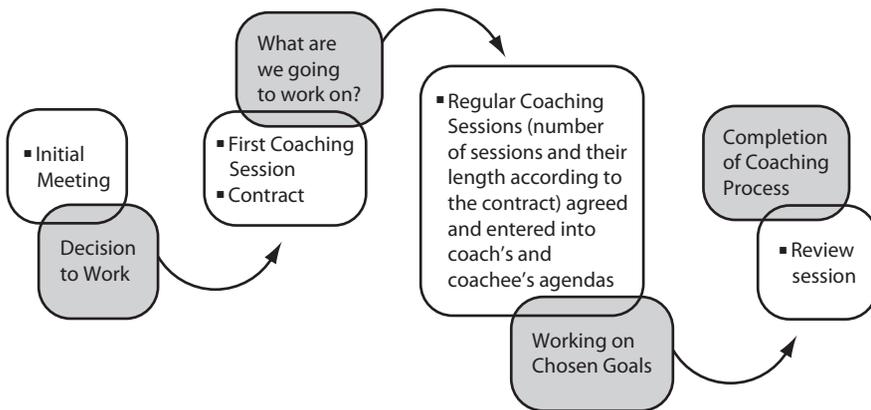


Figure 5. Functional coaching process

shows that irrespective of coachee's engagement in the process it often happens that meetings are irregular i.e. hours or dates are changed, because of unforeseen crisis situations at work (more frequent than in the cases of external coaching), workload, business meetings and trips, important company's events, holidays, etc. In internal coaching there is tendency to reschedule meetings, but it is worth to hold on to the contract and to keep the initial dates and agreements.

In my opinion, the diagram on the Figure 5 shows a functional coaching process.

Conclusions From Internal Coach's Experience

- Maintaining motivation to have regular sessions is an important element of the coaching work.
- If the coaching process is not regular it is quite important to look for the reasons of such a situation.
- It is useful to agree in the contract that it is the coachee who is responsible for remembering about coaching dates and planning his work to incorporate coaching.

ENDING NOTE

Holding a position of the internal coach is a great opportunity to gain extensive and invaluable experience. I am aware that this article only touches upon the issue of internal coaching and my intention was only to share my experiences that might be useful in the process of introducing the internal coaching concept in companies.

Alicja Majka

SYSTEMIC COACHING FOR TALENT DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY

Deloitte: Coaching as a catalyst for change

Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu is an organization of member firms around the world devoted to excellence in providing professional services and advice, focused on client service through a global strategy that is executed locally in nearly 150 countries. Deloitte in Poland is one of the 17 national branches in Central Europe.

INTRODUCTION

2007 was year that witnessed rapid changes. The business market continued to become more diverse and more competitive. The impressive growth of the market had brought along new challenges of being – a bigger and more effective company – as the demands of companies and people changed, there was more and more pressure on systems and processes within organizations to reflect it. In order to meet the new business demands, Deloitte in Poland needed more partners. The approach of learning organizations where learning combines both the prosperity of the organization and employee well-being, seemed to play an important role. That was a time when – Deloitte started to look for a new development strategy (developmental path for future partners) – the corporation programme aimed to provide greater individual employee competencies, thus improving development and performance.

Moreover, Deloitte started to look for an executive coaching and people development company as a partner.

The external company, Mind Partners – European Group of Mentors and Certified Coaches, was brought on board in the autumn of 2007 and as a result of an effective cooperation, the development-based coaching program for Deloitte's Top Talents was implemented.

Mind Partners' Team, represented by Mariola Czechowska-Frażczak, Managing Partner and Lech Rustecki, Managing Director co-created the program together with Deloitte's leaders: Gabriela Kiroł-Kustoszczyk, Talent Development Manager and Krzysztof Kwiecień, HR Director.

Deloitte in Poland has adopted coaching as a framework for supporting managers in the process of development. This, helped them make transitions to new job roles and enhanced the career progress of key employees.

THE "PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE" PROGRAM, AN ACCELERATING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR TOP TALENT

Deloitte's HR department developed an integrated development program for managers.

The traditional techniques of human resource management were replaced by a more holistic approach involving the process of coaching.

It was understood that the "PoE" program is one of the elements that allows future Partners and Directors to develop their competences. These managers were chosen for this Program because they already had highly developed competences that were required for these job positions.

Key features of the program included:

- Core leadership competencies development.
- Preparing for the next stages in the Career with Deloitte.
- Ensuring that there is a clear development path within the Firm.
- Engaging in the management of the Firm.

To kick-start this programme, it was decided to design and deliver the Development Center Workshops (DC). The Mind Partners team was uniquely placed to support Deloitte's in this assignment, due to the fact that integrating the DC with Coaching was their core capability. As agreed at the beginning, the main goal of the DC was allowing participants to have better understanding of their strengths and areas that need to be developed, and to build motivation for further work on developing their potential.

Development Centre

An extensive set of diagnostic tools and simulation techniques were used within the DC. Firstly, program participants passed the OPQ assessment test and a 360 – degree feedback. During the workshops the following range of tools was used:

- Group Activity – Role-play discussion.
- In-tray with presentation.

- Interactive Persuasion.
- Criteria based discussion – individual interview.

Each of the exercises was prepared especially for Deloitte's Development Center and the above mentioned tools were used for surveying the competences that were required for each job position and were assessed in accordance with Deloitte's competencies definitions and behavioral indicators, namely: Service excellence, Marketing, Sales & Communication, Management Effectiveness and Leadership Effectiveness.

The link to business effectiveness was maintained by the other phases included in the program:

- **Involvement of coaches**

The DC was led by analysts. However, coaches were also invited to the process in order to help gather detailed workplace observations and help validate the data derived from the analysis.

- **Writing feedback reports**

The created reports contained suggestions and information relating directly to competencies, but also important for the self-improvement process and recommendations on development: individual coaching, team coaching, mentoring, self-development activities, specific trainings. (These recommendations after HR acceptance would become this person's development plan for the next year).

- **Conducting feedback session**

It was suggested that feedback sessions would be led by analysts and would include a coach observing this person during the DC.

- **Writing development reports**

Co-authored by participants, analyst and coach, which were then approved for each person by the Steering Team.

As a result, feedback debriefing and development planning in collaboration with coaches helped individuals become more aware of their situation, that is, of where they were at that moment in the context of their personal and professional career and business objectives.

Additionally, after the recommendations that were made after the DC, Mind Partners could provide individual coaching solutions. In most cases coaching was chosen over other training alternatives, because it was deemed to be an effective method in developing the potential of employees.

SYSTEMIC DEVELOPMENTAL COACHING

The coaching programme designed for Deloitte was well-established in the internal talent development programme created by the company.

Thus, coaching at Deloitte is the main component of the program: „Pursuit of Excellence” and formed a significant part of the investment

strategy of key resources – human capital. Coaching was depicted in the organizational culture as a process in which the initiative of continuous learning process and competency development is promoted.

Developmental coaching, being a talent support initiative was aimed at preparing selected employees to fulfill current and future needs. The main objectives of using coaching included: to motivate the client to think and reflect, to analyze and explore new ideas and identify the potential areas for future development. Moreover, it was supposed to help the managers to take greater responsibility for the self- development process, expand their learning skills and pulling themselves up in the competitive business reality (that is preparation for taking on new roles).

The coaching sessions carried out within the “Pursuit of Excellence” program primarily focused on:

- progressing a learning and development culture;
- achieving enhanced employee commitment and understanding their career development;
- preparing the participants to become a partner;
- implementing changes through development of the managerial competency level;
- establishing new areas of development (new competences);
- working on self-esteem and efficacy.

In this section, I will briefly present the method coaching used at Deloitte, i.e. the way in which coaching was established as a solid foundation for program development.

My review of the coaching process implemented at Deloitte has confirmed that coaching works, but only when several factors are present that combine to result in a positive climate for coaching. Taking these factors into consideration can greatly enhance both the ease of – initiating a coaching programme and its chances of delivering what is required (Jarvis, Lane, Fillery-Travis 2006: 159).

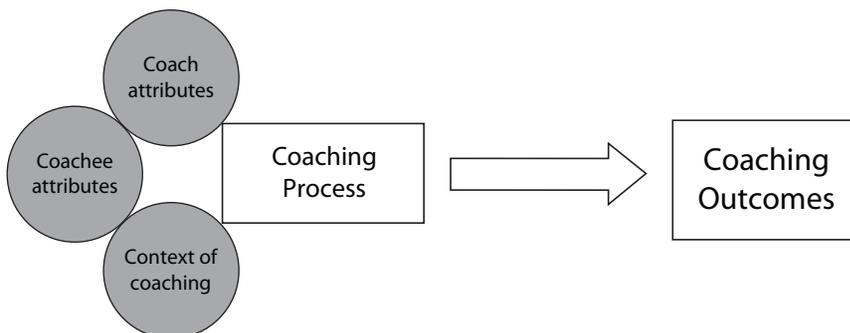


Figure 1. Factors that influence the outcome in a coaching interaction

Source: Jarvis, Lane, Fillery-Travis (2006: 160).

So, let's refer to the research of the coaching case study at Deloitte to illustrate the effects of the above presented areas.

(1) Profile of the coaches involved in the programme

The coaches who worked in this project are graduates of The Co-Active Coaching Course organized by The Coaches Training Institute – thus they used the same competency framework and skills (which helped to preserve the homogeneity and cohesion of the used methodology). The sponsor of the coaching programme required that the coaches would have the following attributes:

- ICF – trained.
- Experience as Senior Managers in Corporate environment.
- Documented business coaching experience.
- Supervision provided by the Mind Partners Management Team.

The group of coaches involved in the program worked based on the International Coach Federation (ICF) Code of Ethics and Competency framework. Furthermore, the coaches highlighted the competences, interpersonal and communication skills that are defined by the International Coach Federation (ICF) and the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC). Thus, the skills of selected coaches were confirmed by certifications of accredited coaching schools.

(2) Coachee Attributes

For the purpose of the Coaching Programme at Deloitte, it was recommended that those selected for coaching would fall into the following categories:

- They are regarded as high performers by the company.
- They have clear and well-defined development needs.
- They are highly motivated to fully utilize the investment in coaching.

The fact that the participants were introduced to the process and that they were working on areas they had identified as important and beneficial reflected on their motivation and commitment.

(3) Context of Coaching

The organizational culture and people-oriented human management policy style at Deloitte influenced the perception and supported the whole coaching interaction.

The coaching process

The customized Individual Coaching Programme for Top Managers at Deloitte was designed and delivered over a 8–12 months period. The majority of Top Leaders participated in the program – a total of 37 people. The first group, with 10 participants, began in the winter of 2007 (see the diagram below: The dynamics of the coaching sessions at Deloitte).

The coaching programme comprised 16–24 sessions. To be as effective as possible, the coaching sessions took place regularly and (frequently enough) for the coaching goals to be maintained, but at the same time it was agreed that 6 individual sessions would be carried out within every 3 months, while having a 2 weeks break between the sessions, which allowed the individuals to reflect and undertake the agreed activities. The programme was adapted individually for each of the participants depending on their needs and possibilities.

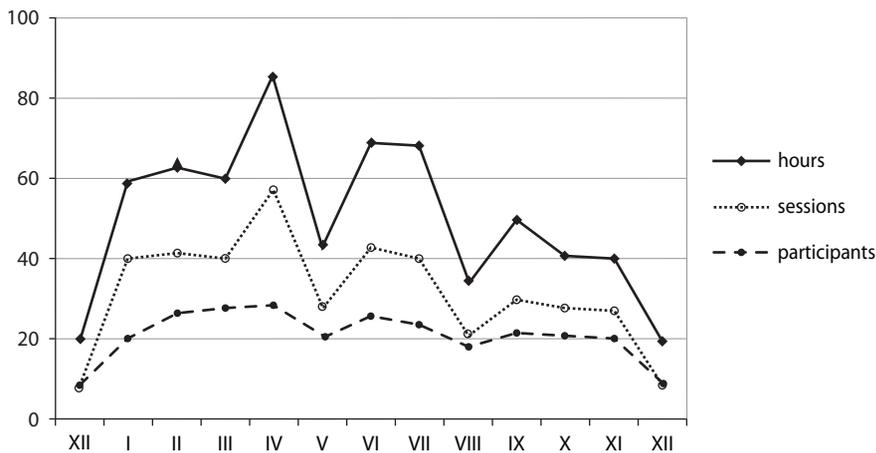


Figure 2. The dynamics of the coaching sessions at Deloitte

Source: Mind Partners – European group of Mentors and Certified Coaches.

The key elements of the program

- 1) A program of individual coaching sessions.
- 2) A quarterly summary as a part of the coaching sessions (Coach-Coachee)
- 3) Periodical competency assessments of coachees:
 - A self-evaluation elaborated by the cochee during the quarterly summary.
 - An evaluation made by the counselor of a particular coachee.

- 4) A review of coaching priorities elaborated by the coachee during the quarterly summary.
- 5) Meetings of the coach with stakeholders chosen by the coachee in order to collect feedback for the client (this is optional).
- 6) A meeting of the coach with the counselor in order to present the Coaching Priorities Card (plus other information agreed upon with the coachee) and collecting feedback and gaining support for the coachee.
- 7) Quarterly summary meetings between Mind Partners and Deloitte.

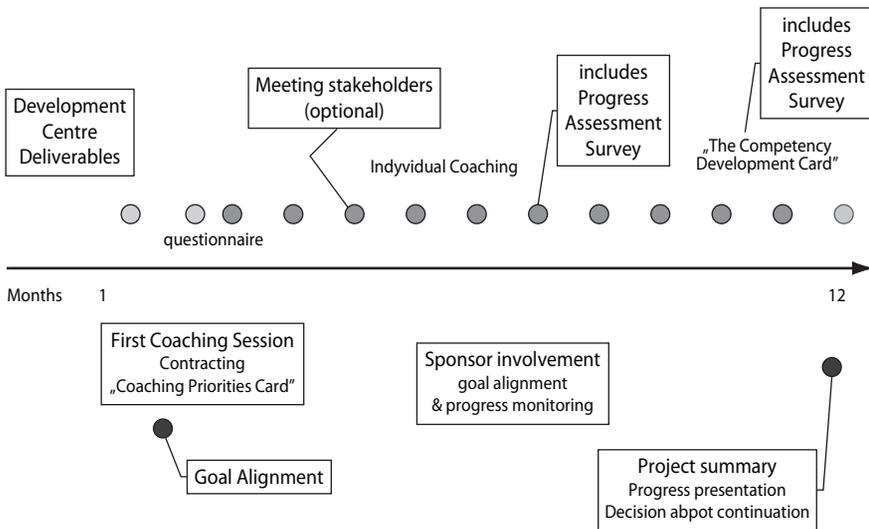


Figure 3. Coaching solution for Deloitte

Source: own adaptation based on Mind Partners – European group of Mentors and Certified Coaches documents.

The Coaching Process

Thanks to the wide spectrum of tools implemented during the Development Centre Workshops, the participants were able to broaden their self-awareness, and coaches were able to prepare themselves before the program started.

Alongside coaching as a part of the business process, the external coaches were working with leaders on the general effectiveness and were helping them deal with the challenges they face in their current roles, as well as encouraging them to see other perspectives and possibilities.

Let's take a closer look at the coaching interaction that took place at Deloitte.

INDIVIDUAL COACHING AT DELOITTE: A DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR MANAGERS

“Coaching is partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential”.

Definition by the International Coach Federation
(Source: www.coachfederation.org)

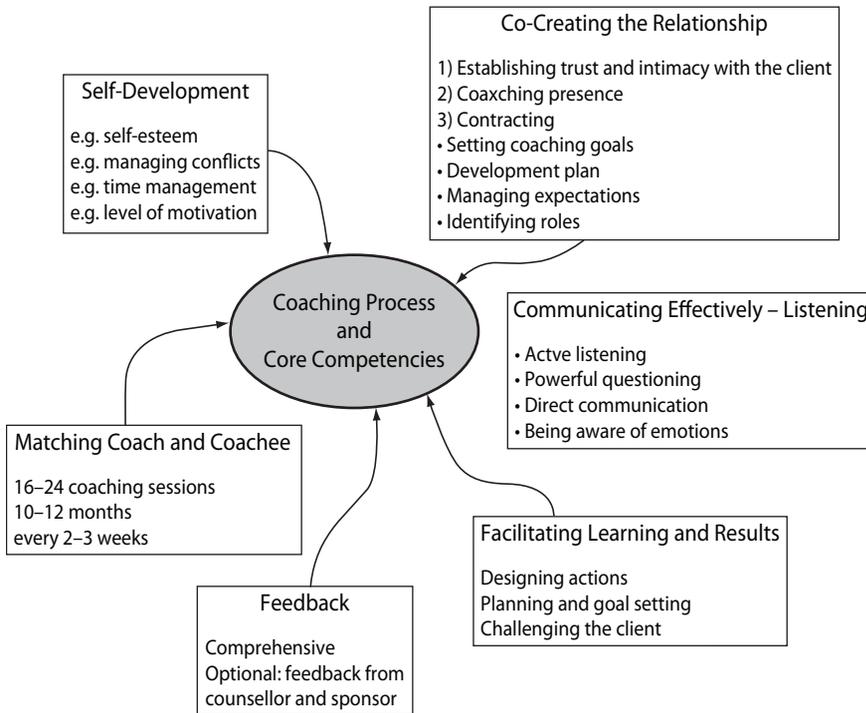


Figure 4.

