Clutterbuck Coaching and Mentoring International (CCMI) in partnership with Turner International Enterprises (TIE) are pleased to offer this virtual program. The aim of this program is to embody the presence of a team coach. You will be supported throughout the program by some of the most experienced team coaches in the world.

Team Coaching Practitioner

SESSION 7 WORKBOOK: DEVELOPING YOUR COACHING PRACTICE AND WORKING WITH THE TEAM

Contents

Preparing for coach supervision

The concept of supervision in coaching is borrowed from the world of psychotherapy and counselling, where supervision is a condition of practice.

Supervision is strongly recommended to support any level of coach or mentor, even at the level of basic skills coaching. The reasons for this are that:

- All coaches should be attuned to the continued development of their coaching skills
- All coaches meet situations, where guidance on different approaches would be useful in helping with a specific issue
- All coaches have a duty of care to those they coach. For example, a coach may not be aware that they are imposing their own agenda on the client – supervision raises their awareness of such situations.

Supervision has attracted an increasing amount of interest in the coaching profession in recent years. In the UK and Northern Europe, particularly, both professional bodies in coaching and large employers recognise the value of supervision in raising the quality of coaching (and hence how effective it is).

What is supervision?

The most commonly used definition of coaching supervision comes from Peter Hawkins and Nick Smith: *"The process by which a Coach with the help of a Supervisor, can attend to understanding better both the Client and their wider system and themselves as part of the Client–Coach system, and by so doing, transform their work and develop their craft."*

Writers on supervision tend to identify three roles of supervision: Qualitative (Q - ensuring the quality and safety of coaching); Developmental (D); and Resourcing or Supportive (R). Among the functions of supervision, as defined again by Hawkins & Smith are:

Continuous professional development and action learning of the coach or mentor. (D)

- Helping the coach or mentor to develop their internal supervisor and become a better reflective practitioner. (D)
- Providing a supportive space for the coach to process what they have absorbed from their clients and their client's system. (R)
- Helping to keep the coach and mentor honest and courageous, attending to what they are: not seeing, not hearing, not allowing themselves to feel, or not saying. (Q)
- Identifying where and how the coach or mentor may need to refer the client on for more specialised help. (Q)

Types of supervision

Supervision is typically categorised as either peer or professional; and either individual or group.

Peer supervision occurs between two or more coaches, who provide mutual support. While it can work well between very experienced coaches, who bring different perspectives to each other's practice (for example, business knowledge and counselling expertise), it is not recommended for less experienced coaches. While peer supervision provides emotional support, it cannot normally provide the other functions of supervision. Peer supervision between inexperienced coaches, or between coaches, who have insufficient

understanding of supervision, may become collusive in nature and convince coaches they are much safer and more competent than is actually the case.

Professional supervision involves regular meetings with a qualified coaching supervisor. By qualified we mean either that they have completed a post-graduate diploma (or equivalent) in coach supervision or that they are experienced coaches, who also have qualifications in supervision from a parallel profession, such as psychotherapy. The UK has more qualified coach supervisors than any other country in the world, in large part because of the number of supervisor training courses available (see for example, Oxford Brookes Business School and Bath Consultancy Group).

Individual supervision is a regular one-to-one event, where the coach is able to address their experiences and concerns in an open, exploratory manner. The main benefit of this form of supervision is that the coach is able to receive concentrated attention on their practice.

Group supervision is increasingly popular, because it is cheaper and because each participating coach has the opportunity to learn from the experiences of peers. It often happens that an issue addressed by another coach raises awareness of similar issues for you. Group coaching uses a wide variety of techniques, many derived from group therapy and family therapy. It often also incorporates peer supervision, with coaches exploring together issues that colleagues bring to the session – however, in this form peer supervision is facilitated (supervised) by at least one qualified supervisor. The downside of group supervision is that you may not have the opportunity to present and explore your issue every time, but most groups have rules that ensure a) that members, who have an urgent issue, will always have an audience and b) that everyone presents at least once every three sessions.

Many experienced coaches have several different supervision arrangements, for different aspects of their practice. For example, they may have an individual coach to develop their use of Gestalt and belong to a group supervision set to address broader development issues.

How to be a great supervisee

Selecting your supervisor
In corporate programmes, a small group of supervisors (or just one) is usually appointed. If, however, you find you need to select your own supervisor, the following advice may be helpful:

- Be clear what kind of supervision you are looking for (e.g., individual or group? With an emphasis on a particular psychological approach?) and look for a supervisor with that experience or background
- Write a "job description" for what you want to achieve from the relationship
- If you are looking for professional supervision, make sure they are genuinely qualified and not just a peer supervisor in disguise!
- Look for someone, who will challenge you and help you gain a deeper understanding of yourself as a coach (and as a person)
- Look for someone you will be able to be honest with

Preparing for supervision

Preparation starts during and immediately after each coaching session. Spend time reflecting on:

- What went well and less well in this session?
- When did I feel uncomfortable and why?
- What patterns are emerging with this client or across several clients?
- Where would I have valued a different approach?
- What would I like to take to supervision?
- How will I explain the issue to my supervisor? (Consider both "What do I know?" and "How do I know it?")

Although thinking through the issue before the supervision session is helpful, be prepared to take along quite vague feelings of concern or disquiet about an aspect of your coaching. The supervisor will help you investigate these and either provide reassurance or enable you to clarify what you are instinctively feeling.

