A Powerful Mastermind Model for Group Coaching
by Carl Dierschow (USA)

Virtual Intercultural VUCA and the New Normal
by Malcolm Nicholson, iCN Journalist (UK)

Leading Learning Through COVID-19
Interview with Jon Foster-Pedley
by Bob Larcher, iCN Journalist (France)

Reinventing the Gig Economy
by Divya Parekh (USA)
Welcome to yet another exciting edition of the International Coaching News (iCN) online magazine! For our 30th edition, our theme is Group & Team Coaching. This edition is loaded with content on a variety of relevant topics. It is focused on helping organisations develop high performing teams, provides tools & tips on how to build successful teams and how to be a better team coach amidst the pandemic we are experiencing recently.

The iCN is proud to have collaborated with several renowned international columnists, expert coaches and best-selling authors to provide insights on corporate coaching. Look out for our Quarterly Column 'Reinventing the Gig Economy' by Divya Parekh. Divya shares three concepts to gig economy, Growth, Integrity, Greater Good. Another noteworthy article 'Virtual Intercultural VUCA and the New Normal' by Malcolm Nicholson, examines ideas around a new ‘How’ – how to deliver team coaching in a lockdown and post lockdown intercultural VUCA world. The ‘what’ that is delivered will depend on the client requirements. ‘A Powerful Mastermind Model for Group Coaching’ by Carl Dierschow. Carl discusses the Mastermind concept & process and how it is beneficial to the group. ‘Want More Clients? Use This Amazing Tool’ by Ruby McGuire. Ruby shares why group coaching is a great tool to consider adding to your business, for an additional revenue & a three-part strategy for overcoming your mindset monkeys.

Each of our columnists, too numerous to mention individually, has taken some really interesting perspectives, and I would encourage a thorough read-through of this edition.

And speaking of team, we are delighted to announce that we have been working over the last months to recruit and train new journalists for the iCN magazine. We have now appointed 8 new Journalists to search out new cutting-edge happenings in the world of coaching and personal development. To know more about our Journalist and our entire team, kindly click HERE.

Just like all our other editions, this is not just an interesting read, but it provides you with helpful personal development ideas and professional development techniques to grow your business and improve your lifestyle. I hope you enjoy this issue and do let us know if there are any topics you’d like to see covered in the future.

Leeann

Ongoing Actions:
- CPD - If you’re not already logging your hours, start now. You need to demonstrate a minimum of 30 hours per year to maintain and/or upgrade your professional status. You can download a CPD log from the members area.
- Professional Support - We recommend everyone benefits from having the professional support of a coach/mentor/supervisor to develop our skills, so talk to us when you’re ready to be professionally supported.

Further Information:
- Volunteering - If one of your values is paying it forward, and you’d like to contribute by becoming a volunteer, then we want to hear from you. We have many rewarding and interesting opportunities that can potentially enhance your skills and utilise your expertise. Please contact dawn@coach-accreditation.services
- Submit a Testimonial - We would like you to share your experience of your accreditation of IAPC&M with the world. Please submit a testimonial via the accredited area - https://coach-accreditation.services/submit-a-testimonial/

Final Stage Actions:
- Benefits - Please download the evolving list here https://coach-accreditation.services/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/LY1318LTfIAPCM-Benefits-Leaflet-V210618.pdf and cross reference them to ensure you are taking full advantage of the various discounted support services and products available to you.
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But great group coaching can be so much more valuable! This is where it’s useful to leverage techniques often labelled as a ‘Mastermind group.’ Many may not be familiar with this term either, but even the name evokes an image focused more on expertise sharing and developing soft skills.

Building on the Mastermind concept, I like to construct a group coaching program where each participant is learning, supporting, and helping everyone else. Each group session is structured:

1. Reporting progress since the previous session
2. Group work on the members’ issues
3. Each individual setting goals for the coming weeks

As organiser and facilitator, my role is to take care of housekeeping details, and ensure everyone is engaged, authentic, respectful, and helpful.

I set up a group with clear ground rules:

- Confidentiality: what’s said here stays here.
- Helpfulness: the purpose is for this group to help you, so you must help others.
- Involvement: everybody contributes

I will have a behind-the-scenes conversation with anyone who appears to be bending these rules. Mistakes are usually unintentional, where gentle feedback suffices to get the person back on track.

When forming a group, I am also looking for diversity which will support varied perspectives. Of course, that depends on the overall purpose of the group and how participants get selected. The most useful engagement is when each participant enthusiastically opted in because they are convinced it will be valuable for them.

The opening and closing sections of the Mastermind session are clearly meant to build accountability for each person making progress. After all, the most useful work is done between sessions, where they have a chance to actually apply the new information to their personal situation.
It’s crucial that each member of the group sets their own goals based on the insights they’ve gained during the session. It’s not an assignment from a teacher, so my prompting questions are crucial:

- ‘What insights or conclusions have you come to today?’
- ‘What are you taking away and doing before our next session?’
- ‘What support will you need to keep you on track?’

Once the group gets going, I usually just have to call attention to the next person on the list – or let them volunteer to be next – and get them started. This simple process combines an appreciation for the work done, projecting forward in time, and deciding how much to commit to.

I find that goals declared by the client are much more powerful than an assignment given by someone else. At the beginning of the next session, I will ask each person to give their ‘one minute progress report’ which closes the accountability loop. Notice that it’s more powerful to declare goals and progress to a group than to just a facilitator, I may kick off the initial session – or call attention to the next person on the list – or let them volunteer to be next – and get them started.

The largest portion of time in this Mastermind session focuses on members’ issues. As facilitator, I may kick off the initial session – or even multiple sessions – with a “topic.” Again, it’s not about teaching content. The purpose is to help the group focus on a certain area if that supports the group’s overall purpose.

The more impactful conversations, though, come from one of the members deciding that they would value the help of the group in some way. A day or two before the session, I will ask them all to consider if they have a topic which would be useful to work on.

I have found that often people eagerly launch into describing all the aspects and history of whatever issue they’re focused on. I will quickly stop them and ask them this key question: ‘What help would be useful from this time today?’ I am looking for a statement like:

- ‘I would like some feedback on my approach.’
- ‘I am looking for ideas and perspectives.’
- ‘I would like to role-play a difficult conversation I need to have.’
- ‘I want the group to help me get really clear.’
- ‘I want to be pushed out of my comfort zone!’

With this grounding, the speaker will become more focused, and everyone else will get clear on how they could be most helpful. Then, as the speaker starts describing the situation, interactions will produce more of the desired results.

I like to keep these conversations to about 10-15 minutes apiece, but it really does depend on the goals of the group. Primarily, I want to get things moving in a useful direction; rarely are issues fully resolved in the session itself. That’s the work each person should declare as their takeaway and actions at the end. Often I will help wrap-up this group conversation by asking the initiator whether they have what they need to move forward.

**Frequent Questions**

**How many sessions are useful for a group?** It depends on the overall goals of the group, but I would say that it takes a minimum of four sessions for people to really get in the groove. After that, groups can find this to be useful indefinitely, even for years.

**How often should the group meet?** I find this similar to 1-1 coaching, where participants need to have enough time to get useful work done between the sessions. You also need to be sensitive to whether this feels like ‘additional work’ to the participants, versus helping them make progress which is useful and valued.

**How many people are in a group?** I find that the best size is between about 5 and 12. Smaller groups can be disrupted when someone has to miss a meeting. And larger groups create a situation where members feel like they did not get enough time to work on an important issue. I encourage membership to be stable, as it always takes considerable time for a new person to become a trusted member.

**How long is a Mastermind session?** I like having sessions between an hour or two, but I have seen successful models which stretch across half a day or even multiple days. With more time, you can go much deeper, and every person can have the chance to do significant work on the issues most in their way.

**Will people pay for this?** The bottom line is that people will be motivated to engage when they see that the purpose of the group aligns well with where they need help, and they believe that the structure will make a tangible impact on meeting their goals. These are the key points to emphasise when proposing this kind of model to individuals, teams, and organisations.

**The Group’s Purpose**

I have mentioned the purpose of the group several times, but have not actually said what that is. That’s because it depends on what you want to set up, and how you desire to engage participants.

**About Carl Dierschow**

Carl Dierschow is a coach for leaders and owners of small businesses in the USA with Small Fish Business Coaching. He is an education leader for the International Coach Federation Colorado Chapter, and is a Certified Comprehensive Organisational Coach and Certified Leadership Coach.

Carl works with owners and leaders in companies which are making a powerful contribution to their communities, employees, and society. His blog, The Values Based Business, is rapidly gaining recognition for its support of companies which are based on powerful foundations based on deep values and a compelling mission.
Teamwork: Not Just Surviving, but Thriving

by Gary R. Gasaway (USA)

For years, I have witnessed many of my manager peers treat their employees unfairly, disrespectfully, and with truly little value. Thus, I also observed these same poorly managed and unsatisfied employees under perform in their jobs. Meanwhile, I was enjoying employee high moral and performance, mutual trust and respect, and completely satisfied team members. Yes – team members. What I was experiencing resulted from a group of employees that appreciated their position, worked hard, and completed performance goals. These employees were not just barely surviving like my peers’ employees, they were thriving! Why? Because they were a part of a high-performance team.

As a leader, it was my role to encourage collaboration and teamwork. I understood that the members of my team needed to work together collaboratively with one another to achieve more than just working independently. Working in a positive, team environment allows for effective communication, resolving inner-team conflict, purposeful direction, focus, accomplishing established goals, and providing a results-driven structure. I discovered that the establishment of a high-performing team led to desirable performance improvements such as: improved productivity, efficiency, quality, employee satisfaction, and not to mention the emotional components of happiness, joy, and harmony with all team members.

I believe the key to my success was mostly due to developing standards of excellence, and then setting an example for others to follow. Truly, communication was a priority in establishing principles concerning the plans and direction that ultimately provided an avenue in which employees’ performance goals ought to be pursued.

The key was to actively involve my employees, ask for feedback, and resolve any issues by keeping the doors of communication always candid and open. In fact, I believe communication is the number one factor for successful team performance. My employees understood that mutual respect and honesty allowed for them to perform at their highest peak; and they strived to create an atmosphere of trust and dignity within the team. They knew the importance of strengthening others because it made each person feel capable and effective to be the best they could be.

As I stated, there needs to be trust, respect, and a feeling of being valued by all team members. This just does not automatically happen; it needs to be built with effective communication and support. To work together, the team needs expectations of the leader. These expectations can be the guidelines that the team can effectively work with. Here are (6) guidelines that I used when encouraging my team to work together towards performance goals:

1. Clear and meaningful goals

There needs to be understanding, or clearly stated goals. These goals also must be measurable and challenging; otherwise they would not be worth the effort to strive for.

2. Results-driven structure

In other words, roles must be defined, there needs to accountability by all members, and each must monitor their own individual performance to ensure it’s meeting the expectations of the team’s performance.

3. Competent team members

Understanding that all team members have different levels of knowledge, skills, and talents. The combinations of these make up strengths and are used for the success of the overall team’s performance.

