The Past, Present and Future of Coaching as a Profession

Learn how coaching is linked to the fulfilment of human potential.
CONTENTS PAGE

1. OVERVIEW 3

2. THE HISTORY OF COACHING 3
   WHAT IS COACHING? 3
   THE ORIGIN OF COACHING 4
   Early Coaches 4
   Why enter the coaching profession? 5
   COACHING AND OTHER PROFESSIONS 6
   DIFFERENT TYPES OF COACHING 7
   COACHING SKILLS 7
   THE BENEFITS OF COACHING 8
   COACHING TOOLS 9
   The Wheel of Life 9
   The GROW Model 10
   The Inner Game 12

3. THE PRESENT OF COACHING 12
   CURRENT APPROACHES 13
      Tools & Techniques 13
      Link to NLP 14
   REGULATION & ACCREDITATION 15
   The Coaching Contract 15
   Accreditation 15
   TRAINING 16
   WORKPLACE COACHING 17
Internal or external coach? 17
The Internal Coach 18
The External Coach 18
Preparing to be coached 19

4. THE FUTURE OF COACHING 20
ACCREDITATION 20
COACHING SUPERVISION 20
WORKPLACE COACHING 21
Coaching Culture 21
Internal or external coach? 22
Evaluation Framework 23
POPULARITY OF COACHING 24
Coaching in the media 24
Coaching Trends 25

5. CONCLUSION 26

REFERENCES 28

BIBLIOGRAPHY 31
1. OVERVIEW

"Who exactly seeks out a coach? Winners who want even more out of life." (http://www.susandunn.cc, 2007)

The above quote, featured in the Chicago Tribune, which reaches an estimated 1.7 million readers each day, illustrates the rising profile of coaching (http://www.chicagotribune.com, 2007) This report will examine the evolution of coaching from its inception in the early 1990’s through to the current day and will outline its prospects and challenges for the future.

As the writer chronicles the development of the coaching industry, they will discuss many different areas of this profession including its links to other occupations and techniques such as counselling and neuro linguistic programming (NLP). The writer will then describe the key skills that every coach should possess and will then define some of the benefits that can be derived from coaching.

Following this, the writer will illustrate some of the tools that are used in coaching sessions and show how these have evolved over the years. The use of coaching in the workplace will then be examined with a particular emphasis on answering the questions, “who should do the coaching?” and “who is the customer?”. Subsequently, the writer will document the position regarding the regulation of the coaching industry and relate this to training, accreditation and coaching supervision.

Finally, the writer will highlight the key developments likely to impact the profession in the future. This will include an examination of issues such as accreditation and workplace coaching. They writer will then conclude by summarising the key messages discussed in this paper.

2. THE HISTORY OF COACHING

2.1 WHAT IS COACHING?

There are a plethora of definitions of coaching, most of which stress the helping and supportive nature of the profession. For example, “Coaching encourages you to move positively towards achieving your goals by focusing your energy and your potential on positive solutions.” (http://www.inspire-coaching.co.uk, 2007) and “Coaching is an ongoing professional relationship that helps people...
produce extraordinary results in their lives, careers, businesses or organizations” (http://www.trans4mind.com, 2007).

Other definitions provide an analogy between coaching and different occupations. For example, one website likens life coaching to football coaching. “A Life Coach is similar (for the sake of familiarity) to a football coach. The football coach coaches his players to improve, change and develop so that they can become better footballers. A Life Coach coaches people to enable them to improve, change and develop aspects of their lives (but without the shouting running and press ups!).” (http://www.startliving.org.uk, 2006)

Alternatively, life coach Julie Starr makes an interesting correlation between coaching and the stagecoach or rail coach. She says, “…the word ‘coaching’ literally means to transport someone from one place to another. One thing that all forms of coaching seem to have in common is that people are using it to help them move forward or create change.” (Starr, 2003)

The writer agrees with the definitions above, as they are all concerned with improvement and progression towards a goal(s).

2.2 THE ORIGIN OF COACHING

It is thought that the profession of coaching has existed for many years; however, it has only been in the last 25 years or so that it has been recognised as an industry in its own right. Prior to this, coaching was linked to very specific occupations such as the swimming coach, drama coach and voice coach.

