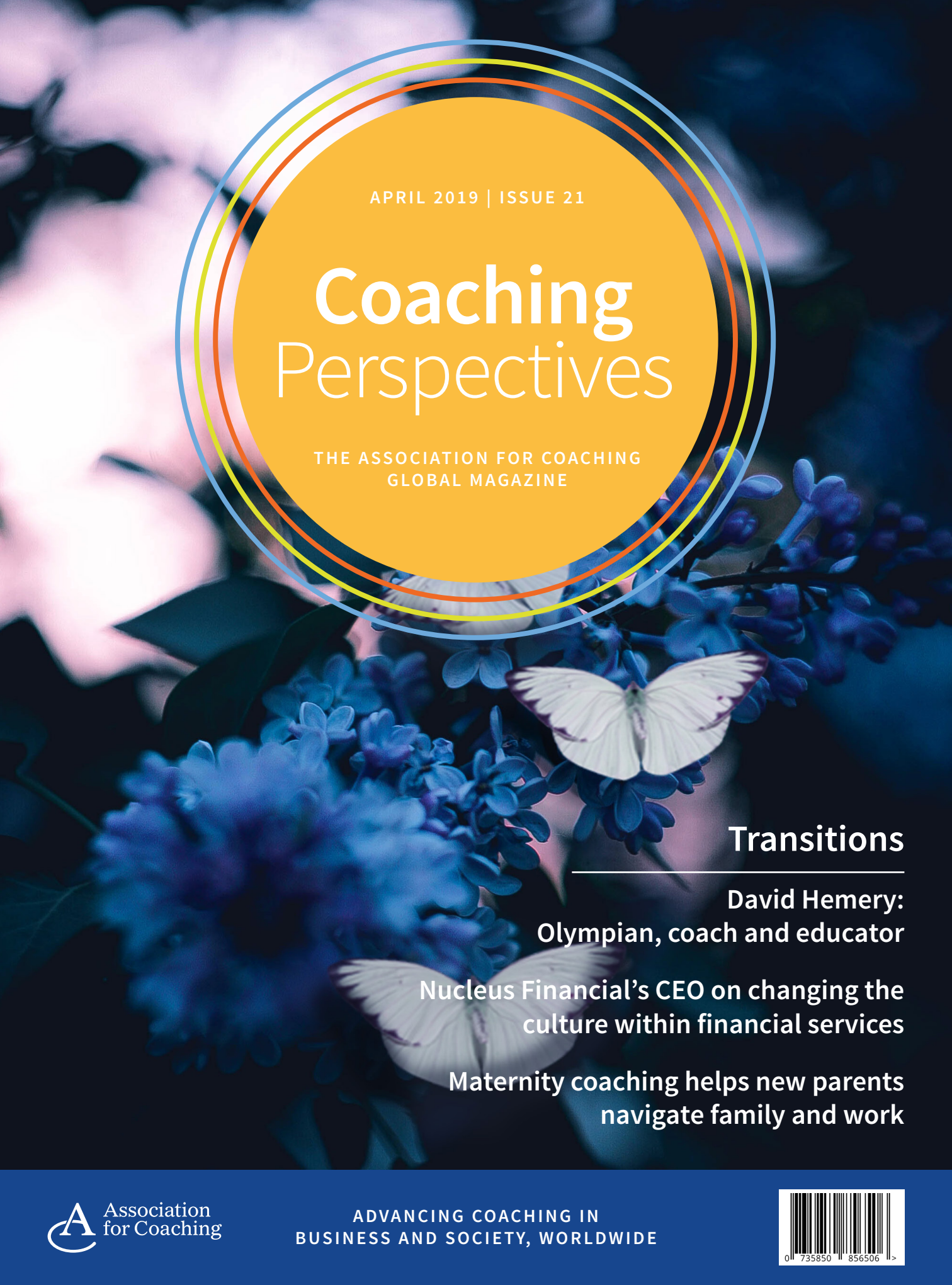

APRIL 2019 | ISSUE 21

Coaching Perspectives

THE ASSOCIATION FOR COACHING
GLOBAL MAGAZINE

Transitions

David Hemery:
Olympian, coach and educator

Nucleus Financial's CEO on changing the culture within financial services

Maternity coaching helps new parents navigate family and work

Association for Coaching

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Association for Coaching Dates for your Diary 2019

APRIL 2019

Monday 29th April
6pm - 8.30pm
Cambridge Evening
Supporting Your Coaching Clients to Be More Resilient
Kathryn Buck

Tuesday 30th April
9am - 4.30pm
London Day
Coaching with Paradoxes
Dr Geoff Abbott

MAY 2019

Tuesday 7th May
2pm - 5pm
Dublin Afternoon
Coaching with Paradoxes
Dr Geoff Abbott

Wednesday 8th May
9.30am - 12.30pm
Belfast Morning
Coaching with Paradoxes
Dr Geoff Abbott

Tuesday 21st May
9am - 4.30pm
London Day
How To Build A Brand Your Prospective Clients Can't Resist
Kim Arnold

TO BOOK PLEASE VISIT OUR EVENTS CALENDAR ON THE AC WEBSITE

More events are added regularly*

* Dates and times subject to change

JUNE 2019

Thursday 6th June
9am - 4.30pm
London Day
Motivational Interviewing
Dr Tim Anstiss

Thursday 6th June
6pm - 8.45pm
Leeds Evening
Buoyancy Aids or Dead Weights – Will our personality features inhibit or enhance us?
Robin Walford

Tuesday 11th June
6pm - 8.30pm
London Evening
No Stone Unturned – Strategies for Creating a Sustainable Coaching Business
Charlie Warshawski

Tuesday 25th June
9am - 4.30pm
London Day
Coaching Leaders of and in Change
Dr Robyn Vesey

Coming soon

The Necessary Revolution in Coaching for the 21st Century
Professor Peter Hawkins
London

Facilitation Skills for Coaches
Linda Aspey
Birmingham

Compassion in Coaching
Jill Savage
London, Birmingham and Newcastle

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When we conceived of the idea of focusing our April issue on the theme of transitions, we never thought that we in the UK would be living through the most momentous and turbulent of transitions. Brexit continues to play out in all its complexities, its emotional anguish and confusion as I write!

Brexit is a vivid, in the moment illustration of the difference between change and transition. The words are often used synonymously but, as William Bridges knew when he conceived his Transition Model in 1991, while change is something that happens to people – whether they like it or not – transition is the process of how we get from here to there. This is practical – involving altering structures and physical moves – but above all a profoundly mental, emotional and psychological process. Transitions involve a shift in mindset, the giving up of old certainties or beliefs, losses and endings, being able to tolerate limbo – the period of not-knowing while the new landscape has not yet formed, and from uncertainty to summon the capacity to embrace new beginnings with optimism.

This is an ideal moment to reflect on the impact of the many transitions we all go through in life and work, and how we as coaches might support our clients to navigate them better. In this edition **Adrian Blair**, former COO of Just Eat, describes how coaching can help pupils make the transition from school into the world of work based on his understanding of the human ingredients that helped Just Eat transition from start-up to global success. Another key transition for many is that of starting a family and then figuring out how to manage the dual demands of home and work life. **Melanie Fry** addresses the searing emotional cocktail that often colours this period – guilt, conflict, low confidence and exhaustion – and how coaching can be vital in helping clients regain their sense of agency and balance. Our interview with Olympian **David Hemery** points to the importance of having a deep sense of purpose to provide the red thread through the highs and lows of a sporting career, while **Joe Davis** describes how emotional intelligence coaching can support athletes to perform under pressure and prepare them for transition after they leave the intensity of a life in competitive sport.

Taking time for reflection is key to navigating transitions successfully. **Andrew Gibbons** extols the benefits of keeping a learning log throughout his coaching career and **George Athorn** recounts how his familiarity with a particular development tool, involving self-assessment and feedback, enabled him to face the biggest transition of his life: from rude health to living with major paralysis resulting from a rare neurological condition. In our Deep Dive, **Christopher Connolly** details these skills of reflection and the other core competencies needed to navigate career and indeed all transitions successfully, based on his PhD research into *Transition Expertise*. And **Paul Lawrence** suggests that coaching supervision must transition from a clinical approach, focused on monitoring and quality control, to a systemic approach that recognises coaches' need to work with this complexity if it is to remain relevant.

At *Coaching Perspectives*, we are experiencing our own transition as we say goodbye to our Sub-Editor, **Sally Phillips**, who is featured in our contributor spotlight. She has been a stalwart force in our small editorial team, bringing her ability and eye for detail to ensure that each edition of the magazine is produced to the highest quality. We shall miss her.

I believe the idea of cultivating systemic humility is helpful as we now live, work and coach in a world in almost constant transition, such is the speed of change and the complexity of interdependencies. Perhaps humility, along with compassion and courage, can help coaches engage with the anxieties and frustrations aroused by the uncertainty and ambiguity of transitional fluidity. In this way we can better support our clients to face the illusion of control or their nostalgia for a stability that no longer exists, and, based instead on the compass of values, ethics and purpose for good, find their pathway through to positive action.

We hope you find much to stimulate your reflections in this issue, along with more on team coaching from **Dr Dec**, book reviews and the first of our New Perspectives feature: how fintech company Nucleus Financial is overturning stereotypes by putting transparency first in their workplace culture.

Best wishes,

Hetty Einzig

CONTENTS

APRIL 2019 | ISSUE 21

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Published by the Association for Coaching

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100 COACHES PROJECT

At the time of going to print, world-renowned coach and author **Marshall Goldsmith** brought his '100 Coaches' programme to Europe. The event, hosted by Henley Centre for Coaching, is part of Goldsmith's legacy project to train 100 coaches across the world in coaching skills, on the commitment they will pay this forward by committing to train others in coaching skills before they retire. Goldsmith's two previous events, both held in the USA, were immensely popular, attracting 16,000 applications for the limited number of places. Places for this event were advertised by both Goldsmith and Henley Centre for Coaching, and 30 participants have been selected from organisations, coaching firms and consultancies. During the event, Marshall will also be launching his new book, *Mastering Executive Coaching*, which is aimed at helping experienced coaches develop their practice to the next level.

MANIFESTO IN COACHING

In May, the 'Manifesto in Coaching' report will be published. This joint report by Henley Centre for Coaching and the Association for Coaching reviews the state of supervision research and calls for the development of supervision within coaching. The report, written by Peter Hawkins, Eve Turner and Jonathan Passmore, aims to raise awareness of coaching supervision research and the potential contribution of supervision and reflection to coach development as supervision moves into its next phase. The launch event is on 15th May in central London (*details and bookings on the AC website*). The report will be freely available at the event to delegates, as well as online from the Henley Centre for Coaching website.

NUCLEUS FINANCIAL'S INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO CULTURE

In the first feature in our New Perspectives section, we hear from David Ferguson, CEO of Nucleus – a fast growing company in the financial services sector – about the unique people culture they have developed.

When we started out as a business thirteen years ago, we set ourselves an ambitious goal – to change financial services for the better. We realised early on we'd have the best chance of doing this if we brought together the brightest, most energetic people we could find, and empowered each of them to make a difference.

Nucleus is essentially a financial technology ('fintech') business, but we look to marry the commercial aspects of being a technology company with the social and cultural aspects of being part of wider society. We do this by viewing the business across three strands. First of all, we have to have a product that people want to buy. Then we have to make money for our shareholders. But we don't believe these two are possible unless we have the right proposition for our people.

We obsess about our product and the technology that underpins it, and there is a big emphasis on transparency and being honest with each other. But it's our people who ultimately drive the success of our business, and so our company culture is built around that one central concept.

There is a big emphasis on transparency and being honest with each other

PRODUCT AND PEOPLE

To understand more about our perspective as a company, it might help to take you back a bit to explain a little more about what we do and why we do it. I started out as a failed actuary, at a time when the prevailing culture in the financial services sector was one dominated by sales. Pension and investment companies called all the shots, and paid commission to financial advisers who sold products to their clients.

We thought it would be infinitely better if the power lay in the hands of advisers and their clients, rather than with the big companies at the top of the food chain. In starting our business, which provides efficiency and transparency by helping advisers and clients manage their pensions and investments in one place, we saw a role for technology in driving and advancing that change.

So we had a clear purpose from the start: to make people's lives better by making their money work better for them. Having that clear purpose makes it easy for our employees to understand what we're trying to do, and to motivate them to achieve this.

For us, our approach to leadership feeds into our overall desire to create an environment where people are equipped and supported to do the best work of their lives. This is underlined by our leadership team's commitment to our people and culture.

Our culture as a business is always evolving, and owned by everyone in the business. It feeds into everything we do. It is based on four key values: accountable, authentic, inspiring and energetic. These core values guide not only how we interact with each other but also with the financial advisers we partner, as well as directly influencing our people and engagement strategy.

At a leadership level, the executive team meets quarterly as part of what we call our 'people group'. Here we discuss delivery against the people strategy and share best practice on how we are carrying out people plans in our respective areas.

HOW WE ENGAGE

It's important to us that everyone owns the culture at Nucleus, and we have a number of channels and formats designed to provide transparent business updates, to listen to everyone's views, and to continually seek feedback and insight on better ways of working.

A regular fixture in people's diaries is our '4.44' meetings, all-company gatherings held every other Friday. These provide a quick update on what we've been up to over the last fortnight as well as what's coming up over the next two weeks. We use an app called Periscope to allow colleagues working remotely either to watch live or catch up at a time that suits them.

On a quarterly basis, we have all-company meetings where we share the company's goals and objectives and our roadmap to achieving and delivering these. The sessions also provide a forum to share the insight we get from our people on what it's like to work for Nucleus.

We get feedback on what we're like as a workplace through the Cultureamp survey tool, which benchmarks attitudes and sentiment at both a team and company level. We then have a network of 'culture leaders': volunteers from each team who work with the people team and their people leaders to make sure the feedback is acted upon.

We hold 'great colleague' awards every quarter, where people nominate the colleagues who best demonstrate our values. This is complemented by an annual 'brilliant people' awards celebrating the four standout people from our company who model our values and serve as role models to others.

While we are mindful there's always more we can do, the data show that we score highly on factors such as being proud to work for Nucleus, having people leaders who care about staff wellbeing, and caring about the impact of our work on our customers. This is just a snapshot of some of the things we do to ensure our culture is embedded into the fabric of our work, with the overall aim of driving great outcomes for financial advisers and their clients.

To summarise, my view is that any business is essentially an agglomeration of people. You can choose to fight that or to respect it. The financial services sector in particular has a track record of adopting the 'command and control' approach, and of being very hierarchical. We wanted to move away from that, and have sought to build a company firmly focused on a people-centric approach. In the end, the more space you give people to thrive and do their best work, the more likely they will be to succeed.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Ferguson co-founded Nucleus in 2006 and has been chief executive since then. Previously a director of Abacus Financial Marketing, he was a trainee actuary with Life Association of Scotland before working at Ivory & Sime and the former Scottish Life International. He has also been a member of Her Majesty's Treasury Fintech Envoy for Scotland since December 2016 and is the current chairman of FinTech Scotland. He has a BSc (Hons) in Actuarial Mathematics and Statistics from Heriot-Watt University.

www.nucleusfinancial.com

JUST COACH! DEVELOPING COACHING SKILLS AT SCALE

Adrian Blair, former Global COO of online food order and delivery service Just Eat, explains how professionals and school pupils can together learn the coaching skills required by the modern workplace.