Source: own elaboration based on the Coaching Competency Framework developed by the European Mentoring and Coaching Council, International Coach Federation.

What really happens in an executive coaching relationship?

During **the first session**, drawing up a contract between the coach and coachee is a crucial element of an effective coaching engagement. It is one of the most important stages, and that is why the rules and conditions of cooperation are discussed between the coach and the coachee.

In addition, the coach works with the coachee on defining the roles, responsibilities and accountability of each party.

Alongside of the Coaching program that was carried out at Deloitte, arrangements were made based on the report generated by the DC. During the initial session the coach helped the coachee with analyzing the information obtained after two diagnostics: PMC and OPQ. Once the data was collected, usually the coach worked with the client to help her/him identify a job-related set of goals to improve the professional and personal performance. For the purpose of the coaching program, the questionnaire: „Coaching Priorities Card” was created.

It was also the responsibility of the coach to recognize the willingness and check the commitment to move forward. Thus, the coach was supporting the coachee in accomplishing their goals.

Learning philosophy

The approach to coaching used at Deloitte is heavily based on the American program: The Coaches Training Institute (CTI), in the cognitive-behavioral paradigm with elements of humanistic psychology.

During the coaching process, the coaches used a wide range of methods and skills which were aimed at reducing the gap between the actual competency level and the desired one. It is difficult to point out what actually happens during the coaching sessions, as each coaching relationship is unique. Despite the fact that there is a diversity of challenges that coaches and their client face during the coaching interaction, usually all coaching sessions seem to use three general processes. The case of coaching at Deloitte supports the above thesis. The mentioned processes that occur within the coaching process are as follows (Sudheim 2005: 16–18):

- 1) Awareness Building – coaching often entails opening a coachee’s eyes to information or a dynamic that he/she has never considered before;
- 2) Critical Reflection/Dialogue – Once awareness is heightened around a specific topic, critical reflection is important so that an executive can begin internalizing the meaning of the new awareness;
- 3) Action Planning and Action – an Action Plan should result from the previous 2 processes. Action plans usually include new behaviors, new organizational structures, or new ways of communicating with staff. In order to be effective, this process needs to include accountability measures to ensure that the new actions actually happen consistently (case study).

Thus, the agreed-upon inherent aspects of the sessions conducted at Deloitte were: building the self-awareness of the client, inspiration to

critical reflection, staying in dialogue as well as initiating and establishing an action plan.

Additionally, every three months, **quarterly meetings were planned**. When preparing the coachee to the summary process, the coach suggested involving the stakeholders into the process and presented the benefits that arise from this solution (it was an option for the coachee to choose-it was not an obligatory part of the programme).

When forming the principles of the coaching programme for the participant of the “Pursuit of Excellence” program it was suggested that the coach conducts 1–3 interviews with the stakeholders of his/her coachee e.g. counselor, subordinate, HR manager. The main reason for carrying out these interviews was to collect feedback for the participant.

As a part of the quarterly meetings, the coach conducted a specific summary for his/her coachee, having in mind the areas and competences that the coachee selected to elaborate during the first session (revision of the “Coaching Priorities Card”). Thus, at the end of the process the coachee was asked to fill out the progress assessment survey “The Competency Development Card” in order to check whether a change occurred during the coaching process.

In order to monitor the effects and results of the coaching process, it was agreed upon to hold **quarterly meetings between Deloitte and the Mind Partners**. The meetings aimed at observing the progress that was made with respect to the coaching objectives. These meetings resulted in the idea of linking coaching to business initiatives and internal programs at Deloitte – the Performance Management Cycle (annual goal settings and career planning process (CP), feedback process, mid-year and year-end performance progress reviews (PPR)).

Due to the fact that people development is a key priority at Deloitte and the benefits of effective coaching have been noticed, participants were introduced to the programme. However, the rapid economic change connected with the economic global crisis, which has also impacted the Polish economy since October 2008, influenced the board’s decision to suspend the coaching programme. This decision was made because one of the key needs that was fundamental to the programme ceased to exist: the need for a greater number of partners to fill the gap created by a rapid growth of the business.

The impact of the program

Although a higher-level evaluation did not take place, the company did track the achievements of the program. The effect in the organization was very positive. Among Based on the feedback received through the survey the following conclusions were made:

- Participants are highly committed to their personal growth and most of them treat the development processes in the program very seriously.
- The “Pursuit of Excellence” program is perceived as a positive initiative by most participants.
- All soft skills training was evaluated very positively.
- Participants taking part in the coaching process are generally very satisfied with it, observe improvement of their business performance due to coaching and are interested in continuing it for next months.

Other evaluation results regarding the development process (coaching program) are also very positive and encouraging:

- Coaching was evaluated very positively by 27 interviewed participants (90%):
 - only 1 case of changing the coach (from soft-skills-oriented to more business-oriented),
 - 1 case of moderate satisfaction from coaching effects,
 - 1 case of finishing of the coaching process early (the process met its goals),
 - all the above cases were analyzed and feedback was given to the coaches.
- 14 interviewed participants (47%) took part in different soft skills training sessions; only 5 interviewed participants (17%) took part in the mentoring process; they evaluate the process as useful, but suggest it should be more structured.

WHAT LESSON CAN WE LEARN?

Coaching is an effective method to develop high-potential leaders.

As can be concluded on the basis of this paper, overall one-on-one coaching can give good results that may not be addressed as well by more traditional or less intensive development programs. However, it was also noticed that coaching would have had a bigger impact on the organization if a team coaching process was implemented. Thus, there is a positive change that occurred after the series of individual sessions however the change is on a smaller scale.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the members of Deloitte in Poland and to Mariola Czechowska-Frączak and Lech Rustecki for the opportunity of making the materials used in the coaching process available and sharing the results on the effectiveness

of coaching, which were invaluable in the preparation of the presented case study.

On my personal behalf, I would like to convey my sincere appreciation to Mr. Krzysztof Kwiecień for the support and opportunity to enhance learning for individuals and organizations.

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www.coachfederation.org

The tools and materials used within the process were created by Mind Partners – European Group of Mentors and Certified Coaches.

PART III

BEST PRACTICES

Kazimierz F. Nalepa

6 PILLARS OF SUCCESS IN COACHING. HOW IS IT WORTH TO INVEST IN HUMAN POTENTIAL?

6 PILLARS OF SUCCESS

During many years of pursuing self-development and development of other people, from time to time, I had to deal with the barrier of low effectiveness. And then I asked the question “Why?”. Why the things I do or other people do do not work or are not effective enough?

The search for the answer to what are the most **important factors** needed to produce the optimal effectiveness of achievements and development resulted in the conception of the theory of 6 Pillars that influence human achievements.

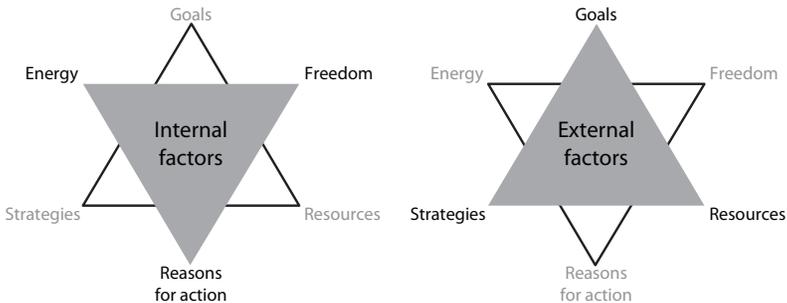
The six pillars are:

- 1) **Goals** – what you want.
- 2) **Reasons for action** – why do you do/want this.
- 3) **Energy** – personalized.
- 4) **Freedom** – lack of internal limitations.
- 5) **Resources** – do you have what is needed to succeed.
- 6) **Strategies** – appropriate plans of action, procedures.

If a person wants to effectively and efficiently pursue their aims they should take into consideration all six components of success.

The above factors may be grouped into **two sets**:

- External factors: goals, resources, strategies
- Internal factors: reasons, energy, space (freedom)



Internal factors are less visible and frequently more difficult to notice, but they are the foundation of a healthy success. External factors are more visible and noticeable. They are less “psychological” and more “tangible”. Both types, however, are necessary for healthy, harmonious development and high effectiveness of action.

THE HEART OF THE 6 PILLARS OF SUCCESS THEORY

The essence of this theory is to give people a map that allows them to go in the most profitable change direction. I have seen many cases in which people:

- 1) formulated and pursued goals that had nothing to do with their authentic motivation;
- 2) increased their resources when it was enough to increase the level of individual energy;
- 3) looked for new strategies to reach their goals instead of cleaning up their internal space for success, making room for movement and having a straight road to success.

When a client has spent a long time pursuing his goal and the results are disproportionate to the outlays it is quite probable that he acts in the area of the wrong pillar.

Each time it is worth asking:

- 1) Which pillar should be dealt with?
- 2) What kind of action should be undertaken and when will it finish?
- 3) What pillar of success should be dealt with (it might be the same or other pillar)
- 4) etc.

Where it is advisable to act?

When we move in the wrong direction, we waste time and do harm – even the best techniques do not help then.

COACHING BASED ON 6 PILLARS OF SUCCESS – CASE STUDY

When a client comes to us, we can determine his ‘gear’ in all six areas is. I will illustrate this with an **example**.

A client came to me a month or so ago. He had problems with fulfilling his professional aspirations. It is worth noticing that his aspirations are quite high and he is a top specialist in the field. He holds a responsible position and has great achievements. However, what he dreams of is 2 or 3 levels above his present achievements. His desired achievement level is not “a bit more” or “a bit better”. He cares for a radical change of achievement level and a change in comfort of performance and of being on a new level. We can describe client’s need by saying: “from a very good situation to a highly attractive situation”.

After some initial discussion, we specified client’s driver capital in all six pillars of success. The table shows the results.

Client’s Profile of Pillars of Success – John Smith 2009.09.04												
Goal: “Within 2 years I will achieve a professional position that fulfills the following criteria: 1. criterion; 2. criterion; 3. criterion; 4. Criterion”												
N=now; P=possible to achieve	1 0	2 0	3 0	4 0	5 0	6 0	7 0	8 0	9 0	10 0	more	
Goals N=85%									N			
Reasons N=30%			N									
Energy N=100%											N	
Freedom N=60%						N						
Resources N=95%										N		
Strategies N=90%									N			

Such description of client’s situation (with respect to coaching goals):

- 1) establishes a good starting point for building relation with the client;
- 2) enables both the coach and client to specify the initial, starting position;

- 3) helps to determine the scope of necessary work;
- 4) facilitates the optimum sequence of coaching steps.

The process of building a complete diagnosis may take from one to several sessions. Due to the scope of this article I will not cover here the methods of such diagnosis. A well-trained specialist will do it on a single session. If we decide to do such a diagnosis we incorporate a **diagnosis**-consulting session into coaching work. It has its advantages and disadvantages.

The **advantage** of using effective and well-chosen diagnostic tools in coaching is that:

- they allow a **coach** and **client** to identify and describe client’s situation. Very rarely it happens that at the very start of the process the client is clearly aware of his situation and very often it takes some time (???) before even the coach begins to understand what the problem is and what the best solutions to the client’s problem are;
- they help to quickly establish what needs to be done for the client to achieve his goals;
- they are a splendid foundation for agreeing the contract with the client.

On the other hand, it is **disadvantageous** that:

- client’s illusions that he will be able to breeze through the issue are shattered;
- the pace of works may be too fast for the client;
- the client does not develop the skills needed to diagnose his own situation;
- the coach risks his own reputation if he fails to diagnose client’s situation well or does not know how to make the client fully aware of the diagnosis in a ecological way.

The above table may be turned into a continuous record of the entire sequence of client’s development works on all coaching sessions.

Client’s Profile of Pillars of Success – John Smith 2009.09.04						
Goal: „Within 2 years I will achieve a professional position that fulfills the following criteria: 1. criterion; 2. criterion; 3. criterion; 4. criterion”						
	Goals	Reasons	Energy	Freedom	Resources	Strategies
1. Session start	85	30	100	60	95	90
		1 step		2 step		

The quality of each pillar of success is given in percentage points, where 100 percent equals optimal situation. Additionally, the worse the situation in a given field, the darker the field.

Note: Having set goals, together with the client we have established what are his “assets” in each and every area of the six pillars of success. This exercise helps to organize the search for the best solutions. It turned out that the greatest deficiencies were in the area of reasons. Client had been pursuing the goals that resulted from expectations of other people, which the client had accepted as his own. To a great degree, these were his father’s and uncle’s expectations concerning career and types of achievements. This type of initial achievement stimulation was sufficient to make him reach high achievements but inadequate to make these achievements last and give the client authentic satisfaction. Usually, on a high level of achievements, shortcomings in the area of reasons get in the way.

Once coaches specify client’s assets in all pillars of success, they determine in which area the changes are the most needed with respect to the entire success strategy. It is worth mentioning that the order of dealing with client’s matters does not only depend on a deficit size. This is a bit more complicated. Coaches should discover the proper sequence of actions that would lead to healing client’s situation and giving him more possibilities. These are clients that know the perfect order of actions. Coaches’ role is to discover (together with clients or on their own) the order and follow it.

In this case study, the succeeding steps agreed with the greatest deficiencies¹. First, we worked on refreshing client’s contact with reasons for achievements – step 1. The client discovered his own reasons, which were still attractive, and reasons that he adopted from elsewhere. I will not describe the entire process here. As a result of this findings, client’s contact with the true motives of his actions rose from 30 percent to 90 percent and the goal of pursuing further achievements become definitely more attractive. The client, however, was unable to discover a full set of his own reasons for a professional success in the first step, because of internal blocks and limitations.

Next, we concentrated on discovering client’s blocks and on overcoming them. We achieved a considerable improvement (from 60 percent of freedom to 95 percent of freedom). Such clearance of limitations gives a person the feeling of internal freedom and space for action. It often happens that after this type of session clients need rest.

At the end of the session (End), we determined client’s new resourceful state in every pillar of success. It is quite clear that the client’s situation changed.

Because two success pillars changed

- the authenticity of reasons for action rose from 30 percent to 90 percent,
- freedom of action rose from 60 percent to 90 percent

the client found himself in an entirely new internal situation.

¹ It does not always have to be like that.

	Goals	Reasons	Energy	Freedom	Resources	Strategies
Start	85	30	100	60	95	90
		1 step		2 step		
End	55	90	90	95	75	70

The changes that took place during the session resulted in a quality change in the remaining pillars of success:

- The old way of formulating goals became less suitable, decrease from 85 percent to 55 percent
- The level of internal energy slightly dropped – the client was engaging very much during the session. After we finished working, a lot of his attention was still directed inwards as he was completing the processes started at the session. We agreed that before he gets in the car or starts something that requires concentration and quick responses he would take a long walk and allow the processes to come to a natural end.
- Client needs larger resources. The level of the resources he had was described as 75 percent.
- In the desired situation, the client needs new strategies of action. Therefore, the current quality of adequate strategies at the end of the session was rated at 70 percent level.

Summary: It was a very intense session – quite a breakthrough. The client changed key parameters that limited him (1. Reasons, 2. Blocks). The breakthrough was possible, because the client was ready to make a change. He had been waiting for it and acting towards it for a long time, but he was unable to overcome his limitations in the field of:

- perception – he was unable to notice, where his real limitations were;
- tools – he did not have a complete set of ways to get to the changes he needed;
- relations – an appropriate division of roles and possibility of getting temporary support from a coach helps on certain stages of a change process.

Client needed a competent support for his goals. When he got it, he did what was possible on this stage and entered into a space ready for effective individual work. It must be said that this client has a strong motivation for achievements and splendid tools for change. From time to time, however, our own possibilities are too small to go ahead and the life goes on and does not want to wait for us. And this is the time to find a coach.