2.2.1 Early Coaches
As far as life coaching is concerned, many regard Thomas Leonard as the founding father of this profession. Leonard founded Coach University, a virtual company dedicated to providing coach training programmes, in 1992 and then went on to form a professional association for coaches, the International Coach Federation (ICF) in 1994 (http://www.coachinc.com, 2007) and (http://www.coachfederation.org.uk, 2007).

Leonard was a key contributor to the development of the coaching industry. He authored six coaching books, wrote 28 personal and professional development programmes and participated in many conferences and events throughout the world. Before entering the coaching profession, Leonard was a
financial planner. (http://www.coachville.com, 2007)

Other coaches have followed a similar path and discovered coaching from alternative professions. For example, Cheryl Richardson, a mentee of Leonard, was a tax consultant who realised that her clients sought guidance and support on more than just financial matters. She decided to leave the financial industry and focus on helping people to improve all aspects of their lives by becoming a coach and delivering workshops entitled ‘Secrets of Success’. (Richardson, 2000)

Gerard O’Donovan of Noble Manhattan also became a coach following a career in the financial industry. Gerard is now a highly respected coach and has helped many people to realise their goal of becoming a successful coach through his coach training and personal development organisation. (http://www.gerardodonovan.com, 2007)

These three people are a small sample of those that have developed a successful career from coaching other people to improve the quality of their life in some way. They serve as an inspiration for aspiring coaches and have shown that coaching can have a powerful and lasting effect. As the industry has grown, so too has the number of examples of highly successful people like those above. In fact, it is said that coaching is the second fastest growing industry behind IT (http://www.thebig-leap.com, 2007).

2.2.2 Why enter the coaching profession?

In addition to the desire to follow in the footsteps of successful coaches, there are a number of common reasons that people decide to enter the coaching industry. These include:

- “They like people and want to bring out the best in them
- They want to do something more fulfilling in their lives
- They want personal and financial freedom
- Their family, friends and colleagues previously turned to them for advice and help”

Source: (http://www.businessballs.com, 2007)

Many of these reasons have been quoted in other coaching articles and websites. Additionally, in the writer’s discussions with fellow coaches, they would generally agree that these are reflective of their own situation. It is reassuring to note, however, that the same article reports that those who enter the profession solely for monetary gain tend to leave the industry again within a relatively short period of
2.3 COACHING AND OTHER PROFESSIONS

The link between coaching and other professions has been well documented. Laura Berman Fortgang cites the three most popular comparisons that are made between coaching and other professions as; coach v business consultant, coach v psychotherapist and career coach v career counsellor. As far as the business consultant and career counsellor are concerned, they have a more directive role than a coach in helping to deliver a solution by giving advice and guidance. The psychotherapist, on the other hand, deals with more emotional issues from a client’s past and strives to help them resolve such issues. (Berman Fortgang, 2005)

Other writers have described the connection between therapy and counselling, although there are several well-defined differences between these professions. These include the varying expectations placed on therapists, counsellors and coaches to have formal qualifications and accreditation with a recognised body (http://en.wikipedia.org, 2007). The requirements are far more stringent for the former two occupations than the latter.

One of the most prominent differences between these occupations is the emphasis coaching places on the client’s future, whereas therapy and counselling look to past experiences. As John Whitmore explains, “Coaching focuses on future possibilities, not past mistakes” (http://www.roundrose.com, 2007).

Additionally, coaching is often discussed in the same vein as mentoring although these too have some distinct differences. Mentoring tends to involve one person supporting another by sharing their experiences and wisdom (http://www.mentorset.org.uk, 2007). The mentor is often in a more senior position to the mentee and the mentor/mentee relationship is generally formed in a work environment. A coach, on the other hand, does not need to have knowledge or experience of the situation to be able to coach someone to a satisfactory conclusion. They introduce “…a fresh perspective” to the relationship and will challenge the coachee in a supportive environment to maximise their potential for success. (http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk, 2007)

However, both mentoring and coaching do share a similar goal and purpose of helping people to improve their current situation. As Guest (1999) states, “Mentoring can claim a 3000 year headstart
on coaching, but both are proving powerful aids to personal and organisational change and development.” Indeed, each of the job roles described above are, to a greater or lesser extent, concerned with the continuous improvement of an individual or organisation.