How do you deliver 500,000 takeaway meals in four hours on an icy Saturday night? How can we give young people the skills they need to succeed at work? For me, 2018 saw a transition from the first to the second of those questions. Building a global leader in digital food ordering showed me the capabilities young people need to thrive in the modern workplace. So, having stopped selling kebabs, I created Circl.org to help professionals and school pupils develop these skills at scale. Let me explain…

WHAT IT TAKES TO BUILD A GREAT BUSINESS

I joined Just Eat as Chief Operating Officer in early 2011 when it was a little-known Danish start-up. Seven intense years later we'd built a FTSE 100 company and 3,000 people had built a network of 100,000 restaurants serving 24 million hungry customers across Australia, Brazil, Mexico, Canada and most of Western Europe. Packing so much growth into a relatively short time meant extreme pressure, but provided an equally powerful learning experience.

The searing lesson was the extent to which a big company with a team of over 100 senior, experienced leaders across the world relies on its front line. Without salespeople adding new restaurants to the network or call centre staff answering the phones, no growth would have been possible. When employers are asked what skills they look for in frontline employees, the same buzzwords repeatedly come up: teamwork; interpersonal skills; communication. But it's important to unpack these buzzwords and ask why employers go to such trouble to recruit the front line in the first place.

The story is one of complementary strengths and weaknesses. A business is, at its core, a combination of three things: expertise, cash and a plan. The stuff the cash buys, combined with knowhow, turns a plan into reality. But that's not the whole story. Senior managers rely on the front line for energy, creativity and adaptability. Hundreds of (often repetitive) tasks need to be conducted in a short time, so frontline staff need the energy and resilience to be able to do this. They need the creativity to challenge the status quo and devise better ways of working, and to adapt quickly to new colleagues, methods and situations.

At Just Eat our field sales teams needed the energy and resilience to get out onto the streets every day for dozens of conversations with takeaway restaurant owners – without getting disheartened when the most common answer was 'no'. Our best call centre staff were creative enough to learn from problems customers were experiencing, and feed ideas for improvement back to the product team. The culture and bottom line were preserved because the best frontline staff were adaptable enough to listen to feedback, learn, evolve their behaviours and develop into team management positions.

So, behind the buzzwords, employers want three qualities from young people which their senior managers often lack: energy, creativity and adaptability. Combined with expertise, cash and a plan, you have the makings of a successful enterprise.

THE SKILL GAP

How might all this relate to coaching? The key realisation for me was that, in practice, energy, creativity and adaptability of the kind employers need are not the same as those needed to pass exams. A positive attitude and habit of hard work are clearly critical for energetic accomplishment of tasks. The confidence to challenge others and the status quo and ability to combine insights across disciplines clearly help with the kind of creativity employers want. A low-ego, emotionally intelligent person demonstrating a growth mindset will be more adaptable and therefore able to accept feedback and progress to management positions. No doubt other readers of this publication will be more qualified than me to unpack energy, creativity and adaptability into underlying beliefs, values and behaviours that can be coached.

Previous generations of school leavers might have succeeded without these qualities, because repetitive jobs where the human touch was an optional extra were plentiful. But the world is changing fast. From taking a restaurant or flight booking to operating a supermarket checkout, technology has already replaced humans. Advances in artificial intelligence in the next 20 years will do the same elsewhere. These are genuinely positive trends for society – given the astonishing capabilities of the human brain – as long as people are properly prepared. But our education system is patently not doing this.

Subject knowledge combined with analytical and written communication skills deliver strong grades, and thus remain the overwhelming focus of cash-starved UK state secondary schools. Meanwhile, the most important ingredients of success at work – energy, creativity and adaptability underpinned by strong interpersonal skills – are not being explicitly coached.

In the last century, young people might have developed many of these skills through interaction with their peers. But today 74% of millennials report spending more time on their phones than with each other. More young people meet their romantic partners online than through any other channel, while 65% don't feel confident communicating face-to-face. They might have energy, creativity and adaptability in an academic, cerebral sense, but to be useful to an employer these qualities only breathe and come to life through interaction with others.

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

The tragedy is that millions of people in businesses are building and demonstrating precisely these qualities every day. But no forum exists to bring them together with school pupils in a constructive way, and at scale.

Circl.org is designed to fill this gap. We train young professionals how to coach others. But rather than stopping there, as conventional corporate training might, we then bring school pupils into the office. Each pupil is paired one-to-one with a professional who coaches them in the interpersonal skills needed to flourish at work. We repeat the process four times over a year with the same set of pupils practising new skills face-to-face with the same professionals each time.

Plenty of training companies exist, and plenty of charities exist which bring business people into schools or vice versa. But Circl is different from anything that has gone before in a number of ways:

- Circl is a for-profit organisation (companies pay full market rates for the training we provide) and thus able to expand rapidly like any successful business, without having to seek donations.
- The coaching is completely free of charge to schools, so there is no barrier for even the most resource-constrained to take part.
- The coaching is carefully developed and structured, so that there is consistency in the offering.

The reception and feedback so far from both companies and schools has been extraordinarily positive. Companies find that as well as helping them develop a coaching culture, it also prepares teams to work with more diverse talent. And it gives employees a stronger sense of social purpose at work (something millennials – the largest section of the workforce – particularly crave). In just six months since launching we're already working with Facebook, Uber, Etsy and many other high-growth technology businesses. We plan to expand in 2019 across industries and geographies.

Just Eat showed me how the modern workplace is changing at an extraordinary pace. How can the education system ready its charges for this moving target? Amazon founder Jeff Bezos advises entrepreneurs to 'focus on the things that don't change' (meaning, for Amazon, vast selection, fast delivery and low prices). If your aim is to prepare young people for work, focusing on the things that don't change means nurturing energy, creativity and adaptability – backed up by the interpersonal

skills to ensure they make an impact. However fast technology continues to advance, these are the things we can be confident employers will continue to want.

The irony is that the digital revolution has with one hand put a premium on these skills in working life, while with the other removed opportunities for young people to practise these in their personal lives. Fortunately, the millennial generation stands ready and willing to help. They are the biggest group in the modern workforce, with a keen desire to give back to society. If their employers offered them a forum to grow themselves while helping school pupils succeed it could really catch fire.

Co-founding Circl.org was my response to this challenge. It's a great concept, growing fast, and we are determined to make an impact.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Over seven years as Just Eat Global COO, Adrian Blair managed a team of 2,000 people across four continents and played an instrumental role in propelling the company from a start-up to the FTSE 100. Before this, he led teams at Spotify and Google in California and London. In 20 years of leadership at high-growth technology businesses, he constantly found that young professionals need management development and meaning in their work. He designed Circl with Charlie Stainforth to deliver both in a unique way, providing real-world experience of coaching diverse talent.

DR DEC'S TEAM COACHING CONUNDRUMS

This second article in our Team Coaching series explores what is meant by team coaching, the market demand for it and the skills required to coach teams effectively.

Team coaching is on the rise. It is widely seen as a growing trend in organisations (Thornton, 2010 in Carr and Peters, 2013; Kets de Vries, 2005; Ridler 2012, 2014, 2016). This is not entirely surprising, since teams are the basic unit of organisation, with strong links to work performance. Put simply, if teams perform, so do organisations (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993; Sharma, Roychowdhury & Verma, 2009).

With this growing focus on teams at work, the means of supporting them are likely to follow. There is some evidence for this, with the latest Ridler Report telling us that 76% of organisations were expecting to see a rise in the use of team coaching in the last two years (Mann, 6th Ridler Report, 2016). Six years ago, firms predicted a 45-65% growth and so the ascendency of team coaching appears to be continuing (Mann, 5th Ridler Report, 2013).

This growth in team coaching is also evidenced by an increased spend by organisations, with the total revenue for coaching services globally estimated to be $2.35bn, and a potential market size for team coaching of $26,437,500 (Mann, 6th Ridler Report, 2016). With this magnitude of spend on team development, it is not surprising that coaches are moving in to meet this demand.

While this all bodes well, there is still widespread confusion about what team coaching is. As far back as 2009, David Clutterbuck pointed out, 'When people and organisations talk about team coaching, they may mean very different things.' Although there have been a few texts written on team coaching since, the literature that is available, while offering high face validity to practitioners, is not particularly informed by research, nor strongly evidence based (Thornton, 2010; Hawkins, 2011; Clutterbuck, 2009) leading Wotruba (2016) to describe the team coaching literature as 'messy'. Given this dearth of empirical evidence, many of the claims made about team coaching can only be considered to be speculative, personal opinions. With published team coaching research moving at glacial speed, it is not surprising that team coaching practice has moved ahead of the available literature. This has led to team coaches being left largely to their own devices to determine what good team coaching looks like.

There is neither a widely agreed or accepted definition of team coaching, nor a single or common set of standards for team coaching practice (Thornton, 2010; Hawkins, 2011; Clutterbuck, 2009; Lawrence & Whyte, 2017). This is about to change, however, with the professional coaching bodies (including the author) actively working on a set of industry coaching competencies to be completed in late 2019. Without the clarity this work will bring, 'team coaching' remains an umbrella concept covering a wide range of practices including team building, team facilitation, reflective practice groups and action learning sets and the like. The result: there is significant confusion among organisational buyers of team coaching and practitioners alike about what constitutes team coaching and good practice.

Why is this lack of clarity significant? It is important because it is generally accepted practice that coaching starts with the coach understanding a client's requirements, reaching agreement on how the coaching will meet these, and contracting for their role in this (see, for example, Woods & Cumberland, 2016). In turn, this matters because when coaches are not clear on their roles they can find themselves:

- Unintentionally taking on roles that belong to the team. Examples include note-taking, time-keeping, and charting and tracking progress against plans and towards goals.
- Moving out of coaching mode into consulting or advising. Examples here might include training the team on teaming skills or instructing them on how to go about their work.
- Taking on full responsibility for team performance including holding team members to account for actions and results. This rather leaves the team leader redundant!

Adopting some of these roles is not unexpected, as current literature actually points coaches in these directions. For example, some commonly cited definitions of team coaching include:

- 'Helping the team improve performance, and the processes by which performance is achieved, through reflection and dialogue.' (Clutterbuck, 2007)
- 'Coaching a team to achieve a common goal, paying attention both to individual performance and to group collaboration and performance.' (Thornton, 2010)
- 'A process of working with the whole team, together and apart. Coaching them to collaborate and develop their collective leadership in order to achieve their common purpose and performance objectives…' (Leary-Joyce & Lines, 2018).

None of these roles or activities is inherently bad or wrong – they are just not particularly team coaching! Core (individual) coaching competencies, including contracting, listening, asking forward-moving questions and providing direct feedback and communication, can all too easily be forgotten or downplayed when working with a team. Let's bring more coaching back into our work with teams.

While the demand for team coaching has arrived, my own research interviewing experienced team coaches concluded that it is 'Not for the faint hearted' (Woods, 2014). Even highly trained, individually accredited and experienced team coaches can be fazed by teams. Those coaches interviewed considered their team coach training to be inadequate, leaving them ill prepared for the complicated task of working with teams.

Given the demand for team coaching, how can a practitioner prepare themselves to coach a team?

- Firstly, until the empirical research on team coaching catches up, it matters less perhaps what the texts say about team coaching. It is more important that a team coach is able to offer their own definition of team coaching and articulate their approach to a prospective client.
- Secondly, as well as having a definition of 'team' and 'team coaching', coaches would benefit from having a view about what constitutes an effective team – and how to go about gauging this. It is important to use a research-based tool to do this.
- Thirdly, using the core principles of (individual) coaching when working with a team. These are often neglected and include careful and on-going contracting, active listening, asking powerful questions and providing direct communication to raise a team's awareness.

What additional skills and competencies are needed to coach teams? While work to determine these is still emerging, the following seem to be particularly relevant in my own team coaching practice:

- Creating and building psychological safety and protection between coach and team, and across the team.
- Actively building relationships (with individual team members and the whole team) and forming a working alliance.
- Encouraging reflection, dialogue and exchange between team members.

If a team is truly to become more than the sum of its parts, it would benefit from strengthening the connectivity between members. The medium for this is dialogue and team relationships – and this starts with the team coach modelling this. If you wish to capitalise on the rise of team coaching, practise effective relating. Go to it!

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The next column will look at the process of team coaching – the journey a client team progresses through.
To prepare for this, reflect on the following questions:

- What is your team coaching 'offer' – your process of team coaching?
- Which elements of this process are core and compulsory, and which optional?
- What are your critical conditions (as Coach) for successful team coaching outcomes?

Let us know your answers and thoughts by emailing **editor@associationforcoaching.com** or the author: **declan.woods@zpdconsulting.co.uk**.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Declan Woods coaches CEOs, C-suite executives and leadership teams and leads ZPD – the board level consulting company. Declan is a Chartered/Registered Psychologist and the first AC accredited Master Executive Coach. He has Master's degrees in psychology from Cambridge and INSEAD universities, an Executive MBA, and carried out doctoral research on team dysfunction. He was the AC's inaugural Global Head of Standards and Accreditation and honoured as an AC Fellow. Declan created Middle Circle® for Teams – the leading team effectiveness diagnostic tool.

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NAVIGATING THE TRANSITION BETWEEN CAREER AND FAMILY LIFE

Executive and maternity coach Melanie Fry explains how there are few transitions in life as fundamental as having a family and continuing to manage a career.

As the Michael Rosen children's story, *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*[1], says: 'You can't go over, under or around it, you have to go through it.' And it's the impact of having children, regardless of how they arrive in parents' lives, that presents a conflict of identity and a juggle of 'who to be' in various scenarios.

The raw emotion of 'Am I doing well enough?' appears at every stage before and after children arrive. This can be magnified by myriad other practical issues and sensitive, privately managed scenarios. Health histories, pregnancy challenges and childhood illnesses can all add to the emotional voltage of managing a career. For those who do not have children, unsatisfied maternal drive can also raise its own challenges, which cannot be underestimated, later in life.

SMOOTH THE WAY

Coach Jennifer Liston-Smith of the consultancy My Family Care asserts that maternity coaching serves to normalise the transition and to hold up to the client that their professional self is still there and still capable, alongside their new identity as a parent[2].

Coaching can support the client to find confidence and inner wisdom and to develop personal success strategies. The coaching partnership helps to champion talents, and to encourage and support the person to shine in their work and home identities. I agree that as coaches we are 'the radiator... in the room'[3]; that is, we have an effect and influence by simply being present. We interact as coaches from our own systemic perspective and experience. Having children since becoming a coach I am fortunate to be able to work flexibly, while as both a professional maternity coach and parent I am able to understand both perspectives equally. Balancing coach empathy and acknowledgment is a fine art; I find that there is deeper understanding to be gained by metaphorically peeling an onion with clients, surfacing inscrutable emotions, and enabling clients to articulate and understand their own, profound experiences.

Being able to own your actions and energy nurtures resilience when the pressure is on at work or home. Finding that right balance between your own career motivation, feelings of personal satisfaction and success is a constantly changing landscape of children, finances, school and home life. Coaching parents through transitions to be creative with their time and resources helps to reconcile 'wanting it all', by defining this not perfectly, but credibly. At this stage, enabling parents to understand their innate values is key to a sense of perspective of the what, when and how.

HELP! I AM ABOUT TO TAKE TIME OUT OF MY CAREER

Temporarily leaving a successful and enjoyable career to take maternity leave can result in a loss of professional identity. At this stage, coaching is sensibly focused on understanding underlying beliefs around trust and self-assurance to comprehensively consider options, while the impact of the underlying corporate culture must also be borne in mind.

Various studies show that employers often lose highly qualified women within the first two years of return after maternity. Maternity coaching in the UK began around 2005, mainly in London's major law firms, with the initial aim of addressing problems of retention at female partner level, and also to support equal career development opportunities.

Since becoming widely available to both women and men across different business sectors and managerial levels over the past fourteen years, 'maternity' coaching now encompasses support for a wide range of parenting and family configurations, and for adoptive leave also.

Employers are the main providers, often paying a recognised company to provide specialist one-to-one support before, during and after leave.

This coaching is reported to help returning mothers manage their expectations and aspirations, and to support them in re-setting their work-life balance and re-engaging with their careers. There is, however, limited information available about its longer-term impact on career development and flexible working practices. In addition, research could usefully evaluate any increases in employee loyalty and diversity, as well as success in sustaining the female talent pipeline.