Immediately before the supervision session, take a moment to ensure you are n an appropriate mindset – relaxed, anticipatory, open and curious.

In the supervision session

There are several groundrules that will ensure you get the most out of the session:

- Whatever happens is a learning opportunity – for example, if you feel defensive, your instinctive reactions should include asking yourself why
- Ask yourself from time to time "How can I help the supervisor help me?"
- In group supervision, aim to respect all your colleagues and to value both their strengths and their weaknesses
- Take time out of the conversations, when you need it, to reflect on comments or perspectives that strike a chord for you; extend the same courtesy to others, when they need similar personal space-
- After the supervision session
- Once again, it's important to spend time shortly afterwards, reflecting on what you have learned. Some useful questions are:
- What am I now going to do differently?
- What am I going to continue to think about?
- How am I extracting value from this supervision relationship?
- What could i do to extract more value?

FAQs

How much supervision do I need?	It depends on several factors: • the level of coaching you are doing (i.e., whether it is for example, predominantly skills coaching or, say, behavioural coaching) – the more significant and complex the issues your client faces, the more supervision you need • how often you coach (at least once every 20 hours of coaching is typical) Greater experience as a coach doesn't mean less supervision. In practice, the more experienced a coach is the more complex the issues they address with clients and the deeper they explore those issues – so they still need frequent supervision to remain grounded!
How long should a supervision session last?	Individual supervision tends to last between one and two hours. Group supervision between two and six hours, depending on size of group and frequency of meeting.
How long should a supervisory relationship last?	Expect to change supervisors as your practice evolves and you develop new needs. Review the relationship every six months or so, to assess whether it's time to move on. A sense of declining levels of challenge or personal insight is often a good indicator
How do I decide what to take to supervision?	• Prioritise anything that makes you feel anxious or have self-doubts • Try to bring a variety of issues. Recurrent themes will emerge naturally
Where do I go to find a list of qualified supervisors?	There is no credible centralised resource at present. However, the reputable organisations providing coach supervisor training will all provide lists of their graduates.
Where can I read more about coach/ mentor supervision?	The most widely recommended texts in this area are: • Hay, J (2007) *Reflective Practice and Supervision for Coaches,* McGraw-Hill, Maidenhead • Hawkins, P & Smith, N (2006) *Coaching, Mentoring & Organizational Consultancy,* McGraw-Hill, Maidenhead • Bachkirova, T, Clutterbuck, D & Jackson, P (2011) Perspectives on Supervision in Coaching, McGraw-Hill, Maidenhead

Pitching to pro bono team coaching clients: a quick guide

The five key messages are:

1. Start with the organization's biggest challenges:
    a. What issues do you lose most sleep over?
    b. Which teams have primary responsibility for these issues?
    c. How confident are you that they are able to deliver what is needed now?
    d. How confident are you that they are equipped to deal with future challenges?
    e. What would be the impact of a10% improvement in overall performance?
    f. What would be the impact of a 10% impact on the quality of teamwork?
    g. What are the biggest worries in your own team that better teamwork and team processes could relieve?
2. Spread out your offering: As team coaches, we:
    a. Help you understand more clearly what is helping and hindering you in achieving your organizational purpose
    b. Help you create and build into the way you work significant improvements in collaborative behaviours, decision-making processes and other drivers of team success
    c. Rather than focus on "fixing" problems, we help you to find more lasting solutions and – in doing so -- to embed the skills of coaching conversations into your normal daily routines
3. Our contract with you is:
    a. We are going to challenge you individually and collectively to be your best selves
    b. We will give you the tools and the ability to use them to tackle both today's challenges and tomorrow's
    c. It may be uncomfortable at times but our request of you is that you treat each moment of discomfort as an opportunity to learn, for your own benefit, for that of your team and for that of your beneficiaries.
4. Team coaching requires a lot of experimenting. We try things out and learn from what does and doesn't work. That's how good teams become great and great teams become awesome. We will be using very well-proven processes to create experiments together, often in the moment.
5. Some of you may go to the gym, where you have a personal trainer. Think of team coaching as fitness coaching for the whole team. It will take some hard work – both in the coaching sessions and outside, in your day-to-day routine work together – but the result will be a much heathier, more agile team that is "fit for purpose".

And one last point. The way we do it, team coaching is also FUN. By engaging in a quality of thinking that most teams rarely if ever accomplish, we support you in building deeper, more caring, more effective relationships with each other.

Developing a team coaching practice

This section deals with how you want to incorporate team coaching into your professional practice. Given the industry is relatively new, we have given you some thought starters to begin to equip yourself to think about what may be required in addition to coaching the team, including selling team coaching. We suggest you continue to work with others as you start offering team coaching to further refine these areas.