The most important thing for the client at this stage is to gain 100 percent access to his own motives for action and to fully accept them. This kind of change will enable him to live his own life and get 100 percent satisfaction from his own achievements. It will be possible:

- by directly discovering his own reasons
 - on his own
 - with the coach
- if it is not possible, then all obstacles that block the client from being in a full contact with his motives, authentic needs and aspirations must be removed; then back to point a.
- energy level must be kept high. A high energy level facilitates changes.
- tackling goals at this stage is not needed. Once the three internal pillars of success are OK formulation of goals will be fairly easy.
- the next step is to supplement resources and master strategy of action.

Now, I will briefly specify the type of work that is done in all six pillars of success.

1st Pillar of Success – Goals

GOALS are a very convenient area to start working with a client. Commencing here, we do not immediately get to deep in client's life. We can also work on client's goals when the client does not reveal them to us. The content of a goal is in fact not needed as we can only focus on goals' parameters. This type of approach makes clients, especially VIP clients, comfortable.

A lot has been written about goals. It is a fairly well known and extensively exploited field of influencing success. It does not mean, however, that people correctly formulate goals. The method of working through goals is overused and applied mechanically and superficially because it is fairly easy to use. Work based only on formulating goals is like taking care of make-up believing that this will make your complexion look better.

Setting authentic goals means taking responsibility for one's own success in life or in a particular area of life. And this is why many people do not have goals. They simply do not want to take responsibility for a fragment or an entire life of theirs. If our clients avoid such responsibility they will work much worse than they can. They will blame others (including their coaches) for their "end runs".

Goals have three dimensions of effectiveness:

- a) wisdom of choice,
- b) specification accuracy,
- c) strength (how much a goal influences a person's life).

A. Wisdom of choice

Wisdom of goal choice, sometimes cautiously called ecology, tells how the achievement of a goal will affect our client and his surroundings. It is quite common that people get involved in activities and tasks that are harmful to them and to other people. In doing this, they are using goals to improve the effectiveness of their actions. It is definitely worth helping clients to understand possible consequences of their goals:

- 1) in different areas of life,
- 2) in different time perspectives.

There are a lot of techniques that help to discover the consequences of goal attainment, for example "time line" or "wheel of success", which was described in detail in the *Personel Plus* monthly (No. 8, 2008). Coaches have the right to refuse to work with clients towards realizing such undertakings that are harmful or that coaches do not want to support.

In my coaching practice I use the following criteria of a well formed goal:

- 1) **attractive** for the client,
- 2) **real**,
- 3) **given in positive language**,
- 4) **simple** – simplicity makes it easier to attain,
- 5) **concrete, measurable**,
- 6) **specified** in time,
- 7) **under client's control**,
- 8) **ecological**.

Attractive

I have had a lot of cases in which client's emotional reaction to his own goal was weak. It may mean that:

- The client is not pursuing his own goals = “slave”. Free people live their own lives. They engage in undertakings that make them happy and are internally and externally profitable. A free person may work for and with other people.
- The client is far away from a situation of well-being and establishes goals that are to help him to get through dreadful and unwanted situations.
- The client does not know how or does not want to take care of himself (low self-worth, self-punishment, autoaggression, etc.) There might be more reasons not to take care, because some people are more creative than wise.

If a goal is attractive it does not mean yet that it is ecological (i.e. narcotics).

Real

To reach a goal a person must perceive it as possible to attain. It does not mean, however, that other people must think the same. A goal must be subjectively real. People have achieved things that other thought impossible. There is a saying in Polish that “faith works miracles” and it is true that faith significantly increases the chances of reaching a goal. Still, faith does not yield expected results when it is used mechanically and bears resemblance to wishful thinking. However, the analysis of a causative potential of faith is definitely outside the scope of this article.

Given in a positive language

A goal should clearly state what a client will achieve and what he will not. It is a synthetic description of a final result to be cheered by the client.

Simple

The more simple description of a goal the better. A perfect situation is when a goal is one simple sentence. It is worth remembering that a goal should have:

- intellectual (unambiguity)
- emotional (motivation)

impact on our organism. Complicated intellectual structures are lesser motivators. Simple goal formulation may of course be complemented with additional descriptions.

Concrete, measurable

When a goal is measurable we can see how much we have already achieved and how much remains to be done. A goal does not have to be objectively measurable. If it is only our goal it is enough that it is subjectively measurable (e.g. “beautiful woman” or “happiness”). If a goal is a tool in coordinating work of many people it is better to make it objectively measurable.

Specified in time

If a goal has an achievement deadline it increases person’s motivation, helps to plan actions and measure the pace of achievements. Setting deadlines pays off. Setting a real and attainable deadline usually requires an in-depth analysis of possibilities of reaching a goal.

Under client’s control

When we want something that we cannot reach all by ourselves at present or in the future we wide open the door to manipulation. When we want to get something that is not under our control the best thing to do is to ask for it. Actions that need to be taken to reach a goal must result from the way a goal is formulated.

Ecological

Here, we take care of the consequences of goal realization and attainment. Remember that only really just ends justify the means and ecology is not really attractive to barbarians.

C. Strength

Strength is about the energy and motivation that is unlocked in us by a goal. Goals are a very effective tool for achieving successes, but to be effective they need to have an adequate strength to impact our organisms. It means, they need to have a high motivational value.

2nd Pillar of Success – Reasons (Intentions) for Action

Another way – leading us decidedly deeper – of getting to the **secrets** of human successes and failures are REASONS people do or do not want certain things, establish goals, act, etc. Notice that reasons nourish goals similarly as roots nourish an entire tree. Healthy roots put in a fertile soil are the foundations of tree's success. But since trees do not need coaching we will deal with people.

On this stage of the process we ask our clients the following questions:

- 1) Why do you want this?
- 2) Why do not you want this? What do you want instead?
- 3) Have you listed all possible reasons why you want this?
- 4) Which of the goals are the strongest (hierarchy)?
- 5) Which are the most permanent?
- 6) Can there be other reasons you are not aware of yet?
- 7) How do you feel when in contact with a given reason?
- 8) Which of these reasons are really yours?
- 9) How do you know?

These questions are simple only linguistically. Very often, clients do not know the answers or the answers are **superficial** and not really true. And in fact, the answers to these questions require internal honesty and being in touch with oneself. And it would be even better, if this was being in touch with ONESELF.

These and similar questions make clients look inwards in search of true motivations. Best goals stem from client's real needs, desires and dreams. While searching for the answers to these questions clients become more and more aware of what they want and why they want it. Sometimes, it gives them an opportunity to reformulate goals and set more fulfilling and wiser goals.

When the client is in contact with “why he wants something” and there is the atmosphere of mutual trust and safety it is a good idea to ask him one more question:

- 10) Why do you **really** want this?

This question often “transfers” the client to his core motivations, to fundamental motives for action. It is a very insightful and beneficial discovery. It may happen, though, that the client may be very surprised.

By the way: “Why are you **really** a coach?”.

3rd Pillar of Success – Personal Energy

To achieve something one needs to invest personal energy in it. The energy must be of adequate quality. There must be enough of this energy

for the task at hand and the energy has to be adequately distributed over time.

If clients have too little energy for a given achievement they will have problems. Energy is like a fuel that feeds our actions and leads to success. If clients have too much energy they may waste it. Too much unrestrained energy makes people stop acting with precision. They are like on drugs. They “get high”.

The quality of energy may be more or less adequately described using feelings and emotions that are its source. Emotions can be healthy or toxic. Emotions are the “colors” of energy that makes actions and life, in general, possible. Different types of energy have different causative value and different side effects. We act differently when we act out of love, out of hate, out of boredom or out of insecurity. Energy is also a resource (5th Pillar of Success). I deal with it separately, because it is fundamentally important.

Examining this aspects of client’s readiness for success we can ask:

- 1) Where does your energy and strength for realizing the goal comes from? (2nd Pillar – Reasons)
- 2) In your opinion, do you have too much, enough or too little energy?
- 3) Using percentage points (where “enough” = 100 percent) describe how much energy you have to achieve the goal.
- 4) What emotions or feelings accompany you in pursuing the goal?
- 5) How do they help you in achieving the goal?
- 6) How do they influence the quality of your life?
- 7) Are there other, maybe better, emotions that will help you to achieve the goal?
- 8) Do you think you have enough energy to achieve the goal?
- 9) Are there moments that you lack energy? When?

There are many methods and techniques of working with personal energy. It is good to make sure that your client is effective in this aspect of the “success technology”. It is worth knowing that if true reasons for action are discovered and internal barriers are removed, the energy should be activated automatically in a healthy and natural way.

4th Pillar of Success – Freedom (Space for Success)

The city decided to construct a modern and badly needed junction near the place I live. The owner of one of the plots required for this investment project had been “blocking” this undertaking for two years. There are also situations, when an “old bomb” is discovered while laying foundations or a new building settles down because “the soil underneath” is not stable enough. This is the nature of our own blocks.

When there are blocks and limitations on our road to success then things that otherwise might have been simple get complicated. Blocs

means difficulties and complications on our way or even inability to achieve goals.

The topic of this pillar of success is available in many books that deal with identification, analysis and removal of human limitations. There are many schools, approaches and methods focusing on limitations.

When clients have serious problems with natural and effortless attainment of valuable successes it is almost certain that they have certain limitations. If there are none clients have a free access to what they care for. Blocks can be:

- overt and hidden (clients are unaware of them),
- simple and complex (many interconnected phenomena),
- new and old (existing for long time),
- unwanted and accepted (clients have developed a bond with blocks and defend them),
- understandable and rejected by clients (clients reject the possibility of existence of such a block, limitation or fact in them or in their lives).

The idea behind this pillar of success is that if you have already set off to reach your goal you will reach it faster and easier if the road is clear and of good quality.

The second – more important - reason for removing blocs and limitations is love that is expressed by caring for oneself and others. Each block is a testimony about past problems, difficulties and failures. Its very existence reduces the quality of life and limits or pathologically increases possibilities.

Each block and internal limitation is:

- a chance for better life (once it is removed),
- a hidden lesson, very important to the client,
- a training on how to deal with life and with oneself.

Blocks and problems are treasures
in an unattractive wrapping.

Blocks and limitations may exist in all pillars of success:

1. Blocks in goals

They distort goals. People may:

- avoid setting goals (for example because of fear, lack of meaning in life...),
- take somebody else's goals for their goals (for example: parents' or organization's goals),
- choose harmful goals (self-punishment, autoaggression...).

A blocked mission or somebody else's mission instead of our own is a very strong and destructive block in this area. This type of block has a harmful and devastating impact on the entire life of a person.

2. Blocks in reasons

Distortions and blocks in this area may result from:

- a shallow contact with oneself,
- domination of another person,
- no access to oneself, one's needs and desires...

They may have a limited or a very broad scope. Without removing blocks in this pillar there is no chance of living one's life. It is impossible to fulfill one's role in life, hence it is impossible to feel fulfilled, calm and satisfied with who the person is and what the person does.

People with blocked and limited reasons for actions may have success, even surprisingly great successes, but their own achievements are not rewarding enough, because they are not truly theirs. A dog that fetches his master's newspaper is rewarded by the fact that his master is content (an indirect reward), but it feels quite differently than a dog that carries a tasty bone and walks with his master to a nearby park (a direct reward under favorable conditions).

Certain blocks are so huge or/and so subtly installed that their owners have no clue they have them, but still they defend their existence. I still remember a client of mine who was very determined to pursue his professional mission and engage in activities that were related to it. The problem lied in that it was not his authentic mission. This fact caused many problems and frustrations in his private and professional life.

It is worth remembering that somebody else's reasons,
may, at best, nourish us only indirectly.

3. Blocks in personal energy

There are at least several different approaches to the phenomenon of human energy. Those who have problems with understanding the concept of body's energy may think about it as human vitality. When we talk about success we mean vitality that is set on achieving goals.

Acupuncture has developed an excellent diagnostic and intervention apparatus that helps to revitalize the energy by restoring an optimum energy flow in a human body. Other approaches such as acupressure or massage or even the SPA trend are based on more or less the same concept.

It is definitely worth to deal with this aspect of client's potential because it strongly influences his possibilities. It is up to the coach how it will be done. The questions that may help here are:

- 1) Are you feeling full of energy for action and life?
- 2) How do you rate your own energy level? (100 percent = as much as I need)
- 3) Where do you get the energy for achievements from?
- 4) Are there any moments that you lack the energy for effective action?
- 5) Do these moments have anything in common? (pattern of limitation or a trace of it)
- 6) In what situations does your energy rise?
- 7) In what situations does your energy drop?
- 8) Do you sometimes feel as if somebody was taking away the energy from you?
- 9) Can you prevent harmful drops of your energy level?
- 10) How do you do this? Do these ways suffice?

4. Blocks in space for success

Are there blocks and internal limitations that block other blocks? – of course, yes. When people have difficulties it happens that instead of sorting them out and treating them as a great, although tough, opportunity for development, they try to flee from them. One of the most common solutions is to run away from a difficult subject and block the access to it, so that in the future any type of contact is impossible. So, as a result there is a block on a block. More diligent and far-sighted human beings are able to safeguard this area of their psyche with several more contact blocking structures.

It is the case, the coach has a lot to do and he better knows what he is doing.

It does not mean of course that all coaching interventions are technically complicated. There are moments, when one good question and a good timing are enough and the client on his own gets access to what he needs. In other moments, coaches help clients to simply build new possibilities and create better strategies. Nevertheless, it is inconvenient to erect new buildings on tight plots or in areas scattered with unexploded shells – remnants of past events.

5. Blocks in resources

Do you have what success requires from you?

- 1) What do you already have?
- 2) What do you need?
- 3) Do you know how to get it?
- 4) Do you use well what you already have?

Well, sometimes clients have it and sometimes they do not. Acquiring a certain resource may not be easy, especially when there are blocks restricting client's access to it.

One of my clients had serious problems with public appearances. He was holding an important and high position in the company and was further promoted. His new duties were not only connected with management but also with meeting other also very important people. The success of such meetings very often depends people's self-confidentiality and ease. My client had successes in managing his area of the company: he was diligent, he understood and liked what he did and he was very analytical. What he stumbled into were public appearances. Even meetings with his subordinates frustrated him and his people were not happy with them either. Seventy five percent of the work we did concerned building new strategies for public speeches. We spent the remaining 25 percent on removing barriers that blocked the skills he had but could not use (because they were blocked).

If the client has a resource it is better to make it work instead of building a new but the same resource "next" to it. Blocked fragments of our possibilities burden our organism. We have to understand how we can unblock them and make them work in a way that is fully profitable for the client.

6. Blocks in strategy

- 1) Are your strategies suitable for achieving the goal?
- 2) Have you had useful ways of acting that you no longer use?

In the socialization process some of our strategies are blocked and/or transformed into other strategies. A natural child's strategy of peeing in pants is transformed into using a toilet. A natural strategy of satisfying our sexual needs is blocked in many groups or circles. We are punished for satisfying our curiosity. And a strategy of overeating is inhibited by our fear of obesity. These examples are limitless.

There is the same problem as with resources. Is it better to build new strategies of action or check whether the client has this type of strategy and make it work, adjust it or develop it?

Looking from client's perspective, it is better to base the process on what the client already has. If what the client has is authentic and valuable it is worth to activate and develop it. If it is not valuable the coach needs to help the client let it go.

5th Pillar of Success – Resources

Each achievement needs a certain set of resources. These may be: money (an investor), believing in one's abilities (everybody), contacts with

particular people (a spy), muscle strength (a sportsman), timbre (a radio announcer), impeccable biography (a politician), legs (a model), etc.

Internal resources may be:

- spiritual,
- mental,
- emotional,
- physical,
- complex.

Among the external and relational resources are:

- money,
- power and influence,
- contacts,
- owning certain objects, things.

This is not about complete lists of resources or their elegant classification. I am aiming at showing that resources may be quite diverse and that similar achievements may be accomplished using different sets of resources and strategies. It is a tough land to plough, because clients very often get fixed on their own version of a resource set needed for success. But there might be other variants, which give better results (for example: a new wife to be in a happy relationship or the same wife + changing the relation's character, another way of building your business, etc.).

It would be valuable for the client to become sure, during coaching, that he is not cutting corn with the sickle when he can use the scythe. While broadening client's perspective on necessary resources the following questions might be helpful:

- 1) Why do you need this particular resource?
- 2) Are there people who achieved a similar success with a different set of resources ? (Do you really need money to make good business?)