2.4 DIFFERENT TYPES OF COACHING

Coaching typically falls into one of two categories – directive and non-directive. As the name suggests, directive coaching involves the coach telling or instructing the client what to do and relies on the coach’s knowledge of the subject under consideration. Non-directive coaching, on the other hand, places the emphasis on the client discovering their own solutions by answering the coach’s questions and reflecting on their own thoughts. (http://www.downeycoaching.com, 2007)

The non-directive approach is supported by many coaches including Laura Whitworth, Henry Kimsey-House and Phil Randahl who developed the ‘Co-Active Coaching’ model. This style of coaching “…involves the active and collaborative participation of both the coach and the client” (Whitworth et al, 1998).

As well as different styles, coaching can take many forms and can be tailored to clients with specific needs. Some coaches specialise in certain areas such as “career coaching, transition coaching, life or personal coaching, health and wellness coaching, parenting coaching, executive coaching” (http://en.wikipedia.org, 2007). Within these specialisms, the coach may choose a directive or non-directive approach or indeed a combination of the two.

However, the fundamental principle behind all variations of coaching is to help the client make positive changes in their lives and ultimately to ‘make a difference’.

2.5 COACHING SKILLS

There are certain skills that should be prevalent in all coaches. According to Bresser and Wilson, a coach needs to be skilled in active listening, questioning, clarifying, summarizing and reflecting (cited in Passmore, 2006). The Learn Direct website also mentions these attributes and adds; “excellent listening, questioning and communication skills; the ability to inspire confidence; the ability to motivate clients and encourage them to achieve their goals; and the ability to remain objective and non-judgemental” (http://www.learndirect-advice.co.uk, 2006).
In the writer’s view, a coach should refrain from trying to provide solutions for the client as they are there to help the client uncover their own answers i.e. they should be non-directive. This can be illustrated in the following quote concerning sports coaching. According to American football coach Paul Bryant “No coach has ever won a game by what he knows; it's what his players know that counts.” (http://www.brainyquote.com, 2007)

Furthermore, many coaches acknowledge that intuition can be a valuable skill in a coach’s toolkit. Whitworth et al state “the great thing about intuition and coaching is that intuition always forwards the action and deepens the learning, even when it lands with a clang instead of a melodious ping.” This highlights the powerful nature of intuition but also warns that not all clients will respond in the same way and that the coach’s intuition may be inaccurate. If this is the case, it can still have an impact by reinforcing the client’s perspective and the coach should continue to remain unattached to the thoughts derived from their intuition. (Whitworth et al, 1998)

Interestingly, Eldridge and Dembkowski (2004) have investigated the key coaching skills and cite them as “development of rapport; deep listening; creative and open questioning; open and honest feedback; and use of intuition”.

Therefore, it would appear that there is widespread agreement regarding the key coaching skills that are conducive to developing an effective coaching relationship with a client.

2.6 THE BENEFITS OF COACHING

Coaching can lead to many satisfactory conclusions, not only for the client but also for those they interact with and for the coach themselves. According to Starr (2003), “Whilst it is never the purpose of the conversation, a coach can sometimes benefit from the coaching as much as the coachee”. Indeed the process of becoming a coach can be a rewarding and fulfilling experience as the coach learns about themselves and resolves past issues in an effort to prepare themselves to coach others to the best of their ability (http://www.businessballs.com, 2007). A coach can also gain from being in a coaching supervision relationship as this facilitates their continued professional development.

In the case of corporate coaching, the organisation can also benefit from their employees participating in coaching sessions. In 2001 Fortune Magazine featured an article that stated, “Asked for a
conservative estimate of the monetary payoff from the coaching they got, these managers described an average return of more than $100,000, or about six times what the coaching had cost their companies.” (http://www.susandunn.cc, 2007)

Coaching need not be sponsored by the organisation for it to realise the benefits. An employee who has independently decided to be coached could adopt a more positive outlook and may progress work-related goals and issues during their sessions. This could have a positive effect on their colleagues, team members, customers and the organisation as a whole.