I frequently hear of clients' 'fear of missing out', not being physically present and part of what happens at work. Losing the daily routine of dressing for work, commuting, having team interaction and social flexibility can be daunting. Parental leave is not a holiday, and although there is excitement, this is mixed with trepidation. Parents often worry about continuing their career, managing working hours, money and childcare.

DURING LEAVE

Regardless of how dedicated you are to your career, there is an immediate practical balance to achieve once the new child arrives. The change to the family structure is all-consuming, and the baby is ever present and takes centre stage. Coaching helps unravel this tangle of the ball of life, enabling parents both to be authentic and to evolve into their new roles, and coaching support for new parents on leave is frequently a practical exploration aiming to build confidence in what they do, to enjoy time away from work and to find inspiration in the experience of parenting itself.

As the return to work date draws nearer, conversations shift to reconnecting with previous career values and objectives. Throughout the coaching sessions, I encourage new parents to be kind to themselves on their new learning journey. We role-play difficult conversations and identify positive, practical action plans for the client's re-integration into their career. Once back at work, reviewing these plans helps to minimise the worry and guilt experienced by many returners.

RETURN TO WORK AND IDENTITY

The organisational culture and corporate commitment to flexible working will affect the amount of pressure experienced on returning to work. The transition can result in loss of confidence, status and meaning. Although women are typically the primary caregivers, fathers, too, are just as likely as mothers to say that parenting is extremely important to their identity[4]. At this stage, issues over role clarity and progression on return can dominate coaching conversations, especially if there have been changes to the organisational structure during the parent's leave.

Creating confidential coaching space and time to evaluate practical considerations after they return to work can enhance clients' understanding of their skills and capabilities. I have found that reflecting with clients about career visibility and gravitas elevates these. Returning parents appreciate opportunities to highlight challenges and focus attention on what has improved. Frequently parents come to realise that being courageous and sharing a child-career challenge is about learning that everyone has issues and that the many frustrations that accompany them are normal.

FINDING A WAY

The process of change is what really underpins having children and managing a career, regardless of the time you devote to each. Progressing up the competence ladder involves creating the impetus to manage working time around school hours and holidays while still maintaining performance. Coaching is a valuable tool to reassess the here and now, moving forward confidently. Successful transition involves making decisions about situations involving others, and depends on the client's own judgement, timing and values, as well as the realisation that 'work-life balance' is simply life itself, reflected in all its aspects as a peacock displays its array of colourful feathers, as systemic coach John Whittington has commented[5].

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Melanie Fry previously worked in HR, dealing with organisational change, transition and expatriate careers before qualifying as an executive coach. She is committed to maintaining confidence, visibility and career momentum, supporting clients to own and actively manage choices. Using NLP to complement her coaching, she helps clients appreciate changes in identity, recognise their values and consolidate their strengths. Her thought-provoking and adaptable coaching approach promotes taking a strategic perspective to development and managing a career with life changes.

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Life's transitions through sport and education

Staying true to deep values of spiritual integrity and to contributing to society are the foundations of Olympian David Hemery's life, his sporting success and his coaching achievements. He shares his story with ***Coaching Perspectives*** Editor Hetty Einzig.

Until he was ten years old David Hemery had never heard a radio or seen a television or been to the cinema. David was one of four children brought up by parents who belonged to a strict Christian order, the Plymouth Brethren. The family lived in a kindly but isolated world – 'I could never bring a friend home from school. Religion coloured my view of everything. But,' he explained, 'we just accepted this as normal.' His father, however, did not. When David was ten, his parents took the momentous step to leave the Brethren (a protracted and painful process of severing all ties with their community and friends) moving from London first to Frinton-on-Sea in Essex and then, unexpectedly, to the USA. A brilliant accountant, David's father was invited to become finance director of the then prominent Billy Graham Evangelical Christian crusades operation in the US. In this fair and democratic family, the Hemery children were consulted about going: there was a unanimous yes! Since a priority for the Hemerys was their children's education, after David's father had set up a new financial system in Colorado Springs, Boston became their destination and a whole new world opened up.

This first transition was the biggest, and set Hemery up for the many transitions he would make throughout his life. 'It was very difficult for me. At fourteen I was still small – five foot three and weighing only six stone – with a squeaky, English voice. I was dyslexic and cross-lateral (right handed but kicking a ball with either foot and hurdling with a leading left leg) and very shy. I was called a "zilch" at summer camp as I was tiny, thin and wiry! I had poor grades, so the only place I could prove myself was on the sports field. I have needed to prove myself all my life – which is why I've ended up with four degrees!' Hemery discovered a talent for football, scoring an average of two goals a game and then, suddenly, aged fifteen, he grew a massive nine inches in one year, reaching six foot; by university David was six foot two inches tall, but weighed only twelve stone. This height : weight ratio, along with his cross-lateralism, became important advantages in his chosen sport: 400m hurdles.

When Hemery was seventeen, his father left his lucrative career to bring the family back to the UK, where Hemery discovered the hurdles coach Fred Housden. Hemery counts this as the second important transition in his life. 'Fred transformed me: I was able to translate his insight into action. He had a camera for an eye and was extraordinarily patient. From the first tip he gave me I ran ten metres faster in the next race.' Sport had become Hemery's passion. But this passion wasn't appreciated in the UK culture, while his brother and younger sister now met with jibes about their American accents. Having hoped to forge a new career as a vicar in the UK, Hemery senior took the family back to the USA, where it was difficult for him to find a job; the family went from being rich to very poor as the father slowly built his own business. This key transition marked them all and cemented a strong work ethic in the Hemery children.

Accepted at Boston University, where he worked to pay his way and achieve a degree in business administration, Hemery counts his third key transition as being spotted by the 'great Billy Smith' – the most well-read and intuitive coach he ever met. 'He told me he read my energy levels before designing my training session. Now before any session I ask all my athletes to score their energy on a scale of 1 to 10. If it's low there is no point in introducing something tough.' Billy Smith coached individuals, not 'GB or USA'. Smith worked only part-time at Boston U, as his passion was to nurture talent in high schools. He told Hemery: 'I can get them free education if I can get them good enough in track and field.' It was Smith who insisted that Hemery focus on only one sport – athletics – and who coached him to world competition level.

Hemery is reticent, almost dismissive, about the following period of tremendous sporting success. His only comment about his famous 400m hurdles win at the 1968 summer Olympics was that it 'was a dream come true'. He set a new world record of 48.12 seconds. His margin of victory was the largest since 1924. Hemery went on to win more medals during this period. But, he warns, 'always have a Plan B': Hemery has a teacher training degree from Oxford ('But no one ever mentioned the power of asking questions!'), which he fitted around his athletics training, moving back and forth between the US and the UK.

Hemery's modesty, combined with a gentle humour, are his signature characteristics, certainly contributing to his being crowned UK Sports Personality of the Year in 1968. This tribute reminds us that it is as much Hemery's dedication to the growth of others, and his generosity of spirit, as his sporting successes that have continued to inspire others. Hemery went into sports politics, becoming president of UK Athletics, and in 1969 he was awarded an MBE followed by a CBE* in 2003 for contributions to British sport.

The early 1970's found him training again with Billy Smith, now at Harvard. 'This was a bad time for me: there was no balance in my life. Billy left my training schedule up to me. But I overdid it, contracting a low-grade virus and some injuries. There was no emotion and no spirit in it all.' Billy's comment was to get a wife and a life! 'He was right,' adds Hemery. 'To fulfil your potential you need to have all four elements – physical, emotional, mental and spiritual, but I couldn't see that then.' When, at the 1972 summer Olympics in Munich Hemery came third, he felt he had let everyone down. It was time to activate that Plan B and focus on teaching – a core passion for him. Hemery, now 28, was asked to write his autobiography. 'At 28!' he laughs.

* MBE (Member of the British Empire) and CBE (Commander of the British Empire) are among the awards for outstanding achievement conferred by the British Crown.

Returning to Boston U to write, he enjoyed one of his happiest times, enjoying seven years as Head Track Coach and teaching sports psychology. In 1981 Hemery married Vivian with whom he had two sons, Adrian, born in 1982, and Pete in 1984.

Back in the UK, meeting renowned business coach John Whitmore around 1988 and entering the world of business was the fourth big transition in Hemery's life. Hemery found a fellow traveller in Whitmore, with many connections in common: a spiritual approach, and the inspiration of Tim Gallwey and his concept of the *Inner Game.* Gallwey had been Head Tennis Coach at Harvard in the 1960's and had studied Buddhist meditation. 'We believed in engaging in self-discovery – not common in those days in either sport or business!' It was a shock moving into this world and learning a 'new language,' but in some ways a natural follow-on. 'Moving into business was still about unlocking potential. Our intention was: yes, you will do better financially if you involve others in making decisions that affect them. We were raising awareness and responsibility. This was the cornerstone of all our work.' Together Hemery and Whitmore tried to persuade business people to focus on sustainability rather than profit at all costs.

I asked Hemery for his thoughts on the wider challenges and transitions the world is going through now, and his views on what is needed to face these.

'We are going through a significant time of transition. There are challenges to many, if not most, large institutions. Capitalism has driven money and power into fewer and fewer hands (even though many are better off globally); education in its repetitive form is boring our children who see it as largely irrelevant; pollution is reaching almost every area of the world; technology is running ahead of values and artificial intelligence is considered by some to be the greatest threat to humanity. Many people rely too much on drugs for their health. Rather than trying to hold on to what was, these times require us to look at what is causing dis-ease and what we would like to become.'

Hemery believes that coaching can be a perfect tool to get people to think, 'although it is still not widely understood. Coaches could be prompting all of us to become more aware and to take greater personal responsibility for our choices and contributions.'

Setting up 21st Century Legacy in 2008 was a natural sixth transition. Hemery was by now vice-chairman of the British Olympic Association and helped win the bid to host the 2012 Olympics in London. Following his successful careers in sports and business coaching, Hemery brought his skills and depth approach back into education, by 2018 reaching a quarter of a million young people in the UK with his holistic programme 'Be the Best you Can Be'. 'How can we help young people think more deeply and aim higher? Firstly, by enhancing the listening and effective questioning skills of teachers. We bring a coaching approach, helping them to balance "asking" and listening with "telling", informing, encouraging and giving feedback.' Also key to the programme's success is a focus on the four pillars of resilience:

- physical health and strength
- fostering a positive mental attitude
- finding supporters
- building a spiritual and moral compass, making a contribution

There remains a spiritual underpinning to everything Hemery does. 'I see myself as a spirit with a body. This body is just a vehicle so the question was: how do we get this body into shape – to be the best it can be?' Considering Hemery's early life, it comes as no surprise when he adds: 'I always pushed for that personal best – almost obsessively – and to make a contribution to society.'

Does the coaching profession need to adapt in light of the challenges the world faces? I asked. 'Unfortunately coaching has been used to drive for more profit from fewer people… My request would be that coaches look at the need for integrity and sustainability. Many see that eventually our big systems will collapse and a lack of personal responsibility and accountability could kill us both metaphorically and physically. What questions should coaches be asking? They are often in a more detached position so able to challenge thinking. The risk we face is killing the goose that is providing us with golden handcuffs,'** Hemery adds. 'What would you like to be able to say about your use of coaching when you retire? How much might we regret not standing up for what we know is needed? How strong and resilient are we able to be?'

Recent government cut-backs and a measurement focus on numeracy and literacy in education have caused reductions to school budgets for art, sports, music and drama – which is dispiriting for Hemery. 'We need to help people become rounded individuals – it's a devastating situation. In all aspects of life we need to start with the bigger vision – only then will

** This sentence combines two well-known English sayings: 'killing the goose that laid the golden egg', refers to the idiocy of killing off one's source of income; and the idea of 'golden handcuffs' to describe a job or situation that is so lucrative and comfortable that one is 'handcuffed' or imprisoned by it, losing one's power to challenge the system.

people truly cooperate.' Coaching can make a significant contribution here. 'In all institutions a larger vision and mission needs to be discussed, aligning energy towards progressing in all areas of challenge.'

Hemery concludes on a characteristically positive and inspiring note: 'No one is claiming that this will be easy. However, it's an exciting time to be alive and as coaches we have the opportunity to prompt big questions to the powerful, and make the small contribution. It is after all,' he reminds us, 'the tiny "trim-tab" on the rudder of huge tankers that actually turns the vessel!'

ABOUT DAVID HEMERY

Dr David Hemery CBE is a former Olympic champion and world record holder in the 400m hurdles, and three times winner of Superstars. He has been an athletics coach, and taught sports psychology and management development. He has been a company director, chair of school governors, motivational speaker and written four books. Hemery was President of UK Athletics and Vice Chairman of the British Olympic Association, then founded the charity 21st Century Legacy to bring coaching to teachers and young people, and a greater focus to physical and mental health and wellbeing.

ABOUT HETTY EINZIG

Hetty brings over 25 years of psychology and executive coaching experience to global corporate culture change and leadership development, with a key focus on women's leadership and coaching for contribution. She holds a Masters in Organisation Consulting and is a certified coaching supervisor. Hetty is Editor of *Coaching Perspectives*, the AC global magazine. Her latest book, *The Future of Coaching: vision, leadership and responsibility in a transforming world*, was published by Routledge in 2017.

COACHING EMPLOYEES WHO ARE INVISIBLE CAREGIVERS

Shiri Ben-Arzi, founder and CEO of the Medical Coaching Institute, describes the Institute's approach to helping caregivers deal with chronic stress and build resilience.

When we think about health disruptions in the workplace, we tend to think of employees who are diagnosed with an acute or chronic health condition and the implications of that on their work performance. We might extend this to employees returning from sick leave or facing redundancy due to a medical condition.

There is an additional group of employees whose lives and work are affected by health disruptions; these are employees who are or have become caregivers. Being a caregiver means that there is a family member for whom you provide care for and help with activities of daily living. The term 'caregiving' is commonly used to address issues related to illness, disability, old age or a mental disorder.

Part of understanding the experience of being a caregiver is being aware that this group experience extremely high levels of stress that can result in what is known as 'Caregiver Stress Syndrome' or 'Compassion Fatigue'. Both are extreme versions of burnout due to chronic stress. This type of stress is 'invisible' to the workplace because it is rarely addressed due to social stigma and culture.

Chronic stress is different from the *acute* stress that appears as a short-term reaction to a specific stressor. Although acute stress might be an unpleasant experience, our neurology, psychology and physiology know how to cope with it; in the right context this type of stress can create motivation and peak performance. Chronic stress, however, appears as a result of continuing exposure to one or more unresolved stressors. Over time, the high levels in the body of the hormone cortisol create a chemical imbalance which affects us on four levels:

1. **Physical:** affecting the physical functions of our organs in various ways such as blood pressure, heart rate, body temperature and breathing rate.
2. **Emotional:** affecting the endocrine system, causing emotional fluctuations and mood swings.
3. **Behavioural:** the effect on the endocrine system results in emotional fluctuations that in turn cause various changes in behavioural responses, such as loss of interest, irritability, depressive states and nervousness.
4. **Cognitive:** affecting the brain's neurotransmitters, which results in various symptoms such as confusion, distortions in perception and difficulty in judgement.

When combining the stress of being a caregiver with daily work-related stress, the result is extremely distressed employees who, if not supported, will at some point exhibit extreme symptoms of burnout.

According to AARP Public Policy[1], 25% of the millennials in the workforce today are caregivers for a sick child, sick spouse, ageing parent or grandparent. This means that business and corporate coaches are likely to be already coaching employees and executives who are struggling with additional chronic stress due to the challenges of balancing caregiving and work responsibilities. In addition to the potential of burnout, these issues can sabotage coaching by undermining the client's ability to achieve goals and also by compromising the sustainability of the client's achievements.