To easily and nicely accomplish achievements clients need to have suitable resources and be able to use them skillfully (strategies). During coaching we may help clients in :

- specifying resources needed to achieve a goal,
- determining what clients have and what they need.

While dealing with client's resources we can use these questions:

- 1) What do you need to achieve success?
- 2) Can you achieve it using a different resource? (i.e. diligence instead of intelligence or quite the opposite).
- 3) Are you sure that it is all you need?
- 4) What is the hierarchy of resources for this success?

- 5) Why do you need *this* success? – analysis of how a given resource influences success.
- 6) Please rate to what extent you have all the resources that you need. (100% = enough).
- 7) How can you acquire or supplement the resources that you lack? (You are already asking for strategies).

6th Pillar of Success – Strategies

It very rarely happens that a client that does not regularly master his own ways of acting has an optimum set of strategies of action. Frequently, we use strategies that are just OK and we do not look for those that are excellent. Here is a great land of rationalization that can be later used to improve clients possibilities.

Strategies – ways we use while acting – may apply to:

- building necessary competencies (e.g. training on delegating or controlling);
- using existing skills to achieve successes;
- mastering one's strategies.

Sometimes clients need new resources and sometimes it is better for them to change the strategy. Most of the time, they need both. These two areas are interconnected as is work done in them.

Notice that coaching is only one of possible development strategies. Those who take advantage of coaching have different possible strategies to use while being coached and these different strategies differ in effectiveness.

In the area of strategies the following questions are particularly helpful:

- 1) How have you been pursuing your goals?
This question is quite difficult since many people “just” pursue their goals not thinking about “any” strategies. Nonetheless, when clients describe the strategy they have been using in a particular area they learn a lot and usually have ideas how to improve it. And it is difficult to improve something we do not know.
- 2) How do you rate your effectiveness? (in percentage points)
- 3) Have you heard about people who used better strategies than yours?
- 4) What did they do differently?
- 5) Do you think it is the best strategy for you? Why yes and why no?
- 6) Does your present strategy need to be replaced by any other, better strategy? Or are small changes to the present strategy enough?
As a rule, if new achievements are much greater than present ones new strategies of action are needed. Managing a 10-person team requires a different strategy than managing a company employing 1000

people. Earning 100,000\$ instead of 10,000\$ requires a change in the income pattern.

Effective coach's help in searching and constructing client's new strategy is invaluable. The coach can use techniques of modeling, analyzing and improving old strategies or discover, install and verify brand new strategies. This area of coach's activity requires a very good technique of work in the area of externally manifested strategies (hitting a ball in golf) and inner strategies (e.g. strategy of self-motivation).

Each area of success requires different types of coaching interventions, different approach and different techniques. If the coach is skillful in moving on the map of pillars of success he is more effective while working with the client.

Summing up, coaches need to help clients to:

- 1) determine the status of all six pillars of success;
- 2) discover the most profitable intervention;
- 3) do what needs to be done;
- 4) again determine the status of all six pillars of success;
- 5) discover the most profitable intervention;
- 6) continue until the goal is achieved.

Urszula Kuzińska

THE WORK OF THE COACH AND THE WORK OF THE CLIENT

The world was created by a poet for a dreamer

Oscar Wilde

A MUSICIAN THAT DID NOT PLAY MUSIC

A story will serve as an introduction. Yesterday, I went to visit a friend who has a music store at Marszałkowska street in Warsaw. It was all because of my legs, which have similar dilemmas as my clients. Jarek made me sit on a bench next to him. He poured me cold water, which having a lot silicon can allegedly help in all kind of problems. I started wondering aloud whether coaching can bring out 100 percent of genius that is inside a human being. I showed him a film with Benjamin Zander¹ on the Internet, because I thought that as a musician and music specialist he will appreciate who Zander is. I talked enthusiastically about Zander's work, but my interlocutor did not even winked. – “*Strange*”, I thought – “*he is such a deep guy?!*”. Finally, he felt provoked and told me two stories from his world of music.

On Sunday (we met on Friday) – he started – *a lot of friends called me, telling me that I should regret not having come to the concert of a great musician – common friend of ours – a jazz pianist. He had received a brand new, high-class instrument and gave great show. On Monday, the very same musician turns up at my store and invites me for a breakfast. I agree and we go out. I can see that he is kind of crushed.*

– “*What has happened?*” I ask him. He says that he gave a dreadful concert on the previous day.

¹ Benjamin Zander is the conductor of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra and the world acclaimed leadership and creativity mentor.

– “How come,” I blurt out. – Our friends called me telling me that I should have been there.

– I got new piano? and I did play tremendously well, but only technically. I was all over the keyboard. I did a great fingering. The show was out of this earth, but I did not play music. I got a standing ovation. I went to a bathroom, put my head under the tap, wet my hair, slapped my face and decided that after coming back I would play music. I entered the stage. The public raved seeing my wet, cool hair. I closed my eyes and started playing the way I should play. But this new stuff... I could not resist it... My fingers just played the chords and I did the same thing I had done in the first part. Then, they wanted me to play an encore, so I did and everybody was standing. When I finished, everybody patted my back saying “Great! Great! You’re tremendous!” I could feel each and every finger of their hands. For me, it was a disaster. Nobody could see that I didn’t play music. Who was the concert for? They’re unable to appreciate quality. Once, on a concert in Odessa I risked a lot. I interpreted boldly. In the first row, there was someone. I didn’t know who the person was, it was dark and I could not see, but the person applauded everything I did: every risk I took, every failure and success. He or she heard everything. I was so happy. I played for that person. This time, it was different. It is so depressing that irrespective of what you do, if it sounds OK they praise you. What motivation can I have to risk, to create something extraordinary if nobody can appreciate what I do?

Jarek and I were very moved when he finished his story. And then he told me another one. *Once in a while a person comes to my store holding his or her CD in hand and asks me to listen to it and give my opinion. Usually, this person is very nice, asks me for a favor, agrees to meet me the next day at 5 p.m. and the next day comes at five to five – and his music is the same, a kind of “five to five” music – just nice. On other days, I might have different visitors. This might be a type that enters the store, his cell phone drops on the floor, he kicks it under a shelf then retrieves it, answers the phone and promises to be somewhere in 5 minutes, although he knows that he will be sitting at my place more than 2 hours. The person is sheer chaos, spontaneity, but probably his music will be interesting. It is about a unique content coupled with a unique form. Once, my friend was shouting frustrations through his trumpet, saying that the world is bad and this type of thing. Right now, he has nothing to shout about. He tells me, “My shoes cost PLN 15,000. I play nice music about beautiful life. I’ve changed. I’ve disappointed those who liked when I shouted, but I have integrity. I play the way I want to”.*

I think that everybody will find something different in each of the stories. For some, the story about the pianist might be a story about bad effects of changes or inability to use what one has been given. Others might say he just lacked inspiration at that moment. What was so moving in this story? That he could not play music for himself or that nobody

saw that he did not play music? Does the drama of the “five to five” musician is that he is nice and would prefer not to be, especially when he is playing music? Maybe he would like to be more authentic? Or maybe there is no tragedy here? Some are boringly nice and others are interesting, but nobody can stand living with them.

The majority of my clients are people who have everything they need to have a good life (a place to live, food, employment and a person they love) but still they want something more. It is a great pleasure to coach people who are thirsty – devoured by an internal fire. It is a curse to work with people who seem to say “do something with me”.

TIME ORIENTATION

Recently, Philip Zimbardo, the master of contemporary experimental psychology and his associate John Boyd have published a book titled *The Time Paradox: The New Psychology of Time That Will Change Your Life* (Zimbardo, Boyd 2009) – the result of two decades of research. It conclusively proves that the time perspective strongly determines the type of work we chose, relations that we develop, our success, financial well-being, safe life and even health. The authors discerned six types of orientations². The **past-negative orientation** (I think about what I should have done differently) makes people re-experience the harm that was done to them, makes people anxious and as a result they have little energy and are prone to depression and aggression. The **past-positive orientation** (I like stories about the good, old times) creates happier, healthier people who are more grateful than those having past-negative orientation, but who are not fond of changes and for whom the tradition and the family are important. People who believe that somebody or something has already planned their life, so they do not take steps to improve their situation have the **present-fatalistic orientation** (a lot in my life depends on fate). According to Zimbardo and Boyd (2009) these people are cynical and resigned. The **present-hedonistic person** (acts impulsively) is self-indulgent, enjoys life, looks for sensual pleasures and avoids effort and routine. **Future orientation** characterizes people who are goal-oriented and learn from failures. They might be impatient and are unable to take things easy. **Future-transcendent orientation** (death is a new beginning) is typical for people who act in order to get rewards after death (salvation). This perspective helps to face difficult reality and allays fears of death. Zimbardo’s and Boyd’s research shows that the optimum mix consists of the strong past-positive orientation and low past-negative orientation and fatalist-present orientation.

² Words in bold taken from the interview with Zimbardo – *Wieczna chwila i inne czasy* (2009: 64).

If time perspective is so important it is good to know that a similar theory was developed by an American psychologist, Tal Ben-Shahar. The theories are consistent, but Ben-Shahar's approach is more directed towards a better life organization. It evolves around present and future, where the former is perceived as a road to the goal and the latter as the goal itself. In creating his model, Ben-Shahar used a hamburger analogy to create an image of life as something you can stuff with different things. A **healthy but tasteless hamburger** is usually eaten by people who are taking part in the "rat race", but also by those who sacrifice their life in the name of certain, not always well named, awards. Mothers who give up their own pleasures to give everything they have (time, money, etc) to their children, creditors entangled in a life-long mortgages in a company they hate, students doing their parents favorite major, women on diets doing exercises they do not like. People who belong to this group may torture themselves until retirement if civilization disease will not get them earlier. A **unhealthy but tasty** hamburger will bring immediate short-term pleasure and therefore is devoured by hedonists who do not wish to take part in the "rat race". However, they have problems in getting pleasure and profits in the future.

There are also **unhealthy and tasteless hamburgers** for nihilists. The best hamburger, of course, is the one that is **appealing and healthy**, but at the same time the most difficult to prepare. To make it, one needs more knowledge than while preparing the remaining hamburgers. One needs to know what is good and healthy and how to eat the hamburger to savor the taste. One needs to get prepared. The Ben-Shahar's model is in fact a calling to be in the present and in the future at the same time. Being aware of the future i.e. of goals is like being aware of a lighthouse that you sail to. But the road you take to get there is the most important.

The majority of my clients are people who want to eat healthy, but they do not know how to do it. The hamburger theory of Ben-Shahar does not take into account the possibility of people who are in a relative balance i.e. they think about the future and they have their pleasures now, but still they feel they could do more, harder, deeper, higher or more intensively. This "more" desire is nicely illustrated by a person living in the reality where pleasure and carefreeness are the highest values and discomfort, effort, love and strong emotions are treated as a disease to be cured immediately and not transmitted to others: *Speaking very slowly, "Did you ever feel," he asked, "as though you had something inside you that was only waiting for you to give it a chance to come out? Some sort of extra power that you aren't using – you know, like all the water that goes down the falls instead of through the turbines?"* (Huxley, [http](http://)).

TOPICS FOR THE COACH

My coachees are usually impatient with themselves and tired with the reality: the quality and type of work they have, relations with their family and friends and dreams “laid waste”. They come because everything is fine “but”: the work does not satisfy them and they have read that it should; there is family, but with no special bonds; dreams float somewhere far away getting unreal with every day. Everything is OK. Close friends say that there is nothing to complain about, but still, life does not seem worthwhile.

From a formal point of view, there are several coaching types, but in my opinion these are not topics, but circumstances that determine the coaching style. People who come for life coaching are open and warm. Those who seek career coaching are under pressure to develop. And last but not least, executive coaching coachees are defensively pompous to a different degree. The topics that these client want to talk about are similar and roughly fall into five categories:

- 1) *My work is crap.* It is true what Stephen Covey says that before you start climbing up a ladder, make sure that it leans against the appropriate building. Sometimes it is difficult to check that building on your own.
- 2) *My relations with my close and not so close relatives are frustrating.* And it is a wide known fact that relations with people who are important to you are the basis for a satisfactory life.
- 3) *Nothing makes me happy.* Those who come with an emotion are usually those who have missed the moment of being “pissed off and frustrated” and let these feeling rot inside them. A coach will know it by a frequent grimace of repulsion on their faces.
- 4) *I have dreams, but I do not know how to come about them.* I have many dreams, but I do not know what I should focus on.
- 5) *I have to do X, but I do not feel like it.*

COACH'S DOUBTS

Let's put ourselves in coach's shoes. A professional pianist comes and says that from time to time he does not play for himself. The coach asks what it means. The client answers. The coach asks how the client wants to play. The client answers. The coach asks what the client can do. The client says he knows or he does not know. The coach asks the client what the client will do. The client answers. Then the money is paid and everybody is happy. But the pianists is nauseous when he gets on a stage. And it is here, where the shoe pinches. Everybody knows that neither a

coach, consultant nor a therapist is good for a feeling of loneliness and that is why I would really love to read a book about dilemmas of a beginner and advanced coach, about the difficulties they face and borders they do not want to cross. I would like to know why masters very often stop coaching. What are the insights and dilemmas of a person who has listened to 1000 hours of moaning, grumbling and problem mounting?

COACH'S ATTITUDE DURING SESSIONS

It is said that the coach should not be a psychologist, since it is bad if the coach focuses too much on what the client says and gets hooked on the content. The absolute tragedy happens where the coach starts to analyze it and psychotherapeutically feels it. How much truth is there to it? From my experience, I can say that a lot. Usually, when the client comes he is lost (he has not found a solution yet). Entering the same boat the client is on makes the client and the coach turn around or sink. The ideal is when the coach is with, but outside, the client. The content flows like a river and the coach should pick up things that are really important and focus on them. The coach should listen to emotions (his own and the client's), be aware of them, but not participate in them. And when the time is ripe, the coach should be ready to ask a powerful question that will shake the entire client's structure. The power of coaching lies in questions and feedback.

WHEN THE CLIENT KNOWS THAT HE DOES NOT KNOW

How to call a state that brings clients to the coach? You can call it discomfort. The client knows he feels bad and wants to feel better. Because he is unable to do it with "home-made" solutions he seeks help. Accepting an assumption that a person does not do anything constructive as long as the person does not have to do it, we can add that discomfort is accompanied by a belief that "I have to do something about it, because I want to feel better". 'Better' usually means that a person wants to feel useful, important and needed – wants to feel emotions that appear in the context of being with other people. The client wants, but somehow cannot, feel calmness, warmth, joy, satisfaction, fulfillment and pride that are closely connected with feeling good with oneself. Emotions are the "boss of the bosses" and it is them that propel action. Besides, emotions are truthful and authentic unlike content.

One of the 'optimistic' premises of coaching is that the client knows the best what he wants and the coach is to just to follow him in a comfortable distance. Practically, it happens that the client comes hoping for "better", wanting "something" (very often he does not know exactly

what he wants), but a different “something” (he does not usually know what this something is) holds him back. So a situation in which the coach follows his client is a very rare and ideal situation. It is difficult to ignore the fact that a lot of contents are hidden in subconsciousness and unconsciousness. Since the Freud times it has been known that human mind is a like an iceberg – the little tip above the water is the only self-conscious part of it. The coach should be aware of the fact that from time to time the client will try to make a fool of himself and the coach at the same time. The responsibility for the direction of the session – at least, at the very beginning when client’s needs, dreams and goals are checked – should be equally on the coach and on the client. Very rarely, it happens that the client knows how to make a healthy and tasty hamburger. Therefore, the coach has to check with the client and look for his shining eyes (Zander, Zander 2000).

WHAT DOES THE COACH WORK ON WITH/IN THE CLIENT?

When a „newly hatched” client comes to a coach, the coach usually needs to deal with a great mess that looks like space junk circling the Earth (just like on the picture). Many coaches would delightfully send such a client to a therapist or mentor, but intuitively they know that if they started treating dissonances like problems they would have to send away six billion people. According to Dilts (in: Bennewicz 2008: 14), spirituality and identity are the center of mind (what is my role here?, what am I here for?) and the rest might be material for a “problem”. The coach works on beliefs, the trainer or mentor works on capabilities and behaviors and the vocational guidance counselor on environment.