4. Unified commitment to team success

This commitment is for a motivational effort in promotion of guiding team members to participate in making joint decisions for the success of the team.

5. Open communication

To be honest, respectful, and a willingness to listen to different perspectives, opinions, and positions of all team members.

6. Standards of excellence

There is a certain pressure created for all members of the team to perform at their highest level.

Once these guidelines are communicated and understood, I monitored the progress and provided encouraging feedback and additional guidance if necessary.

Let us go back to my observations of my peer managers. For the success of the company and for these managers, I took the initiative to design, develop, and including the facilitation of what I titled as: The Modelled – Coaching Workshop. This two-day workshop focused upon the skills, knowledge, and implementation of ‘coaching components’ guiding managers to be more effective leaders and coaches. Some of those components included: Understanding Employee Needs, The Coach as a Risk-Taker, Coaching Communication, Acceptance as the Coach, Coaching Techniques and Strategies, (and 12 others), including my last component – Teamwork: Coaching the Entire Team.

How to put the concept of teamwork into action:

I will not go into details of the entire teamwork section regarding the workshop at this time, but I will provide just a brief part of a team building exercise that was a part of this section.

An exercise I have used for many years is based upon survival. I believe its effectiveness of how it proves an overwhelming difference surviving as an individual verse’s having multiple members involved is greatly impacted as a result of completing this exercise. What this exercise teaches, is the fact that teamwork is not just about surviving but thriving.

One, most effective tool I use in this exercise is a one-piece combination of a mountaineer’s carabiner/compass (used to secure ropes). Let me explain further. At the end of my survival presentation I give one carabiner/compass to each participant and explain to them that with the one they are attached to only themselves.
Next, I have them attach to the person on their right and have them pull on their carabiners. I further explain that this proves to be a good, firm attachment, but could be stronger. Now I have the entire group (usually 20 participants) and have them get in a straight line. Then I have all participants attach their carabiner/compasses to each other. Lastly, I attach my carabiner/compass at the end of the participant line and have the front person pull against all of us, with me at the opposite end. The strength of all of us ‘together’ cannot be broken. I then explain that we are now strongest together and using the compass; we are also all going in the same direction. I referred to it as S4:

S4 – Stay Connected, Same Direction, Supporting Each Other = Strongest as ONE

Not just surviving, but thriving as a team!

As a manager or as a coach, my role included evaluating the different talents and skills of all my employees and then using each person’s unique strengths to the advantage of the performance potentials of the entire team. At the same time, I created motivation and inspiration for my team members and helped them stay on track toward achieving team goals. Remember that the most successful managers, like the most successful coaches, know how to breed success in others. They keep the team focused while building members’ confidence, commitment, and trust in themselves and each other. By following a few basic coaching techniques, anyone can become a better manager and simultaneously help their employees perform better, too. Focus upon thriving as a team and consistently winning the day!

Gary is the founder of Conflict Coaching Solutions, LLC, a professional life coaching business that focuses on inspiring individuals, couples, and/or groups to transform their conflictive situations into positive solutions.

Before creating his company, Gary was a “corporate coach” for a large utility company in Southern California. During his 32 years with this company, Gary designed and developed several coaching courses and workshops that he facilitated to supervisors and managers throughout the company.

Gary also has now written and published four books: The Coach’s Chronicles Trilogy and The Reflection Connection. A new book: A Simple Life, is coming out this autumn. For additional information regarding Gary and his business or books, go to: conflictcoaching.com

The scope of this article is to examine ideas around a new ‘How’ – how to deliver team coaching in a lockdown and post lockdown intercultural VUCA world. The ‘what’ that is delivered will depend on the client requirements, the unfolding variables and your own personal magic dust. (See iCN Edition 28 ‘Jazz music and coaching – the art of improvisation’)

We are experiencing a seismic time as a planet. Approaching global warming tipping points, a pandemic, near global lockdowns, sliding towards right wing politics driven by online ‘perspecticide’, and undoubtedly heading into a global recession with no idea of the long term impact of the pandemic. And at the time of writing the death of one man in the USA has set off unprecedented global demonstrations.

This is impacting organisations and teams; we are now so far into ‘lockdown’ - or whatever the local term is - that teams have been formed, members recruited and businesses run entirely remotely. Many are reporting staff surveys show a 20-60-20 spread for returning (20% home working, 60% hybrid and 20% full time office). Several of whom I know are evaluating a fully remote dispersed model post pandemic.

Teams are dealing with the paradox of setting direction whilst reacting to events and making up a lot as they go along, such is the speed of change. Who would have thought in January 2020 that in 8 weeks leaders would be changing the direction of their organisations to keep their staff alive?

Some international teams have been working with ‘virtual’ as a part of their meetings cadence; however ‘virtual’ meetings have now been mandated into becoming that most overused of phrases - ‘the new normal’.

Strange times indeed.

So, where does team coaching fit in this highly complex, shifting landscape? For leaders, delivering results, delivering change, doing the day job and protecting your territory often mean that the chance to pull together in the same direction is often illusive.

However the pandemic has seen many teams report that they are pulling together far more cohesively than they were BC.

For team coaches be able to deal with complex situations they have to have an equally or more complex set of approaches to deal with the situation. Only complexity can absorb complexity.
When at its best, team coaching, informed by good theory and practices and case studies around international business in the true sense, is brilliant and unique at informing or encouraging conversations and enabling teams to develop a culture that can create a desirable future, discover emergent possibilities and create and implement the variety of actions needed to cope with the diversity of challenges the organisation will face.

A couple of lenses that team coaches could consider are 1. Intercultural has been already with us, 2. Virtual is likely to be the approach for quite some while and 3. Virtual does not have to be worse – it’s just different. Team coaches need to display the same skills – listening and watching below the surface line, appreciation, facilitation and challenge only now with greater intensity, awareness and focus.

So what is a good template for approaching a team coaching assignment? The answer, of course, is ‘It depends…’!!!

Flexible Approach

Every team, business, culture and budget are unique, consequently each team coaching intervention will need to be bespoke. Additionally, there are levels of detail within that will emerge as the programme progresses. There is consequently a need for the team coach and agenda to be even more flexible in hyper VUCA and to liaise closely with the executive sponsors, to enable ongoing course correction to drive the direction and content towards the – often evolving – outcomes.

Structure

Initial scoping includes the typical elements of: fact finding, interviews, launch announcements, 360 feedback, psychometric profiles, confidentiality agreements and boundaries around group learning & feedback. A ‘future state’ agreement, specific or aspirational, on the required outcomes.

Flexible Approach

My personal preference BC (Before Covid) would - predicating with ‘It all depends’ - initially consist of a minimum of 3 one to one individual coaching sessions and 3 group off-site sessions over a 6 month period. Approaches IC and AC (In and After Covid) include changing the team sessions to 1.5 - 2 hour online meetings held on a weekly/bi-weekly basis threaded between the 121 sessions.

Dual Track

This 121 and group structure combines double loop learning from the group sessions and one to one meetings, enabling a dual track approach. The time the team spends together focuses on outputs that can only be achieved by their interaction. The 121s help individuals ‘move’, to experiment and question in a safe environment. These perspectives can make sense of what is going on ‘under the hood’, thus improving the impact on an individual and consequently the team level.

The central concept is that organisational culture is a direct reflection of leadership actions, which in turn are a reflection of individual belief systems. So organisational change will not happen without individual change.

Being Present

With non work interruptions likely, ensuring everyone is present at an emotional as well as intellectual level is vital. A guided grounding exercise is useful – be it breathing or a relaxation/visualisation exercise will help bring some consistency to the team’s level of presence.

Ruth Wageman et al have made available a Fast Team Start up approach (see Wageman https://6teamconditions.com/covid-19-support/) designed to set the parameters for the team and to minimise the error rate in new teams.

Everyone should be visible. Cameras on, no muting (subject to non work background noises) to enable them to remain present.

Intercultural Awareness

‘Data’ There are many questionnaires available to measure teamwork effectiveness, behaviours and attitudes. Amongst the best are the Peter Hawkins, Wageman et al and Lencioni questionnaires (See Team coaching resources article). All these are excellent conversation openers and move beliefs and behaviours from subjective to objective.

Measurement

This is an occasional frustration for me as some organisations want quantifiable outcomes when the team coach is having to deal with a group of Complex Adaptive Systems working in a series of nested Complex Adaptive Systems! Organisations also have an entirely different criteria for what makes a great leader. (Apart from ‘Get the results!’). One outcome focused CEO said to me ‘I’ll see from the team if you are being successful’.

What makes a great virtual team coaching session?

The ground rules should be agreed to minimise time spent together discussing them. Parameters around contribution, interjection, levels of contribution, signalling etc., need to be agreed from the kick off, as should the timing of breaks.

Timings

Sessions should ideally be 1.5h – 2.0h. It is also essential to build in reflective space whilst the team is online – as soon as the collective string is cut, people will revert to checking the tidal wave of ‘stuff’ – transactional communications that never goes away.
‘Virtual’ may increase the opportunity for misinterpretation of responses – cultural differences from body language to thinking styles need to be surfaced. This is particularly important for new and emerging teams.

This is especially relevant as the team coach mines the levels of conversation from typical organisational transactions of ‘Instruct’ and ‘Inform’ to richer levels which require more nuance and vulnerability from participants. A session on an intercultural tool to help understanding would be time well spent. Andy Molinsky’s ‘Global Dexterity’ tool fits really well (see ‘Team coaching resources’ article).

Feedback

If the nuances of behaviour, body language and eye contact are more opaque virtually, then more frequent check ins are advisable. Simple questions to gauge general responses work well. Team coaches should be encouraged to use available technology – online polls provide real time anonymised data and – theoretically - are difficult to argue with!

Silence

As Susan Scott said in Fierce conversations – ‘let silence do the heavy lifting.’ Don’t fill it yourself.

The need for delivering great virtual, intercultural and VUCA team coaching is currently enormous. Teams, organisations and countries are facing unprecedented scenarios.

When delivering an online lecture on intercultural working to staff at a UK university recently, the realisation struck me that now is the time to be focusing more, not less, on intercultural relationships and building relationships and understanding. Our hardwiring towards tribalism is being used now at a geo-political level. The push back must start with the things we can control – our own relationships and roles.

So finally - is there a link between what we can achieve with team coaching and improving our lot on this planet? I truly believe that by raising awareness – not necessarily on specifics, but enabling people to be aware of their environment, be that domestic, business, geographic or political, is a starting point for change.

Besides, we are at a point where we really don’t have a lot of choice...
In the old days – maybe ten years ago – doing a gig meant your band got a date to play in a club or an actress landed a commercial she had to film. It was a one-shot deal and a way to share your artistic talent, whatever it was. Comedians got a comedy club gig; an artist had a few days to show his or her paintings, the guy staffing the soundboard got to go work when a group came into town for a concert and so on.