According to Simon Barrow, chairman of People in Business, coaching can be a “means of rewarding and retaining key staff” (http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk, 2001). This may be of particular importance to organisations that are limited in the ways they can reward their staff. For example, public sector organisations face constraints in terms of the financial remuneration they can award staff, therefore, personal development opportunities such as coaching can enhance their overall package making the organisation a more attractive option as a prospective employer.

Therefore, it is evident that coaching can have a significant impact on a great many people including the coach, the client’s employer, their family and friends and most importantly, the client themselves.

2.7 COACHING TOOLS

Coaching is typically delivered on the phone or in person, however, with the advent of email this is increasingly being used to conduct coaching sessions and also to track progress between sessions. This means that often coaches do not have to be located in the same geographic area as their clients, providing greater flexibility for both the coach and the client. According to one life coaching article, it is possible to coach from anywhere in the world, offering a huge degree of freedom for the modern coach (http://www.businessballs.com, 2007).

No matter the communication mechanism that is used to conduct the coaching sessions, a coach has a wide array of tools at their disposal to provide a structure for their coaching.

2.7.1 The Wheel of Life

The Wheel of Life, shown in figure 1 below, is extensively used in the coaching industry. This exercise is often utilised in the initial stages of the coaching relationship to establish a client’s current situation
and determine where they would like to improve their lives and therefore, focus their coaching. The client considers each area of the wheel and rates their current situation with ten being the optimal position for this area and 0 being the least favourable position.

Where they rate an area significantly less than ten, they may have a desire to improve this area and thus set some goals for improvement. The ‘wheel’ can then be used to measure progress following implementation of actions and, in the writer’s opinion, can be motivational in terms of assessing the positive actions that have been taken. This proves to the client that they have the ability to make a difference in their own life and can encourage them to take further action.

![Wheel of Life Exercise](http://www.lifecoachsolutions.co.uk, 2007)

2.7.2 The GROW Model

Since the advent of coaching, many coaching models and frameworks have been developed. One of the most common is the GROW model. This was developed by Graham Alexander and has been widely supported and utilised by John Whitmore. The model is made up of four elements; Goal, Reality, Options and Way Forward (or Wrap-Up). The coach guides their client through each phase, asking mainly open questions and encouraging them to develop effective actions that will move them closer to their goals. (Passmore, 2004)

Some coaches have now developed their own models and frameworks or ‘tweaked’ those already in use...
existence. For example, Myles Downey provides an illustrative interpretation of the GROW model in figure 2 below. This shows the interrelationships between the various stages of the structure and the fact that a coach should be flexible and prepared to move between the stages with ease as opposed to following them in a rigid manner.

This is supported by Whitworth et al who describe the coach’s role as “dancing in the moment”. This refers to the fluidity of the coaching relationship and the fact that the coach should take their lead from the client. (Whitworth et al, 1998)

Downey also supplements the use of the GROW model with his model T. This involves the coach encouraging their client to expand their thinking initially and then to focus on key aspects to reach an effective solution. This is depicted in the diagram shown in figure 3 below.

![Figure 2: The GROW Model (Downey, 2003)](image)

![Figure 3: Model T (Downey, 2003)](image)
2.7.3 The Inner Game

Another technique that Downey has incorporated into his own coaching business is Tim Gallwey’s ‘The Inner Game’. Gallwey, author of several best-selling books including ‘The Inner Game of Tennis’ has developed an interesting approach by which people can change their way of thinking so that they can excel in their chosen field. (http://theinnergame.com, 2007)

He believes that, “In every human endeavor there are two arenas of engagement: the outer and the inner. The outer game is played on an external arena to overcome external obstacles to reach an external goal. The inner game takes place within the mind of the player and is played against such obstacles as fear, self-doubt, lapses in focus, and limiting concepts or assumptions.” (http://theinnergame.com, 2007)

This can be summarized by using the formula, “Performance = potential-interference”. These principles, although originally founded in sports coaching, have now been successfully applied to business coaching and are used by many coaches including Myles Downey. (http://theinnergame.com, 2007)