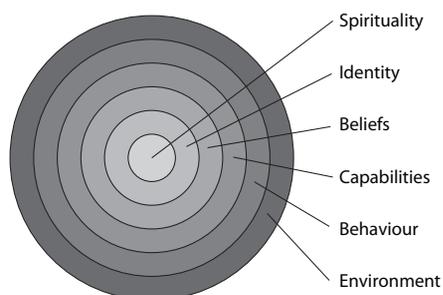


Figure 1. Dilt’s schema of Logical Levels

All topics brought by clients have at least one thing in common, namely they are related to a feeling of impossibility, blockade and stagnation. This feeling of stagnation is usually fueled by limiting beliefs about the self and other people. And here I would like to introduce a term used by psychologists – a certain key word that will clarify my point. In 1957,

Leon Festinger published *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* introducing the concept of cognitive dissonance to the realm of psychology. Dissonance is a feeling of discomfort and anxiety resulting from lack of harmony in cognitive structures when two or more beliefs about the world or oneself are contradictory. The frequently quoted Festinger's example describes a smoker who knows that smoking is harmful. In other words, the smoker is aware of the fact that he likes to smoke (the first belief) and at the same time he knows that smoking is bad for his health (the second belief). Working on beliefs usually means working on dissonance. The smoker must decide which of the beliefs is more important to him and make a choice. Keeping the dissonance in stagnation, contrary to what is believed, consumes a lot of energy and results in hard to bear tension.

If being in a cognitive dissonance, i.e. conflict of beliefs, is psychologically uncomfortable, clients may tackle "the problem" in two ways (Malewski 1962):

- remove it or make it smaller by confronting themselves with these tiring beliefs (the stronger the tension, the stronger the need to remove it);
- avoid situations and information that may result in creation of cognitive dissonance or may strengthen it.

The pressure caused by the cognitive dissonance may manifest itself as a need to replace beliefs. When the client is ready for a change and the dissonance is so great that the client is on the brink of changing his behavior there is a tendency to look for information increasing this tension and supporting the decision to change behavior. What is more, after taking the decision the tension increases proportionately to the importance of the taken decision and relative importance of the rejected solution. The very fact of taking the decision is a breakthrough, because it anchors the client and strengthens him in the new decision (the newly accepted belief) thanks to a natural psychological mechanism which increases the attractiveness of the chosen option and decreases the attractiveness of the rejected option³. Sometimes this mechanism acts against the coach when he tries to broaden the spectrum of client's possible choices.

A good session might be very tiring. It requires the client to be creative, imaginative, courageous and getting out of the "box" in conditions that are not necessarily supportive. We must remember that during a session the client is outside his "comfort zone".

³ It is worth knowing that this mechanism works only in the case of people who are generally of good opinion of themselves i.e. have high self-esteem, because research shows that people of low self-esteem usually feel that the option they have rejected is more attractive than the one they have chosen (Malewski 1962).

WORKING ON CLIENT'S REALITY

One of the main sources of cognitive dissonance may be in the **approach to the reality** the beliefs are about. It may happen that the problem concerns client's **behavior** and the change in this area will improve the quality of client's life. One may also change the very reality by, for example, changing the **environment** that causes dissonance. A client that feels bad at work and says that the discomfort is connected with not fitting in the professional group will be attracted towards changing the profession or people that surround him.

It may also happen that the change does not depend on us, but this stands in contradiction to the positive psychology and the 20th century existentialism, which say that humans are the architects of their life despite ever-changing circumstances.

We can also change the way **we perceive the reality without really changing it**. If discomfort is too small to generate radical steps this possibility seems to be more ecological. The very same client who feels bad at work may become aware of the fact that although she feels different from the people she works with, she may offer them her own unique perspective (as a person of different sensitivity or education level) or decide to learn new types of behavior that she observes at work. Change of reality's image is usually possible when other people support the new perception of the situation.

WORKING ON CLIENT'S BELIEFS

If the coach works on beliefs it might be good to know how to use them. In the first possible scenario, an uncomfortable belief might be given an **additional belief**. It may help to play down the uncomfortable belief by showing that inconsistency is only illusory and tension is easily removable. The client that is convinced that finding a new job is only possible by mailing CVs and attending job interviews, but is not successful in doing that may consider thinking that although taking advantage of networking is unethical (from this person point of view) other people do it. If the client believes that the world is unfriendly, a new additional belief might be that certain parts of the world are good or at least neutral.

According to the second scenario beliefs can **be changed**. Very often, clients believe that they cannot do something. For example, they believe that they are too old/young for that, the thing is so difficult that is almost unreal or that they do not have necessary skill and capabilities to do it. The ideal situation is when the coach uses strong questions to steer the client out of the bush to the perception of possibility with bearable doubts.

The third method says that it is **possible**, although very difficult, to **reject** one of the contrasting beliefs. A person that is unable to change anything may believe that what the person has already is good enough. One of my clients said that she would be happy if she believed that she had a lot and that it was enough. It does not sound good enough, however, and none of the coaches will peacefully fall asleep without trying to understand the real content in such a piece of information. A client that came back, following her boyfriend, from her beloved NY city to Warsaw she does not like may need to reinforce one of the beliefs. Either she loves NY (and she should go back with or without her boyfriend) or she love the boy (and this is what counts right now). The best possible solution, however, is to have a cake and eat it, so maybe it is worth to show the client the broadest possible scope of possibilities and make her think how to take the boyfriend back to NY.

HOW DOES IT HAPPENED THAT NOTHING HAPPENS?

It might happen that there is such a strong dissonance between beliefs that the resistance against the change blocks client's development and makes coach's work impossible. Although the client takes the pains to come for a session, he might not be ready for confronting beliefs that lead to a change. By facing new information, during the session, that could create cognitive dissonance or strengthen the existing one the client blocks this kind of information and does not allow it to access his consciousness by forgetting it, questioning the value or truth of it.

Blocking certain information may also happen on unconscious level. How does it happen that we postpone the most important things to the last moment? Why do we omit things that guarantee a long term satisfaction? Leon Festinger speculates that fear i.e. discomfort might exist even before its real sources i.e. dissonance appears. That is to say, people might be geared with fear of discomfort that appears arm in arm with a cognitive dissonance connected with a topic that is important in their life.

Cognitive dissonance may also generate a mechanism called **self-justification** (Tavris, Aronson 2007). We buy a used car that turns out to be a piece of crap. It is broken all the time and we keep repairing it for a lot of money in order to justify this unfortunate investment. It is not like lying. We engage in a sort of rationalizing to feel better about poor decisions we make on an everyday basis. We convince ourselves that our decision were good. The danger is that we start believing that what we did was OK: "I did it for this country", "Those bastards deserved it", "I have the right to it". Self-justification makes our mistakes seem lesser in our own eyes although people around us are acutely aware of

the hypocrisy. Huxley said that for sure there is nobody who would be a conscious hypocrite. Setting moral boundaries requires justification, crossing them requires double justification. Between a conscious lie to deceive others and unconscious justification to cheat ourselves there is a gray zone patrolled by an unreliable, side-taking documentary maker of our memory.

COACHING AND THE THEORY OF LIFE QUALITY

The findings of coaching can be applied to many areas of knowledge, but it is especially important to compare it with the theory of life quality. It is a good topic, but there are not many exciting, controversial inconsistencies. A good coach is not only sensitive to the needs that are declared by a client, but also to emotions that accompany these declarations i.e. to the “bare” needs and motives. People may need and achieve things that may not make them happy. In 1996, it was proved that wanting and liking are managed by separate neural systems (Berridge 1996). It may happen that what we desire and what we work towards is not in fact what gives us joy and happiness. On the other hand, we know that we can be happy “for good” only if we set goals that result from our values and interests and if we pursue these goals acknowledging particular stages and enjoying the very process. According to Fromm, the goal of life is this kind of development that leads to a fulfillment of the human nature model (Spinoza) or, in other words, an optimum development in line with the conditions of human existence and truly becoming what one is potentially (Fromm 2005). Using human development category we may paraphrase John Wooden and say that success is the state of mind that is a direct result of self-content coming from the feeling that you have done your best to become the best person you can possibly be⁴. In other words, a happy man is a man who develops himself. This theory is in opposition to a vision of eternal, passive sunbathing on the Bahamas. And is supported by researchers who focused on lottery winners and discovered that they are happy with the wealth, but not for a long time. After six months, their declared happiness level returns to a starting point and very often it goes below that level, because they have limited their ability to enjoy everyday things. Therefore, we can risk repeating after Erich Fromm that “‘Great Liberation’ is a liberation from the domination of greed (in all its forms) and from fetters of illusion”.

⁴ John Wooden, the legendary UCLA basketball coach. In: Zimbardo, Boyd (2009: 221).

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Patrycja Sznajder

IMPLEMENTING COACHING BASED ON COMPETENCIES

INTRODUCTION

Polish Scientific Publishers PWN Encyclopedia defines competence from a cultural point of view as *the ability to use cultural patterns of a given culture*¹ or from a communication and psychological point of view as *the ability to use language adjusted to a given social situation and characteristics of a recipient*². On the other hand, Wikipedia defines competence as *the knowledge of a social actor that enables him to be effective in a particular field in compliance with the criteria of a given social group or organization*³. On the basis of these colloquial definitions, we can clearly discern components of a competence i.e. cultural patterns, language and interactions among actors.

The concept of competence first appears in the research of Robert White (1959) and David McClelland (1973), who developed a method for assessing competencies that was quite different from intelligence and aptitude tests used at the time. One of his main conclusions was that although intelligence is important, whether a person is effective or not is largely influenced by other personal factors such as: the level of motivation or ability to communicate. Since that time many researchers have dealt with the subject of competencies and many tools and theories describing competencies and methods for diagnosing them have been created.

From a business point of view, competence is understood as a *cluster of related abilities, commitments, knowledge, and skills that enable a person*

¹ <http://encyklopedia.pwn.pl/haslo.php?id=3924603> (24.09.2009).

² <http://encyklopedia.pwn.pl/haslo.php?id=3924602> (24.09.2009).

³ <http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kompetencja> (24.09.2009).

(or an organization) to act effectively in a job or situation. Because each level of responsibility has its own requirements, competence can occur in any period of a person's life or at any stage of his or her career⁴. This means that competencies are not given once and for all but that we can and should develop them. If we change the job or are promoted (lateral/vertical promotion) the company may require a different set of competencies needed to perform work on a given position. Fryczyńska and Jabłońska-Wołoszyn define employee competencies as *the ability to use one's own resources – predispositions, skills, attitudes, knowledge and experience – to achieve results specified by an organization. These skills are expressed in behavior and professional activity that allow an employee to achieve excellent results to the extent expected by the organization* (2008: 48). These definitions point to a one more aspect of competencies i.e. organization's requirements. An organization to act effectively needs competent employees (employees having a given competence) that act in a competent way (employees that use it). In addition, competencies that are required on a given position differ depending on the environment and on the organization's life cycle. Different competencies will be important for president when the company is emerging on the market (entrepreneur-pioneer), in the growth phase (authority), in the stability phase (bureaucrat) or in the inertia phase (entrepreneur-leader) (Chelpa 2007: 454–456).

What is competent behavior made of? It might be said that it is the way of doing work that leads to meeting or exceeding expectations and achieving a defined level of results that takes into consideration limitations resulting from internal and external environment of an organization (Dubois, Rothwell 2004: 120). This approach does not only point to the fact that employees should have certain competencies but also that they should be willing to use them. Additionally, while defining a model of competencies and evaluating them certain organization's limitations should be taken into consideration.

At present, managers have many tools to influence employees' competencies such as trainings, mentoring or individual coaching. Coaching is founded on the following principles: process approach (coaching is a process that has to last and a coachee may learn skills and integrate them over a longer period of time), inspiration (searching for individual potential, encouraging self-confidence and being active), support (helping a coachee and being with him in the process of change) and focus on the future (based on the vision of the future that results from the past, but enables a coachee to act in a new, better way) (Marzena Fryczyńska, Maria Jabłońska-Wołoszyn 2008: 126). Executive coaching for organizations covers a wide spectrum of activities such as *personal development in a non-therapeutic context, individual business consultations and organizational transformation that is possible when individual*

⁴ <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/competence.html> (24.09.2009).

employees and the entire organization aim to achieve future goals (Dilts 2006: XXII). Coaching is best suited to deal with *generating new possibilities, making choices, setting expectations (towards oneself and others), effective and clear communication, time management, learning from mistakes, problem solving, improving relations at work, top-down management, finding work-life balance* (ibidem). This means that certain aspects of knowledge and skills in the areas listed above may be acquired through training or reading, but practical integration on an individual level requires time and a special, individual treatment of each person that cannot be fitted into a standard training.

In this article, I focus on employee development based on coaching and I refer to other development methods where necessary. The assumption behind the coaching project described here is that an earlier performed analysis showed that coaching is the best possible way to develop a given competence under business conditions.

OBJECTIVES OF IMPLEMENTATION OF COACHING BASED ON COMPETENCIES

In a quickly changing unsteady environment, change is the only constant. The analysis of trends influencing organizations shows that companies have to face:

- high and still rising investments in intellectual capital, which increase its significance; being open to an international exchange of all basic markets: products and services, intellectual products, capital and labor markets;
- restructuring of economic activity by withdrawing from stagnate markets and products of low added value and intensively investing in quickly rising markets and highly profitable products, especially in the information technology sector;
- improving effectiveness of using up resources thanks to investments in education and information techniques and technologies;
- lesser share of labor costs in production costs and increased capital intensity i.e. high level of technology (Koźmiński 2005: 14–15).

From the above listing, it is clear that people who are responsible for decision making in an organization should concentrate on competencies that enable people to fully use existing and developing technologies, to participate in international projects and deal with all possible aspects of working outside a regular place of residence, to more quickly adapt to changes and tackle new tasks and improve creativity and reaction time to ever changing clients' needs and differentiate between technical and social skills (Dubois, Rothwell 2004: 75–91).

IMPLEMENTING COACHING BASED ON COMPETENCIES

The following plan can be adopted to implement employee development model through coaching based on competencies⁵:

1. Establish business goals of the organization and the needs of the clients of the HR unit

The starting point in coaching based on competencies is to establish business objectives of a given organization. This can be done using documentation related to company's strategy, existing objective measurement tools (e.g. Balanced Scorecard) or newly developed company-specific tools. Strategic business objectives should be put in the language of competencies, so that nobody has any doubts what the objectives and scope of coaching are.

2. Carry out an audit of environment

The analysis of environment covers identification and evaluation of tendencies, mechanisms and processes characteristic of company's external environment, which could point to the fact that a client of the HR department would benefit from using coaching method based on competencies.

3. Synchronize organization's business objectives with the needs of the clients of the HR department and specify project's objectives

This stage is devoted to integrating the company's strategy with the HR's strategy bearing in mind that the strategy of the company shall prevail. This process is to bring answers to the following questions: What results and outcomes does the company want to achieve now and in the future?; What are the planned results and outcomes of the coaching project?; What is the connection between the results of HR's client's projects and the results of the coaching project?; If the objectives are not met or the project is abandoned how this will influence the organization?; If the project is not completed and the previously set objectives are not met how this will influence the organization or the results or outcomes it wants to achieve? Answers to the above questions are important in order to align the strategies of the organization and the HR department and to avoid difficulties in carrying out the project.

A very interesting employee development project based on competencies was implemented in Booz Allen Hamilton⁶, a consulting firm from the USA. Because the company hired a large number of people it took advantage of a new approach to training they called "preboarding" that consisted in offering training and development tools to new

⁵ Based on Dubois, Rothwell (2004).

⁶ <http://www.workforce.com/section/11/feature/26/55/57/> (23.09.2009).

employees before they even appeared at work. The moment new employees accepted a job offer they were directed to an internal Web portal to get information about the company and messages from senior executives, and did not have to wait for their first official day at work. By doing this, the company also had the opportunity to establish good relations with the newcomers and check their communication skills and ability to fit in the company's organizational culture. Preboarding was a tool for company's managers to improve coaching and development processes and eliminate problems and obstacles connected with them. In such a large organization, introduction of this platform improved development and coaching processes, but of course it did not replace regular meetings.

The topic of choosing employees for coaching is a good moment for mentioning talent pool management. Coaching is a very good way to develop talented employees who *have more informal (hidden) knowledge than formal (overt) knowledge; more knowledge acquired through interaction than on trainings; and more frequently using information in a flexible rather than schematic way* (Pocztowski 2008: 142), because talented employees will be quicker in achieving goals when working individually in a non-standard way during a direct interaction rather than during a standard training.