Now, that ‘gig’ term refers to job opportunities in many professions. Rather than working full time for one company, an IT technician might do a week’s work in one company and then do three months across town in another. You take almost any profession, and the same principle applies.

As hiring people for short-term assignments becomes more prevalent, I believe the gig economy is only going to grow. Some people have an adverse reaction to businesses operating in this way. Instead of lamenting that things are not like they used to be, we should embrace this trend. There are advantages for the ones doing gigs. Your integrity is what others will see and how they will know you. Your honesty and moral principles shine through all you do.

As an executive coach, I have been part of the gig economy for some time. It is time to add some prestige and accolades for those who travel this road. The next time you go out on a new gig, I want you to think of this:

**Growth** – You are out there growing your business.

**Integrity** – Your honesty and moral principles shine through all you do.

**Greater Good** – The work you do helps people.

Let’s look at each of these in more detail.

**Growth**

There are not too many better feelings than seeing the fruits of your labour. Let’s face it; we have been programmed that way since childhood. We were proud of our elementary school projects, which continued into high school and out into the workforce. We feel good when we accomplish what we set out to do.

As I said, when going from gig to gig, it is all up to you. There is nobody to blame your failure on or to take credit for your success, but you. You have the control to increase your business size until you get to the point of hiring others to help you. Before you know it, you are managing others. You have that power!

There is another kind of growth you go through when you work for yourself. You acquire more knowledge and a depth of maturity that isn’t always there when you work for a company rather than being the company.

You might be a graphic design artist and great at it. However, because of plying your talents through various gigs, you suddenly have to know how to market yourself, be knowledgeable about taxes and other regulations, know time management, be able to multitask and do everything else to run a business.

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**Integrity**

As I said, when going from gig to gig, it is all up to you. That means you can operate your business with your values and principles. Working from a place of integrity is not always easy to do if you don’t own your own business. How you conduct yourself will put your mark on every professional relationship you cultivate as you work various gigs. Your integrity is what others will see and how they will know you.

When you practice your profession through gigs, it is all up to you! There is nobody to blame your failure on or to take credit for your success, but you. You have the control to increase your business size until you get to the point of hiring others to help you. Before you know it, you are managing others. You have that power!

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**Integrity**

As I said, when going from gig to gig, it is all up to you. That means you can operate your business with your values and principles. Working from a place of integrity is not always easy to do if you don’t own your own business. How you conduct yourself will put your mark on every professional relationship you cultivate as you work various gigs. Your integrity is what others will see and how they will know you.

If you have ever seen a Spider-Man movie, you are familiar with the expression, ‘With great power comes great responsibility.’ For anyone who runs their own business, whether it has 500 employees or only yourself going out to gigs, your superpower is your integrity. That is the compass that guides you in all you do. When your values are on display to others as you practice your profession, it is the best marketing you can do. You establish a reputation based on your integrity. Through word of mouth, others will know you as being honest and hard-working as you demonstrate your skills in the work you do.

There are a couple of meanings to this concept, and they are both applicable. First of all, you always want to do your best for your client. This regard for others points back to integrity, and you should always strive to do the best job possible. Remember, for some customers; you might feel that you are going above and beyond your usual standards to get the job done for them. However, doing that is how you will enhance your reputation as one who gets the job done.

The ‘Greater Good’ also refers to what you do for others outside of your profession. When we realise we are all members of a community, whether it is your neighbourhood, town, county, state, country, or other nations, we all have to pitch in to help others. You can do it by putting your time into a volunteer organisation, taking part in civic projects, or committing a portion of your profits to a cause that means something to you. Being successful is not being selfish.
Helping others gives you a definite high that is difficult to achieve otherwise. While you should not do it to impress others, others will observe your generosity and make a positive impact on them.

When you apply these three concepts to your gig economy, you can see that it is honourable of a career as anyone else does. You are in control of your fate. Be proud of what you do with it.

ABOUT DIVYA PAREKH

Divya is a global business relationship and leadership mentor, coach, and speaker. She helps clients cultivate power partnerships that lead to high performance. As a speaker, she connects the audience with their inner leaders.

She works in close collaboration with corporate leaders, coaches, and entrepreneurs who are ready for evidence-based strategies that shape and improve their personal and business culture.

She has an enormous love of people, fierce passion for coaching, commitment to building leaders, and unbridled desire to create a better world. Divya would love to bring her talent and experience to any person, company, or organisation that she can help or support.

SECTION: Quarterly Column

A Recipe for Transformation Within Team Coaching

by Dr. Keith Merron (USA)

Over the last 35 years coaching and consulting, I have coached individuals, built teams, and designed and delivered hundreds of workshops. My primary focus has been on working with leaders as both a coach and an organisation development consultant. My work as a coach of team will be the focus of this article.

To begin, I want to admit to having been a workshop junkie over the years. I have loved participating in personal growth workshops and even more, creating and leading them. I love the insights that come from participants as well as being an agent of people’s transformation. Over time, however, I have grown to recognize the limitations of workshops. Often it is hard to sustain the learning without sufficient support and sometimes the learning fades rather than strengthen.

In contrast to my past devotion to training, I now believe that in the realm of leadership, training rarely works very well as a standalone approach to leadership development. The concept of training is based on the assumption that there is a body of knowledge that needs to be imparted to a person in order for them to become a better leader. But leadership at its best is not taught. It is discovered. Great leadership cannot be learned by following five easy steps or adopting three simple processes. Instead, it is earned through an ongoing examination of oneself, and by fully embodying one’s authentic ability to inspire others. To achieve this aim, I have developed a process for group or team coaching I refer to as “cohort coaching”.

In cohort coaching, I work with a group of people or a team, and in this process, I both teach and coach. In addition, participants also coach each other. I often meet with the team once a month for about 5 hours, during which time participants are introduced to a universal set of principles of high-performance leadership which they learn to embody (using their unique expression) over time.

These Principles include:

• Being guided by an inner compass
• Looking at the organisation as a system
• Gaining alignment with teams, strategically and tactically
• Developing trust
• Synergy and collaboration
• Leadership as an expression of integrity
• Courage and risk-taking

The group meets either face to face or on Zoom conference. Sessions revolve primarily around ‘cases’ or situations that participants bring to the meeting, enabling everyone to explore ways of strengthening their leadership effectiveness in ‘real-time’ situations.

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The group meets either face to face or on Zoom conference. Sessions revolve primarily around ‘cases’ or situations that participants bring to the meeting, enabling everyone to explore ways of strengthening their leadership effectiveness in ‘real-time’ situations.
Common themes are explored, and powerful principles of leadership are offered. Through deep exploration, inquiry, and dialogue, insights for leading naturally unfold. Together, we create a confidential, emotionally safe environment within which to develop participants’ leadership capability. In addition to the monthly meetings, I meet with individual participants at least once a month between sessions to deepen their experience and amplify their own individual lessons and discoveries.

This combination of a learning environment, participants coaching each other, and my coaching them as individuals between sessions, has a number of advantages over one on one coaching. The biggest advantage is that I get to see the people I coach in a realistic setting of sorts. I see how they interact and how they coach others. Since coaching is a crucial part of being a good leader, by seeing them in action, I learn a whole lot about their paradigms for leader, which I can then incorporate into my 1:1 work with each individual. As coaches, we often rely on a clients’ self-reporting, which is naturally filled with biases and blindspots. By seeing them in action, I get a better sense of who they are and how the operate.

Another advantage of this form of group coaching is that it usually goes on for at least a year, sometimes much longer. As a result, clients are steeped in the learning process. It keeps it front and centre for them. In contrast to workshops which tend to be congested and short, cohort coaching moves slower and takes longer – which tend to be congested and short, cohort and centre for them. In contrast to workshops steeped in the learning process. It keeps it front.

When I do team coaching (coaching with an intact team as opposed to a collection of individuals), I teach principles of effective teamwork and then help the team integrate these principles real time. In these leadership teams, the leaders get better both as leaders and as teammates. They also learn how to develop the culture of their organisation together.

During these monthly sessions, people bringing specific challenges they’re facing at work and they get coaching from others in the group (not advice but true coaching). The experience of coaching one another becomes a laboratory of sorts, where I am often calling ‘time-out’ and inviting us to look at the dynamics of what is going on here and now in the cohort coaching session. I might say something like, ‘I notice Sally tightening up in response to what you just said, Jake. Did you notice it?’ Or, ‘I’m wondering about the dynamic I just saw unfold. What I saw was….’ We then explore any of a number of things: What happened, how did it happen, what could have been done differently, etc.

I believe that participants end up with substantial ‘ahas’, as well as the ability to couple these insights with concerted experimentation and action. Over time, the process becomes a powerful cauldron for learning.

One of the greatest aspects of the process is participants becoming accountable to each other. In coaching individuals, they’re only accountable to themselves, and to a lesser extent, to me. The tensile strength of their agreements with themselves to do X, Y, or Z is therefore not nearly as strong as when they make an agreement to do something in front of the cohort. The mutual expectations and reinforcement accelerate the process mightily.

I continue to do one on one coaching, and will happily take on more clients, but I prefer cohort coaching in many cases because I get to provide one on one and work with the group at the same time. The combination requires more of me, but it also allows me to have an even greater impact. And of course, that is the ultimate aim.

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Because in a Group Everyone Matters
by Petra Juhászová (UK)

Sometimes we think that we can do alone without the help of others. There are times we need to get off of our high horse and admit that we need help. During my work where I facilitate sessions for people from different backgrounds and walks of life the most important thing for everyone is to feel safe. Whether we talk about a session for a group of people who came together for the first time or they’ve known each other already.

When we decide to work in a group - whether we are a facilitator or the leader of the meeting, it is important to make sure that everyone knows whatever they have to say, their opinion matters. We need to respect that people are different. Therefore, their contribution is different. An extrovert could start invading the limelight to show off their skills and thoughts, while an introvert would need a little more time and space to start sharing. Especially on those ‘brainstorming’ meetings looking for new approaches. One of the most common mistakes occurring in a ‘brainstorming’ meeting is judging the ideas as soon as they are said. This is really discouraging to the participants.

As you can sense the dynamics of these kinds of meetings and group works are not helpful. They might solve a short term problem, but the participants were not really exploring ideas outside the box. They ‘played it safe’. If we don’t encourage everyone to share their ideas, but only those who always shares, then we’re going to always have the same kind of solution.

Just because someone is not interrupting in mid sentence to share their ideas doesn’t mean that they don’t have anything valuable to say. When I lead team meetings or group session, it was always important for me to make sure that everyone is comfortable in the group. Don’ fall for the usual pattern of meetings. The leaders start talking but not really interested in what you want to say. The outcome of the meeting has already been decided before you even started it.

Many times, or rather most of the times we listen for giving an answer to what the person before us has said. We do not listen to understand but we listen to answer and show off our mental ability. It keeps people from free thinking.

Nancy Kline has identified ten behaviours that form a system called a Thinking Environment. Everyone in the meeting is treated equally. Everyone is given their equal turns and attention. An agreement about this is agreed at the beginning of the meeting.