The future of team coaching

As a relatively new phenomenon, team coaching is still finding its feet. In this blog, I outline some of the emergent trends, which are likely to shape team coaching in the coming decade. There are surely others, which I haven't noticed, but those that I have include:

- A gradual movement towards professionalization of team coaching. This can be seen in discussions within the European Mentoring and Coaching Council and elsewhere about standards for team coaching, and in the rise of academic accreditation for team coaches. It is too soon to see team coaching as a required element of coach training, even at masters degree level, but it is probably only a matter of time before this becomes common practice.
- Increasing clarity about what team coaching is, for both providers and purchasers. It will become less tenable to label team facilitation, management consultancy or team building as team coaching. (However, this is probably not going to happen overnight and *caveat emptor* is still a wise nostrum!)
- Team coach supervision. There is, at present, only a handful of qualified (i.e. formally accredited to at least post-graduate certificate level) supervisors with credible team coaching expertise. In countries, such as the UK and Germany, where there are well-established communities of qualified coach supervisors, this transition is likely to be relatively smooth. In countries, where supervision for one-to-one coaching is less entrenched (including the United States, where relatively few coaches have an appropriate level of supervision), this is likely to take longer.
- Increased emphasis on team coaches' knowledge and competence in systems theory and managing systems dynamics. Peter Hawkins' book *Leadership Team Coaching* has been useful in extending the boundaries of systems thinking in team coaching. However, the toolkit of tools and techniques for addressing systems issues – especially where they concern the team's relationships with its external environment and other teams – could be expanded considerably, with further scavenging from the worlds of family therapy, social mapping, and chaos studies.
- Research and writing. A search on any of the Internet book distributors quickly reveals how few books on team coaching there are. Similarly, the academic literature is relatively thin. The list of topics that can be explored is vast, but falls conveniently into two categories: fundamental studies of key aspects of team dynamics and how the coach can assist (e.g. how teams make decisions); and applications of schools of one-to-one coaching practice to the team environment. The late Richard Hackman, whose research and writing informed much of our current thinking about team effectiveness, nurtured a caucus of US researchers, who continue his work. Some of these are interested in the team coaching dynamic. There is also research interest in Europe and Australia.
- Expanding scope of team coaching. Most team coaching is targeted at top teams or enterprise-critical teams. In part, this is because team coaching is a relatively expensive, medium-term investment. However, some organisations, which have benefited from team coaching at the top, are examining how to spread team coaching throughout their structure, for teams at any level. This will in most cases involve developing a team coaching capability internally. Managers, who have demonstrated good coaching skills one-to-one within their teams, have the potential to continue their development and take on team coaching roles for other teams within the business.
- Team coaching is becoming a de facto element of creating a coaching culture – quietly added to the list of factors, which will encourage and reinforce a coaching mindset.

These are exciting times for team coaching -- for becoming a team coach, and for developing the knowledge base and for building a community of practice.

The business case for team coaching

The following are the three most common reasons for using team coaching. You may need to start with other items before coaching the team such as individual coaching, interviewing the team members and leader, diagnostics and/or skills workshops. Thinking of a team, what might be useful for them to start with? When would you introduce team coaching? What would be the benefit to the team? What examples can you share of each of these (from actual experience, or from situations where you can see it would be useful)?

- To improve some specific aspects of performance
- To make things happen faster
- To make things happen differently
- What else would you add to making the business case?

Reasons	Examples
To improve some specific aspects of performance	
To make things happen faster	
To make things happen differently	
Other	

Working with new teams

Think of new teams you have been associated with. What is likely to promote "hitting the ground running"? And what might prevent it?

Your thoughts

Ethical and quality issues in team coaching

Ethicality is a complex topic. Most teams think their decisions and actions are much more ethical than they are, both individually and collectively.[1] As a team coach, you have several responsibilities:

- To help the team identify and reflect upon its own ethical issues
- To help it develop robust processes for ethical awareness and ethical management
- To examine regularly and honestly the ethicality of your own team coaching practice

There are six key steps in the ethical management process:

1. Articulate the problem
   - Who does it affect, how and why?
   - What is the nature of the conflict of interest?
   - What specific personal, organisational and /or societal values are involved?
2. Consider the context
   - Who is involved, directly and indirectly?
   - Is this a new issue, or an old one in a new guise?
   - What are your specific and general responsibilities?
   - Who has been consulted?
   - Who needs to be consulted?
   - Is there a relevant code of conduct or guideline?
   - What is the general ethical climate here?
3. Consider the implications
   - What risks are involved? (Safety, financial, reputational etc)
   - What precedents may be set by this decision?
   - What would be the impact if this were done on a much larger scale?
   - Would the implications be different if this were played out publicly v privately?
4. What other opinions/ perspectives may be relevant?
   - What might you be avoiding acknowledging?
   - Who might provide a robust challenge to your thinking?
   - How can you make other people feel more comfortable about speaking up?
   - Have we genuinely sought and listened to dissenting views?
5. Balance the arguments
   - What would an impartial adviser see as fair?
   - What priorities should we apply to conflicting objectives and values?
   - What are the "zones of ethical acceptability" and what lies outside them?
6. The final check
   - What decision-making biases might you be applying without realising?
   - How honest are you being with yourself? (How pure are your motives?)
   - Do you truly feel this is the right thing to do?
   - If we were to give this issue more time, would we come to a different conclusion?

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[1] Useful background reading around this issue includes Carroll & Shaw's *Ethical Maturity in the Helping Professions,* along with Bezeman & Tenbrunsel's *Blind spots.* Also useful is *Thinking fast, thinking slow*, by Daniel Kahnemann

Consider an ethical dilemma, which you have either been involved in directly, or which has arisen in another team, but could just as easily have arisen in yours. Discuss how the team approached this issue. What does this say about the team's ability to:

- *Recognise and respond to potential ethical issues before they become a problem?*
- *Understand the complexity of the dilemma and the implications of different courses of action?*
- *Discuss ethical issues openly and courageously?*
- *Come to ethical decisions in line with both individual and collective values?*
- *Implement ethical decisions, once made, even though these may incur short-term damage to performance or reputation?*

How would you go about:

- Helping a team with a specific ethical issue?
- Helping it become more ethically aware and capable of managing ethical issues?