Our responsibility as coaches is to have the ability to recognise, address and coach our clients through their caregiving challenges and stressors in addition to the challenges and stressors they cope with in the workplace.

MEDICAL COACHING

One way to address these challenges is through Medical Coaching. This is a methodology that enables clients to develop emotional, mental and physical *resilience* is a medical or health crisis or challenge. From a Medical Coaching perspective, resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or other significant sources of stress — such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems, or workplace and financial stressors.

Practically speaking, resilience means 'bouncing back' from difficult experiences. The operative meaning for us as coaches is:

1. Being resilient does not mean that a person does not experience difficulty, distress, emotional pain or sadness.
2. Resilience involves behaviours, thoughts and actions.
3. Resilience is not a trait that people either have or do not have. It can be learned and developed in anyone.
4. Resilience leads to agency.

The Medical Coaching Institute definition of stress is: '… a physical and physiological response to a stressor that makes us change the way we normally react and think.'[2]

From this definition we can derive the following:

- A stressor can be an event, a place, an image, a sound, a sensation, a memory, a thought, a smell or a taste.
- A stressor can be a positive event as well as a negative event – for example a wedding or pregnancy.
- A stressor can be external and internal.
- Stressors are subjective and individual.
- What might be a stressor for one client might not be a stressor for another.
- A person's reaction to a stressor derives from the way that person perceives the stressor.
- The connection between stress and illness is a 'two-way street': stress causes illness and illness causes stress.
- There is no 'right' way to cope with stress. Any coping approach needs to be aligned with the client's inner narrative, values and belief system.

When coaching a client who is experiencing chronic stress, we must remember five important points that are extremely relevant to the coaching process:

1. Chronic stress does not happen overnight, and reversing chronic stress is a process that takes time.
2. To create sustainable results, we need to address the client's challenges with adherence (ability to follow advice).
3. Chronic stress can 'disguise' itself as depression, anxiety, ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and even PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder).
4. For caregivers, the stressors are an integral part of their role. There is no medical solution that will end them.
5. The experience of 'Caregiver Stress Syndrome' is similar to the experience of living with an 'invisible illness'.

The Medical Coaching Institute structure for coaching clients through chronic stress has four stages:

1. Identifying the specific stressors.
2. Adjusting the emotional reaction to the stressors.
3. Identifying relevant resources and creating new resilient behaviours.
4. Establishing a self-care routine.

You do not need to be a medical coach to work with this structure. Follow the principle of the four stages and use the tools, techniques, knowledge and experience you already have.

As workplace stress is reaching levels of a health epidemic, and achieving the desired work-life balance is growing more challenging by the day, it is our professional and even moral obligation to raise awareness of the challenges that caregiving employees face every day. We owe it to these clients to know how to coach their unique needs and help them develop resilience for the sake of their own wellbeing, the wellbeing of the people they care for and the humanity of our corporations.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Shiri Ben-Arzi is the Founder and CEO of MCI – Medical Coaching Institute. Over the past fifteen years, Shiri has worked with international leading pharmaceutical companies, medical organisations and hospitals including MSD, GSK, TEVA, Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline, Sanofi, the Israeli Ministry of Health and many more. Shiri's vision is to facilitate change in the medical system through medical coaching and communicational skills, adherence, resilience and medical leadership training.

1. https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/ppi/2018/05/millennial-family-caregivers.pdf
2. https://medical-coaching-institute.com/

CONSTRUCTIVE STEPS TOWARDS RECOVERY

George Athorn describes how his knowledge of a personal development tool proved vital as he faced the greatest transition of his life.

It was my birthday. I was lying in bed contemplating being 48. However, this was not just any bed. Seven days earlier, I had walked into the Radcliffe Infirmary in Oxford, England for tests. Their best neurological consultants now told me they could not locate the tangle of blood vessels in my spine which resulted in my being paralysed from the waist down. There was no surgical treatment that could be offered. I now had a tube through my stomach from my bladder which was slowly filling a catheter bag. I might never walk again.

A management training consultant, I faced the greatest transition of my life. Being familiar with 'the change curve', I decided not to waste time in denial or grieving. After all, there was no one to blame or get mad with. My condition affects less than one in six million people in the United Kingdom. I knew the medical team had done their best. It was up to me to get on with life despite the many frustrations ahead.

I won't bore you with the day-to-day battles I faced. Instead, I want to talk about strategy: I chose to use the Constructive Styles from Human Synergistics' Life Style Inventory (LSI). I have used the tool in my work for many years, but my personal situation provided an acid test.

The Human Synergistics Life Styles Inventory™ was researched and developed by Robert A. Cooke PhD and J. Clayton Lafferty PhD.

The Life Styles Inventory (LSI) is an individual development tool that uses both self-assessment and colleague feedback to identify individual thinking and behavioural styles. By providing insights into strengths and areas for development, it empowers people to embark on their own journeys to being better at, and enjoying more, everything they do.

The tool identifies twelve behaviour clusters and measures 20 behaviours in each cluster. The twelve clusters are sorted into three styles:

- Constructive Styles: Achievement, Self-actualizing, Humanistic-Encouraging, Affiliative
- Passive-Defensive Styles: Approval, Conventional, Dependent, Avoidance
- Aggressive-Defensive Styles: Oppositional, Power, Competitive, Perfectionistic

The goal is always to strive to perform with more constructive styles, more often and at a greater quality level.

Designed for managers, leaders, students, and those in professional and technical roles, the LSI has helped millions of people to understand and change the way they think and behave. It has been referenced in numerous management and psychology books and journals, as well as in newspapers – including *The Wall Street Journal*.

Humanistic-Encouraging: As a trainer, humanistic-encouraging behaviours are easy for me. I was determined not to sink into self-pity. 'It cannot be true. They must be able do something,' was the most common reaction to my news. All the people around me needed my support, which I offered by:

- Comforting my family whilst they dealt with their own shock and the denial of others.
- Teaching some of the hospital staff, who lacked experience, how to use computer software and how I did self-catheterisation!
- Being a good example for other patients and their relatives so they could see a way to come to terms with their own circumstances.
- Helping overseas members of staff gain confidence speaking English.

Affiliative: During times of need, high affiliative behaviour really pays back – not that one should necessarily keep score. I cannot count the number of supportive actions – visits, cards and phone calls – from friends, family and colleagues. You get back what you give out. People's kindness truly amazed me. Similarly, affiliative behaviour can be nothing but helpful when dealing with new people (fellow patients, doctors and staff). In a hospital ward there is little personal space, so it is important to get on with the people around you. I did this in a number of ways:

- Playing noughts and crosses with a memory-loss patient, to give others in the ward a break.
- Opening plastic shrink-wrapped cheese and biscuits for a stroke patient who only had the use of one hand.
- Being pleasant to people who helped me, always saying thank you.
- Seeing the funny side of the situations I found myself in.

Self-actualizing: I find this the most difficult area to work in and yet the most beneficial. Over the years I have completed enough psychometric tests to understand myself reasonably well. My LSI tendencies are passive-defensive, especially avoidance and approval. People around me were desperate to help, and it would have been incredibly easy to say 'pity me' and exploit the situation. I strove to be independent. I accepted the current reality, taking one step at a time and making the best of the situation by:

- Allowing myself to be taken to public places without worrying what people might think.
- Turning myself over in bed: a small but critical task to avoid pressure sores.
- Washing, shaving and dressing myself, which maintained my personal pride but mostly my sense of independence.
- Forcing myself and the hospital staff to push the limits, especially during physiotherapy, with surprising results.
- Going unaided to the hospital canteen to get little treats as rewards for achievements.

In hospital, the greatest battle all patients face is to avoid the passive-defensive cluster of behaviours. The system drives us to be *conventional*, become institutionalised, just do as we are told. It would have been easy to become over-*dependent* – similar to 'learned helplessness'.* Being self-actualising meant I took responsibility, tried not to use *avoidance* behaviours and did not blame anyone – including myself. Interestingly, the more independent I have become, the more *approval* I have gained. This new-found sense of worth is based on what I have done. As always, 'Actions speak louder than words.'

Achievement: This is the most challenging area for me. One of my Belbin Team Roles[1] is *Plant*. I like having ideas, but lack follow-through. Because I am self-employed, my overarching goal was getting back to work. I couldn't 'think' myself out of a wheelchair, so to achieve my goal I needed careful planning. I set short-term SMART goals, a classic application of the 'ant eating an elephant' technique. I found that it is critical to be REALISTIC.

* Psychological concept, made famous by Martin Seligman's experiments with dogs: the perceived absence of agency that can follow repeated painful experiences; possibly a cause of clinical depression.

Here are some of the goals I achieved:

- Learn to use a sliding board by the end of week one in order to get out of bed into my wheelchair unaided.
- Transfer to the rehabilitation unit within four weeks to establish links with the social services in my home area.
- Learn to transfer in and out of cars after six weeks to enable me to go home for weekends. (This had the additional benefit of allowing friends to take me out for pub lunches!)
- Various physiotherapy goals, too numerous to mention but all critical to my plan.

There are many situations that could have easily been resolved by pressing the call button; instead I used creative problem-solving:

- Finding the best way to get my shoes on. (The first time I tried, it took me 20 minutes, and I caught my leg on the valve of my catheter bag – with obvious results!)
- Volunteering to create worksheets for the staff using the computer, rather than spending time in Occupational Therapy on non-value-adding tasks such as sanding blocks.

My ability to re-plan and be flexible was essential. Originally, I had aimed to be out of hospital and at home in my wheelchair within seven weeks. Just before that deadline, I spontaneously began to get more movement in my legs. I decided to spend another six weeks in hospital. During that time, with some rapid recovery I re-learned to:

- Stand up safely, which makes a huge difference when reaching for things.
- Walk with a Zimmer frame, each day going further than before.
- Climb stairs, which avoided costly alterations to my home and best of all allowed me to sleep in my own bed!
- Put my own wheelchair into the boot of a car so that I can travel independently.
- Use intermittent self-catheterisation instead of a bag.

OUTCOMES

My strategy and behaviours worked. I was discharged from hospital after thirteen weeks, which meant I could spend Christmas with my family (another of my goals). At home, I took sole responsibility for my personal care, so I was not a burden to my family. I also performed many of the tasks I had undertaken before my illness, such as cooking and (online) grocery shopping. By relieving my family of chores, my contribution was beneficial to them.

NEXT STEPS

I use a wheelchair most of the time, but I am walking more on crutches. With daily, self-imposed physiotherapy I am building up strength and stamina. I have visited some of my customers to plan future projects and find solutions to access issues. I can drive my own car – using manual gears – giving me greater independence. Most importantly, I am still applying the principles of constructive lifestyles. With more SMART goals, I hope to be working again – less than five months after being discharged from hospital.

FOOTNOTE

I am also catching up on some reading. *Still Me* and *Nothing's Impossible* by Christopher Reeve are very thought-provoking for someone in my situation. Apart from the obvious parallel, if you study the way that he behaved you find that he was operating almost entirely within the *constructive* cluster. His actions were of course high-profile. But there is a little bit of Superman in all of us, as demonstrated by my own case study.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

For over 20 years, George Athorn enjoyed management, leadership and training roles in blue chip companies and voluntary organisations. As a Management Advisor with The Industrial Society and as European Training Manager for Raychem, thousands of people participated in high quality development programmes designed and delivered by George. Following a recent further deterioration in his health, George retired, but supports the company he founded, Options With Learning Ltd, which is run by his partner, Carole Thelwall-Jones.

1. https://www.belbin.com/belbin-for-teams/

A NEW FRONTIER IN THE WORLD OF SPORT

Joe Davis, Head of Sport and Performance Psychology at RocheMartin, explains how emotional intelligence training can enhance athletes performance under pressure and support them during transitions.

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) training has been implemented for many years within the corporate world to improve a range of performance-related outcomes, and more recently to enhance employee wellbeing. But the practical power of the framework has yet to be comprehensively explored and applied to good effect within the world of sport.

Developing competencies such as self-awareness, self-confidence, resilience and focus enhances people's ability to perform optimally under pressure and work more effectively within team environments. But perhaps a less publicised benefit of building EQ, particularly in sport, is its potential to equip people with a skillset that will support them as they transition into their next challenge. Whether you are an elite athlete transitioning into retirement or a young aspiring athlete who doesn't make it as a professional, developing social and emotional skills will help you adapt and thrive in your new environment.

EQ essentially involves two parts: first, becoming aware of how emotions in ourselves and others drive behaviours, and second, developing the skills to manage these emotions intelligently, so as to leverage our personal strengths.

Within pressurised performance environments emotions run high, and those individuals who are equipped to recognise, understand and regulate them ultimately are best placed to perform optimally when under pressure. Athletes who have well-developed emotional skills are able to maintain confidence, demonstrate resilience in the face of adversity and sustain laser-like focus during the heat of competition.

'High performance is about managing emotions so that people can perform at their best under pressure' – Sir Dave Brailsford (General Manager, Team Sky)

Self-confidence and resilience are just two of the emotional skills within our sports-specific model of emotional intelligence, but how do they work? And how can athletes develop them and thus increase their chances of unlocking their potential, or transitioning successfully into life after sport?

SELF-CONFIDENCE

Self-confidence is the emotional component of an athlete's personality and the most important factor in determining how they think, feel and behave. Emotionally intelligent athletes accept, like and respect themselves as people aside from their athletic prowess.

The other component of self-confidence is self-*competence* – a feeling of being on top of a situation and possessing the skills and resources to manage life's challenges.

HOW CAN ATHLETES BUILD IT?

- Self-confidence comes from within and is fundamentally a relationship that you develop with yourself. How you feel about yourself is within your control. By altering the internal beliefs of the mind, athletes can change the outer aspects of their lives.
- This involves replacing unhelpful self-talk with a positive, constructive narrative. Over time, this helps to bend internal beliefs about your ability to perform at a high level and maintains energy levels.

Understanding and developing self-confidence is often what separates the great athletes from the good. But aside from providing them with the mental strength to perform optimally when under pressure, self-confidence is a crucial and transferable skill that will support athletes when navigating the transition into life after sport.

RESILIENCE

Resilience in sport is defined as the ability to cope effectively with major setbacks and disappointments; it involves a strong will to succeed and the ability to bounce back by focusing on the task ahead rather than the negative emotions.

Developing psychological resilience is integral to becoming successful in elite sport, as a large part of an athlete's life revolves around defeat and disappointment and how they respond to these. Athletes who have developed the capacity to see setbacks as temporary, learn from adversarial experiences, and re-focus on their objectives, are the ones who more often than not bounce back stronger and enjoy sustained success.

In recent years, there has been a lot of media coverage related to mental health, and a large number of athletes have spoken about their struggles with anxiety and depression during the transition phase. As well as enhancing performance, developing the ability to effectively manage emotions and build psychological resilience is powerfully protective of mental health, so this should form part of training programmes across all sporting organisations.

USING A RIGOROUS, SCIENTIFIC PROCESS TO FACILITATE BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

In order to bring about behavioural change, research indicates that people first need to gain insight into their emotional behaviour. Once they gain insight and understanding, they can then implement specific tactics and strategies that systematically change how they behave.

At RocheMartin, we have developed a unique process for equipping athletes with personal insight and assisting them to make behavioural changes. We educate teams and individuals on what EQ is and how it supports high performance. Athletes can then take our sports-specific, online psychometric assessment tool – the ESi. This process provides insight into their current level of competence across ten key emotional skills that are highly predictive of elite performance, as well as a tailored coaching report. After the assessment, the athletes participate in a one-to-one feedback session with a qualified practitioner and are coached through the tactics and strategies that can be implemented to systematically enhance their EQ, and an action plan encourages the athletes' commitment to achieving their goals.