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Before I get to the ten components, I would like to say a few words about this environment. This environment is a non-judgmental environment, where all the participants know that they will be listened to and they don’t need to worry about getting interrupted. This helps everyone to lift the ‘curse’ of having their mind going back and forth between the same patterns. It frees the thinking process and really allows creativity to flow through. By knowing that we will be listened to, we can switch off our ego and make space for some innovative ideas that might want to arise from this space.

What are the ten components of this environment?

1. Attention
   - You listen to understand and to answer. You are listening with respect.

2. Incisive Questions
   - When you remove assumptions that limit ideas, you open the space for new ideas to come in.

3. Equality -
   - Everyone in the meeting is treated equally. Everyone is given their equal turns and attention. An agreement about this is agreed at the beginning of the meeting.

4. Appreciation
   - Practising a five-to-one ratio of appreciation to criticism.

5. Ease
   - Offering freedom from rush or urgency. Urgency keeps people from free thinking.

6. Encouragement
   - The goal is to move beyond competition between the individuals in the meeting. They are all there for the same reason - to find a solution.

7. Feelings
   - It is important to allow sufficient emotional release to restore thinking.

8. Information
   - Providing a full and accurate picture of reality is always important.

9. Place
   - Creating a physical environment that says back to people, ‘You matter’.

10. Diversity
    - The differences between us can add quality to the meeting if treated in the correct way.

This approach to meetings has a profound impact. When people feel that they matter and they are listened to, they can move mountains to help achieve the shared vision. This approach might take a little bit longer to develop and get used to, but on the long run it is definitely worth it.

Reference:
Time to think by Nancy Kline

ABOUT PETRA JUHÁSZOVÁ
Transformational Life Coach, NLP Practitioner
Petra helps people get unstuck and connect with their inner strength. Using family or systemic constellations she creates a space where they can have a look at the different systems they are part of and see the dynamics that have been hidden from their eyes. This ‘seeing’ allows people to decide what is the next step forward and helps with letting go of anything holding them back. One of the many techniques Petra uses in her work includes EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique).
What do you Need to Know About the Differences Between Team Coaching and Team Trainings?

by Rosen Rashkov, iCN Journalist (Bulgaria)

‘Excuse me, but I don’t understand something.’

‘Training and coaching mean the same thing, but you obviously seem to make a distinction. How are they different?’

And from my answer to Milena’s wonderful question, today’s article was born.

Team coaching?

Almost everyone knows what corporate training is and has a huge amount of personal experience. But coaching, and a team one?

David Clutterbuck, arguably the leading expert in the field, defines it as ‘helping the team to improve their performance and the processes for achieving this through reflection and dialogue.’ And because the definition, although widely quoted, is somewhat abstract, I decided to compare it to the more familiar model of training programs.

Purpose

In trainings, the goal is learning through the transmission of information. The team gains knowledge to decide how to best use it for their work. Therefore, it is possible that after a training day participants from one team could come out with a different amount of new learnings and their perception could be also quite various (according to information from our feedback forms).

In team coaching, new learnings are created within the team. It happens through the exploration of experience, internal dynamics and creating mutual, collective awareness. After a coaching session, it is possible to have only one new learning, which, however, is of great value for the coaches. And it is shared by all the team members and determines the changes in the behaviours and attitudes inside the team.

Time

Training is usually organised to develop or update skills in the team. And often companies choose a format of one-time, one-day or two-day modules for this purpose. Amid COVID-19 situation, many of the team trainings converted to an online experience –for example half-day training modules once per week.

Team coaching is usually effective in sessions of 1 to 3 hours and when it is an ongoing, periodic process - for example once or twice a month.

Engagement

In trainings, there is an obvious difference in the participants’ engagement levels. In a world where people change their job in about every two years, many managers happened to already have some training experience in certain topics.

On Monday, while talking to Milena, HR manager, about the benefits of a combination of training and coaching for their management team, she cut me off.

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Engagement

In trainings, there is an obvious difference in the participants’ engagement levels. In a world where people change their job in about every two years, many managers happened to already have some training experience in certain topics.
And when in training, they seem to be easily bored and always willing to ‘help’ the trainers with tips, opinions and disagreements.

In one sentence, in trainings, participants are responsible to show up, listen and learn. In team coaching, their responsibility is to create the learning outcomes.

That is why in team coaching I think we see a higher level of engagement, partly because we are dealing with real and present pains and challenges of the team.

In training the content is standardised and based on theoretical models and supporting activities. The training is rather formal and the opportunities for change are relatively small following a certain curriculum.

In coaching, the goal/topic comes from the team. And in the session, they can create innovative solutions and action plans to achieve the results they have set themselves. The work is much more informal and free of time and instrumental frameworks.

In order for the team coaching process to be successful, psychological safety is very important. This is the team’s ability to overcome traditional roles and rules, to adopt the attitude that every idea is important and will be heard and discussed. And if a member of the team puts his problems on the table, they will not be rejected, but will receive support to successfully deal with them. At the same time, team members learn from each other through open and honest feedback. They also understand their strengths and enrich the ways in which they would complement each other in the team.

In trainings, psychological safety is usually not so much addressed and it is kept in the lower levels.

The training aims to create a well-informed, effective team. Coaching is set to keep the team firing on all cylinders and to address the real challenges that arise in various business situations, while addressing them through the application of new knowledge.

The team can truly grow together, when everybody on the team is on the same page about team goals and standards of performance, to increase mutual understanding and to discover new ways and new motivation to contribute to the success of the organisation.

With all that in mind, team coaching - as part of a training program or a stand-alone tool, can play an important role in a company’s culture change program.

Jon Foster-Pedley

Jon started his career as a scholarship pilot cadet at the Royal Airforce in Cranwell, after a period in aerobatics and as professional pilot, he joined British Aerospace in a sales role selling aircraft in Africa.

After completing an MBA at Ashridge, Jon became the Marketing and Education Development Director for Euresas, an aerospace business school created by Airbus and, it’s then, partners, specialising in sales & marketing; Jon was part of the team that successfully guided the school through the aeronautical crisis of 1992.

In 1995 he emigrated to South Africa and took up, firstly, the post of lecturer in strategy and then the role of Director of the Executive MBA at the University of Cape Town.

After a short period leading an innovation incubator in New Zealand he was appointed, in 2011, to his current position as Dean and Director of the Henley Business School in Johannesburg South Africa.
henley Business College
South Africa

When Jon arrived at Henley Africa in 2011, the school had a full-time staff of 5 for its small annual intake for its one MBA programme and was technically bankrupt. Today, almost 10 years, later the school is recognised by the leading UK, European and US accrediting bodies there is a full-time staff of almost 75 people, a student population of 4500, and it is financially autonomous - in fact revenues have increased by 1000%. Henley's global alumni network is 80000, and has been ranked by the Economist as the No. 1 alumni grouping in the world for potential to network.

Today the business schools’ purpose is ‘to build the people who build the businesses that build Africa’.

The Interview

Bob Larcher (BL): When was the ‘Houston, we have a problem’ moment for you Jon, the moment when you thought, ‘wow, this isn’t going away’?

Jon Foster-Pedley (JFP): As someone who taught strategy for many years and who was a pilot, I think I have developed a kind of contextual awareness of what’s going on; the ability to pick off the small subtle inferences & clues that maybe others do not see quite so early. I was watching and aware of what was going on in China, but it was when I holidayed in northern Italy and attended a conference in Milan (at that time unaffected by CODIV-19) that I started to see the possible repercussions of the epidemic. By the time I returned to South Africa the virus had hit Milan and it was clear to me that this was going to be a world-wide pandemic. I started to visualise for myself what would this look like in South Africa; a country that has the highest Gini coefficient in the world, a country where people do not trust their government and, maybe most importantly, a country where people saw COVID as a ‘rich persons disease’.

Also, it’s never a great feeling when people see COVID as a ‘rich persons disease’. You get cross with you – you just have to listen, understand and move on for the common good.

JFP: Yes, we were still face-to-face; however, even though we had managed to put some social distancing procedures into place it was clear we would have to go virtual and put a team together to start looking at what we could propose.

BL: Your internal team were essentially supportive?

JFP: Yes, I have a good team; some people did not understand what was going on, they had their habits, thought this was crazy, thought I was paranoid, but there was a lot of trust between us and I think it’s the trust that helped people to keep going and eventually to really buy into the idea.

We rapidly decided to transform in a ‘fast prototyping way’ with beta modes, brainstorming, fast-forwarding, marginal improvements and all the agile tools we could get our hands on.

The business school does not receive subsidies, we have always had to finance ourselves out of our revenues and this has developed a mindset of self-sufficiency and experimentation. The first question we asked was, ‘what’s the most cost-effective way that we can do this quickly and that will work?’ The first response was, ‘talk to a computer with a camera’; we then asked, ‘what could be the next level up?’, ‘a better camera with a speaker’. ‘And the next level up?’, until we reached the right level of quality; this fast prototyping, marginal improvements way was very important for us to understand how to develop our capability and have a ‘minimally viable product’.

JFP: I was fairly forceful and the people were fairly polite; I am sure that there was plenty of muttering, but I have to say people were generally marvellous. At the beginning when I first started talking about few thought it would come – why would they? It is part of leadership, as a leader you are always scanning the horizon for the dangers that will scupper your project. Andy Groves (from Intel) used to say, ‘only the paranoid survive’ and I think you do need a healthy anxiety in yourself in order not to become complacent. It’s a leader’s job to see these things coming at you and keep your people safe.

JFP: The first thing was to look at what we teach, we already teach in a fairly progressive way with a lot of interaction, a lot of interpretation and a lot of conversation. We have conscientious people working with us and there was a clear commitment to going virtual; we have a lot of people working for us, both full-time and as associates and we didn’t want anyone to lose their jobs.

JFP: If you are a pilot and you are flying along and the engine goes, you don’t ‘feel a lot’, you soak in the reality and you deal with it. Sure, I had feelings of fear, but more important was the feeling of responsibility and accountability for all the people working round us. We have educated people, given scholarships to people and developed people, but our first ethos has always been to keep people safe. I felt it my duty as a leader was to keep people safe; it wasn’t a popularity test.

We started to find it quite exciting; integrating technology, learning facilitation, etc.; it was a bit like a flight crew working together. And then it started happening and everyone was pleased with what we had achieved and many people said they were grateful.

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BL: Were you still delivering programmes face-to-face at that time?

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**Q BL:** You said earlier that not having money available was an obstacle that you were used to dealing with; what were the major obstacles you had to face?

**JFP:** Clearly people’s fear & uncertainty but also one interesting obstacle that came along early on was people feeling that I was treating them like children, ‘don’t sit so close’, ‘don’t share your packet of crisps’, ‘move your desk’, ‘have your meeting outside’, etc. I am a great believer of pointing out errors & mistakes, respectfully but directly in the ‘here & now’; which, if done appropriately, can be very effective. In a crisis situation there isn’t always time to find a moment to sit and talk and give feedback on something that happened yesterday – the feedback needs to be given when pertinent.