What ethical issues might arise for you as a team coach and how would you deal with them?

Helping a team with a specific ethical issue

Helping a team become more ethically aware and capable of managing ethical issues

What ethical issues might arise for you as a team coach and how would you deal with them?

Team coach standards and supervision.

The world of professional coaching is only just getting to grips with team coaching. The European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) released its accreditation standards in 2020 and the Association for Coaching (AoC) and International Coaching Federation (ICF) have review committees established to release theirs shortly. The Association of Coaching Supervisors (AoCS), are also looking at standards for team coach supervision. To remain up to date as a team coach, you will need to monitor developments in this area.

You will also need to give serious thought to how you find and use appropriate supervision. There are very few qualified (i.e. trained and accredited to at least post-graduate certificate level) coach supervisors, who also have relevant team coaching experience. A practical solution for many team coaches is to have several supervisors, with different expertise.

As you embark on your team coach career, we recommend that for at least the first year, you coach in pairs. This has the benefit that someone else can step in if you get stuck, but most importantly, you can give each other feedback.

How will you ensure high quality supervision of your team coaching practice?

Developing your team coach brand and offering

What kind of teams and what situations do you think you can work best with and why?

Type of team	What you can offer

Your elevator pitch as a team coach

Work in pairs. One person asks the other to describe how they will add value as a team coach/ what's special about their practice or approach. This person talks for three minutes, with little or no interruption. The questioner notes key words and phrases to repeat back. Both of you reflect for three minutes; then the responder says the same thing in one minute. They reflect again for a minute. Repeat with 15 seconds of explanation and 15 seconds of reflection. Then, if needed, in 5 seconds.
Capture the result!

Your elevator pitch

Your personal development plan as a team coach

It's up to you whether you integrate your general personal development plan with your plans to develop as a team coach or keep them separate. Either way, you should find that there is a lot of cross-over between them. When they are at their best, personal development plans:

- Identify the difference between where you are now and where you want and/or need to be (even if it is hard to be specific about what will be different)
- Link immediate (short-term) objectives and actions with longer-term, wider personal goals
- Link development goals explicitly with values
- Provide an appropriate level of stretch
- Are motivating and create a bias for action
- Are shared with your support network
- Can be monitored to check that progress is happening and how fast it is happening
- Constitute a "live" document that you refer to at relatively frequent intervals, to benchmark how you are doing
- Are flexible enough to allow for new goals and to respond to unexpected opportunities

Bearing these characteristics in mind, use the table below to start your planning process. This is, of course, just a first pass – you will want to modify your plans in the light of further reflection, experience in the role of team coach and input from supervision.

Area of development potential (interest or need)	What you intend to do about it	How you will measure progress

Share with a colleague and help each other sharpen up your plans.

Finally, undertake a reality check by asking yourself:
- Do I feel energised by the key items in the plan?
- Am I clear about what I want to change and how to go about it?
- Have I got the support I need to achieve what I want, or do I need to look into how I find it?
- What am I going to do differently right now?

And finally….

Looking back across the three parts of this workshop, what are the highlights for you in terms of:

Issues	
Ideas	
Insights	
Intentions	

Thanks for taking part in this journey of exploration into team coaching. To keep up to date with new developments in this field, make sure you are registered with the following websites:

http://clutterbuck-cmi.com/

Tammy Turner -- Team coaching: passing trend or organizational staple?

Coaching has grown exponentially since its popular inception in the 1970's. (Clutterbuck, D. and Turner, T., 2017) Executive coaching has become a staple of many organizations, as has collaborative leadership and leader/manager as coach training programs. In fewer than 25 years, business coaching in the US alone has become an $11 billion industry with over 88,000 coaches in nearly 52,000 businesses. (IBIS Business, October 2017) In 2017, globalization, complexity, and disruption have perhaps contributed to an estimated 32 percent of organizations' surveyed striving to be more adaptable and team-centric. (Deloitte, p. 22)

On the surface, the trend toward team coaching seems to be both a natural progression in the coaching industry as well as a more cost effective and impactful way for organizations to embed collaborative leadership. Yet are we as coaches prepared? And are organizations clear about what is required for team coaching to work sustainably to enhance their cultures? This chapter will begin to dispel the myth that the progression from one-to-one coaching to team coaching is a linear progression. It will also examine the history of working with teams to illustrate the complexity and nuances involved. The intention of this chapter is to foster rich dialogue between the buyer and the supplier of team coaching to build the relationship necessary to deliver team and group coaching in a complex global economy.

Current climate

To date most coaching training, research and publication has been for application in a one-to-one format with the coach being the master of the process and the client being the master of their content. Evidenced- based research cannot support what makes one-to-one coaching 'work' and there are no agreed industry standards, competencies or metrics across the professional bodies. (Turner, Lucas and Whitaker, 2018).
Similarly, if we look for clarification around what team coaching is, then as of October, 2017 a search on the Association for Coaching (AC), Association of Professional Executive Coaching and Supervision (APECS), International Coaching Federation (ICF) and European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) websites indicate that they have no published team coaching definitions, nor standards' on what is required to deliver it.