4. Ensure support of the HR department for project's objectives

In this type of project, it is important that both the HR department, which manages the coaching project, and the person that coordinates and supervises coachees are fully engaged. It may happen that both the HR and the client face objective difficulties in pursuing their objectives. These difficulties may result from work schedules, increased costs and limited budget, changed employee's engagement in coaching, lack of knowledge, uncertain company's environment resulting in considerable changes in task distribution and work schedules or changes in the scope of the project during its implementation. If both project coordinators support the project and are authentically engaged then eliminating unfavorable situations takes place quicker.

5. Prepare a project management plan and a method for its implementation over a long time period

In managing a coaching project, like in any other type of project, you need a plan and work schedule. To plan effects, work schedule and measurement tools you can use any project management programs available on the market. The plan should consist of: expected effects and results given in a clear form that is understood by all project's participants (especially by the HR coordinator, employee coordinator and the coachee – the best way to do this is to prepare a contract), a list of employees participating in the program, meeting dates and expected effects, target

dates for developing particular competencies, and, where possible, expected dates and effects set after coaching process has started, costs, budget and alternative costs of the project, if applicable.

6. Implement the plan for project management

Each coachee should sign a contract that would address: the subject of work, goals, rules for informing superiors about coachee's advancement, confidentiality rules and meeting schedule. People indirectly involved in the project should be informed about its commencement so that they do not, for example, give coachees tasks during sessions. It is also important to specify how process goals are defined, agreed and approved and maintain the engagement of the employees and the management in the process.

7. Development and overall performance review

Evaluation of goals and feasibility of a coaching project should take place already during the preliminary planning phase. Evaluation criteria and monitoring and should be laid out during the main planning phase. To be able to evaluate project effects end products must be specified at the very beginning. One method of specifying effects might be a pre-coaching analysis of coachee's level of competencies done with psychological tests. As a result of taken tests, a coachee receives a list of his competencies in a strong-weak order with a factor level for each competency. In addition, he receives a list of desired competencies and their levels required on his position. Together with his superior and the coach, the coachee compares these two lists and decides which competencies will be developed and to what extent and to what extent he is able to acquire the competencies in question. This is the basis for creating a system that measures coachee's progress that should be checked from time to time to avoid surprises at the end of the process. It is important that these measurement criteria are developed and defined by the coachee in cooperation with other people that will be able to monitor and control them. Although Jack Philips describes difficulties in converting competencies into financial and development criteria – very often it means that competence criteria are not precisely defined and are left in a descriptive form as intangibles (Phillips, Phillips 2005: 142) – I personally believe that it is better to measure them in any, even abstract, percentage form in order to have a solid reference point.

John Picoult⁷ strongly advises not to rely on employees' self-assessments, since their evaluation of the situation might be quite subjective and not necessarily in line with organization's goals and evaluation. Performance assessment should be done "on-line" in a written form. The

⁷ <http://www.forbes.com/2009/07/29/performance-review-employees-leadership-managing-pay.html> (23.09.2009).

author recommends keeping a running diary with examples of specific behaviors and accomplishments that illustrate performance strengths and weaknesses, so that during a review meeting or while writing a report a person has a reliable source to use. It is also important to be aware, which areas of employee development are not controlled during coaching and to consciously select those that are important for a manager. The author wraps up by urging managers to capture those achievements which an employee is expected to show and not to delegate reviews of developments in coaching to other people.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS

This approach is effective in the case of coaching projects for several employees or projects that are components of a greater whole (e.g. development project covering trainings, coaching and mentoring). The objective of such a project may be competence rise in times of company's reorganization, planned promotion, opening a new branch, personnel changes in the management or development of new employees even before they start actually working in a given organization. Defining coaching project objectives should begin with the analysis of strategy and employees' characteristics, expressed in the language of competencies that result from this strategy. Company's, HR's and employees' development objectives must be aligned. Next, project management and choice of people for coaching also plays an important role in the project. A pre-coaching analysis should take place to ensure that development program is granted only to those people that will actually benefit from the program and will be valuable employees in the future. Last but not least, it is quite reasonable to set criteria for development and constantly monitor progress of coaching.

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Mirosława Huflejt-Łukasik

THE PRACTICAL MEANING OF A COACHING CONTRACT

Coaching is a method of supporting a change and focuses on defining and achieving certain goals. Coaching as a support for an organization is a form of help for individuals and teams carrying out tasks as effectively as possible (Dilts 2006). **A well-formulated contract has great influence on the success of coaching.** It is the basis for the success of this form of support of the development of an organization and its employees. Knowing the elements of the contract means knowing the factors that determine its effectiveness. A good contract enables a proper relation between the coaching client and the coach and it also relates to complying with the ethical principles that apply in coaching.

Special attention needs to be paid to the contract when a company hires a coach for the purpose of professional development of the employees. One needs to keep in mind that even though **the client of the coach is the person with whom the coach works directly, his work is based on the objectives that are important to the organization (company) as a whole.** A contract with a client entails discussing the work rules and methods of a particular coaching with the representative of the company and including a part of them in the written agreement. The coaching contract and the agreements made with the representative of the company that is hiring the coach are interdependent. Only when the perspectives of all the involved parties in coaching are taken into account, will it achieve its full effectiveness and comply with work ethics.

Hence this article will discuss: (1) the contract elements and their influence on the coaching process, (2) chosen elements in reference to ethics, (3) possible arrangements and agreements with the representative of the company that is hiring the coach, (4) the system: organization - employee - coach.

An unambiguous specification of the roles and tasks of the coach and client within the contract will permit the undertaken work to be carried

out efficiently. When a coach is hired by a third party (the company) for its employee, then the contract needs to take into account the expectations of the company (organization) requested coaching. This situation requires a particular transparency for all the involved parties in the coaching project (Huflejt-Łukasik, Peczeko, in press; compare Thorp and Clifford 2006). A coach has to establish a proper communication with the employee that he is supporting as well as with the representatives of the organization that has hired him. Therefore, between the employee and the coach an **contract** is set up, which includes the needs of the employee as well as the subject matter and course of the meetings, whereas between the company and the coach an agreement is signed, which describes the content related and formal aspects of carrying out the order by the coach.

The agreement with the company for the delivered service corresponds to the contents of the contract. It consists of two elements: (1) a review of the coaching objectives as well as its mode of realization (2) a written agreement. First the review takes place and when both the representative of the company and the coach agree on the soundness and type of coaching, a coach is chosen for that particular coaching task. The coaching client accepts the coach during the first meeting and the contract is signed. Subsequently, the written agreement is signed with the company.

The elements presented below should be included in such a contract, and the agreement with the representatives of the organization that is hiring the coach should also take them into account. The named **elements and their description are meant for a general orientation and can be altered depending on the needs of a particular coaching.**

THE CONTRACT SIGNED WITH THE COACHING CLIENT

The contract that is signed with the coaching client consists of the elements presented below, which are arranged in a typical order of establishing such elements while discussing a contract (this is a simplified model).

- 1) **An introduction of the coach, including a description of his past experience in the field of coaching.** This is an important element, not only because it provides basic information. Depending on the objectives and the recipient of coaching, the work experience of the coach becomes significant. One needs to keep in mind that coaching, like in no other method, combines different forms of support (Huflejt-Łukasik, Peczeko, in press). A coach is often also a mentor. A personal example, the experience of a mentor helps a person cross boundaries and discover competencies that he or she was unaware of

(Dilts 2006). A coach also often combines coaching with the expert knowledge of a consultant, especially when coaching board members (*executive coaching*). He can share his knowledge and experience in a given area, he can put forward solid solutions, giving the client in such a way enough material to think about and look for the best course of action. In some cases, consultation includes, for example, an accurate analysis of the current situation of the company and, in collaboration with the representatives of the company, establishing goals for its future and necessary changes for an increase of effectiveness.

- 2) **Discussing the purpose of the meeting and the general objectives of coaching.** This does not only serve the purpose of planning the course of the meeting, but is also, in case the coach is hired by a company, a verification whether in the communication process between all three parties – (1) the company, (2) the client and (3) the coach – everybody has understood each other well. It is particularly important to verify whether the objectives set by the company, as well as those pointed out by the client, are concurrent. The coaching client is the person that participates in coaching and experiences a process of change, regardless of who is paying for it. In such a situation, the interests and objectives of the client have to be considered and respected. Therefore it is necessary to discuss the objectives of the company for the achievement of which the client has to be coached¹. It is also important to establish to what extent the person that has been offered coaching by the company, is convinced and motivated to take part in this form of professional development.
- 3) **Explaining the work methods.** The methods of a given coaching technique have to be discussed, as well as the coaching process itself. This is in accordance with the ethical principle that emphasizes the importance of an informed and voluntary decision of the person that will receive a given form of support (see Huflejt-Łukasik 2009).
 - **Timetable: length and frequency of the sessions, an estimate of the total duration of the coaching process (amount of sessions).** Coaching sessions are usually longer than, for example, psychotherapy sessions. They focus on tangible professional goals and strive to achieve those goals. They usually last 1.5 up to 2 hours and take place once a week. However, if there is the need to prepare for a certain task at work or a solution needs to be found for an occurred problem, the sessions last as long as it

¹ Moreover, throughout the entire process, the coach also has to take into account the welfare and objectives of the company, of which the client is an employee. In case of any kind of conflict of interests (whether it is with the employer or between the client and the coach) – a potential one or an occurring one – the coach discusses this openly with the client. He also discusses the possible and optimal solutions for a given situation (see the ethical principles – Huflejt-Łukasik 2009).

is necessary and can take place more often. This concerns board members (*executive coaching*) in particular and is typical for working with teams. In group coaching the minimal duration of meetings, which take place every week or every two weeks, is usually 3 hours, but team coaching can also take the form of, for example, two-day workshops. Also the time that it will take to achieve a certain coaching goal is determined at the beginning. After learning the exact goal(s) of the client, which he wants to achieve with the help of coaching, a precise form and duration of coaching is suggested (see point 6 below).

- **Meeting place.** Depending on the type of coaching, an appropriate meeting place is chosen, at the workplace or outside of it. When coaching concerns direct support with professional tasks, then it is carried out at the workplace. This concerns situations in which the coach has to, for example, observe the daily duties of a person or team and the way in which these are carried out; or when the task of the coach is to assist a team with the implementation of a new work system. If coaching is related to the development and perfection of a particular work function, then it takes place on neutral ground. In that situation it is important that the person is coached in a place free from professional connotations and constraints, so that the client can look at himself from a different perspective more easily. Often it is important that the possibility exists to completely abandon all current work duties for the time of the session. The principles mentioned above are of course general guidelines and the actual coaching requires flexibility in its work methods and with respect to the place of meetings. However, coaching always needs to take into account the main goal, the existing connotations with the executed professional function in a given place (the so called anchors – see O'Connor, Seymour 1996; O'Connor, Lages 2004), the possibility of effective work and discretion.
 - **The costs of the service,** if the buyer is not a company, but a direct client.
- 4) **The principle of confidentiality and potential circumstances of passing on information about coaching to third parties** (the representative of the company that requested coaching). In coaching the principle of confidentiality is binding, which is the ethical principle of keeping a professional secret (Huflejt-Łukasik 2009, Huflejt-Łukasik, Peczeko, in press). Disclosure should only take place if required for achieving the coaching goals. In the contract, potential exceptions from the principle of keeping a professional secret need to be discussed: (a) what information needs to be disclosed, (b) when disclosure is allowed, (c) who will receive that information, (d) and in what form. The clients need to be informed about circumstances

that might hamper confidentiality before commencing the coaching, therefore while setting up and signing the contract². It is required to discuss situations in which information could be passed on to others. Such persons are described in the records concerning confidentiality in the work of a coach as “authorized recipients”, which receive such information. Also the potential method in which this should take place is discussed. For example, the coaching client has the right to know exactly what information is passed on to the employer and comment on it before it is handed over.

An example of a coaching situation where passing on information is required, is coaching that aims at diagnosing and at the same time developing a certain skill of the employee for whom the coach is hired by the representative of the company. If a coach is hired in order to develop the managerial skills of an employee, so that he can be offered a promotion to a managerial position at a later stage, then passing on necessary information to the employer regarding the coaching effects is a part of the actual objective of offering such support to the employee and the company.

- 5) **Cancelling the session.** This should be discussed in the part of the contract where the procedural aspects of the course of coaching are determined. Here the rules should be put down concerning the **consequences in case of unpunctuality or not showing up for a session.** The client needs to be aware of the fact that if he is late, the coach will not be able to spend extra time on him, because he has other commitments to attend to. It is also important that the client realizes that the work of the coach commences at the agreed hour and not when the client shows up for the session. These regulations do not only specify who and when the client should inform about changes in schedule, but they also motivate the clients to follow these regulations and make good use of the time that is planned for coaching.
- 6) **Describing the objective of the client more precisely as well as the possibilities and conditions of changes in the contract.** If the coach and the coaching method are accepted during the meeting, the goals that the client wants to achieve through the coaching are discussed in more detail. Then it is also possible to determine the required duration of the coaching – the number of sessions. Another thing that is included in the contract, is the possibility of introducing changes in the contract in case such a necessity arises (according to the client or the coach), and also the possibility of setting up and signing another contract after the coaching is completed, in case it is necessary to extend the coaching time with respect to that matter or if the necessity of coaching with respect to a different matter arises.

² Also when the necessity arises already during the session.

Determining the required time for achieving established goals with the help of coaching is just as important as establishing a deadline for fulfilling this task by the employee. And even though it might be difficult for the coach to determine the needed time for the client to achieve these goals, an estimate needs to be given. Establishing a deadline is an element of a well-formulated goal (the so called well-formed goal – compare O'Connor, Seymour 1996). With an established deadline the time of the coaching can be utilized to its maximum potential in the least amount of sessions that are necessary for that particular coaching subject. When it comes to the effectiveness of the time dedicated to coaching, it is best to determine a realistic deadline for the realization of the coaching objectives. If necessary, a new contract can be set up that extends the coaching time. An excessive limitation of the required time is not beneficial for the coaching process and results in frustration of the participating person on account of the concern that he will not be able to achieve the goals within the planned period of time. An overestimation of the required time is not as harmful for the coaching process, but it does incur extra costs for the company that hires the coach. It should also be remembered that coaching as a method of achieving certain goals, also by formulating them appropriately, means that the planned time for coaching needs to be optimal.

- 7) **The first session.** Setting a date for the first session rounds off the first meeting, which concerns the contract and planning a next meeting. The best option is to plan even further ahead and set dates for a number of sessions, so that potential difficulties with adjusting the hours of certain meetings will not interfere with the coaching process. Coaching sessions do not necessarily need to take place exactly every week at the same hour. However, if coaching aims at the development of an employee, then regularity is necessary. It is a different story with coaching of board members (*executive coaching*). Sometimes a period of regular meetings is necessary, for example when supporting a person with the implementation of changes in a company. Sometimes the coached person asks the coach for help outside of the regular meetings, for example when a sudden problem arises in the company or when new challenges emerge.

AGREEMENT FOR SERVICES

The agreement for services that is signed with the company is a reflection of the content of the contract. It consists of two elements: (1) discussing the topics with respect to the coaching goals and the manner of realizing the coaching process (2) an agreement in written form (Huflejt-Łukasik, Peczeko, in press).

The following topics need to be discussed with the representative of the company that is hiring the coach:

- 1) **The goals of the company with respect to the requested coaching (the expectations of the hiring party).** This is a crucial matter, since it lays down what the company wants to achieve through coaching. Subsequently, verification takes place in order to determine whether the goals set by the company can be achieved through coaching and whether that is indeed the best way to achieve them.
- 2) **Evaluation method of the realization of the coaching goals.** In some cases such an evaluation can be very accurate and can be expressed in numbers, for example in the case of a sales increase or a decrease in the rotation of employees. It is also quite easy to estimate the coaching results when it comes to creating solutions for problems or conflicts. However, it is much harder to evaluate the development of an employee, in other words, to what extent he has perfected his skills in a given domain, especially when the initiator of the coaching is the company. In such a situation, the question arises regarding the extent to which the development of the skills is satisfactory for both parties. However, each time, especially when the coaching is requested by the company for its employee, it is important to establish clear indicators for achieving the goals.
- 3) **Rules for and degree of information flow concerning the coaching process.** This is a preliminary indication of the information the company expects it should or would like to receive. The degree of information flow primarily depends on the type of coaching. However, clarity in this area is required for all coaching parties, so that the coach can establish a solid and plausible contract with the client. Therefore the following issues need to be discussed:
 - what information should and can be disclosed by the coach;
 - who should receive that information;
 - when (periodically throughout the coaching, after the coaching is concluded, etc.);
 - in what form (in a conversation, a written report, etc.).
- 4) **Coaching method.** Here the time and location of the coaching sessions is discussed. Also the price of the service is given.