This article has only brushed the surface of emotional intelligence and the ways in which the EQ framework can be applied within sport. But with application of the ESi tool and associated training methods, we are now able to practically apply the framework to improve athletes' emotional skills. Not only does this enhance performance under pressure, but it also equips them with the skills to adjust and thrive as they transition into their next challenge.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joe Davis MSc is Head of Sport and Performance Psychology at RocheMartin – the global leader in implementing emotional intelligence and mindfulness training. We work with individual athletes, sports teams, professional associations, Fortune 500's and within education to unlock potential, develop emotional talent and enhance overall wellbeing. Joe is responsible for carrying out global research studies examining the relationship between athlete emotional intelligence, performance and wellbeing, as well as designing and delivering impactful training programmes that lead to considerable behavioural change.

THREE REASONS A COACH SHOULD KEEP A LEARNING LOG

Andrew Gibbons, who has kept a handwritten learning log for over 30 years, reflects on why the process is beneficial for coaches.

I want to share with you three key lessons of value to coaches that I have gained from keeping a one million-word, handwritten learning log for more than 32 years. I am not a natural learning logger, have never been a diarist, nor structured reflection on practice conflicts with my personality and preferred learning style; it took two years of coaxing from a mentor who knew better than me the benefits simply of making a start. Thus, I now know that, given the desire, even I can capture and record learning from practice.

REASON ONE: CREDIBILITY

As coaches, we are primarily in the business of helping others learn. It seems a natural extension of that process to show tangibly that we too are learners. When appropriate, I show at least a little of my personal learning journey to those I coach, stressing that this is the extreme end of capturing reflection, and that this is my 'day job'.

To engage authentically with a client, I feel we must show ourselves to be learners too, that we genuinely understand the issues, challenges and effort required to enhance performance through learning.

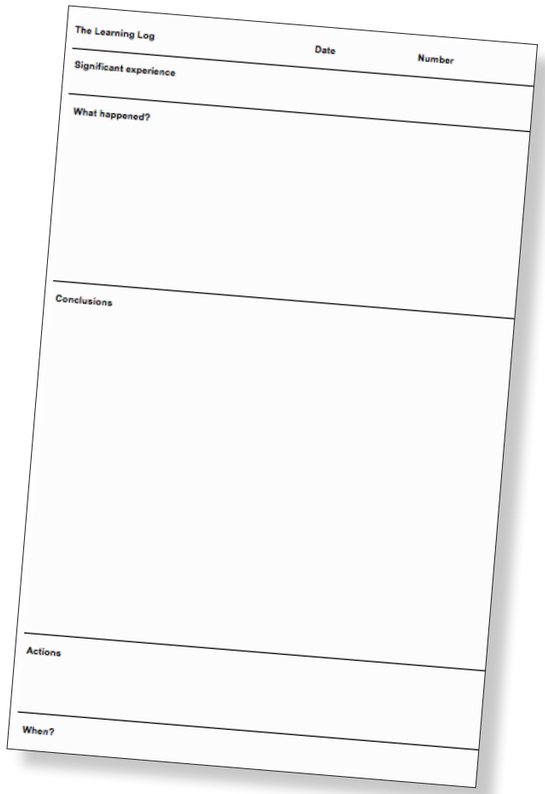
Many of those with whom we work find the very notion of learning and development a challenge, close to questioning their current competence. We know this is not the case, and we also know the huge value in pushing even the most capable individuals to incrementally greater performance levels. Who better to model the way than their coach? Who is better placed than their coach to show the value of humility and enquiry, and to demonstrate that learning transcends ego or status? Who more than their coach could share tangible evidence of how commitment to learning leads directly to enhanced capability?

REASON TWO: DEVELOPMENT

When writing my first learning log entry in February 1987, I knew that I had a lot to learn about all matters learning and development. After 1574 written pages at the time of writing this article, I still have that feeling. My appetite for learning has not diminished. I believe the best of us never lose that drive, that fascination with exploring and discovering learning, and that this fuels our ability to assist the development of others.

A learning log is my means of moving from fleeting thoughts to recorded words. Typically, I write 650 words in 20 minutes. This gives a physical snapshot of my thoughts, plans, reflections and insights.

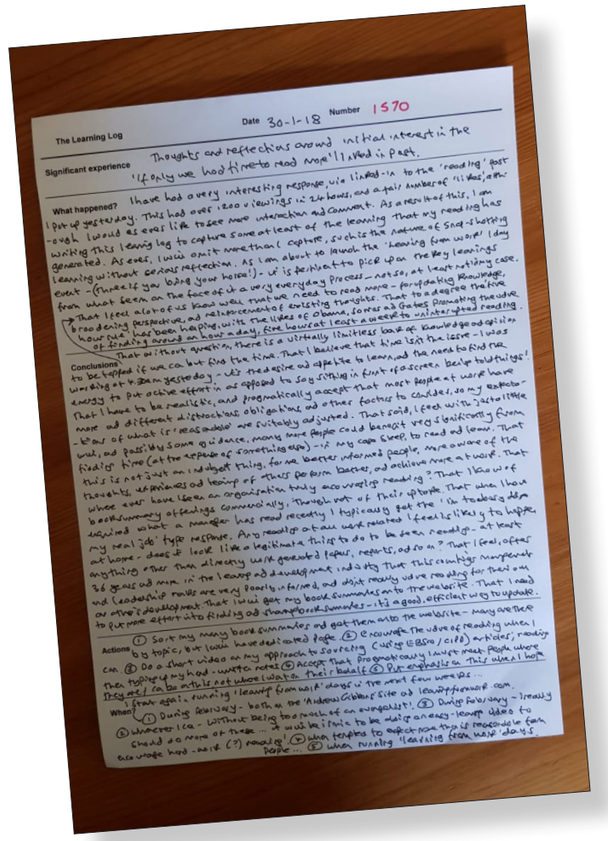
I need a structured process to write under these headings: Significant Experience; What Happened?; Conclusions; Actions. All my notes must fit onto one side of A4 with an emphasis on Conclusions.



Coaching is intrinsically developmental. Speaking only for myself, I know I could not capture as much from the complexity of learning and the issues this prompts without my learning log. I recommend the recording of professional development via three forms of reflection: in anticipation of a 'significant experience'; in the moment; and retrospectively – either alone or in combination. This is a model I use within my coaching practice.

The true professional is indeed a reflective practitioner, and a learning log – however structured and if maintained with commitment – is evidence that can, for example, form the basis of a supervision meeting.

My approach has always been to log my learning transactionally – by incident or experience. There is no 'best way' to do this. One approach, for instance, is to log retrospectively at first, weekly or monthly.



REASON THREE: DIFFERENTIATION

The good news for you is that most coaches won't go near this. They don't have the time, they do it already in other forms, they kept a learning log for a qualification years ago but are glad to have dumped it, and so on. There seems to be sufficient work to coach in a perfectly acceptable way and standard without being a learning logger, and I do not make the claim that coaching requires us to do this.

That said, I do believe that demonstrating the humility and sustained curiosity for enquiry differentiates those few that possess this from the rest. I like to think that having the means to show a rare and very positive sustained interest in my own development opens doors and accesses work that those without such evidence will find impenetrable.

Everyone, it seems, is looking for something that makes them different from the rest. Having a learning-focused differentiator has more value than cheesy smiles or glitzy websites with little or no indication that we take our own advice and guidance.

My advice to any coach who is not yet recording what they learn is to give it a go. Make contact and learn from those such as myself who have experience of, and views about, keeping a learning log.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andrew Gibbons has been 'helping people to learn' since 1982. His particular interests are genuinely self-directed learning and performance coaching that brings attributable and sustainable outcomes. He is author of many articles on and around the practicalities of truly managing our own development. Much of his time is spent developing learning material for his own and fellow practitioners' use. He can be contacted from his website:

www.andrewgibbons.co.uk

COACHING SUPERVISION FROM CLINICAL TO SYSTEMIC

Paul Lawrence reflects on how coaching supervision has evolved to address the increasing need for coaches to work with complexity.

Coaching supervision took off just over a decade ago, with a flurry of books and academic papers, and the emergence of supervision training designed specifically for coaches. Since that time the number of coaches undertaking supervision has grown significantly, according to a global survey reported by Peter Hawkins and Eve Turner in 2017[1]. That survey suggests that 83% of coaches are now undertaking some form of supervision, with numbers lagging only in North America.*

CLINICAL ORIGINS

Despite recent growth, many coaches still struggle to understand why other coaches are so committed to supervision. Many object to the very word supervision, and the implication that one of the roles of a supervisor is to oversee the quality of the coach's work. This *is* an important function of supervision in a clinical context, where the supervisor is often personally accountable for the welfare of the people being treated. Early coach supervision models have their roots in counselling, psychotherapy and social work. Indeed, some of the most popular models used today, such as the *seven-eyed model*, have their roots in clinical practice.

In a clinical context supervision is mandatory, and this view has again made the jump into coaching. Many coaching psychologists are firm advocates of mandatory coach supervision, perhaps because they are particularly attuned to concepts such as transference and counter-transference, and because they find themselves working a lot with people experiencing anxiety, depression, or other mental health issues. Other coaches may see their role quite differently and regard such issues as being out of scope, or have other strategies for seeking appropriate support on an ad-hoc basis.

CLINICAL TO SYSTEMIC

Talking to colleagues, supervisors and coaches nowadays, it seems to me that many coaches have moved beyond this concern as to whether or not a clinical model is appropriate in a coaching domain. Not everyone has moved on necessarily; it may still be a significant concern among some coaches in North America, for example[2]. But in its rapid growth, coaching supervision appears to be evolving quickly, outgrowing its clinical origins on a journey to becoming a shiny new discipline in its own right, a very systemic discipline. As long ago as 2005, UK academic Tatiana Bachkirova suggested there is even more of a need for supervision in the world of coaching than there is in counselling or psychotherapy because of the complexities faced by the coach working in organisations[3].

Coaching as a whole industry has perhaps been slow to recognise the need for coaches to develop the capacity to work with complexity. Many coaches work only with individuals, for example, preferring not to work with groups or teams, and I remember as recently as 2014, as part of a local research study[4], talking to coaches who met only with their coachees, preferring not to meet with any other stakeholders. Yet contemporary leadership theory, recognising the limitations of 'leader-as-hero' models, directs us to shift our focus from the individual, to relationships between individuals. Change is an emergent property of the relationships *between* people, which means that anyone working in the change space must have the capacity to work with relationships and the complexity of social systems. And to develop that capacity requires a commitment to reflective practice and to understanding systems.

Peter Hawkins and colleagues have had a big impact on the coaching supervision industry with their advocacy of the seven-eyed model[5]. This model encourages supervisor and coach to consider multiple dimensions of a coaching assignment, including the impact of the wider organisational context. Use of the model is widespread, and some coach supervisors describe their practice as systemic, referring to their use of the model as evidence. The word 'systemic' in its broadest sense has much the same meaning as the word 'holistic', in that 'systemic practice' means simply adopting a wide-angled view. In this sense, the use of models such as the seven-eyed model may indeed be said to reflect systemic practice. However, we suspect the journey has only just begun.

Constructs such as the seven-eyed model are, in a sense, atheoretical. They encourage the supervisor to pay attention to aspects of an assignment outside the immediacy of the coach-coachee relationship, but they don't provide a theoretical lens through which to hypothesise what's happening in the system. Indeed, if practitioners use such models inappropriately, they may adopt the mistaken view that you can study aspects of a system in isolation, ignoring interactions across those domains. As organisation and leadership expert Margaret Wheatley wrote in her 2006 book *Leadership and the New Science*:

We cannot understand a system by looking only at its parts. We need to work with the whole of a system, even as we work with individual parts or isolated problems.

The seven-eyed model, *the three worlds/four territories model*[6] and other systemic frameworks[7] lead us to consider the broader system, component by component. But such models are quite limited in scope. The seven-eyed model focuses on three individuals (supervisor, coach, coachee) and two dyadic relationships. The rest of the system is lumped together under 'wider context'. None of this is to criticise the model, which helps us to look outside the immediacy of the coach-coachee relationship. Supervision authorities Peter Hawkins and Gil Schenk[8] say that the purpose of the model is to help supervisors 'discover ways they can expand their supervision practice.' They suggest that effective use of the model requires a high level of 'transcultural competence' and self-awareness. They maintain that the model lends itself to working with different theoretical approaches, and Hawkins[9] says that all supervisors need to be trained in systemic thinking, and to develop their own personal systemic philosophy.

CASE STUDIES

What additional value, specifically, might the coaching supervisor bring to a conversation if informed by a theoretical, systemic, lens? I'll attempt to illustrate with reference to the entirely fictional interaction between Karen (supervisor), Peter (coach) and Jane (coachee).

Jane works for a financial services company and has recently moved into a new role. She now works at group head office. In this role she is expected to work closely with the finance teams of four subsidiary companies. She is struggling and believes that her predecessor (Nigel) is undermining her efforts to build relationships. Nigel appears to enjoy status and recognition through being able to offer financial advice to his business based on a detailed understanding of how the whole organisation works. Jane has asked Peter to help her improve her influencing skills and to feel more confident in her role. Peter takes the case to Karen, his supervisor, concerned that Jane may not be fully committed to the work. She turned up to the first session on time and the session was productive, but she turned up ten minutes late for the second session and then apologised for having to leave straightaway to manage an urgent issue. She turned up to the third and fourth sessions but seemed distracted. She cancelled the fifth session over a month ago and hasn't replied to emails since.

SCENARIO 1

Karen and Peter begin by talking about Jane. What seems to be going on for her? Peter thinks she's stressed, worried that the Group CFO doesn't think she's up to the job. She seems reluctant to complain about Nigel, even though Nigel appears to have quite blatantly lied about what conversations he has and hasn't had with two of the business CFOs. Peter thinks this anxiety may be why she hasn't been coming to sessions, that she's working hard to try an prove herself worthy to the Group CFO. Karen and

* More information on coaching supervision, including an article on the seven-eyed model, can be found in *Coaching Perspectives*, Issue 15, October 2017

Peter talk about Jane for some time, and Peter decides to try calling Jane, suggesting that they have shorter sessions while she seeks to manage her current workload.

Peter confesses that he is worried Jane didn't get enough out of the three sessions they've had so far, and that he has failed her. Peter is keen to understand what else he could be doing more generally, to become more proficient at working with coachees who don't show up for coaching or who seem distracted and disengaged. Why isn't Jane looking to Peter for support rather than pushing him away? Is he not showing enough empathy? Is he failing to allow her to set the agenda? He's concerned Jane may not be the only client he could be servicing more effectively. Peter and Karen talk about some of Peter's anxieties in this space, and Peter determines to spend more time seeking feedback from clients and to better manage a tendency to self-doubt.

Karen then gets out the seven-eyed model. Having spoken about Peter and Jane separately, they now talk about the relationship. Karen asks Peter to imagine he and Jane going to the same party[10]. She asks Peter what he and Jane are each wearing, and how they interact at the party. Peter reflects long and hard and says that Jane goes dressed as Carmen Miranda. Her clothes are colourful and bright and she talks to everyone at the party except him. He is dressed as a sheriff and stands by himself at the edge of the room looking on. He then reflects on his answer and sees it as a metaphor for what is happening inside the organisation. If the party is the organisation, then Jane is working hard to impress everyone, while he stands watching on, silently reprimanding her for not showing up to coaching. It's a useful insight for Peter, who commits to trying harder to understand Jane's perspective, and to letting go of his own anxieties.

Moving to mode five of the model, Karen and Peter repeat the exercise for themselves, supervisor and coach, this time imagining they are marooned together on a desert island. This time Peter depicts himself as a skinny young man dressed in rags, trying to spear fish with an old stick, while Karen watches from a deck chair further up the beach, sipping on a martini. Peter pulls a face and confesses to feeling somewhat unsupported. He appreciates the reflective process, but feels there is something missing, and wonders whether Karen is withholding something from him in the hope he will work it out for himself.