As the professional bodies set the industry standards, the lack of standardization has unwanted consequences:

- Core competencies established for individual coaching are not specifically delineated for team coaching. Risk: Team coaches may be using inappropriate techniques.
- Accredited team coaching training is being approved against a one-to-one coaching standard. Risk: Team coaches take the methodology into organizations with mixed impact.
- Confusion about the team coaching intervention. Risk: Inability to manage complexity and/or ensure consistent team coaching delivery.

Regardless of if you are a coach seeking training or a purchaser of team coaching, these deficits create pause for concern. Rather than being fearful, understanding the current

climate can open constructive dialogue. Begin by outlining the desired outcome to create the necessary change. As the engagement unfolds, openly discussing what's being learned can minimize risk and ensure a more sustainable outcome. A more complete checklist follows later in the chapter.

Although team coaching standards currently do not exist, working with teams is certainly not a new concept. Understanding what some fundamental historical underpinnings of team coaching may help us advance robust delivery in the organizational landscapes of the future,

The history of learning in organizations

Learning together is not a new concept. Methodologies that underpin team coaching can be traced back nearly 100 years and are borrowed from management consulting, adult learning, psychology, social science

and one-to-one coaching. Familiarizing ourselves with this background may foster shared understanding so organizations and coaches can deepen their dialogue about what is required for team development. It may also advance industry requirements for team coaching to have longevity and equipping coaches.

Industrialization: Organizational need for efficiency

In a time when driverless cars are looming, it is hard to imagine a past where roads were being shared with horses and automobiles were being built one component at a time. However, if we go back to the early 1900's, the need for efficient organizations that manufactured cars and other items en masse created the opportunity to listen to workers, understand improvements and was the dawn of organizational learning.

Beginning in Frankfurt, 1921, a group of social scientists founded Die Akademie der Arbeit (now the European Academy of Labor). The academy was the first to offer specific courses for industrial workers to develop their individual thinking and apply the concepts of 'andragogy' where the learner's experience creates their source of self-identity and learning is organised around life/work situations. A fundamental coaching concept -- self-directed learning -- is born.

From 1927 to 1932 at the Western Electric Company in Cicero, Illinois, an Australian-born sociologist Elton Mayo and Americans Lillian M. Gilbreth and William Dyer studied the physical, environmental and psychological aspects of factory workers. They identified the conditions for building an effective work team and a productive culture, by building a sense of group identity. Key elements included the manager taking a personal interest in each person's achievements, regular performance feedback, and consulting the group before making changes. (Mayo, 1946; Lawrence and Steck, 1991) Although today's team coaches, consultants and human resources professionals would take these concepts for granted, at the time they were unprecedented.

Expanding on these concepts, John Dewey (1938) introduced revolutionary teaching concepts such as genuine education must come through experience and as a result, the teachers' role is to set the conditions for learning to avoid directing the outcome. As a leader in facilitation, Dewey sets forth that learning is "a cooperative rather than dictatorial enterprise". He suggests teachers extract learning by using the learner's environment and experiences; selecting activities that encouraged knowledge enhancement; and looked

ahead to ensure that they are conducive to continued growth. (Jarvis, p. 209) This adult learning theory is fundamental to coaching's success.

William Whyte's studies of American multinational CEO's and decision making with their teams (1949) popularized the term groupthink used in George Orwell's book 1984 as 'rationalized conformity'. Instead of independent evaluation and decision making, groupthink assumes that the leader has significant or direct influence over the group. Group think also occurs when the group values cohesion and harmony over rationality, which colors their decision making capabilities (Whyte, W.H., 1952; Janis, I., 1971; Leana, Carrie R., 1985). This research signposts that for collective decisions to be the most appropriate for the business (not just team harmony) we must have a deep understanding of group dynamics. This has implications for the team coach, explored later in this chapter.

The twentieth century may have begun as a time when the worker was simply a cog in the assembly line and the Ford Motor Company's concept of efficiency through workflow. But the contributions from these early pioneers initiated thinking of an organizational culture where individuals' opinions matter and by working together in groups achieves a better outcome. Moving toward a more person-centred approach breaks the cycle of groupthink and bias as well as enhances open communication.

Knowledge sharing: Organizational need for effectiveness

By the mid-1950's education became readily accessible to the masses and knowledge became the new currency. Organizations expanded from national to multi-national, hierarchal to international hierarchy and popular western culture began pervading other non-western cultures. Increased education meant a

workforce who could solve problems and create efficiencies in the system. To guide the worker's thinking, the modern manager directed discussion to help a colleague to solve a problem or to do a task better than would otherwise have been the case. (Megginson & Boydell, 1979) Building upon previous learning concepts, the manager has now become a coach – or is using what we would now label coaching skills.
Iconoclast Peter F. Drucker posited, "that the major obstacle to organizational growth is managers' inability to change their attitudes and behavior as rapidly as their organizations require." (1954) He advocated collaborative management over the command and control model and asserted that decentralized companies are more effective. As a potentially early team coach, Drucker's unique approach was "to be ignorant and ask a few questions." (Wartzman, R., 2012) Drucker may have been one of the first to label his techniques as bedrock elements of coaching: relational presence, listening and questioning.