I tried to depersonalise people’s acts and instil a sense of ‘collective’ responsibility; I was being directive with someone for the common good. I also empowered people by getting them to read about and understand both COVID and the collective repercussions of inappropriate behaviours.

A particular challenge I had was dealing with misinformation and fake news, there was a buzz going around the townships that COVID was a ‘privileged white people’s disease’.

**Q BL:** Do you feel your years as a commercial and acrobatic pilot help you stay focused?

**JFP:** At a fundamental level, I believe it is better to be very balanced, but not precisely balanced. During my pilot training I was taught that when lost to look from ‘ground to map’ and not ‘from map to ground’; you see what’s there whether you want it to be there or not and you fit it to the map. If you look at the map first, you will start to identify things that you think fit on the map.

In a crisis you have to stare at what is around, stop that shrieking mind, take a deep breath and say, ‘ok, I am going to be safer if I see this reality rather than a comforting fantasy’, you have to get used to looking at hard truths.

**Q BL:** What is the key leadership lesson for you from this experience?

**JFP:** You have to grow your ego, while you don’t. It’s no good being so scared of your ego and your energy & power, that you never let it grow; at the same time, it should not grow to become narcissistic and self-indulgent.

**Q BL:** Your determination and focus could easily have been seen as being stubborn and blinkered

**JFP:** Absolutely, there are always multiple perceptions. Being aware of how you can appear, that third person position, is really important; but what you cannot do is just be in that observer position and not act – you have to develop the ability to act and to watch yourself acting in real time.

You need to have enough trust; you need to have enough care and you mustn’t abuse people, but you must not be weak either – you have got to be willing to put yourself on the line and take responsibility. It is the trust and care built during normal times that allows leaders to act effectively in times of crisis.

**Q BL:** So, where are you and the school now in terms of the crisis?

**JFP:** We seem to have weathered the crisis so far; we have kept our programmes alive; we’ve picked up new work linked to the virtual teaching ability we have acquired and it has been a development journey for everyone involved. But now our COVID curve is worsening and we need to innovate, & young managers for their upcoming challenges, to ease into their first post. Also coached middle managers for assessment centres and have advised senior management teams going through organisational transformations.

**JFP:** Yes, I often got pushed back on those issues; but when there is a clear and present danger, those energies need to come out. In a military environment or a high crisis environment, people are often more strident, more forthright, more direct, but in an education environment, those behaviours are unfamiliar.

**Q BL:** What is the key leadership lesson for you from this experience?

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**Q BL:** Did you feel your Dark Side taking over at any point, being too controlling, too dominating?

**JFP:** I tried to depersonalise people’s acts and instil a sense of ‘collective’ responsibility; I was being directive with someone for the common good. I also empowered people by getting them to read about and understand both COVID and the collective repercussions of inappropriate behaviours.

The more you can effectively do that and be grounded at the same time, the more you will liberate your potential – you need to take your energy, your determination and your purpose seriously without taking yourself too seriously.

Following your purpose and entering into action teaches you so much about everything; you act your way into a new way of thinking – not the other way around!

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**Q BL:** What is the key leadership lesson for you from this experience?

**JFP:** You have to grow your ego, while you don’t. It’s no good being so scared of your ego and your energy & power, that you never let it grow; at the same time, it should not grow to become narcissistic and self-indulgent.

**Q BL:** Your determination and focus could easily have been seen as being stubborn and blinkered

**JFP:** Absolutely, there are always multiple perceptions. Being aware of how you can appear, that third person position, is really important; but what you cannot do is just be in that observer position and not act – you have to develop the ability to act and to watch yourself acting in real time.

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**BL:** You said earlier that not having money available was an obstacle that you were used to dealing with; what were the major obstacles you had to face?

**JFP:** Clearly people’s fear & uncertainty but also one interesting obstacle that came along early on was people feeling that I was treating them like children, ‘don’t sit so close’, ‘don’t share your packet of crisps’, ‘move your desk’, ‘have your meeting outside’, etc. I am a great believer of pointing out errors & mistakes, respectfully but directly in the ‘here & now’; which, if done appropriately, can be very effective. In a crisis situation there isn’t always time to find a moment to sit and talk and give feedback on something that happened yesterday – the feedback needs to be given when pertinent.

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A particular challenge I had was dealing with misinformation and fake news, there was a buzz going around the townships that COVID was a ‘privileged white people’s disease’.

Your question is very interesting Bob, I don’t think I have yet had time to deconstruct what was going on. You have to police your own mind; reality is often tough and we want to wish it away, but you have to be able to think in despite of your fears – you need the rational detachment from your own fears. It is this that people often find hard.
Want More Clients? Use This Amazing Tool
by Ruby McGuire (UK)

When I first started my coaching business, I knew I needed to get myself and my business noticed. I was not overly familiar with online resources at that time, other than doing a simple Facebook post to promote something. I knew I needed to build my coaching skills, and get clients if I wanted to grow my business.

I created what I call Cappuccino Coaching Sessions, a group coaching programme, covering 18 different topic areas, such as money, procrastination, worry, values and more.

In this article, I am going to share the following with you:

- Why group coaching is a great tool to consider adding to your business, for an additional revenue
- It helps to grow your reputation in the local area & pick up new business
  - People need to know, like, and trust you. What better way than to help them learn something about themselves, to create change in their lives, and move forward?
- It gives you the chance to introduce people to coaching when they don’t really have a clue
  - How many times have you tried to explain what coaching is to people and they just do not get it? Let them experience it.
- It helps to build your confidence
  - The quicker you build your confidence the quicker you build your business.
- It helps you to figure out what topics you enjoy working on and who your dreamie* clients might be
  - Knowing who your dreamie clients are, saves time, money, and energy.
- If you are clear on who you are and what you offer, you are going to be putting the right message out there and attracting the right people.

You can offer affordable coaching, and get new paying clients

- You charge less, leverage your time and better yet your sessions convert to 1:1 paying clients too.

It’s great working 1:1 with clients, but when you work with a group of people and watch that group of people grow as a result of the coaching questions you ask, and the resources you share with them to get them thinking differently, it’s magical.

* I don’t do the whole ‘Ideal client’ thing, I like to call my potential clients ‘dreamies’, those dream clients I can’t wait to work with!

WHY GROUP COACHING

Here are a few reasons:

- Why group coaching is a great tool to consider adding to your business
- The number one key thing you HAVE to know, and some other very important things to consider/learn
- A three-part strategy for overcoming your mindset monkeys

It helps to grow your reputation in the local area & pick up new business

- People need to know, like, and trust you. What better way than to help them learn something about themselves, to create change in their lives, and move forward?

It gives you the chance to introduce people to coaching when they don’t really have a clue

- How many times have you tried to explain what coaching is to people and they just do not get it? Let them experience it.

It helps to build your confidence

- The quicker you build your confidence the quicker you build your business.

It helps you to figure out what topics you enjoy working on and who your dreamie* clients might be

- Knowing who your dreamie clients are, saves time, money, and energy.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW/ CONSIDER

I turned my Cappuccino Coaching Sessions into an online programme for coaches, where I gave my clients the content to use in their own sessions, and also lots of tips on how to run them. Below are some of the gems that I’ve shared over the years.

The number one MOST important thing is to:

Know your stuff!!! When working with bigger groups, you might get asked tricky questions (in front of everyone) You MUST know your stuff, or you’ll crash and burn!

Write great content - no jargon, keep it interesting, be remembered for the right reasons! Sprinkle in some fun or it can become too serious, and you’ll lose people’s interest.

Create a training session plan

- What are the key objectives/takeaways for the group? (Know your audience)
- How will you coach through the topic area? Keep things varied - flip chart, workbooks, activities, group work etc.
- Know your timings - build in breaks
- Keep your learning blocks no longer than 90-minutes (allow people time to process)
- Tell-Tell-Tell (an old training trick) - Tell them what you are going to tell them, tell them that thing, and then tell them what you’ve told them
- Consolidate the learning throughout, and at the end of each block (this is where your amazing reflective coaching skills will come in handy!)
- Create building blocks - adding layer upon layer

Learn how to facilitate a group

- Build rapport
- Notice the energy - as you would with a client, adjust your pitch, tone, pace, shift the content, or even instigate a break if you need to
• Bounce ideas around - open up the conversation
• Manage the group dynamics - deal with chatterboxes, awkward silence, and delegates that don’t join in
• Be mindful of the time - get to the point
• Notice what isn’t landing properly, and clarify

Understand that people learn in different ways
So while you are coaching, rather than training, you’ll still have a mix of people that like to learn in different ways. Kolb’s Learning Cycle will help you with this concept:

- Activists - love to actively do/experience
- Pragmatists - Like practical action, having a go, trying things to see if they work, planning next steps
- Theorists - need the theory, background info. They need to understand the reasoning behind things
- Reflectors - learn by digesting the information, and reflecting on it (sit back, observe, reflect)

By adapting your group coaching sessions to allow for these different learning styles, you will make the sessions more interesting and build a much better rapport. If you are an NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) trained, you can also add in the NLP Predicates of visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and auditory digital to further build the rapport between you and the group.

A three-part strategy for overcoming your mindset monkeys
If you think group coaching might be a great addition to your business, the next step is to explore your mindset around it. Here are three simple ways to tame your mindset monkeys if you have them:

Write down all of the things that scare you about running group coaching calls and test their validity. Clear any limiting beliefs you might have around them. Get really clear on the reasons that are coming up for you as to why you can’t do the group session. Then challenge those answers.

Decide that it’s okay to test something new. What if it fails? So what! (I mean that in a loving way!!) If you are really nervous, start with some friends. Explain that you are testing it out, they will not expect to get amazing results, and you will learn as much, if not more, from it by getting it wrong. You can ask for their feedback and then test another time in a different way. You will not lose face because it did not work.

It’s fun testing out new ideas because you then get instant feedback. You will be amazed at how you can still get fantastic results using tools that you would expect to only work in a face to face situation. I have used lots of NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) in a group setting on and offline, and it works a treat!

Work with someone to help build your confidence around your coaching - We all know it is a lot easier helping others to clear blocks than it is to clear our own. If group coaching is something you know you want to have a go at, but you are lacking the confidence, work with another coach/mentor to help clear those blocks. (I’m here for you if you need help - *waving*)

Here’s a quick recap of what we have covered.

- Why group coaching is a great tool to consider adding to your business, for an additional revenue
- The number one key thing you HAVE to know, and some other very important things to consider/learn

Ps. Did you notice I used the Tell-Tell-Tell approach throughout this article?! If you did, do treat yourself to a chocolate brownie, ten out of ten for your observation skills!

ABOUT RUBY MCGUIRE

Ruby is a Business Mastery and Mindset Queen. She helps her clients to step up as Queens (aka CEO’s) of their business, by developing their leadership skills, mindset, and visibility.