Karen remembers the sixth mode and focuses on her immediate response to Peter's words. She recognises a sense of anxiety within herself, and it occurs to her that her relationship with Peter reminds her of Peter's relationship with Jane. Peter has missed a couple of supervision sessions recently, and she had been wondering about Peter's commitment to the process, and about her prowess as a supervisor. Peter visibly relaxes as she speaks, as if a weight has been lifted from his shoulders. He thanks her for sharing her thoughts and questions himself for being so quick to doubt himself in the face of Jane's behaviour.

Finally, Karen asks Peter to talk about the wider context. What are some of the dynamics going on in the organisation and how might those dynamics be having an impact on Jane? Jane's main stakeholders are the Group CFO and CEO and the subsidiary CFOs, and she is having problems with Nigel, now COO of one of those subsidiaries. Peter talks about the culture as he has experienced it through Jane's stories. She clearly feels under pressure, but she does seem to be getting some support. She did eventually voice her concerns about Nigel to the Group CFO and he appears to have responded thoughtfully, raising the issue with the HR Director. But Jane isn't convinced that they'll take steps. There does seem to be a cultural expectation that you fight your own corner. Peter has done other work in the organisation and experiences it as hierarchical – and that you need to deliver results. Peter leaves the session again committed to find out more about Jane and how she is experiencing her relationships with others. He suspects there may be something going on for her that leaves her feeling vulnerable and lacking in resilience.

REFLECTION

In this case Karen's use of the model appears to have been very useful. Without the model it seems likely that supervisor and coach would have limited their discussion to coachee and aspects of the coach's self-awareness. The model has nudged them both to consider Karen as a player in the system, and the dyadic relationships between coach and coachee, and supervisor and coach. Finally, it has encouraged them both to pay attention to aspects of the wider organisation. But how might the conversation have been even more useful had Karen or Peter brought specific, systemic, theoretical perspectives to the conversation?

SCENARIO 2
BOWEN THEORY

In seeking to shed further insight on the dyadic relationship between Peter and Jane, Karen introduces to the conversation the idea of triangulation, from Murray Bowen's work on family systems[11]. According to the theory, there is always tension in a dyadic relationship. The three-way relationship is the smallest stable relationship, with the dynamics of the triangle providing an outlet for the tension in paired relationships. Karen draws a triangle and shows it to Peter (figure 1).

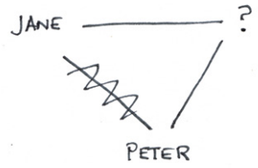


Figure 1

Karen wonders if the unnamed tension between Peter and Jane is a function of a triangular relationship with a third party, and if so, which third party? The third party might be Jane's line manager. Perhaps there the tension in that relationship is being triangulated onto Peter. For example, perhaps Jane has tried some of the ideas that emerged from coaching to try and improve her relationship with the Group CFO, but nothing has changed and she blames Peter. Perhaps the third party is the HR manager who arranged the assignment, or the Group CEO, who doesn't think much of coaching. Peter thinks hard and commits to both talking to the HR manager and suggesting to Jane they have a three-way meeting with the Group CFO so that Peter can experience that aspect of the system first-hand.

This is just one model within a broader model, but we can see that this particular model just by itself has expanded Karen and Peter's perspective of the system beyond the functioning of dyadic relationships.

DIALOGUE

Karen shares with Peter a dialogic theory of change[12]. According to the theory, change cannot be effectively directed and emerges from dialogue. To lead organisational change therefore requires of a leader the capacity to engage in dialogue and the propensity to see the organisational landscape as a complex pattern of dialogues. Peter thinks hard about the organisation he is working with and comes up with the following insights:

- Jane's capacity to listen is likely being hindered by her anxieties. When she talks to the Group CFO, for example, is she succeeding in developing her understanding of his needs and wants, or is she inadvertently making unhelpful assumptions about his behaviour towards her?
- Jane is clearly finding it hard to say what she feels needs to be said. She is feeling undermined and unsupported, which gets in the way of her expressing herself without judgement. Or could her reluctance to speak be co-created? Peter determines to find out more about the mini-systems within which Jane is finding it hard to speak up.
- Peter doesn't know who Nigel spends time talking to. Jane is feeling undermined, but who is it that Jane thinks is being influenced? What conversations are taking place between Nigel and others, and how might Jane intervene to change the dynamics of those conversations? Peter is now thinking beyond hierarchical models of organisation and is focused on understanding relationships between different stakeholders, not just identifying who key stakeholders are.
- Jane is concerned that nothing will change as a consequence of the Group CFO talking to the HR Director. What does Jane know about the nature of this relationship, and indeed the triangular relationship between CEO, CFO and HRD? What tensions exist in this relationship, and which other players have an impact on the functioning of this system?
- How do the business CFOs engage with each other? Do they spend time talking together? If so, what is the quality of that dialogue? What role in this system has Jane (wittingly or otherwise) co-created for herself? With whom would she need to engage in dialogue in order to shift that role?

At this point Peter's head starts to spin and he determines to be much more curious about the 'wider context' and how it might be operating through a dialogic lens. He finds himself questioning the quality of dialogue across the organisation as a whole, and how an absence of dialogue in some parts of the organisation may be hindering organisational effectiveness. He recalls various conversations about siloes, and wonders if those

siloes might be broken down by a focused effort to enhance the quality of dialogue between particular individuals. He and Karen have a long conversation as to his role in the organisation and how he might be more helpful. He and Karen discuss who, ultimately, their conversation is in service of.

CONCLUSIONS

Peter Hawkins asks coach supervisors to demonstrate 'systemic humility', borne of a belief that we can never hope to understand the entirety of a complex system. This is quite a different approach from thinking about a whole system as a set of relatively easy-to-understand component parts. Models such as the seven-eyed model have proved invaluable in shifting our consciousness toward more systemic perspectives. The next step in the journey may be for us to make a collective commitment to draw on other disciplines in order to learn more about the functioning of social systems.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

After completing a PhD in Psychology, Paul Lawrence joined BP plc, leading teams and businesses in the UK, Spain, Portugal, Australia and Japan. Paul has been working as a coach and consultant since 2007, based in Sydney, Australia. He authored the books *Leading Change: How Successful Leaders Approach Change Management* and *Coaching in Three Dimensions: Meeting the Challenges of a Complex World*. A third book, *The Tao of Dialogue*, comes out in 2019. Paul teaches coaching at the Sydney Business School, University of Wollongong.

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COACHING IN AUSTRALIA

Coach and systemic change consultant Josie McLean summarises the perspectives of twelve Australian coaches to provide this overview of the coaching landscape in Australia.

From an industry perspective, although a number of larger coaching and leadership development firms have emerged, most coaches in Australia work for themselves, contracting to others in varying proportions. Over the last 20 years the provision of coach training has shifted from a USA-centric industry to Australian-owned, operated and developed firms. Universities are also more active participants in coach training. This is a significant shift that indicates some maturing of the industry. However, a question remains as to whether the financial rewards of training benefits the coach training providers, or the coaches who train with them? Research into this question may provide another perspective on the maturity of the industry with a hope that, as it further develops, we should be able to see that larger proportions of those being trained are reaping the rewards of their usually large investments.

Research and publication have produced a stronger coaching literature that has supported a greater emphasis on evidence-based approaches. Some of the twelve coaches we contacted for this overview see this as influencing the development of coaching through more incremental changes to existing forms of coaching, rather than the developing new forms of coaching.

All twelve coaches operate in the organisational or executive coaching sphere. While 'life coaching' occupies quite a large niche, it is not represented in this overview. Anecdotally, we understand that a large number of coaches operate in this field and may be struggling to be financially viable, with the result that many gravitate to executive coaching. These coaches may, however, find it difficult to gain work in the organisational market unless they can demonstrate experience and an approach to their coaching that is attuned to this specific context.

Australia in general is a country that prides itself on innovation, even if it often struggles to commercialise this. Interest in systemic coaching and pushing the boundaries of coaching, as we have come to know it, are being passionately pursued by those few who see these possibilities. Artificial intelligence (AI) in coaching is another emerging field, with a few coaches experimenting with simple, AI-driven coaching phone apps to supplement personal coaching sessions. Others are exploring the use of technology in delivering online coaching.

Data protection is an area of concern for coaching as it is in within society more broadly; coaches are becoming more conscious about how and where information gained during coaching sessions is stored, and how privacy is protected.

Within the organisational context, coaches are noticing a growing demand for internal, team and group coaching. Executive coaching is well understood and is widely accepted as a developmental rather than a remedial activity. Coaching is often included in leadership development programmes, and many coaches become part of a coaching panel to provide a set number of sessions in support of these programmes. Additionally, Manager/Leader as Coach programmes are common, and there is wide interest in shaping 'coaching cultures'. In this sense, there is some commoditisation of coaching with a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. This is not universal, however, and other coaches are being requested to design coaching programmes to respond to specific developmental needs of their clients.

My thanks to Paul Lawrence for organising twelve perspectives on the coaching landscape in Australia.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Josie McLean specialises in guiding the development of leaders and organisations to equip them to cope with and lead through changing and complex challenges. She has held various leadership roles in the ICF over the last 20 years. In 2009, she was a recipient of the global ICF President's Award. Additionally, Josie has expertise in systemic coaching through her interests in sustainability, systems thinking, adaptive leadership, emergent change and organisational culture. She continues to publish in these areas.

CONTRIBUTOR SPOTLIGHT

SALLY PHILLIPS SUB-EDITOR

Following our July 2018 article about people who contribute to the Association for Coaching, we turn the spotlight on one of our own *Coaching Perspectives* editorial team members.

How would you describe your role as Sub-Editor?
Managing the production programme; helping to ensure that *Coaching Perspectives* is a pleasure to read and that the magazine is error-free when we go to press.

What do you enjoy most about your role?
Helping to do justice to our global authors and international readers by editing content into English of a very high standard. Being part of a great team with totally different skills and backgrounds. And a bonus: reading every article for each edition is excellent armchair CPD.

What is your business background?
Almost 100% public and not-for-profit. I started in community and organisation development, helping to improve the management of social housing and setting up social enterprises. Following success on the ground, I wanted to see how things 'worked in theory' and I put myself through an MBA before setting up my own HR and development practice in 1990.

Do you coach, and how many years have you been coaching?
Yes. When I set up my practice, I used a coaching approach wherever possible and coached a number of individuals. I increased my coaching workload after training with the School of Coaching in 2003 and have recently offered more pro bono coaching.

How long have you been volunteering with the AC?
I joined the AC in 2007 and took part in the 'AC at 10' film in 2012. I took on the Strategic Relations Lead role for AC, UK that year, and joined the *Coaching Perspectives* team in 2014.

How did you gain your experience in editing?
I've always loved language. Studying Linguistics as part of my Bachelor's degree, teaching English abroad, and attempting to learn several languages have been invaluable in helping to understand how we convey meaning in words. In my previous career I wrote and edited publications on social housing, and I have recently undertaken professional editing commissions. For the past year I have participated in a writers' Masterclass as I continue working on my first novel.

What have been your highlights in the role?
Seeing the magazine develop from a very basic product into a wonderful showpiece for the AC.

What are the greatest challenges?
Working together with busy colleagues in the *Coaching Perspectives* editorial team to ensure that we meet our production dates. For me personally, fitting intricate copy-editing and proofing work into tight deadlines whilst still continuing with the day job.

If you were to give one piece of advice to contributors when they send in articles, what would it be?
Get those articles in on time, please! And do remember that the editorial team are there to help and guide you: we want to feature excellent articles that are a source of pride to both the AC and our writers.

ATTENDING TO LANGUAGE AS WE TRANSITION THROUGH OUR DEPENDENCE ON WORDS

Marta Anna Petrášová PhD, PCC Executive Coach and coach supervisor based in the Czech Republic shares her experience of peer supervision with UK-based coach supervisor Benita Treanor, as part of the AC Group Supervision Calls scheme.

BENITA

A few years ago, I selected an internationally respected supervision programme (the Coaching Supervision Academy) with the intention of experiencing and learning alongside people whose first language is not English. At the end of the programme we formed a multilingual peer supervision group with English as the method of communication. We continue to meet; it is rigorous and co-operative, a place where we courageously navigate our use of language in the often choppy waters of our history, roots, culture, methodologies and case work.

It particularly interests me to notice the transitional space between one's native language and those of others. We all have a particular syntax of perceptions, alongside the structure of the self which any language imposes. The shifts that take place are subtle and not easy to pin down in the structure of language, the self and subsequent limits of one's inner or outer worlds.

In the reflective space of supervision, we are invited to notice our language, especially when it can either limit or open our intentions and subsequent interventions with others – when our blind spots get in the way. Verbal differences can come into play in the arena of 'boundaries' as we face different understandings and the significance of words within our individual contexts. In our willingness to reflect on our approach and use of language, our natural diversity gives voice to wise counsel for our work.

In actively listening to a different language, subtleties begin to show themselves in ways that may previously have been missed or given less attention. It allows patience for deeper clarification of misunderstandings and doubts, empowering further curiosity and possibilities.

In trusting the language of intuition and body awareness alongside suspending familiar ways of judging, we are able to find an emerging, embodied language that renews and invigorates our intentions, interventions and actions with our clients.

The gift of receiving supervision from my peers who speak and understand from different languages has provided me with more confidence and trust in a sense of belonging to a wider global community of practice. The 'real-time' space of 'working it out' has enabled us to move beyond the familiar, pre-programmed notions of understanding and meaning, to find a transitional space that allows each of us our own unique ways of working with language.

MARTA

As supervisors we are taught to work with people in their uniqueness: to enter their inner world with them. We seek to understand the differences in communication, thinking and receiving information and experience. We need to honour our client's values and belief system and bring these to the surface so that they become more visible and recognisable.

I would like to share with you my experience of engaging in peer supervision with people from a different culture, with a different language, history, religion, roots, education and value system. Can you imagine a bigger distance between the uniqueness of two people?

When one of us does not speak in our native language, words are used and received differently, and the subtle understanding of meaning can be lost. But the absence of one type of communication gives an openness to others. This transition leads each of us to connect more to our feelings and body awareness, and to allow the inner voice of intuition to speak more loudly. I can feel the energy of simple words and reflect this back to the client even if I do not fully understand the words themselves.

Transition begins through letting go of the language that we first use to respond to the other. Our bodies are the first to notice; we go together to the ancient language of feelings. This supports the transition from thinking about past and future in the outer world, to sensing the nature of our inner world in the present.

In supervision with people from other 'tongues' you need to put roots into the earth to keep your stability and to connect. All your cells have their own ears. And deep inner wisdom brings questions, images, feelings and senses to share. I feel that supervision through the awareness and inclusion of different languages continues to offer the best learning process to develop supervision mastery.

ABOUT THE AC GROUP SUPERVISION CALLS

The Association for Coaching provides a group supervision experience on the third Thursday of every month. The calls are held via video link or low-cost teleconference line and are facilitated by experienced AC coaches, who donate their time to support fellow AC members. The calls last up to one hour with a maximum of five participants. AC Group Supervision calls are designed to offer members a taste of what supervision is like and what can be gained from participating in it. The calls are available for AC members regardless of location across the world. For more information:

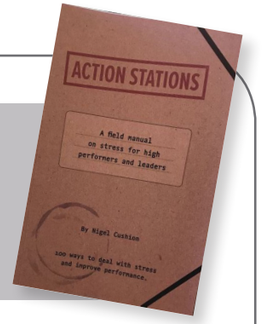
https://www.associationforcoaching.com/page/EventsGroupSupervi

BOOK REVIEWS

ACTION STATIONS

This practical page-turner gave Clive Steeper much to reflect on and enjoy in the author's no-nonsense approach to managing stress.