Extending the coaching received from the manager and to increase efficiency, in 1968 Malcolm Knowles described experiential learning concepts that change itself creates the opportunity to learn and through self - evaluation a learner can move from, "being dependent personalities toward being... self-directed" (Knowles, pp. 44-45). Knowles set the stage for other future adult learning theorists such as Maria Boucouvalas, who introduced a transpersonal view of adult learning theory; Peter Jarvis, who continues to add to the theory of adult lifelong learning and Stephen Brookfield, who led the way on self-directed learning, built upon the concept that adults are a rich source of learning from each other and reflecting upon their own experiences, setting the cornerstone for the foundation of modern day coaching. In 1982 Reginald Revans, considered to be the father of action learning, introduced a specific methodology using questioning techniques and the equation L

(learning) = P (programmed knowledge) + Q (questioning insight). Since then, reflective practice has added to become the theory of action learning that supports organisational problem solving and team improvement. This shift meant individual leaders are required to have coaching skills to work effectively.

In 1992 Sir John Whitmore published his seminal book, Coaching for Performance, and many would argue, launched the coaching industry. Whitmore's GROW (Goal, Reality, Opportunity and Will) model presented a framework for individual coaches to easily scaffold their one-to-one coaching. Co-Active Coaching (Whitworth, L., Kimsey-House, H. and Sandahl, P., 1998), then followed outlining the conditions for the coaching alliance co-created by the coachee and the coach, positioning coaching as a dynamic system, rather than a linear interaction.

Chris Argyris' and Donald Schön's research into organizational development between 1974 - 1991 identified that by expanding a narrow problem solving focus termed "single loop learning" to include reflective practice, dubbed "double loop learning", created the opportunity for individuals to learn and improve from mistakes. Carefully reflecting on in the moment decision making and immediately afterward to see the impact revolutionized how team members worked together. Additionally, double loop learning introduced team goals and responsibilities and built on the leader as coach concept posited by Knowles and others. To better understand reflective practice in team decision making and take responsibility for their actions, Argyris formulated the "Ladder of Inference" (1991) and bridged double loop learning into action learning. Introducing reflective practice into organizations as well as self and team directed goals may have contributed to the organizational imperative for both one-to-one and team coaching.

As individual leadership becomes increasingly important, academics and management consultants study what's required to lead the team and share their observations en masse. Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith differentiated a work group from a team and provided foundational skills to work with teams in their article "The Discipline of Teams" (1993). J. Richard Hackman outlines the five basic conditions for "How to build a team" (2002) including the point 'teams need expert coaching'. David Clutterbuck published his accompanying methodology in *Coaching the Team at Work* (2007) for both managers and coaches. Christine Thornton highlighted the importance of understanding *Group and Team Coaching: the Secret Life of Groups* with her eponymous book in 2010. Peter Hawkins published both *Leadership Team Coaching* (2011) and *Creating A Coaching Culture* (2012), a term that has become common organizational nomenclature. Though trendy observations initially, all of these publications have been reprinted and are still in use today. Based on the combined information in these publications and evidence of reprints, we could infer that the individual providing coaching, the organization and the people being coached must have appropriate knowledge and readiness.

Adaptability: Organizational need to learn

Learning organizations are part of a global economic and cultural ecosystem. To stay viable, the learning organization needs 'disruptive innovation' to anticipate customer's unstated needs. (Christensen, 1997) Disruption: (noun) disturbance or problems which interrupt an event, activity, or process (Oxford Dictionary online, p. 507) has become an organizational call to action, "Today, if you're not disrupting yourself, someone else is; your fate is to be either the disrupter or the disrupted. There is no middle ground." (Ismail, S., 2014)

Contributing to this disruptive ecosystem, major world events such as the collapse of the Berlin Wall, 911, climate change, on-going religious conflicts and Brexit may have been factors for:

- Decreasing respect for hierarchy and authority
- Increasing collaboration, agility and flat organizational infrastructure
- Challenging attitudes and assumptions toward cultural norms: same sex marriage, use of language, political trends, assisted death, religion and race.
- Shifting toward sustainability and resiliency – both environmentally and interpersonally
- Polarizing of acceptance and intolerance
- Pervading immediate knowledge through social media, internet and mobile applications
- Normalizing on-learning through TED, Khan Academy and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)

The organization's ability to cope with constant change and threat has introduced the US Military term VUCA: volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, to describe the way in which people within organizations create resiliency and the readiness for managing and leading change. (Tovar, P., 2016) Disruption, VUCA and the rate of global change may have contributed to the decline in authoritarian leadership both politically and organizationally and shift toward collaborative leaders who can engage others in creating the world in which they live and the way in which business is done. This dramatic shift positions adaptive learning as a way of operating within organizations.

Teaming: Organizational need for consistent collaboration

In 2016, Amy C. Edmondson identified that learning organizations need to actively put the team's work at the center of the organizations to be both adaptive and resilient. Edmondson's leading edge concept "teaming" is actively "reciprocal interdependence, where back-and-forth communication and co-ordination are essential to getting the work done" (Edmondson, p. 24). Amalgamating concepts from both the adult learning environment such as double loop learning, social science concepts that teams make better decisions together, along with elements of coaching: psychological safety, relational presence, listening and questioning which comprise teaming. Teaming outlines the functional elements of team coaching to create learning organizations.

In 2017 teams use their collective ideas to innovate and are organized for adaptability, innovation, and customer impact. Designing for and supporting teaming requires both functional and adaptable infrastructure. Organizations are viewed as an agile network, empowered by team leaders leading through psychological safety and orchestration of tasks, fuelled by collaboration and knowledge-sharing. The team is project-based, with responsibilities focused on products, customers, and services, but fluid titles or roles. (Deloitte, p. 25).