She worked for 11 years in HR, ran her own HR consultancy business, and has run her own coaching practice for 7 years. She’s an IAPCM accredited senior coach, trainer, speaker, and author who has extensive business knowledge and is trained in NLP, EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique) and EDT (Emotional Dowsing Technique).

She loves to write and has co-authored two books, her latest with the IAPC&M - How To Win & Keep Clients. She’s also written Ruby’s Little Book of Visibility Tips and is currently in the process of writing two more books. When she’s not working, you’ll find her out and about enjoying Scotland where she now lives, or at home with her husband, little dog, and chickens, surrounded by lots of books and a cappuccino in her hand.

Ps. Did you notice I used the Tell-Tell-Tell approach throughout this article?! If you did, do treat yourself to a chocolate brownie, ten out of ten for your observation skills!
The aim of ICW 2020 was to create something special for you since many of you are experiencing feelings of isolation during this period of lockdown, so it was important to create an event that was stimulating for you, one where you could connect, ask questions, and be heard.

The webinar topics have you – the coach in the middle; surrounded by relevant topics that solopreneurs typically tend to struggle with most (in no particular order):

1. We met Jerri, the founder of ICW and Nikki, IAPC&M Head of Education who discussed how Covid-19 will impact how we conduct coaching hereon in.
2. We learnt from IAPC&M coaches Glen, Bea & Rebecca how Coachvantage software enhanced their business and work-life balance.
3. Author Wendy Fry reiterated the importance of finding your author’s voice since being published creates the perception of being an expert in your field.
4. Award-winning Katrin explained why branding is vital for clients to be able to identify you.
5. Expert virtual team coach Jennifer helped us go deeper into effective virtual conversations for managing virtual teams and for conducting team coaching – another growth area.
6. We heard from Adam, The Heart Guy, who uses humour and storytelling to create engaging yet relaxed presentations.
7. Marion shared secrets from her laser-focused coaching book which I recommend to everyone.
8. Marcelle, a nutritional therapist & coach, gave us some practical health strategies for enhancing our energy and mental wellbeing.
9. Jonny explained his proven FB marketing strategy for identifying clients who could afford to pay for our services otherwise we stay broke.

Several thousand practitioners registered, shared, liked and watched us on zoom and FB live, and if you missed out, don’t worry, we have recorded these calls for you. If you need a CPD log, just send an email to rhea.va@coach-accreditation.services.
Shadi shared his professional sales journey and tips for better customer relationship management.

Virtual conversations expert Jennifer gave us a valuable insight into how best to use media software to engage more effectively with our clients.

Wendy Buckingham shared her unique take on goal setting and remember, her book has a bonus chapter with the templates we can use for the benefit of our clients.

Rachela shared insightful techniques for adapting our coaching skills so we can better engage with teens, another growth area.

Fahad explained how to be heard and seen and add value in an increasingly noisy digital world.

Julia demonstrated the powerful impact photography has on a coachee in helping them to access their feelings, even if they thought they were not visible.

Betska, aka the guru coach, shared one of her award-winning techniques for finding the spirit in coaching which moves the client from trapped to beyond.

Kat delivered a master class in writing engaging content to help build that all-important trust with prospective clients.

Jenny talked us through the mental health benefits of adding the practice of mindfulness to our daily habits.

In summary, we enjoyed a lot of content-rich information; we shared feedback and all benefited from an abundance of guidance and inspiration with every story shared. We now know 18 international expert speakers & authors that we can mirror and continue to learn from. Finally, we have shared and networked with like-minded professionals around the world, meaning you are now part of the IAPC&M world-wide caring community.

To benefit from these CPD and business building recordings immediately; here is the one link you need to access all 18 recordings - https://coach-accreditation.services/missed-out-on-the-amazing-smorgasbord-of-icw-webinars-heres-the-links-to-the-recordings/

If you need a CPD log, please ask rhea.VA@coach-accreditation.services.

Team Coaching Resources by Malcolm Nicholson, iCN Journalist (UK)

Resources for Team Coaching are increasing in availability as research in the discipline grows. Please note: The following is by no means a complete, comprehensive or researched review of available sources, rather a few suggestions of highly recommended resources based on my own experience successfully working with a range of teams around the globe. Consequently the sources are not cited in any of the traditional academic formats, but with enough information to start a web search.

Courses

The Forton Group is the first Leadership Coach training programme accredited by the International Coach Federation, for the professional leadership coach and manager-as-coach training. They also offer a Team Coaching programme that is fully accredited by the International Coach Federation.

Helen Caton-Hughes, MD and founder of The Forton Group, said ‘Good team-coaching supports progress towards shared goals and a learning culture; additional one-to-one coaching may support specific issues, or barriers to achieving goals.’ She continued ‘Team coaches use the skills of open questioning, listening, reflecting and supporting to enable teams to see and reflect their attitudes, behaviours and performance.’

Not finance. Not strategy. Not technology. It is teamwork that remains the ultimate competitive advantage, both because it is so powerful and so rare.

- Patrick Lencioni
Books

Prof Peter Hawkins provides a great body of material and the 5 ‘C’s of High performing team framework which can form a great basis. I particularly like:


Ruth Wageman a leading scholar and practitioner in the area of team coaching. She and colleagues have produced The 6 Conditions for Team Effectiveness framework, a validated model for predicting performance in real world teams. See also https://6teamconditions.com

Patrick Lencioni. https://www.tablegroup.com/about/ 

Dr. Jacqueline Peters & Dr Catherine Carr
https://highperformanceteamcoaching.com
- High Performance Team Coaching - A comprehensive system for leaders & coaches. FriesenPress (3 Sept. 2013)

Christine Thornton
- Group & Team Coaching The essential guide, Christine Thornton. Routledge; 1 edition (5 Mar. 2010)

Assessments and Psychometrics

Type Dynamics Indicator

Personality profiling tools that will support the current and the wanted state generate more insight for people than traditional psychometrics and support today’s much-needed flexibility.

- Type Dynamics Indicator considers what the team needs, not just what individuals bring.
- To quote the British Psychological Society Website: ‘the aim of the TDI is… to help people understand different aspects of their personality and so help them to become more behaviourally flexible and to adapt to changing circumstances.’

My360plus

The beauty of the my360plus approach is that is founded on the VUCA behaviours identified by Prof. Harry Schroder at Princeton and London Business School. It is a perfect fit for today’s rapidly changing and complex demands on leaders and managers and builds a highly practical learning culture for teams and organisations.

My360plus is a combined 360 degree assessment tool, for individuals and teams. It offers clear, jargon-free reports, with easy to understand graphics.

The bonus of a built-in development plan and the unique ongoing feedback system, means that participants can identify growth areas, address gaps in their performance and leadership behaviours and get continuous feedback from colleagues during their year’s subscription. For details, see www.my360plus.com

Intercultural Resources

The growing opportunities to work with international and intercultural teams will be boosted by the increase in virtual team meetings driven by Covid-19. Opportunities. A greater awareness of interculturalism – beyond stereotyping – will be needed by the virtual team coach as a) the level of conversation moves deeper from typical transactional instruct & inform conversations, to b) ones which will require participants to show vulnerability and greater awareness of interculturalism – beyond stereotyping – will be needed by the virtual team coach as a) the level of conversation moves deeper from typical transactional instruct & inform conversations, to b) ones which will require participants to show vulnerability and greater cultural sensitivity to the body language, communication and thinking styles of other cultures.

- The work of Gert Hofstede in intercultural space has been brought up to date and accessible with an app ‘Hofstede Insights’
- The Cultural Intelligence Centre

Practical Resources

• The Team Coaching Zone is many things, however for me it is primarily a great source of interviews with leading practitioners in team coaching.
• Wageman fast team start up: - ideal for working with teams coming together or working remotely https://6teamconditions.com/2020/04/fast-team-formation-5-steps-10-minutes/
• Virtual team icebreakers

ABOUT MALCOLM NICHOLSON

Malcolm Nicholson is an experienced business person, entrepreneur and much in demand international executive & team coach who has been working successfully with high achievers around the globe for over 20 years, enabling them to improve results through transformational changes. To find out how he can help your organisation, contact him at info@thefortongroup.com or on +44 1933 267597.

https://www.my360plus.com/
Managing Change as a Leader: Are You Blockbuster or Netflix? by Anne Bachrach (USA)

As an entrepreneur, chances are good that you are somewhat comfortable with change. It is frankly difficult to succeed in business otherwise, given that words like ‘nimble’ and ‘agile’ are frequently associated with successful businesses these days. Thanks to technology, the pace of change is ever accelerating, and in many industries is not merely changing how businesses get done but actually determining what business models will survive.

Consider the changes that just a decade can bring. In 1999, Viacom mounted an IPO for Blockbuster Video that valued the company at $4.8 billion. Meanwhile, the year before, Reed Hastings had founded a little company called Netflix, inspired at least in part by a $40 late fee incurred at a Blockbuster store. By 2003, Netflix posted its first profit ($6.5 million on revenues of $272 million) while Blockbuster posted a $1.6 billion loss for fiscal 2002. By 2010, Blockbuster had filed for Chapter 11 protection, leading the video rental store concept down the path to extinction, while the passage of another decade saw Netflix earning FY19 revenue of $18.876 billion.

While you as a leader may be comfortable with change, however, not every member of your team is likely to be so optimistic or positive. One of your crucial functions as a leader is to manage change within the organisation, from the standpoints of both guiding the process and preparing your people. Let us examine how to execute those tasks effectively.

Although most of us rationally recognise that change is necessary for growth and progress, our brains are not wired accordingly. The limbic system, a deep brain structure that has primary responsibility for emotion (as well as managing our ‘fight or flight’ response), instinctively reacts to uncertainty with fear. Understanding that — in yourself and others — is an important step toward managing that response. Educate your people that fear of change is normal, and you will empower them to recognise and overcome their natural reaction.

Beyond that, there are two essential perspectives on change: Contemplating all the things that could go badly, or welcoming the potential for improvements and other positive impacts. Our default mode as humans is to enumerate as many negative outcomes as our imaginations can conjure up. Taking the optimist’s approach takes a conscious effort.

Don’t just encourage your people to ‘look at the bright side,’ though — they can get useless platitudes from a poster or a coffee mug. Another of your key leadership functions is vision, and you need to paint a vivid and convincing picture of what change can do for the organisation.

To return to our earlier example, Netflix started as a better way to rent DVDs, but very quickly recognised the potential for streaming even though household broadband was still in its infancy. Today it is a content creator, expected to spend over $14 billion on original content in 2019 — a radical shift for a company that started out distributing other companies’ movies by mail.

Be a Realist, Not a Pollyanna

Change does not have to be negative and does not have to be feared. That said, it still tends to be difficult, and it has the potential to cause dislocation. Telling your people that they have nothing to worry about is the wrong answer. Yes, the ultimate outcome will be positive. The journey, however, can be trying. Sugarcoating or avoiding entirely those difficulties will damage your credibility and risks leaving at least some of your people unprepared for what’s to come.