TITLE: Action Stations
AUTHOR: Nigel Cushion
PUBLISHER: NelsonSpirit
PUBLICATION DATE: 2019
PAPERBACK PRICE: £12.00
ISBN: 9781916003903



'Action Stations' is probably not a phrase many coaches would use in a coaching session. But bearing in mind that the underlying principle in coaching is to help a client move forwards, Nigel Cushion's book – or as he calls it, 'field manual' – is a tool that offers pragmatic ways to do just that. With its focus on reducing stress and improving mental health and workplace performance, this book would be required reading before undertaking a challenging work assignment or facing a difficult manager.

The book is not an academic read; rather, it is written in a very practical and easy-to-digest style. It is rich with 100 'actions' for dealing with stress that have been tried and tested by the author, famous names in history and more contemporary leaders. These actions offer a wide range of options for coaches to signpost their clients to.

Cushion's approach is positive in intent and much of the material is based around learning from history, military, business and sport. I particularly enjoyed the reminder that games can be won or lost in 'Fergie time', named after the former manager of the Manchester United football team, Sir Alex Ferguson. Cushion makes the point that the team were renowned for scoring in injury time – in the final moments of the game – and it was belief that spurred them on. So, if you are in a stress situation and you don't know when it might end, you need to have belief it will get better.

For some coaches, the suggested actions may appear somewhat robust, as they are fairly directive: do this, or try that. But to be fair, as the book is about taking 'action', that's what you get. I was also reminded that some of those actions are practical things that we can all do to manage stress but may have forgotten – like going for a walk!

Given the style of the book, it struck me that coaches could use it as a reference in either preparation or review of coaching sessions, or as a practical tool in a coaching session where it could provide the impetus to help clients select, plan and navigate through a stressful situation they are dealing with.

The book is structured in three sections: Understanding Stress; 100 Ways to deal with Stress and Improve Performance; and Stress and Leadership. The third section contrasts with the other two by offering more subtle observations about the way future leaders could address the challenge of managing mental health in today's workplace. For example, for leaders to recognise that in many cases employees no longer have the same level of social interaction and security in the workplace, which can be a source of stress in itself, and that it's a leader's job to find ways to address this situation, rather than ignore it.

Action Stations leaves you with the feeling that doing something is better than doing nothing – and rather than reaching for medication when stressed, why not grab a copy of this book instead?

ABOUT THE REVIEWER

Clive Steeper is an Association for Coaching accredited executive coach and coaching supervisor. In his coaching sessions, he provides clients with a space to think, reflect and explore new approaches. These risk-free 'open conversations' have proved invaluable to many of his clients, especially those in senior level, high-pressure positions.

Clive is a coaching supervisor and hosts regular Group Coaching Supervision calls for the AC, and in 2014 he received a Global Coaching Leadership Award at the World Coaching Congress in Mumbai.

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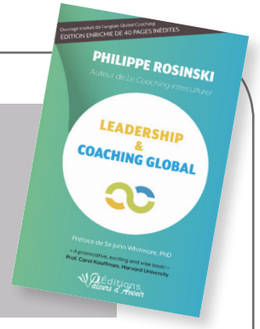
LEADERSHIP & COACHING GLOBAL

Monica Loup finds revisiting this updated French language edition of a wide-ranging and multidisciplinary guide to coaching as moving as ever.

TITLE: Leadership & Coaching Global
AUTHOR: Philippe Rosinski
PUBLISHER: Valeurs d'Avenir
PUBLICATION DATE: 2018
(Original English publication: Nicholas Brealey, London, 2010)
PAPERBACK PRICE: €28
ISBN: 9791092673173



In his book *Leadership & Coaching Global* (an updated French-language version of his 2010 book), Philippe Rosinski seemingly effortlessly weaves together multiple perspectives into a framework that takes his readers to a place where there are no limiting categories or judgements.

Here readers can be perfectly free to define themselves in relation to these perspectives, their own needs and their own circumstances, thus opening the doors to their full potential.

Rosinski's research on the six perspectives of his global approach to coaching – physical, managerial, psychological, political, cultural and spiritual – has been sufficiently thorough and well-thought out, allowing the book to be clear and easy to read without ever losing its distinctive message.

As Sir John Whitmore pointed out in his preface to the initial, 2010 version (*Global Coaching*), Rosinski comes from a fresh angle in that he takes a clear stance on many of the main issues facing society and humanity and, in doing so, invites his readers to do the same on their own terms.

It is quite exceptional in this day and age, where every subject is so highly specialised and one only dare express an opinion if one is absolute expert in that particular field, to come across this *homo universalis* of coaching who almost shamelessly puts it altogether. Of course, the book doesn't pretend to cover the whole range of the human mind, and yet at the same time it provides a framework and a set of tools that make the reader feel like setting out on their own journey. It strikes the right balance, inviting the reader to find their own point of view regarding the main issues of life and society, while at the same time giving concrete, tangible tools to put this into practice. Rosinski gives himself tremendous freedom in writing this, after a time of ongoing preparation and research that must have been gruelling, to seem so limpid, clear and natural, leaving each perspective in its own right thanks to careful adaptation of the narrative to match the perspective under examination.

The book is a breath of fresh air, even more so since it departs from the idea that every culture is unique and has its own added value, and instead focuses on creating synergies between these differences – an approach to societies' main problems that is desperately needed, especially now.

The 40 supplementary pages at the end of the book, specifically written for this French language edition, are a welcome addition. They provide a review of best practice on global leadership applied both to international business, as well as to other sectors in society; for example, a case study on implementing the Cultural Orientations Framework in a school in France which has proved very successful. These pages deserve to be published separately – and in English as well.

I can't seem to find any problems with this book other than the fact that its impact could be greatly amplified simply by breaking down the contents into separate volumes. Not everybody has the time or the mindset to take on the full global approach, and each perspective deserves its own space: I wonder if it wouldn't be a good idea to turn it into six pocket-sized books?

This book is interesting to anyone who is seeking to explore coaching, to unleash their full potential or that of others, and will be useful at both a national and an international level.

ABOUT THE REVIEWER

Monica brings the expertise and skills that allow businesspeople to work and communicate effectively in an international environment of global executive coaching. A business communication consultant trainer and certified global executive coach, she has created her company Geo Coaching to help develop and reveal the international potential and the skills that businesspeople need to achieve their daily goals.

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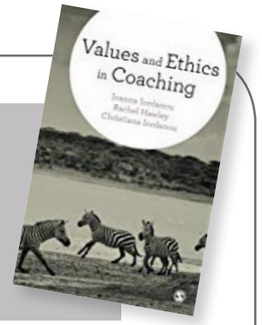
VALUES AND ETHICS IN COACHING



TITLE: Values and Ethics in Coaching
AUTHORS: Ioanna Iordanou, Rachel Hawley & Christiana Iordanou
PUBLISHER: Sage
PUBLICATION DATE: 2017
PRICE: £22.49
ISBN: 978-1-4739-1955-6 / 978-1-4739-1955-3

Nancy Hey is reminded that how we work as coaches is as important as what we do.

The fourth industrial revolution is underway and the world is changing rapidly. The pace of technological and societal change is challenging, and will continue to challenge us in new ways. The increasing speed of our feedback loops means we will be better able to see the impact that we and our organisations have on the world. This greater awareness requires greater responsibility, and the decisions that we and our clients will be dealing with will require us to apply judgement to set the success criteria for our machines, our organisations and ourselves. We will need to separate objective facts from our own values as we make decisions, and it is the coach's job to help us do this.

Values will be a familiar concept for coaches, as they work with these on a daily basis. What this book brings is a theoretical underpinning of both values – what's important to me – and ethics – what's permissible or not – and how these are applied in coaching practice. Ethics are the principles and standards of behaviour that we feel are right and appropriate, and are the basis of rules and codes of conduct. This makes ethical frameworks an essential part of the development of any trusted profession. This is particularly important for coaching, however, because how we work is as important as what we do.

Our values and ethics shape our identity, attitudes and behaviours – both personally and professionally. Reflection on our own values and ethics has a direct impact on our coaching and is therefore a key skill for the profession. This book includes practical ways to do this for oneself, in addition to covering the main points of decision-making in applied coaching practice, such as contracting, and in specific contexts including business, education, sports and health. The value of reflective practice, coach development and CPD, essential for sustained, high-quality coaching, is reinforced throughout. The breadth here is fantastic. The importance of not simply relying entirely on instinct, or fast thinking, in order to be effective but also of stepping back and reflecting with slow thinking is crucial, especially in moments where we may be more likely to make mistakes either because situations are new or because the information isn't simple.

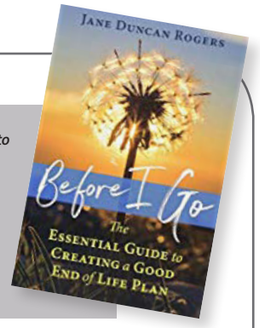
I work on evidence of informed policy and practice, so it is fantastic to see the clear narrative about how engaging with, and contributing to, research can enable the development of our ethical abilities as coaches. Research is often seen as abstract and irrelevant to practice, but one way to change this is for practitioners to increasingly take a role in developing the evidence in their field. The Scientist-Practitioner model is useful but the book, at this point, does get tangled up in research paradigms which make research feel like an inaccessible activity, and I'm not sure this helps improve evidence literacy. This is where some examples, used really effectively elsewhere in the book, would definitely help.

Ethical choice is the stuff of difficult politics, of moral opposition, of challenging personal circumstances and family conflict. The #MeToo movement has dramatically asserted the importance of power dynamics and 'right' behaviour in many work sectors. Having 'awareness of the impact of one's behaviour' is having its day and this is at the heart of coaching. Helping society navigate in this world of ethics and values is a big opportunity for the coaching profession.

ABOUT THE REVIEWER

Nancy Hey is Director of the Works Centre for Wellbeing, the UK's national body for wellbeing evidence and practice aiming to understand what governments, business, communities and people can do to improve wellbeing. She has a law degree and an MSc in Coaching & Development. Nancy previously worked in the UK Civil Service in eight different departments. She set up the UK Civil Service policy profession and coached both internally and externally specialising in emotional intelligence.

BEFORE I GO: THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO CREATING A GOOD END OF LIFE PLAN



TITLE: Before I Go: The Essential Guide to Creating a Good End of Life Plan
AUTHOR: Jane Duncan Rogers
PUBLISHER: Findhorn Press
PUBLICATION DATE: 2018
PAPERBACK PRICE: £9.39
ISBN: 1844097501

Sherry Harsch-Porter finds this book on the subject of death a thought-provoking and insightful experience with much to enrich coaching practice.

If you are looking for a book to help you improve your coaching technique, *Before I Go: The Essential Guide to Creating a Good End of Life Plan*, by Jane Duncan Rogers, may not be the book for you. The book is prescriptive with many tips, to-do's and checklists. Surrounding these, however, are profound questions that challenge your thinking and assumptions on a subject that is taboo to some and simply ignored by others. Coaches spend much of our lives focused on uncovering and achieving aspirational, future-focused goals. Death is an end-point that doesn't align neatly with our work. Or does it?

Coaching and mentoring expert David Clutterbuck uses the acronym PRAIRIE (Personal-Resonant-Acute-Incisive-Reverberating-Innocent-Explicit) to test whether a coaching question is powerful. For me, the book title alone reverberated as a series of questions that I could not get out of my head. *What would a 'good' end-of-life plan look like? Would the process of creating such a plan change my perception of death? Would it change the kind of conversations I have with important people in my life? Would it make a difference to others after I was gone?*

As a coach, I've asked clients to write their own eulogy as a mindfulness exercise designed to examine core values, priorities and focus. But this is different from considering death itself. The premise of this book is that most people living in the Western world simply ignore, or are not good at, thinking or talking about death. The result is that many people die or are incapacitated leaving others to make decisions that may be contrary to what they want. You might say, 'I won't care, I'm dead.' True, perhaps, but do you want to leave other people to clean up the messes that will inevitably follow death without a plan?

While reading the book, it occurred to me that death is a metaphor for the end of anything we value. As coaches we engage with people who have lost a job, are approaching retirement, or have experienced a setback. Many of the questions in the book apply in these situations because they focus on the assumptions we have about the event; explore the social, spiritual and psychological effects of loss and grieving; and cause you to consider who you would like with you during the experience.

I'm sceptical about any book with a title that matches the company's name or the products that it sells. Often, these books are nothing more than thinly-veiled advertisements. 'Before I Go' is, in fact, the name of the author's website, workshops and coaching programme. From reading the book, however, it is clear that the author has both the lived experience and the professional background to make the book worthwhile as a stand-alone experience. I would recommend this book to anyone who wants to write their own, or a loved one's, end-of-life plan. I would also recommend it to coaches who value questions about a difficult topic.

ABOUT THE REVIEWER

Sherry Harsch-Porter PhD teaches graduate-level courses at Washington University (St. Louis, USA), including Executive Coaching. She is a contributing author to *The Handbook of Knowledge-Based Coaching: From theory to practice* and author of *Education as Possibility: Coaching for Persistence*. She is President of PorterBay Insight, a leadership development firm focused on scientists, engineers and technology experts. Her corporate experience includes AT&T and DuPont, where she held leadership positions in finance, information systems, international business development and human resources.

www.linkedin.com/in/sherryharschporter

Transition Expertise

Experienced executive coach and author Christopher Connolly wanted to understand why and how only some successful practitioners can become leaders in their respective fields. He asked the question – is there such a thing as Transition Expertise and, if so, can its key components be identified and measured?

The world around us is in a tsunami of transition which is overwhelming our capacity to act, work, think and live our lives. Almost all of us are facing transitions in our careers, our relationships, our places in the world, our health, our identities. The average professional now stays in a role for four years, and nearly a third of the workforce will change their job every year. Women are seeking work and life transitions that reduce their disparities in rights, economic security, personal safety and health. Millennials* who questioned the very idea of a job as we know it are now feeling the need for security; Baby Boomers* are starting new lives and careers all over again; Generation Xers* are caught in the middle and desperate to find the next step. And who knows what Generation Z* will manifest in its future, though it certainly will involve the global environmental crisis and questions about the nature of modern capitalism.

So, like everyone these days, I have been reflecting on my profession and place in my world. I have run a successful company and have been coaching high performers ever since I founded my sports psychology company, Sporting Bodymind, with my friend and business partner John Syer. I started as a sports psychologist in the 1980's, began working with business people in the 1990's, and became a performance consultant to musicians in the 2000's.

Over the last decade I began to work increasingly with individuals in transition: these could be people who had taken on a very senior role in a new organisation and were struggling; or they had transferred to a new team and were not performing in the new culture. Or perhaps they had moved from being an expert performer to being a *leader* of expert performers. Sometimes these people simply needed support: they may have been struggling and unable to admit it publicly, and sought help to understand why and how to meet their challenges. Sometimes, formerly brilliant performers were on the verge of momentous career failure.

Most of these individuals were dealing with a transition from familiar territory into *terra incognita*: companies, roles, functions and performance environments where their old assumptions and *modus operandi* were simply not sufficient to deliver the requirements of their new positions.

I had been working 'in the field' – at the application end rather than in research – for 30 years – which was too long! And so, as a coach and psychologist working with people in transition, I precipitated a transition for myself. I left my successful business to delve deeply into a multi-year research project on the foundations and root knowledge of my work. What is the true nature of transitions? What are the skills and characteristics that enable people to make transitions successfully? How do we learn to grow and thrive on transitions?

But what interested me most was how we achieve our purposes in our work: how the choices we make and the actions we take steer us on a course that brings meaning to our lives. I explored numerous models of the stages we progress through in life: some focused on career stages (e.g. Crites and Hall), others on life stages (e.g. Levinson and Erikson). Some elaborated on psychological development models, while still others focused on career stages (e.g. Schein or Super). And while still other approaches focus on the transition process itself, most notably Bridges and Elsner and Farrands, they actually seemed formulaic. Torbert's model of different leadership styles identifies different stages and end states, though I was not clear how he addressed transitions rather than the end states that he delineates. Herminia Ibarra's model of changing working identity was most fascinating, but focused almost exclusively on changing from one profession to the next; for example, from Spanish teacher to equities trader. Finally, there is the continued use of Kübler-Ross's model based upon life crises, death and dying to explain transitions in life and work – while work transitions don't actually match the progression of the psychological states she identified so profoundly.