Reviewing the past teaches us that fundamentally what underpins coaching is about teaching people how to learn and relate to themselves and others. Catalyzing this juggernaut into team coaching and extending this way of working could be a pathway forward to create learning cultures.

Next steps: Creating sustainable learning organisations
So what's needed to make team coaching an organizational staple?

History has also taught us that unlike one-to-one coaching, complexity within a team as well as the organization creates a learning ecosystem, which all parties are involved in co-creating. Everyone involved in team coaching (including the coach!) must be committed and dialogue openly about what is continuously being learned. Therefore, in order to make team coaching an organizational staple, we must first start with creating the learning ecosystem.

Within the learning ecosystem, both the organization and the coach have to be ready to work intimately together to create the team coaching 'contract': "the process of agreeing boundaries and is a dialogue that establishes and then sustains the relationship. Contracting is important at the beginning of a relationship to set out the initial terms of engagement i.e.it creates the "Contract" (an agreement that clarifies mutual expectations and obligations). Additionally, it is a critical set of skills that are used throughout the relationship, which enables all parties to voice and explore issues when things become unclear or difficult." (Turner, T., Lucas, M., and Whitaker, C., 2018) The skill of contracting integrates key concepts from one-to- one coaching such as curiosity, active listening, powerful questioning and direct communication. If both the team members and the team coach do not have consistent capabilities in these skills, the intervention is not team coaching.

Necessary elements for a sustainable learning culture:

- Creating an atmosphere of trust, psychological safety, experimentation and 'failing well'
- Influencing and networking with both internal and external stakeholders, above, across, below and throughout the system
- Actively adapting team membership and focus, involving all members in contributing to the strategizing to increase ownership and execution,
- Structuring fluid rather functional infrastructure
- Actively listening to challenges and unconscious bias as they emerge
- Contracting for shared outcomes
- Co-creating collective intelligence and a consciousness shared by the whole system
- Team coaching skills and capabilities (Edmondson, A.C., 2002, Hawkins, P. 2017; Turner, T., Lucas, M. and Whitaker, C., 2018)

Infrastructure is also an important consideration to maximize learning and agility. Consequently the learning organization's structure is roles based upon expertise, interests and tasks (not function). The smaller, nimble project style teams are catalyzed around client-centred outcomes. Team leaders and members actively coach each other capturing the brightest ideas, putting their stakeholders and clients at the center of innovation to create a positive inter-relational and multi-dimensional organization. Together these elements can create the blueprint of a 21st Century learning organization.

Dialogue to establish if using team coaching is appropriate

Given the speed of change and adoption of new ideas in today's frantic world, means we may well hold an assumption that team coaching by itself will lead to an increased learning culture. However, before we dive headlong into this possibility, there are some essential conversations to have between organization and supplier.

Question 1: Do you agree what team coaching is?

This may sound ridiculous, but based on insufficient industry standards; it is the most useful starting point. Begin the dialogue by introducing, agreeing and using a consistent and understandable definition. My definition:

> A facilitated process that enables an organized group of people the opportunity to experience how to learn together through honest dialogue and consistent reflection to enhance both themselves and the system.

By agreeing both the coach's and the organizations' understanding of team coaching, the contract begins to form the basis for the learning ecosystem. Once established, the coach and team members can come back to re-establish that everyone is still on the same page.

Question 2: Is the 'team' ready for coaching?

One metric that could be applied is using the action learning equation $L \geq EC$: learning must be equal to or greater than the rate the environment is changing may be able to gauge if the organization is prepared for team coaching. (Hawkins, P., 2017a, p. 16) If change is higher than learning within the organization, the team is unable to be coached and instead may be involved in:

- Team Development: any process carried out by a team, with or without assistance from outside, to develop its capability and capacity, to work well together, with its joint task
- Team Building: any process used to help a team in the early stages of team development
- Team Facilitation: facilitating the team
    - to resolve a particular conflict or difficulty
    - to review its ways of operating and relating
    - to carry out a planning or strategy process
- Team Process Consultancy: a form of team facilitation where the team consultant, sits alongside the team carrying out its meetings or planning sessions and provides reflection and review on 'how' the team is going about its task (Hawkins, 2017b, p. 71 -73)

All of the above interventions are useful and may prepare the team for future coaching. Further evidence that a team may be ready to test if they're ready for coaching include:

- ❑ Team leader is emotionally intelligent
- ❑ Team members can actively engage in open, useful dialogue which ultimately move them forward in understanding, decision making and/or outcome
- ❑ Team members listen well
- ❑ Conflict can be facilitated with care
- ❑ Culture encourages safe to fail experimentation, active learning and is generally resilient

This list may sound as if the team has finished their team coaching. This is not the case. In fact, these are the optimal conditions for team coaching to commence. At least 3 out of the 5 must exist or the team may be in need of one of the other inventions listed above.

Question 3: Is the team coach appropriate and skilled for the requirements?

For team coaching to be an organizational staple, team coaches will require:

- ❑ High emotional intelligence and self-actualization
- ❑ Strong reflective practice, including coaching supervision;
- ❑ Holding multiple perspectives of the team, the system and themselves in the moment
- ❑ A wide range of interventions and an eclectic toolkit, including a strong background in multiple disciplines in working with groups
- ❑ The ability to work with another team coach and the team – more to follow below.
- ❑ Experience and wisdom to let team to work on issues themselves and leave the engagement when the team is coaching itself

Question 4: What are the best practices for our organization's team coaching?