Usually the following elements are mentioned in a written agreement with the company:

- 1) who is going to be the coach and who is going to be coached;
- 2) how many sessions the coaching will entail;
- 3) the coaching price;
- 4) the rules for cancelling meetings and the consequences of unpunctuality.

The above-mentioned elements of the contract with the coaching client as well the agreement with the company that is investing in its

employee are just indications and their final form depends on the characteristic of the required coaching process. Nevertheless, coaching practice shows that a well prepared coaching plan already while discussing it with the representatives of the company as well as the contract are both crucial elements of working with the client. More often it will be the incompleteness of those elements in the work of the coach, the underestimation of their significance in the system (an organization with its own dynamics), which will be the source of ineffective coaching, rather than certain shortcomings in the applied coaching techniques. And that is why, even though the topic discussed by the author may seem obvious, the daily experience of coaching, being a young profession in the area of supporting organizations and the individuals and teams working for them, accounts for sharing knowledge on basic, but at the same time crucial elements of coaching.

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Zbigniew Kieras

THE COACH'S PERSPECTIVE

Questions activate thinking. Answers end it. That is why it is so important what questions we ask. Where do our questions invite our interlocutors? What kind of message do we convey with our questions: about ourselves, people and the world around us? One of the most inspiring questions anybody who runs coaching can ask themselves is:

What is the most important thing during a coaching session?

I have been looking for the answer all the time and I keep discovering new possibilities and even more effective ways to help people experience how strong, wise and creative they are.

So, what is most important during a coaching session?

One of the possible answers is:

Most important during a coaching session is for a Coach to maintain the coach's perspective.

THE COACH'S PERSPECTIVE

The coach's perspective is about holding the most basic coaching assumptions in your head, heart and in action. It is about not yielding to your ideas what the Client should do and how. Sometimes maintaining the coach's perspective is a great challenge. We all have our experience, views and beliefs. We communicate them incessantly on many levels.

As a coach, you decide to forget about them! You chose to put aside your own ideas of life or of what is worthy and what is unworthy. It is useful to think and bear in mind the three main assumptions of coaching:

The first one says that the **Client is OK** and does not need fixing. The second assumption reads: the **Client has all the necessary resources** to find useful solutions. And the third one maintains that **there is always a positive intention** behind **all types of behaviour**.

1. The Client is OK and Does Not Need Fixing

Who does the Coach that believes that the Client is OK and does not need fixing become? Where does this belief take you as a Coach?

Believing that the Client is OK, the Coach frees himself from the pressure to fix the Client. So the Coach becomes free and this freedom enables him to let the Client shine with his own light. Before the Client started to attend his coaching sessions he had been talking to himself in his own specific way. He might have been blaming himself or other people. He might have spent an awful amount of time thinking what he had done wrong, why he had “screwed up” and what “the hell” was wrong with him. He might also have evoked one of the four beliefs leading to depression and professional burnout: “I cannot make it” (*helpless*), “the solution is not possible” (*hopeless*), “I am not worth it” (*worthless*) or “it is not worth doing it” (*meaningless*). It means that the Client has already contacted his internal critic - and nobody is better at criticizing and castigating us than ourselves. It is not healthy and it does not support development.

The last thing that the Coach could do, is to side with the inner critic. It seems to be happening in provocative coaching, but then you do it out of your love for the Client – you accept every inch of him. On the deepest possible level, you believe that THE CLIENT IS OK.

By having this belief the Coach becomes free, he helps the Client find his own freedom. Freedom for dreaming, for planning actions, for being consistent and for celebrating achievements. What is the most effective way of showing the Client that he is OK? It might be done by asking about the goal and not about the problem, i.e. asking about the criteria of success and not of those of failure.

What specific types of behaviour result from this belief?

The Coach will formulate the contract in a positive way, he will talk about what the Client wants and not about what the Client does not want or what does not seem to function well in his life. If the Client says that he does not want to smoke cigarettes, the Coach will ask: “What do you want to do?”. If he says he does not want to argue with his co-employees, the Coach will ask “What do you want to do instead?”. When he says that he hates to receive the cc emails, the Coach will stubbornly ask “OK, so what do you care for?” It means that the belief that the Client is OK will surface as a positively formulated goal.

Another possible kind of behavior connected with the Client being OK might be the Coach’s tendency to specify both the present state and the desired state – exploring what is happening now and what the Client wants to be happening in the future. This approach differs greatly from focusing on the past, i.e. directing the energy backward rather than forward. When you are asking the Client about some past mishap and say to him: “What were the reasons for your failure?”, you do not make him stronger

and freer by this. A belief that it is impossible to make any improvements without analyzing the causes of the mistakes and failures is very common. But if the Client is OK, it means that he has not failed, but has only received feedback. For some, it is only a semantic difference, for others is a fundamental difference in approaching development and learning.

How much more useful and freeing might be the following thinking:

I would like to achieve A.

I did X, I gained Y.

What can I do differently to achieve A?

What can B, C, D types of behaviour be to get me closer to achieving A?

What new possibilities will doing B, C and D give me?

than:

I would like to achieve A.

I did X, I gained Y

Why did not X give A?

What can you do to avoid X?

What other letters should be avoided and who is responsible for not achieving the planned result? If you really want to show the Client that he is OK, ask “What new types of behaviour may trigger a positive result?” instead of “What has made it gone wrong?”. Direct your attention and energy towards the future and action and not towards analysing the past.

The third possible path is to repeat what the Client has said using his own words! If you want to build rapport with the Client, if you want him to take a different perspective on what he says, if you want to make sure you understand him correctly, and finally, if you need some time to think, you may want to repeat his words. REPEATING his words does not mean paraphrasing what he said! Sometimes a paraphrase might be an enemy of the effective coaching relation! If we define a paraphrase as repeating what other person has said using your own words and starting with: “Do I get you right in saying that...”, it is easy to imagine the following kind of dialogue:

— *You know what. I want to improve my communication with my boss. Well, maybe not improve, but to be able to say ‘no’ to him and tell him to stop shouting at me, because I do not like it and it makes me stressed out...*

— *Do I get you right in saying that you want to learn to set limits?*

We asked a closed questions to which the client may say YES or NO. If he says NO, we still have chances to avoid “selling him our idea”, if he says YES, he starts to follow our idea. One way or the other, the Client becomes aware of the fact that he is unable to formulate his needs in such a nice way as you. You may, of course, ask:

— *If I have understood you correctly, you want to be assertive with your boss?*

This question is about our understanding and invites the Client to negotiate between his wording and our wording. What benefit does it give to the Client to compare our understanding with his intention? What will he get out of it if he tells you whether you were right or wrong in understanding what he said in his own words? How does it make the Client closer to his truth?

And what will happen if you say:

– *You want to improve your communication with your boss, so that you are able to say ‘no’ to him and tell him to stop shouting at you.*

... and wait for his answer. It may have the form of nodding, silence, further explanation, addition, etc. What you did was to align with the Client, to show him that he is important and that you pay attention to what he says and that what he says is OK.

Later on, depending on where you are in the process of coaching, you may ask, for example, the following question:

– *As for now, on a scale from 1 to 10, where are you in refusing your boss and telling him to stop – checking the present state.*

– *And how much would you like to develop this skill by the end of the month – on the same scale? – checking the desired state.*

Which of these scenarios is better at showing the Client that he is OK?

2. The Client Has All the Necessary Resources

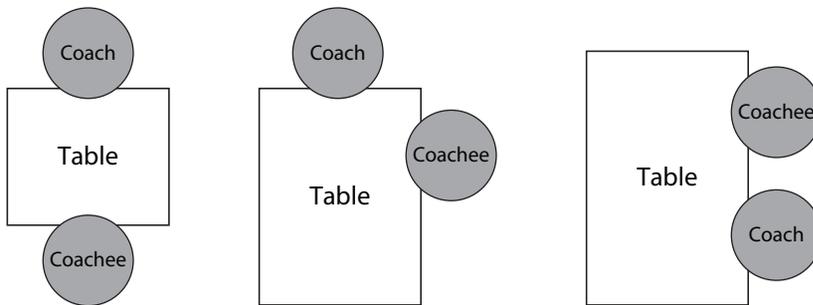
The second belief that helps to maintain the Coach’s perspective is that the Client has (or is able to obtain) the resources necessary to find the solution. If the Coach sincerely believes in it, then it is easy to eliminate consulting, suggesting or following one’s own agenda from a coaching relationship. In other words – using transactional analysis wording – a coaching relationship becomes free of the “adult-child” or the “I am OK, you are NOT OK” types of behaviour and beliefs.

Specifically, what kind of behaviour supports the belief about the Client’s resourcefulness? In how many areas of a coaching relationship can it be applied? Where and when is this type of behaviour the easiest to exhibit?

Let’s begin by thinking about a spatial aspect of this belief. The majority of coaching sessions take place while sitting down. What kind of chair arrangement will the Client perceive as a signal of his resourcefulness? This question is useful in a situation when the manager becomes the Coach. Very often, a coaching session takes place at a conference table or at a desk – in this context the roles are strongly associated with the places we occupy. When is it more probable that the Client will feel rich in resources, or will feel that we believe in his possibilities – when we place him (as it is usually done at work) in front of us, when we sit around the

corner of a table or when we sit at the same side of the table? When will the Client be more free in thinking and looking towards the future – when he sees our attentive eyes in front of him, when half of his perspective is blocked by our profile or when we both look in the same direction?

As we all know, a lot of information in the communication process is non-verbal: the position of our body, our facial expression, the gestures. With these non-verbal signals we can suggest to our Client our preferences and approve or disprove of his behaviour. The Client will constantly receive and process these signals. So, which of the seating arrangements is the best?



When we think about some events and the way they are happening in time – when we organise the past, the present and the future, given our cultural predispositions, the past is usually behind us or to our left, the future is in front of us or to our right and the present moment is just in front of us or inside us. So, which seating arrangement is the best?

The first position is said to be the most confrontational or didactic. The Client's eyes are just in front of the Coach's eyes. In this position it is more difficult for the Client to "slip into thinking", i.e. engage in the internal dialogue, however, it is easier to seek approval. The Client's internal images will be blurred with the image of the Coach. If the Coach is taking notes, they will be difficult to read by the Client, who may be striving to read them – the notes are in a way "a secret".

The second sitting arrangement, the Coach is sitting to the right of the Client. Half of the client's perspective is taken over by the Coach, who, in addition, is sitting at the side of the "future". This may make it more difficult for the Client to imagine events on this side of his timeline and at the same time this arrangement draws more attention to the figure of the Coach. If the Coach is taking notes, the Client will be tilting his head to read them.

The third sitting arrangement, the Coach is sitting at the side of the "heart", i.e. "at the same side" as the Client. Everything that the Coach does is overt and clear. The Client may use the entire perspective in front of his eyes. It is the Client that takes the leading role: chooses, decides and creates.

The Client's resourcefulness may also be easily expressed linguistically. There are words which convey compulsion, guilt or dependence on external factors. There are also words that communicate choices, decisions, free will, willingness and different possibilities. Before answering the Coach's questions, the Client analyses them on many different levels: consciously and unconsciously. Usually, the answer is possible when assumptions given in the question are accepted as true.

What assumptions about his possibilities and resourcefulness will the Client accept upon hearing the following questions?

1. What do you have to do to reach your goal?
2. What should you do to
3. What has to be done in order to
4. What do you want to
5. What are you most effective at
6. Which of the many possibilities can you choose as the first one?

Question:

- 1 – suggests compulsion, necessity,
- 2 – suggests guilt or at least feeling of quilt if you do not do this,
- 3 – expresses pressure, insistence,
- 4 – expresses will, free will,
- 5 – is about skills, abilities and effectiveness,
- 6 – is about the multitude of possibilities, the power and ability to make choices.

Which of the above questions is the most effective in promoting the belief about the Client's resourcefulness? We draw here from the knowledge about the modal operators of necessity and possibility used by Milton Erickson. His was amazingly effective in what he did because he deeply believed that people are OK and that every person has all the resources he or she needs.

The power of believing in skills and abilities of pupils, students, colleagues, subordinates is also corroborated by the research done by professor Robert Rosenthal. The theory has been named after a mythical figure and is known as the Pygmalion Effect. The research has shown that people whose abilities were believed in achieved a lot more than people whose abilities were questioned. In business, this effect is described in the Douglas McGregor's XY Theory, and William Ouchi's Z Theory.

I wonder what positive intention comes to your mind the moment you find out that this article about the coach's perspective is about to finish?

I would like to close this article with a poem written by Virginia Satir – an American therapist, who shared these types of ideas with her clients:

I am me¹

In all the world, there is no one exactly like me.
 There are persons who have some parts like me,
 but no one adds up exactly like me.

Therefore, everything that comes out of me
 is authentically mine because I alone choose it.

I own everything about me:

my body including everything it does;
 my mind including all its thoughts and ideas;
 my eyes including the images of all they behold;
 my feelings whatever they may be...

anger,

joy,

frustration,

love,

disappointment,

excitement

my mouth and all the words that come out of it

polite,

sweet or rough,

correct or incorrect;

my voice loud or soft.

And all my actions, whether they be to others or to myself.

I own my fantasies, my dreams, my hopes, my fears.

I own all my triumphs and successes,

all my failures and mistakes.

Because I own all of me I can become intimately acquainted with me.

By doing so I can love me and be friendly with me in all parts.

I can then make it possible for all of me to work in my best interests.

I know there are aspects about myself that puzzle me,

and other aspects that I do not know.

But as long as I am friendly and loving to myself,

I can courageously and hopefully, look for solutions to the puzzles

and for ways to find out more about me.

However I look and sound, whatever I say and do, and whatever I think

and feel at a given moment in time is me.

This is authentic and represents where I am in that moment in time.

When I review later how I looked and sounded, what I said and did,

and how I

thought and felt, some parts may turn out to be unfitting.

I can discard that which is unfitting, and keep that which proved

fitting,

¹ Satir, V. (1972) *Peoplemaking*. Norwich: Condor Press, p. 27.

And invent something new for that which I discarded.

I can see, hear, feel, think, say and do.

I have the tools to survive, to be close to others, to be productive,
and to make sense and order out of the world of people
and things outside of me.

I own me, and therefore I can engineer me.

I am me and I am okay.

Michał Kułakowski

THE CONTROL OF AWARENESS AS A KEY TO INCREASING THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND UNLEASHING POTENTIAL

The skill to control awareness significantly influences the development of potential; and the improvement of the quality of life. This concerns both professional and private life. This is an ancient truth. Then why is it so difficult to lead a happy life that gives great satisfaction? Why do so many of us experience chaos that keeps us from being happy? The answers to these questions are presented by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi in his book entitled “Flow”.

According to the author flow is a state in which we can freely direct our attention and fully engage it in achieving chosen goals. It is when we feel complete order and harmony.

Thanks to freeing our awareness we gain the possibility of making conscious choices and taking responsibility for these choices. Why do only some people feel happy?

There are at least two reasons why this happens.

Firstly, according to the author, the knowledge and wisdom that are needed in order to free awareness cannot be learned by heart and consequently applied. This knowledge and wisdom are acquired by way of trials, errors, guesses and more trials. The control of awareness is not knowledge. It is a process that leads to a balance of the mind; a process that requires our full commitment and the investment of our feelings and our will. It is not enough to just know how to do it. It needs to actually be done, consistently, systematically, step by step, and at the same time maintaining a lightness of thought and action.

It is the same in all areas of life. Let's take sports as an example – soccer. It is hard to imagine that a soccer player that is preparing himself for an important game, which he intends to win together with the rest of his team, would come to practice, look at his training teammates

and say: “Oh, this I know already. I’m gonna take a break”. It is difficult to develop your technique this way and impossible to keep fit. It is obvious that in order to master a certain skill and maintain it at a high level, you need to practice, practice and practice even more. A master does not fall out of the sky. This principle also applies to mastering the control of awareness. The goal is internal peace, harmony and balance, resulting in a high quality of the made choices and of life.

Secondly, the knowledge on how to control awareness needs to be developed on the basis of the cultural environment that we are in. This cultural environment can have a major influence on the choices we make. In my work as a coach I notice the significance of preparing the person for changes related to the cultural context. This concerns both the changes resulting from moving to a different country and changes resulting from transferring to a different company with a different management culture.

As I already mentioned, an effective way to improve the quality of experiences and of life is achieving a control of awareness. Every step forward in that direction makes our lives more prosperous, more satisfying and gives it a greater meaning. Once we know this, we achieve liberation, it will be easier for us to develop our potential and reach for the resources that we have in and around us.