So despite all the models and maps of transitions, I was left informed, but unsatisfied! No one seemed to have addressed head-on why some people make repeated successful transitions in their careers and lives while others don't, or can't.

The research study

I conducted an in-depth, cross-domain study with leaders in business, sport and music who had made repeated successful transitions to very senior levels in their fields: traders who became bank group vice presidents; automotive engineers who became CEOs; football players who became managers of teams; yachtsmen who became chiefs of Olympic teams; musicians who became heads of faculty and principals of conservatoires. My research was underpinned by major theoretical models for career development, intelligence, motivation and personality theory. The outcome was the development of a comprehensive profile of the type of person who is able to make repeatedly successful transitions in their careers and their lives. I call this *Transition Expertise*.

Transition Expertise brings together two very different human capabilities. *Expertise* is generally defined as superior performance in a domain as agreed by other expert representatives for that domain or by an established measure of expertise: a concert pianist, a Wimbledon champion or a Nobel Laureate scientist are all experts in their respective domains. Indeed, there are expert 'tinkers, tailors, soldiers and sailors'. Expertise is a relatively *stable state* that is aspired to and achieved over time through a combination of ability, training and dedication. However, *transitions* are by definition *unstable states*. They require the release of old patterns and the adoption or invention of new ones.

To develop Transition Expertise you need to be comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty, yet cultivate an attentiveness to your environment and awareness of self, and also access a range of skills and abilities to navigate through uncharted waters. It is this expertise which enables you to map a course through change, thrive in new or unknown distances, and draw upon your strengths while all the time remaining true to yourself.

Transition Expertise

Here are the main aspects of Transition Expertise.

Intrinsic Motivation: to thine own self be true

"There was the ambition in me to be very successful and nobody tells you think hard, do better, you're just trying to do that yourself all the time"

"I was never satisfied and not because I think I was an over achiever – it was more because I felt: 'Oh there's so many things that I haven't done still, or that I didn't do right'"

Your motivation for making a transition will shape not only your success in that transition but also the direction your life takes. Though it is common to think of incentivising people in terms of *extrinsically motivating factors* such as pay, job security or social esteem, in fact it is *intrinsically motivated* choice which makes transitions successful repeatedly over the course of your career. Intrinsic motivation will ensure that your career choices are congruent with who you are; you will be more likely to realise your true gifts; and personal satisfaction, the joy of achievement, and challenge – not external rewards – will shape long-term success.

Personal Resilience: stay the course, weather the storms

"I'm extraordinarily focused and I think of nothing else than how to package this argument up – how to promote this strategy or how to win the authorities round"

"I used to say 'in out, in in out' – I must make the team for two years and the third year in the cycle I seem to be dropped and then I make it for two years and the third year I'd be dropped"

Your personality is the vessel which carries you as you chart your course in the changing world. *Personal resilience* maintains a strong but flexible identity. It is much more than coping and is not captured by terms like 'hardiness'. Rather, resilience should be considered as the right mix of ego strength that enables one to remain clear and centred in the face of challenges, and *ego resilience*, which means being secure in one's identity so that you can adapt to changing circumstances and grow your self-concept, or sense of self. Resilience helps you sustain effort during a transition and overcome the challenges

* 'Millennials', 'Baby boomers', 'Generation X', 'Generation Z' – popular terms for groups of individuals born between 1980 and 2000, in the immediate post- World War II years, between 1960 and 1970, and the mid-1990s and early 2000s, respectively. These are not fixed definitions, and there is some overlap in suggested time-frames.

you meet. Persisting in the face of adversity, rebounding from setbacks, enduring over time, along with seeking and seizing the initiative, are all indications of personal resilience.

Mental Agility: adapt and reinvent

"You can contribute better because you've come without the baggage"

"I adapted"

"You can have an eight-carriage motorway and the art is how you sneak in and out of your carriageways"

Transitions are not achieved by planning, problem-solving, goal setting and assessing the results. This approach is outdated and inappropriate for transition. More specifically, *automaticity* (the ability to undertake tasks 'without thinking') is very important when you need fast access to your knowledge and skills, for example when returning a tennis backhand or responding to a short-term trading challenge. But habits can be deadly when we confront a new situation or seek to respond to a new opportunity. You need to interrupt the mindsets that hinder your move into the new. You will need *cognitive flexibility* to avoid preconceptions. And, when you are mentally agile, you don't fall back on *reductive bias,* the tendency to oversimplify, which turns dynamic processes into fixed objects, makes complex interactions linear, and turns interdependent relationships into simple one-to-one or two-to-one interactions. You will avoid *functional fixedness*, the temptation to apply the same solution to different situations or assume that a given problem can only be solved by one method.

Generative Intelligence: induction, inference, analogy and metaphor

"I think your brain becomes quite like a flow diagram if you do Latin and Greek"

"I often do use music in artistic analogies as a way to confront an issue"

It is a good start to be mentally agile. But on its own it is insufficient. You also need the kinds of intelligence which enable you to generate new and different ideas. *Generative intelligence*, such as the use of induction, inference, analogy and metaphor, helps build a bridge from old experience to new performance. You will recognise general patterns from specific experiences through induction. You will use inference from your previous experiences to draw conclusions about a new situation in which you find yourself. *Analogy* and *metaphor* will help you see parallels between current situations and past experiences.

It is useful to understand the workings of generative intelligence because, while *creativity* utilises generative intelligence, it is inadequate to blanket everything as 'just being creative'. Nor is generative intelligence the same as 'transferable skills'. Transitions require you to move consciously into the new, not unconsciously; to build the new, not recreate the old.

Intra-personal Intelligence: self-awareness and gut feelings

"I try and solicit, seek out areas of potential weakness or areas for improvement"

"It's the question I keep asking myself"

Intra-personal intelligence enables you to learn about yourself and understand how you learn. This is not some new intelligence discovered in the late twentieth century. It is a central aspect of all major models of intelligence going back to the roots of earlier research by the likes of Spearman and Binet, Thurstone and Guilford. You have a fundamental self-awareness. You discover over time both your strengths and weaknesses. You are able to adapt and respond with discrimination to different situations. You reflect and turn your reflections into action. You will have a deep, non-verbal self-knowing, a *felt sense* that helps you validate the rightness of your choices for when, where and how you make a transition.

Inter-personal Intelligence: it's always about people

"Understanding where people are and being more in tune with them and understanding what it is that every person can give"

"Reaching out to people"

"Throughout careers it is about relationships and it's about building relationships"

Inter-personal intelligence enables you to recognise, understand, and work with people, empathise with others, to understand from their language and behaviour what is transpiring inside them. You will be able to seek and understand the appropriate kind of feedback. You will know how to benefit from the abilities of others and how to ensure that they benefit from yours. Ultimately, *inter-personal intelligence* will help you shape and grow those you lead.

As Howard Gardner points out, *inter-personal intelligence* is developed interdependently with *intra-personal intelligence*. But having the one doesn't ensure you will have the other in equal measure. Nor are the two in any way synonymous with introversion and extraversion.

Case Study

Peter is a senior VP for a large multinational energy company. After training, he found his first job in consulting engineering, but after his first year he realised that he was not challenged by his position. Already his *intrinsic motivation* was asserting itself. So, he initiated a move to the company where he would spend most of his career: a state-owned energy company which was known for its refined culture, its international engagement and its opportunity for growth.

When, two years into his new job, a position came up for a sideways move into energy trading, he seized the opportunity: 'A colleague mentioned the position; the company was growing and I simply took the leap.' *Initiative* combined with *mental adaptability* would prove to be key elements of his make-up. He knew that he did not have the financial or mathematical facility of his trading colleagues, but he realised that he could step back and use an engineering systems model to organise his trades. He soon found himself heading a team trading energy futures.

Peter became highly regarded for the cohesive team of players he built through his *inter-personal intelligence*. Once again, he found himself wondering what he would do next when a position came up to organise the logistics of a major shipping operation within the company. Though this was totally beyond his expertise, he knew enough by now about the flows of the continental energy market to predict where and when to ensure that the right kind of energy resource could be accessed. His *inferential intelligence*, along with a strong *contextual intelligence*, helped him do this.

Peter decided to avail himself of an MBA programme supported by the company and in so doing made good use of his contextual intelligence to find out where to access resources, people, information and advice. At this point, he suddenly thought to himself: 'I've achieved my original life objectives: So now what?'

Deciding that he wanted to run his own operation Peter took an amazing leap to head up a regional operation in South Africa. His continued mental adaptability enabled him to respond to an *intrinsically motivating challenge* that stretched his abilities because of the great cultural differences. He developed relationships with *knowledge experts* in both the culture and language of the country; these individuals also knew how to navigate the minefield of local and international laws. At the same time, Peter had a diverse team of financial, human resources and operations people reporting into him. 'It was not by chance that I had and kept such a good team. I could not have succeeded without them. So I found them, formally and informally, and we worked together impressively.'

While he was thinking about returning home, Peter instead accepted a position as CEO to the newly acquired but large division in the USA. 'While the overall performance of the division was central, I simply loved helping people learn and grow.' He became deeply *intra-personally* reflective on his role in the company as an agent for developing talent, and constantly sought out advice and support from people who understood human nature. At this later stage of his career, Peter fully actualised his intrinsic motivation – which went beyond a challenge or achievement and led to a growing sense of purpose in his life and work.

Contextual Intelligence: the world at your fingertips

"It was the environment… it was the culture, the challenge and the way people worked together"

"Because of where I was, I sought out learning opportunities from people who were world leaders in their fields and gave me an understanding of issues"

Contextual intelligence is the most generally useful of the transition intelligences. It is not *inter-personal intelligence* though it is sometimes confused with this. It is partially captured in Sternberg's idea of shaping, adapting and selecting the environments in which you work. Nor is it social intelligence as typified in Cantor and Kilstrom, which usually includes a range of *inter-personal intelligences* and perceptual abilities. Contextual intelligence is both more and less than these models. Specifically, it is demonstrated through the apprehending of your environment and understanding the nature of its people, resources and cultural artefacts such as language and symbols. It enables you to understand the new environment into which you are moving, to shape it where you can and adapt to it appropriately where it cannot be changed.

Purpose: get aligned

"I think if you love the art of music you can put up with anything really. If you see it as a means to an end, you're likely to get disillusioned and unhappy very quickly. So I don't think there was ever an occasion when I would turn up to a concert and wish I wasn't there"

"There were various things that I am completely passionate about in sport and I love excellence and I love people doing really well. But it's more about sport as a catalyst to change… and so I went to my interview with a really clear vision of what I thought a sporting nation should look like"

Purpose operates as a higher-level organising principle. While intrinsic motivation chooses courses of action that give you satisfaction and a sense of achievement, for example, purpose ensures that these actions give meaning to your life. And by making choices in alignment with your purpose you will get where you need to be. But as the pilot of a trans-Atlantic passenger plane explained: 'For 90% of the time you are drifting off course. My job is to gently steer us back onto course. The longer I drift, the more time and energy it will take to get me back.' Purpose aligns intrinsic motivation with innate abilities.

As the philosopher Plato wrote 2,500 years ago: 'Purpose... is the full use of your potential, in the pursuit of excellence', and this underlies the choice of title by Peters and Waterman for their classic management book.

How not to transition

Transition expertise is not the same as professional expertise. In fact, your professional expertise may be your weak spot. When you become an expert in a subject, it is likely that some, if not many, of the more general ways of thinking and acting that you will need during transition may have become tied to your expert knowledge. They may not be easily extricated from those knowledge-specific anchors to use in new circumstances.

Counter to many assumptions, taking it slowly one step at a time is not the answer: incrementalism can be a slow death. Sometimes you simply need to take the leap. It is amazing how many of the individuals in my study were ready to jump in and seize the opportunity rather than carefully calculate and plan a move. In fact, my research clearly indicated that slow, carefully calculated transitions tend to be too little, too late.

Extrinsic motivation will leave you stranded. Career choices based upon extrinsic motivators like security, money and status may achieve short- to mid-term results. But in the longer term they will leave you with money, security, status but not a lot else. Early career choices often combine a successful mixture of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. But as you progress it is important to constantly ensure that challenge, satisfaction, flow, achievement and autonomy steer your transition choices.

Emotional Intelligence is not transition expertise. EQ is a hybrid model: a mix of personality, intelligence, learned behaviour and affect management that has captured the business imagination. It is a useful model but, despite its name, not really an intelligence. Nor does it deal exclusively with the emotions. And its components differ from model to model.

Don't 'Plan-Do-Study-Act'. Dr Deming's process will not help you manage a sucessful transition. Planning, self-management, problem-solving and risk analysis are all wonderful management techniques for stable, incremental change. But they are not the means with which to make a transition. Nor will they provide you with the kind of fleet-of-foot thinking required in a new environment. Over-reliance on the mindset cultivated by these approaches will absolutely hold you back.

Don't spend 10 years and 10,000 hours practising, practising, practising. This dated message from the 'deliberate practice school' is so contrary to what is required of you when you transition that it should be banned from our repertoire and language! Time to move on from this limiting and unhappy-making formula of uninspiring drudgery!

Avoid seeking homeostasis. 'Homeostasis' refers to the tendency of organisms to maintain a steady state at all times, whereas transitions are by their very nature *non*-homeostatic. In a transition you are more often interrupting and breaking a former pattern. The processes you use mentally, emotionally and behaviourally to maintain homeostasis will be the very ones that let you down and hold you back when you transition.

More than ever, career transitions require transition expertise...

We live in a VUCA world – Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous. More than ever, career transitions require Transition Expertise. Career changes that move you from one field of endeavour to another, from Spanish teacher to investment banker, or football player to lawyer, are difficult when entrenched and limited conceptions of yourself result in *identity foreclosure*. Re-organisation of yourself requires Personal Resilience.

Your self-concept is a personality construct, a fundamental sense of who you are. It is your vehicle for the expression of your potential and your purpose for being. In this rapidly changing world, we need continually to re-assess who we think we are, how we respond to our challenges, the ways we use our gifts and potential, and why we are motivated to change. Successful transitions depend upon our ability to make conscious, informed career and life choices. In so doing we acquire wisdom as we grow into ourselves and our abilities; these are developed through experience and practice – they help us guide ourselves as well as lead others into the emerging future. Transition Expertise enables you to chart and then steer a true course towards attaining your full potential in work and life.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Christopher Connolly PhD co-founded SyCon – The Sporting Bodymind Group – with John Syer in the 1980s. They pioneered applied sports psychology working with Premiership football clubs, Olympic teams and professional athletes in Europe and the USA. He has applied his expertise in the private and public business sectors for 30 years, lectured widely and made numerous appearances on television and radio. He has co-authored several books including *Sporting Body, Sporting Mind* and *How Teamwork Works*. His most recent research on career transitions will be published in his sixth book, *Transition Expertise*, in 2019.

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As background to my research, I studied many areas of human nature: intelligence from the early work of Binet and Galton to the more recent approaches of Sternberg and Gardner; psychological development from Freud and Jung through Vygotsky and Erikson; personal resilience from Germaine to Seligman; belief systems from Heider's attributions to Bandura's self-efficacy; motivation from MacDougall's operant conditioning, through Atkinson's achievement motivation, to Maslow's self-actualisation; expertise from Chase and Simon's collaboration to Eriksson and Gobet's disagreements; the search for meaning and purpose in life from Victor Frankl to Roberto Assagioli; and so many more.

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