Once you've established that the team is ready to be coached and the coach has the capability and capacity to work with the team, planning for what constitutes 'best practice' is the next step. Some key elements for consideration:

- ❑ Agree that the client is the team – not individual team members, not the client sponsor and/or the most senior person or who holds most power on the team.
- ❑ The work of the team is whatever is happening in the room with the team in the moment.
- ❑ Two coaches in the session: one as observer and the other as team coach. One coach could potentially be an internal, though preferable to have both be external to avoid groupthink and power dynamics.
- ❑ Contract often about shared objectives for the session, the overall goal and/or when there is conflict.
- ❑ Regular professional supervision with a qualified coaching supervisor who has group and/or team coaching experience. This also includes reflective practice for both team coaches to specifically look at the impact of the coaching. The supervisor will act as an external to the system and can signpost challenges that they see in the system, support the coach staying neutral and being a significant part of the learning ecosystem. Even as an external coach, you are part of the system when you're with the team.
- ❑ Pacing the coach(as) and team members: Take breaks often, drink plenty of water and allow for reflection about what's being learned.

As you can see, team coaching requires a radical shift in thinking. Coaching a group or team is not the same as one-to-one coaching. If either the coach or the team aren't prepared for the task of team coaching, this can be a significant setback in the team and more importantly the organizational growth. However, team coaching done well can be a significant contribution to the long-term success of creating a learning organization.

Conclusion

Bringing people together to learn together is pivotal to organization efficacy and resilience. Drawing upon methodologies and techniques gathered over the last 100 years from reflective practice, group process and systems, adult learning, coaching and the concepts from double and triple loop learning and teaming, create the scaffolding of team coaching methodology. Given the breadth and depth of possible methodologies, inconsistent norms

and standards as well as the complexity and emergent nature of team coaching, dialoguing about we are learning can better define and measure team coaching. To answer the question posed by this chapter – perhaps "team coaching" as a label is a passing trend, whereas learning together to co-create a shared outcome is fundamental for the success of any organization.

Team coaching could become the framework where team coaches, leaders and organizations learn from each other and we can be the disruptors needed in the coaching industry. As a result, organizations of the future could create a new societal frontier where leaders sit around the metaphorical campfire under the stars, have the honest conversations, make decisions about what lay ahead and brings people together who learn together. I wonder what we will call this future activity? Time will tell.

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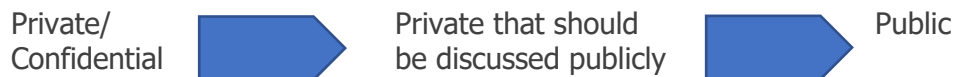
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Confidentiality issues in team coaching

Private/
Confidential

Private that should
be discussed publicly

Public

Coaches working with teams or with individual clients within teams receive a great deal of information shared only between them and those individuals. The simple distinction above allows the coach to clarify what permissions they have to use that information.

Issues that are private or confidential fall into two categories: those that the individual *prefers* not to share and those that they *feel unable* to share. The former is driven by internally-generated motivations, such as being a generally private person; the latter by externally-generated motivations, such as the fear of speaking up that characterises environments of low psychological safety.

Issues that are currently private but should be public also fall into two categories: those that *affect people individually* and those that *affect the team collectively*. So, for example, someone's unwillingness to ask for help, versus the "elephant in the room" – something everyone knows is a problem but is reluctant to bring into the open.

Public issues are ones everyone is aware of and talks about. However, talk doesn't always lead to action. The problem may be acknowledged but "too difficult to deal with". Or the conversations may happen within sub-groups of the team (often in whinge sessions) but not with the team as a whole; or within the team but not with key stakeholders, whose cooperation is needed to resolve the issue.

The role of the team coach is different in each of these circumstances.

In the first situation (private/confidential), we can start by exploring the person's thinking and motivations. When someone shares something deeply personal, they are usually responding to a sense that they can trust you. That trust comes from a mixture of the personal qualities they see in you, along with the authority that people instinctively place in a skilled professional. A question I often use is: "What has happened for you that makes it OK to talk about this painful issue now?" We might eventually also reach the question: "What benefit, if any, would there be, if other people understood this issue from your perspective?" Many times, we discover together that even a small amount of greater transparency can help the person feel less alone. Moreover, expanding the conversation to how the team might benefit from supporting the individual through the issue opens up a new perspective that strengthens collegiality.

In the second situation, we can build on the nature of the relationship between the individual and the team. Useful questions include: "What would it take for you to feel confident in asking for help?" "What would it take for you to approach a colleague and offer help?" "When does an issue for one person, become an issue for the team as a whole?" "What is it that everyone knows, but no-one voices?" "What would create the collective courage to address this issue openly?" "What are your personal responsibilities here and what are the collective responsibilities of the team?"

In the third situation, the blocker is not whether people will talk about the issue, but inability or reluctance to do anything about it. A key question here is: "If the conversations we are

having about this aren't leading to resolution, what conversations should we be having?" Also: "What is happening in the team's systems that are preventing these conversations happening?

A phrase I use to describe these approaches is "progressive transparency". By thinking of privacy and openness as a spectrum, both we as coaches and the team itself have multiple options about how we intervene.

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