What kind of experiences do we need in order for the quality of our lives to improve?

It seems that many of us believe that pleasurable experiences give us happiness. For some this may be the purchase of good clothes, a car, motorbike, house or any other thing that we wish to have. We experience pleasure when we receive information that our expectations have been fulfilled; expectations resulting from the biologically imposed cycle or social conditions. I feel great, because I spent my holiday in a dream destination, I bought what I wanted so much, I ate when I was hungry, I drank when I was thirsty, I got a job that points to a high social status, etc. I am glad, I am pleased, because I did my job well, somebody gave me a compliment and my self-esteem increased. The feeling of pleasure is a very important element of life, however that alone will not give us happiness.

Let’s take a closer look at another factor that influences the quality of our lives and our satisfaction. It is not just about satisfying needs and expectations. It is more about moving forward, development, experiencing new things, broadening horizons and setting new limits. What the author means here, is achieving something that perhaps we did not even expect, but what we will, in retrospect, call a good experience – one that is worth repeating. This can also be a job well done, a trip, building a house or other experiences thanks to which we **have learned** something that is particularly important to us. You will probably have noticed by now that a single event can bring both contentment and satisfaction. The difference is the reason for which we get involved in a given activity. The

quality of our involvement is important, as well as our focus and the investment of our mental energy. Satisfaction goes along with a consciously directed development.

People describe completely different activities that give them satisfaction at in a similar way. It is curious that they indicate similar reasons for which a given activity gives them contentment. According to the author, regardless of the culture, its stage of development, social class, age or gender, people describe satisfaction in the same way.

So when do we feel satisfaction from performed activities?

Firstly, satisfaction can occur when we undertake activities that we have a chance of concluding.

Secondly, when we start realizing clearly defined goals. This concerns goals that are important to us; goals that surpass us, that give us a sense of meaning and mission. According to Hannah Arendt, it concerns goals that even after we are gone leave an impression for the next generations.

Thirdly, we need to focus on the carried out activities and be able to get involved deeply. This involvement should not require effort. One of my teachers once said: "People find it hard to achieve goals, because they try too hard. They get all stressed, instead if approaching it with 'lightness'." It is about a deep involvement and a "lightness" of actions, which can be learned.

Leading our lives in accordance with our goals and decisions will lead us to an internal harmony. Experiences that bring satisfaction give a sense of control, peace and a pleasant lightness. Gradually we will learn to concentrate on a chosen situation, task or goal. We will be able to fully commit to the chosen activity and still maintain the feeling of "lightness". We will feel that we are in the right place at the right time and heading towards the right direction. If that is the way it is supposed to be, nothing needs changing. Any activity has no meaning, unless it concerns something important, a goal that surpasses us and that we are fully committed to.

Experiencing the state of flow requires a certain effort and concentration of attention, but at the same time this state of mind is extremely pleasant and satisfying.

If we do not learn to set goals for ourselves, as well as recognizing and evaluating feedback when realizing those goals, the undertaken activities will not make us very happy or even not at all.

Therefore, defining the goals clearly is a useful thing to do:

- 1) What do I want to achieve (goal)?
- 2) How can I see whether I am approaching or moving away from the goal? (feedback)
- 3) Decision-making.
- 4) Undertaking tangible activities.
- 5) Full commitment to what I do.

Without the above, it is hard or even impossible to experience satisfaction.

People that I have had the chance to work with describe the experiences that give satisfaction in a similar way. One of them said:

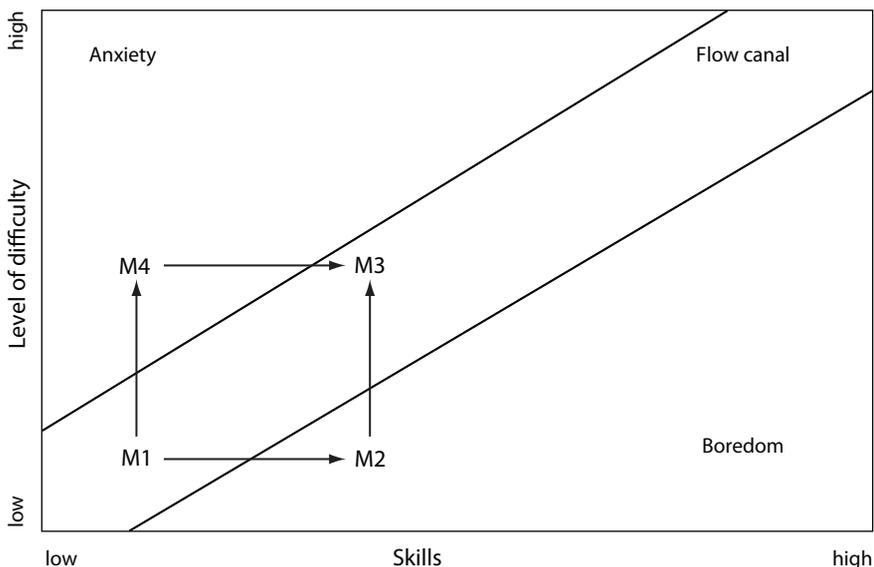
“What gives me satisfaction? Carrying out work knowing what I want to achieve by doing it. I know how to carry out the work, or where to look for the needed advice. I know how to recognize whether I am approaching the goal or moving away from it. I know how fast I am making progress. I am focused on what I am doing. I see both the goal and the outline of the path leading to it. Above all, I see the place where I am currently at on this path. I clearly see the next step I need to take. Time flows in its own rhythm and, in a way, I flow with it.

The daily little problems fade away and I do not think about anything but the place I am at on the path to my goal and about the next step I have to take. If other thoughts do appear, I manage to shake them off quite well. It is a curious fact that my goal, although always present, is somewhere in the background. The most important is the “here and now”. The next step also falls under the „here and now” category.

It is as if I am connected to what I am doing, as if I am flowing in it. It is important that my activities are in accordance with my abilities, or even a little bit above, so that I can learn.”

If we are doing a job that we love, a job that is leading us to a goal that is important to us, then we focus our attention appropriately and we are committed – then we do not work anymore, we just do it. We simply “flow”.

The process of maintaining the state of flow can be demonstrated in the following way:



Let's assume that the above figure refers to a particular situation, for example carrying out a given task by a young team manager. In the figure there are two dimensions presented on the axes: the skills dimension and the level of difficulty dimension. The letter "M" stand for manager. His task is to perform a presentation for his team of employees. If he is doing this for the first time and he does not have high skills in this area, the presentation will be a challenge to him. Even though this is not a very complicated task, for this manager it will be satisfactory, because it is in line with his abilities (situation M1). If he will be giving presentations more often, his skills and experience will increase. With time, giving presentations will start to bore him (situation M2). Perhaps the need will arise and he will have to give a presentation and a workshop in a different language for the foreign employees of the company. Let's assume that the presentation must be given in a language that the manager does not know very well. In that case, he will feel anxiety based on the lack of the needed skills (situation M4).

Both boredom and anxiety are negative emotions. The manager will have the motivation to go back to experiencing flow. Giving a presentation without it being a challenge anymore (M1) does not give satisfaction. The manager has two options. He can either look for challenges outside the current company environment or he can increase the level of difficulty of the task so that it is in line with his skills (situation M3). This could be, for example, giving the presentation and workshop in his mother tongue, for the preparation of which he will have an adequate amount of time.

If the maintenance of the state of flow would merely depend on putting the performed tasks in line with our skills, then surely most of us would experience this state throughout a long period of time. However, this is not the case.

What hinders us from raising the bar and improving the results?

What obstacles do we come across that make maintaining the state of flow difficult? How can we turn these obstacles into our allies?

Very often during conversations I hear the words:

I cannot influence this or that. Things are happening too fast. If I had more time I would be able to put my ideas into effect. I cannot concentrate. I have a lot of doubts. I do not actually know what I want to do, what I want to achieve.

I have an idea, but I do not know how to put it into effect. Can it at all be done? I would do this or that, but I am too chaotic, scatterbrained, or not creative enough... – and here a whole list of reasons why something should not work out emerges.

Not so long ago I heard someone say that a long-lasting state of happiness is like utopia.

We hear beliefs or we express them ourselves. We truly believe they are true and reflect reality. If we really believe in them and act accordingly,

they become reality. Unconsciously we make our beliefs come true. We filter the information that we receive and mainly notice those elements that confirm our beliefs. However, if we can become aware of the fact that we create our own “truths” concerning a certain issue, then we can verify them and bring them up to date.

When I hear: “no, this cannot be done” or “maybe it is easy for someone else, but for me it most certainly is not” – a “red light” goes on in my mind and the warning appears: “Caution, restrictive beliefs!”.

Then I tell myself: “Never just trust something to be true. Always check, test and verify it”.

The words of Alfred Korzybski come to mind: “There are two ways of getting through life easily: to believe everything or to doubt everything. Both ways will keep us from thinking”. Thus, I repeat, double and triple check the truth of your beliefs.

Restrictive beliefs are the kind of beliefs that instead of being supportive bring us down and freeze us, which results in us sabotaging our own work. They make reaching goals more difficult. Often they even make it impossible to clearly define our goals. They keep us in our old, familiar and “safe” ways of the only “truth”. If we are not aware of them, they impede the exploration and verification of other possibilities. They restrict unleashing potential.

Below are some of these “truths” I heard from my own clients:

- I am not a competent boss; I do not know this or that.
- Sales are going down and there is nothing we can do about it, because the market situation is the way it is.
- It is hard for me to motivate my team, because I am a bad speaker.
- I will never be a good boss, because I am too chaotic.
- I am not a good boss, because I got promoted too soon.
- Particularly a boss should have better self-control in such a situation.
- Nobody with a sane mind would do this.

I believe that behind every behavior (action, word, thought) there is a positive intention, which is conveyed in the best possible way that a person is capable of in a given moment and situation. That is why I always try to figure out the positive intention that lies behind statements like those listed above.

Consequently, we find out together with the client what really lies behind the words that he expresses. Only when we discover the positive intention behind the words can we start modifying the belief. Instead of a restrictive belief, we create a new one, which will support the client on his way to the goal.

Such restrictive “truths” are linked to our inner voice. They influence our feelings and our actions. This voice belongs to the Inner Critic, as Stone calls it. His main task is to look after us, our safety in the

surrounding world. He is the one that has always been protecting us from criticism, helps us adjust to the world and meet its requirements, whatever they may be. In order to fulfill his task, the Inner Critic needs to shape us in such a way so that we will be accepted by people. That is why he is always ready to criticize and eager to do so before anyone else does. This criticism can be directed at us, but the Inner Critic is also willing to take on the role of a judge and criticize everything around us. That is how he works.

He has a tendency to exaggerate to such an extent that things get out of hand easily and he starts sabotaging us. He gets easily excited with tracking imperfections, pointing them out and triumphing over us. The at first useful activity of the Critic starts to become a major problem. His watchful eye scares us, we feel insecure and we will not allow ourselves to make any mistakes. Sometimes it seems better not to try at all; then we will be sure we will not make any mistakes. If we do not make mistakes, we will not be criticized, but we will also lack inventiveness and that will also be criticized.

So how can we be a successful boss, motivate teams and build authority?

It is difficult to be a good speaker, be a confident person or a competent employee if we believe everything that the Inner Critic is feeding us to be true.

One of the major triggers of attacks of the Inner Critic is the criticism we receive from others. If we are criticized we may feel vulnerable, we may feel guilty and our self-esteem may decrease. We may want to withdraw from the uncomfortable situation and perhaps we will start blaming ourselves or somebody else. We can also wait till the worst passes and do something completely different, i.e. with a feeling of inner power make the conscious decision of doing something about the situation.

The Inner Critic attacks our Inner Child, which consists of our deepest feelings, like sensitivity, spontaneity, fear, joy, freedom and the sense of adventure. The Inner Child can get seriously mad if it is disregarded by us or by others.

That is why, when someone criticizes us, we have a difficult task at hand. Firstly, we have to deal with that person and secondly, we need to deal with the Critic who is attacking from the inside. The inner voice can then clearly say: "You see, your problem is that you..." – and a long list follows.

Let's discuss an interesting professional situation. The boss walks into the office and asks his subordinate: "Did you do the presentation?". The question can be asked completely neutrally or with an implied meaning. The way the message is received depends to a certain extent on the form and context in which the question was asked. It is about what the employee feels in relation to the asked question. If, despite him being a good employee, he has not prepared the presentation and his Inner

Critic is active and strong, the question may be perceived as threatening. The employee then feels guilty and perhaps also frustrated and angry. He will take on the attitude of remorse or he can attack by saying, for example: "I NEED MORE TIME", saying it with the appropriate intonation.

Meanwhile, the boss may feel that the employee is not working hard enough and not fulfilling his tasks as he should, neglecting them, or even that he is bumming around. The blaming inner voice of the boss gives refuge to his emotions and reassures him in his belief that the employee is bumming around.

They can both easily fall in the trap that is based on the principle that if you are not aware of your own susceptibility to distress in a relation with another person, then it can be expected that you will be more willing to blame others. You will do so out loud or to yourself.

Stone indicates that we meet all kinds of friends of the Inner Critic, which live in every one of us. These may include: the Pleaser, the Rule Maker, Pusher or Perfectionist.

Every one of them can make itself heard and dominate. This can happen so often that you will think that you are the one making the choices and decisions concerning your behaviors. If the Pleaser is dominating, you will feel the need to adjust yourself to the needs of others. You will learn to smile and put the needs of others before your own.

The task of the Rule Maker is to establish rules according to which you "should" act. He will decide how you should be and what traits of yours can absolutely not be tolerated. He will do all of that to guarantee you safety in life. The rules that he will establish will depend on the cultural sphere in which you are developing. The Rule Maker dictates the rules of conduct and the role of the Inner Critic is to persuade you to follow them.

The task of the Pusher is to keep you going, make you achieve your goals, keep climbing up, faster and faster. Unfortunately his characteristic is that he is never satisfied. When it seems that the previously established finish line is nearly reached, he will always move it further at the appropriate time. If the Pusher grows in strength, you will start acting like a "racing dog" hunting a fleeing rabbit, which you will never catch anyway.

The Pusher, just like any other part of you, acts in good faith. He wants you to be successful and achieve the best, so that people will look up to you. It is worth remembering that the Pusher has a tendency to have excessive ambitions.

Correct, improve and repeat until everything will be perfect! That is what the Perfectionist tells you to do. Everything is important, as if your life would depend on it. There is no hierarchy of priorities. If the Perfectionist establishes the quality level of the carried out tasks, the

Critic will not rest and will “help” you achieve this level. It does matter whether it is attainable or not.

It is worth observing whether by any chance we are letting one of these voices lead our lives, because if that is the case, we cannot make decisions on our own. The decisions will be made by that voice that currently has the strongest position.

Each of these “parts” of you has its own inactive opposite that we are ignoring. These may include: the Controller, the Playful Child, the Creative Guy and others.

Once you realize that the various “selves” indeed exist, it is also worth realizing that everything strives for equilibrium. If one of the mentioned selves starts dominating too much, a signal will come from the opposite part. You will feel an inner tension.

Learning how to deal with the Inner Critic and see an ally in him and make use of his services, primarily consists in not taking him and his friends so seriously. They can be your advisors, but you should be in control of the decision making process and take responsibility for the made decisions.

All of the mentioned parts of you will be happy to hand over the responsibility and rest, but only when they will be sure that you will take care of your Inner Child appropriately and will pay adequate attention to each of the “parts” and treat them with the right amount of respect.

You will notice that very often they simply fear for you. Sometimes they are terrified and they try to help as well as they can. The need you to take over the responsibility for making decisions and they need you to assure them that you can handle it. They like it very much when you experience the state of flow, but even then they try to get your attention so that you do not by any chance lose this state.

By finding a goal of which the achievement is worth living for, you influence the improvement of the quality of your life and the satisfaction it gives you. You unleash your potential and develop quickly. You feel an inner harmony, peace and strength.

It is important that you find the right values for yourself, which will give you a sense of meaning and mission, as well as goals that are achievable. These goals need to be clearly defined and you need to make sure to receive feedback concerning the progress of realizing them. You need to know where you are at, in what direction you are headed and how fast. You need to focus on each task separately and get deeply involved in what you are doing. This involvement should not require any effort. It is important that you maintain a “mental hygiene”, paying attention to all the inner voices that want to give you advice. You need to learn communicating with them. This is a continuous process. Celebrate your successes – that is particularly important! If you start acting according to this, you will experience the state that is called “Happiness” on a daily basis.

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