Because change in business comes in so many forms, there is no single checklist to prepare for it. You’ll have to engage your people to contemplate what a given change is likely to represent for your organisation. Brainstorm how best to engineer the change and what will be needed in terms of processes, people, or skills. To the extent that it’s appropriate, your existing team should be the ones to develop those processes, and you should provide opportunities for them to learn or develop the new skills that will be needed.

The opportunity to dissect a coming change in detail, to understand what will be involved, and then to be part of preparing for that change will be a substantial boost to morale. Much of the fear of change is rooted in nagging questions like ‘What will this mean for me?’ or, more to the point, ‘Where will I be in this place for me?’ Leading your team to tackle change head-on provides exactly the reassurance that people need in the face of uncertainty.

Keep in mind that some of the people that got you to where you are today, won’t be the right people to take your firm to where you ultimately want to go.

If your business is confronting a change, start with your people. Present the issues openly, share your vision of the end state, and ask for their questions and concerns and ideas. Once you have their honest perceptions of what change will mean for them, you’ll be better prepared to lead them through change management—with buy-in and engagement from every member of your team.
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• Become a more powerful leader/coach
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IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY:

Did you like how the mini-assessment enabled you to get a more accurate perspective of yourself and the people around you? If you think you and your clients would benefit from a course developed around this insight and the best selling business book, Why Aren’t You Like Me?” please go here for an overview of its benefits.

For 40 years the success rate of coaching practices all over the world have been significantly improved, and now you can tap into these opportunities like millions before you.

Get it FREE right now!

5 Reasons Why Coaching Makes you More Successful

by Laura Puchtler (Ireland)

If you are like I was two years ago, you might think that coaching is only for people who have a problem. Or people who are lazy and need somebody to motivate them. You, however, self-reflected and achieving as you are, are well able to reach your goals without help from anyone, so coaching is not for you. At least that’s how I felt back then.

Now, two years later, I can happily assure you that coaching has turned around my life for the better in a matter of months. It has sped up my personal development and increased both, my success and happiness level at the same time. Maybe I would have achieved the same kind of progress on my own as well, but it would have taken me years longer to this point. ‘Why?’ you are asking? Here is why.

1 Focus on Yourself

How often do you usually sit down with yourself, pen and paper in hand, determined to figure out yourself, your behaviour and your patterns? I don’t mean taking 20 minutes on a Sunday night to plan your week ahead or to jot down a quick to-do-list. No, I mean taking a full hour of focused quality time with yourself, where nobody interrupts your flow and where you reflect on your values, your purpose in life, your belief system, your boundaries. A good coach will enable you to do just that, giving you 100% focused attention and guiding you with powerful questions which enable you to find your truth.

2 Take the Bird’s Eye View

So often we are caught up in our own world, in our busy lives, in our struggles and challenges. We think we have ourselves figured out but somehow we keep going in circles, never really moving forward towards our goal. Something deep down is holding us back, but we are so busy fighting it that we cannot figure out what it is. What we need is to take a step back to see ourselves from an outside perspective in order to re-evaluate our situation. And what better way is there to do this than explaining yourself to a neutral person (aka the coach) who will challenge you, support you and hold up a mirror to your face?

3 Turn off your Inner Critic

Have you ever noticed the amount of self-talk constantly going on in your head? If so, is the voice in your head your biggest supporter or your biggest critic? Think about it. Before I started taking coaching sessions, I was convinced to be a confident person with limited self-talk (I was too busy for that anyways) and if there was any, it surely was positive.
I could not have been further from the truth! Coaching helped me realize what was constantly going on my head, how much my inner voice was punishing me, criticizing me, making me feel unwanted. And it helped me turn limiting beliefs into positive, empowering beliefs to become a kinder, freer, happier human being.

In my opinion, coaching is for everyone and I believed that no matter the kind of goal you want to achieve, coaching will help you get there a lot faster.

We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used to create them

That is what Albert Einstein said. In other words, we have to change the way we think about certain topics in order to get to the next level. That is the difference between learning and development: Learning is adding new things to existing thought patterns, whereas development is changing thought patterns. The latter is what powerful coaching is all about: elevating your way of thinking, of evaluating your reality and thus evoking transformation.

A comfort zone is a beautiful place, but nothing ever grows there

If you truly want to grow, transform your life and achieve your goals, you have to get out into the unknown, away from your old habits and away from safety. This can be a terrifying process for our brains which are programmed for survival and risk aversion. A coach can be your partner and supporter in this process, giving you some sense of safety while you are in the arena of life, moving towards the ‘Edge of Chaos’ (that’s how Stephen Porges put it in his Polyvagal Theory). This is where the magic happens, at a point of sharp awareness and full stimulation of the brain, but without letting fear overwhelm us.

Coaching the Next Generation of Women Leaders

by Susan Inouye (USA)

I am often struck by the number of younger women in leadership roles who call me for executive coaching. Engaging a coach to help them grow is a strength of millennials. I’m not surprised to hear the same common themes that have plagued women of all generations for years: bringing their voice to the table; standing for what they believe in; feeling confident; letting go of controlling everything; asking for help; finding balance; and saying no.

Why is it, after all these years, young women still face some of the same issues of previous generations of women? While some of the largest corporations are leading the way toward numbers that reflect gender equality, diversity, and inclusion, numbers aren’t enough to create change. Until we begin to reimagine cultures that honour the inherent strengths in all gender identities, women (and other under-represented groups) will continue to suffer the same challenges of their predecessors.

So, who will answer the call? Who will step up to make that happen? The next generation of women leaders is uniquely poised to do that. Why? Because in a complex world, many of the inherent gifts in women allow them to more easily embody all innate intelligence. This whole way of being becomes especially important in a VUCA (Volatile - Uncertain - Complex - Ambiguous) and post-COVID world. Today, leaders must use not only their logic, reason, and intellect, but also need to go beyond and imagine novel ways of addressing the unpredictable nature of how rapidly the world is changing.

They must ‘sense’ what’s next with few facts to guide them to stay ahead of the curve; develop other intelligences to compete with robots in order to be irreplaceable; and engage a new generation of leaders who want to feel more connected into the organisation, so they retain the best talent and bring others along with them.

People change in a community, in relationship with others. We need leaders who will create the conditions for people of all genders, generations, and ethnic backgrounds to develop and transform, so they bring their whole self into the workplace. We need communities that will support that change, especially in these uncertain and complex times.

Knowing how to develop these innate intelligences so women transform into the leaders they need to be is critical. So, how do you help them tap into these innate intelligences? In my coaching practice, I emphasize five Leadership Capabilities necessary to thrive in a complex world.

ABOUT LAURA PUCHTLER

Laura is a certified professional coach specialising in career, performance and lifestyle coaching. She came to Ireland three years ago to accelerate her career in sales at LinkedIn, where she is still working full-time as a sales professional. In early 2020, she started her freelance business LIBRA Life Coaching. Her experience in international business paired with a background in competitive dance sport and her diploma in coaching with neuroscience creates a rich package for her clients. Her approach to coaching is a healthy mix of traditional tools, NLP methods and psychological facts, highly customized to the individual needs of the person in front of her. Laura is Austrian by nationality, Irish by residency and Italian by heart.
I have found in the past two decades of working with leaders that the following capabilities are necessary to thrive in a complex world, a world that is becoming increasingly unpredictable.

- Big-picture ‘being’
- Intuitive knowing
- Risk-taking
- Vision and foresight
- Innovation

Truly mastering these five leadership capabilities requires a ‘whole person’ approach. It takes developing two types of intelligence that are typically overlooked and undervalued – the intelligence of our hearts (emotional) and bodies (somatic). This is the soft, fuzzy stuff most men reject as nonsense, but most women innately feel more comfortable with. Thus, women have an advantage in the emerging world of leadership.

Because our society highly values and supports women in roles that integrate all innate intelligence – head, heart, and body, women are more likely to have the capacity to further deepen all three intelligences needed to embody the five critical leadership capabilities.

**BIG-PICTURE ‘BEING’**

For leaders in a complex world, big-picture ‘being’ is critical and requires one to quiet their mind. In stillness, you can step back and open to a broader view of things. This is especially important in envisioning new possibilities and understanding the organisation as a whole.

**INTUITIVE KNOWING**

Women in business are often encouraged to overlook their innate intuition, often seen in motherhood. Unleashing this is vital in a rapidly changing world where you must make good decisions quickly or miss opportunities. Analysing information with your intellect is not enough to succeed. That is why developing the intelligence of your heart and body that opens your intuition and gut instinct is critical. Neuroscience has proven these actual sensations, backed by millions of neurons, enable us to bypass analytical thought and take clear, effective, and compassionate action.

**VISION AND FORESIGHT**

My clients have found that tapping more fully into their intuitive knowing brings a host of benefits. They make better decisions because they do not overanalyse, but engage both their intellect and intuition; anticipate change so they more easily pivot in new directions; stand for their beliefs because they are emotionally connected to their passions; and feel confident because they embody a core inner strength.

**SUGGESTED PRACTICES:** Meditation; yoga; slow walks in nature; and stepping back and seeing the big picture, then ‘feeling’ what’s it like to embody the big-picture mode.

**INNOVATION**

A kayaker navigating down the unpredictable rapids of a river must move into action, taking risks and adjusting to what unfolds. They must quickly respond over and again to ever-changing conditions, which are dynamic and highly interconnected. They do not know what problems need to be solved until they solve them. In a complex world, where nothing is predictable, leaders must be equally nimble and willing to make bold intuitive strokes. It takes courage and trust within yourself.

My clients have found that developing the capacity to take risks brings a host of benefits, including being comfortable with uncertainty, so they let go of control more easily, go with the flow and trust themselves and others; embracing change so they are constantly open to new ways of doing business or improving themselves as leaders; feeling self-confident not just from what they do but from how they feel and experience it within.

**SUGGESTED PRACTICES:** Reflecting on how it feels to let go of things like clothes, distractions, things you should delegate, judgments; meditation; learning something new; making decisions from your intuition; and changing directions like on your route to work, the path you run, walk, bike or hike.

**RISK-TAKING**

Having vision and foresight starts with knowing yourself. This is the portal to imagine what’s possible. Today, imagination is especially important in a complex world where to be effective we need to freely imagine without constraints, so you design for what’s emerging, not what’s been strategically planned.

My clients have found that deepening their vision and foresight brings a host of benefits, including a sense of belonging because people feel a part of something greater than themselves; motivated employees because people are inspired by what’s possible and committed to helping the organisation reach its vision; and successful retention and attraction of people whose personal vision and purpose for their life aligns with the vision and purpose of the organisation.

**SUGGESTED PRACTICES:** All previous practices; observing what you care about and are passionate about; cross-disciplinary training; storytelling; collective brainstorming; and having fun.

**INNOVATION**

In our rapidly changing world, it is no longer enough to be on the cutting edge. Leaders must redefine the edge. This means coming up with innovative ideas that disrupt their industry before their companies get disrupted.
However, a leader can’t do it alone. They need to develop within themselves and their people the capacity to be innovative and a culture that supports it.

My clients have found that developing the capacity to be innovative and the culture that supports it brings a host of benefits, including people feeling unique and valued because they have the freedom to use their gifts to create novel ideas; confidence because they are given the opportunity to solve impossible problems; and an increased passion for their work and commitment to the organisation because they are honoured for bringing their whole self to work.

**SUGGESTED PRACTICES:** All previous practices; openly receiving, especially illogical ideas; address projects from a scarcity not an abundance of resources; be curious and ask yourself questions that seem impossible to achieve; to take pieces of a problem and reimagine a new picture; and engage in the arts.

By mastering the five Leadership Capabilities, the next generation of women leaders will be empowered to break the common patterns that have challenged women before them and create organisational cultures where all genders, generations, and ethnic backgrounds thrive and prosper.

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**ABOUT SUSAN INOUYE**

As a recognised expert in working with millennials, Susan Inouye has helped leaders in over 600 companies in 40 industries—from small businesses to Fortune 500 companies—to increase productivity levels by engaging and motivating this generation of unique talents. An expert in executive coaching, leadership development, and organisational change, she is the bestselling author of *Leadership’s Perfect Storm: What Millennials Are Teaching Us about Possibilities, Passion and Purpose*. She is the recipient of The Congressional Award for Contributions to the Community and was named one of the Top 10 Inspiring Women Rocking the Global Business World’ by Global Woman.

**LINKS**

**Book:** 'Leadership’s Perfect Storm: What Millennials Are Teaching Us about Possibilities, Passion and Purpose'

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The use of language (in coaching and beyond) has important implications of the message one conversational partner tries to convey to another and how this message is perceived and acted upon by the listener. Exploring research in psycholinguistics, cognitive science, neuroscience and positive psychology, I present evidence of how language use influences our thinking, behaviours and ultimately, decision making in everyday life. I suggest that, equally, the language selected and used by coaches during their sessions has great impact on the behaviour, overall outlook and direction of the coachee’s agenda, leading to possible change. I believe that such evidence from research outside the coaching field, are valuable for coaches and the application of those findings and principles will benefit one’s coaching practice.

There are several theories on how cognition relates to language and vice versa; from Vygotsky’s interdependence theory (McLeod, 2018a1) to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis that language determines cognition (Comrie, 20192); and from Piaget’s concept that cognitive development determines language development (McLeod, 2018b3) to Chomsky’s position that these two are independent faculties (Rieber, 19954).

It has been argued, primarily by Chomsky (19655, 19866, 19957), and other proponents of his theory (Smith and Wilson, 19798; Wexler and Manzini, 19879; Rizzi, 199010); that thought is possible without language e.g. many animals can trouble-solve without the use of language; children think and interact before they develop language, although by general admission we normally think in terms of our language, in the sense that our thoughts are pre-packed into words and grammar.

Founded on the Safir-Whorf hypothesis, there is a range of scientific evidence in cognitive linguistics suggesting that language can have an indirect effect on cognition (Lakoff, 198711; Jackendoff, 199612; Tomasello, 200313). For example, a study of the language of the Piraha tribe in the Amazon forest (Gordon, 200414) revealed that they only have numerical terms for ‘one’ and ‘two’ and for anything greater than three they use the word ‘many’. Gordon suggested that the lack of precise quantity numbering posed a limitation to their cognitive abilities in this area.

As Gleitman and Papafragou (200515) advocated, it is clear that language and thought interact in many significant and complex ways; however, it is outside the scope of this article to unpick specific aspects of such interactions. A first example will focus on evidence from applied conversational analysis (henceforth CA), defined as the study of analysing the communicational and interactional functions of language.
Research on conversation analysis shows that there are many aspects of language use affecting our everyday interactions and ultimately influencing our talking partners, be it friends, students, work colleagues or people we coach. Heritage and Robinson (201116) analysed how physicians’ questions elicit more than a single concern from their patients. The study’s hypothesis was that the question recommended by medical textbooks (i.e. ‘Are there any other concerns you’d like to address during this visit?’) is ineffective as a means of eliciting additional concerns because the word ‘any’ is linguistically speaking, negatively polarised, and therefore prone to prompt a negative answer. By substituting the word ‘any’ with ‘some’, Heritage and Robinson were able to compare patients’ responses. The results revealed that 53% of patients responded affirmatively to the ‘any’ question while 90% responded affirmatively to the ‘some’ question. In summary, by using the word ‘some’ instead of ‘any’ in the question, the chances of a patient leaving the medical visit with an unmet concern were reduced.

Developed by Kahneman and Tversky, Prospect Theory claims that the way a problem is framed in relation to a reference point influences one’s response and eventually one’s choice. Based on this, and employing a hypothetical life and death scenario, Tversky and Kahneman’s (198817) experiment explored how employing different framing affected the choice of the participants’ responses. Participants were presented with a choice between the two treatments for people affected by a deadly disease, with the phrasing shaped either in a positive, (i.e. how many people would live), or negative (i.e. how many people would die) frame. Note that framing the same message differently does not alter its meaning. 72% of participants chose a treatment option when the choice was presented in a positive frame, while only 22% chose the treatment option when the same choice was presented in a negative frame. Building on the findings of this experiment, linguists support the idea that the use of positively biased language is generally perceived in a more positive light by the listener, thought to be because positive language affects cognition. Similarly, in research by Levin and Gaeth (198818), consumers were asked to rate several qualitative features of ground beef that framed the beef as either ‘75% lean’ or ‘25% fat.’ The results showed that consumers’ evaluations were more favourable toward the beef labelled ‘75% lean’ than that labelled ‘25% fat.’ The experiment shows us that more favourable associations were made by consumers when the beef was described in a positive light (lean) rather than in a negative frame (fat) and that such attribute labels influence the evaluation of consumer goods.

For marketing research, Plous (199319) claimed that using different questions for the same concept can provide insight into consumer behaviour. For example, he reported that the average response to ‘Do you get headaches frequently, and if so how often?’ was 2.2 times per week, while in contrast, the answer to ‘Do you get headaches occasionally, and if so, how often?’ was 0.7 times per week, providing again support for the theory that framing and word choice is not about what is said, but how it is said.

In psycholinguistics the debate is ongoing as to whether language influences thought. A contemporary illustration is the use of language that the press and media employ to project current affairs in a positive or more negative light, for example. To provide an example, the use of the terms refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, which over the last few years all have been given positive and negative connotations exploited by the media to sway public opinion and political campaigns. During a war, the vocabulary used by newspapers and news programmes influences our thought, for example, a policy of mass murder might be referred to as ‘ethnic cleansing’ to portray a more positive tone and inspire national unity against the population of another country or the ethnic minority in question. Politicians and their teams routinely design their pre-electoral speeches in a manner that avoids committing themselves to promises they are not sure they can fulfil, by mastering the art of generalisation, and by adopting methods such as scarcity of details and vagueness. An example of this, is Barack Obama’s successful campaign of ‘change’ in 2008 that inspired Americans with the positive slogan ‘Yes we can’, which was then adopted by numerous other campaigns and advertisements. Short, sharp and simple, it shows how the use of positive and/or negative language in political communication influences voters who want their leaders to deliver messages of hope, positivity, unity and future prosperity. In social media and online news platforms, Berger and Milkman’s (201220) research revealed that news stories evoking more positive emotions tended to be shared more often than negative stories, and that stories with high emotional arousal were more likely to go viral.

Framing, therefore, is an unavoidable part of language and human communication. We find it everywhere in the media as events are presented in certain ways; we find it in politics as politicians attempt to characterise events as one thing or another; and we find it in negotiating when one side tries to move another towards a desired outcome.

References

Considering all the evidence presented above from various fields outside the coaching sphere, I believe a clear connection can be made with coaching practice and the application of those theories, concepts and ideas can be a valuable tool for coaches. More than anywhere else, in coaching, the selection of language can bring the person into their own positive realm by creating a positive narrative, synthesised from the coach’s positive language. Even though coaching sessions are not organised into ascribed stages like the examples above, the language selection of the coach is responsive to the person’s emerging contexts and vice-versa. Ultimately, I believe, an important aspect of a coach’s role is to affirm and empower the person and positive language can only assist with this aim.

These states create “a force around one’s thinking, feelings, and behaviours” (Passarelli, unpublished doctoral dissertation, p. 20, quoted in Boyatzis et al, 201524) and they are self-regulating states; therefore, once a person is in one of these states, they will remain in that state until an event provokes a shift to the alternate state. Once the PEA has been activated, it acts as a positive force and guide on our thoughts and behaviour. The benefits of positive emotions have been discussed in research in behavioural and social sciences and within the territory of positive psychology and positive organisational theories. Positive emotions appear to contribute to shaping and developing a strong vision, confidence for the future, perceptual openness, willingness to behaviour change and decision making. Moreover, when a person is in a PEA state their altruistic, supportive and collaborative behaviour increases too. Such direct brain-to-brain communication results to awareness and sharing of feelings and emotional states from one person to another (Lewis et al., 200025).

Boyatzis et al (2015) conclude that because of the dynamics of emotional contagion, the quality of relationships matters in determining effective leadership, engagement, and organisational citizenship. These states create “a force around one’s thinking, feelings, and behaviours” (Passarelli, unpublished doctoral dissertation, p. 20, quoted in Boyatzis et al, 201524) and they are self-regulating states; therefore, once a person is in one of these states, they will remain in that state until an event provokes a shift to the alternate state. Once the PEA has been activated, it acts as a positive force and guide on our thoughts and behaviour. The benefits of positive emotions have been discussed in research in behavioural and social sciences and within the territory of positive psychology and positive organisational theories. Positive emotions appear to contribute to shaping and developing a strong vision, confidence for the future, perceptual openness, willingness to behaviour change and decision making. Moreover, when a person is in a PEA state their altruistic, supportive and collaborative behaviour increases too. Such direct brain-to-brain communication results to awareness and sharing of feelings and emotional states from one person to another (Lewis et al., 200025).

In sum, the research above shows that PEA triggers constructive cognitive and physiological responses that enhance an individual’s motivation, effort, optimism, flexibility, creative thinking, resilience and other adaptive behaviours. As Boyatzis et al, (201525) put it:

... we believe that in order for a person, team, or organisation to discover or articulate a vision based on the ideal self, they must be in the PEA

(Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006).

To conclude this brief article on language use, I consider our thinking can help shape and influence our actions, decisions and emotions; and it can also shape and influence the thinking process of the person we coach, affecting, in some way, the outcomes in their life. Although the evidence presented here, comes from fields different to coaching, there is scope for coaching researches and coaches to examine such evidence and utilise it in their practice in order to evaluate the impact of positive behaviour on coachee outcomes and determine the extent to which positive language results in effective behaviour change. As we offer insight and shed light into the person’s darkest corners, I believe we often trigger significant breakthrough moments. The studies discussed in this article, suggest that positive language can be a beneficial tool that coaches can use to influence the development of new behaviours in coachees.

References

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