Downey states that “a key part of the line-manager or coach’s role is to help reduce the interference that affects the people he works with”. This can be achieved by helping the coachee to stay focused on their goal and to realign their thinking so that they feel empowered to achieve success. (Downey, 2003)

3. THE PRESENT OF COACHING

“Coaching is quickly becoming one of the leading tools that successful people use to live extraordinary lives.” (www.mylifecoach.com, 2005)

The rise in the coaching industry has been well documented and there is now quantifiable evidence to support its increasing popularity. According to Starts-Up magazine, “Coaching is the number two growth industry right behind IT (Information Technology) jobs, and it's the number one home-based profession.” (http://www.susandunn.cc, 2007)

In their annual learning and development survey, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
(CIPD) found that 79% of respondents used some form of coaching activity with 47% of these organisations stating that they are training line managers to coach, whereas 18% are using a network of internal and external coaches, 35% were doing a combination of both approaches. (CIPD, 2006) Interestingly, 80% of those who use coaching state that they want to develop a coaching culture and most of them have devoted resources to attain this goal. The main reason for doing so was a desire to “improve individual and business performance”. (CIPD, 2006)

3.1 CURRENT APPROACHES

3.1.1 Tools & Techniques

There are many coaching models currently in use such as the GROW model described in section 2.7.2 above. Performance Management Coach Allan Mackintosh has further developed the GROW model and established the OUTCOMES model. This stands for “Objectives, Understand the Reasons, Take Stock of the Present Situation, Clarify the Gap, Options Generation, Motivate to Action, Enthusiasm & Encouragement, Support”. (http://www.performance-am.com, 2007)

Of the OUTCOMES model, it is said that “The increased structure will result in more depth to their coaching that will enable an increase in more understanding, motivation and commitment to action than they may have experienced with other simpler models such as G.R.O.W.”. This model was principally developed for managers, and sales managers in particular, to coach their staff and Mackintosh believes that it provides a greater discipline than the conventional GROW model. (http://www.performance-am.com, 2007)

Another development of the GROW model is the ACHIEVE coaching model (see figure 4 below), which was developed by Fiona Eldridge and Dr Sabine Dembkowski following a study of best-practice of executive coaches in the US, England and Germany.
This model appears to be an expansion of the GROW model as it covers the same key areas but in more depth and provides greater direction, particularly for new coaches who may benefit from the additional structure. Furthermore, it follows a slightly different order than the GROW model but, in the writer’s opinion, it can be equally effective in moving the client forward in their life as it facilitates the coaching session by offering key prompts for the coach to follow. Eldridge & Dembkowski believe this to be the case and have tested their model in public and private organisations in the UK and Europe. (Eldridge & Dembkowski, 2004 - 1)

3.1.2 Link to NLP
One approach that has been closely linked to coaching is Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP). NLP was established in the 1970s by Richard Bandler and John Grinder under the direction of Gregory Bateson at the University of California. According to the principles of NLP, “We act and feel based on our perception of the world rather than the real world”. (http://en.wikipedia.org, 2007)

Bandler and Grinder thus sought to establish the behavioural patterns of those that achieved levels of excellence in their chosen profession or passion. This resulted in the use of modelling as “The patterns of any genius can be replicated through modeling” (http://www.nlpacademy.co.uk, 2007).

According to NLP Trainer Assessor Chris Collingwood, NLP can greatly enhance coaching by “assisting coaching clients to have more choice in their behaviour, emotions and the beliefs they hold”. It can help them to alter their beliefs and transform old habits that no longer serve them. In addition, it can contribute to a fresh outlook with a renewed perspective and a positive attitude from which change
can take place and success can be optimized. (http://inspiritivelife.com.au, 2007)

3.2 REGULATION & ACCREDITATION

At present the coaching industry is unregulated just as the financial industry was in the 1990’s (http://www.fsa.gov.uk, 2007). Therefore, anyone can technically call themselves a coach without any training or accreditation. This could have a potentially damaging effect on the quality of coaching given to clients as well as the reputation of the coaching community in general. According to Jarvis (2005), the industry has “suffered because of ‘cowboy coaches’ flooding the market” and this has led to some cynicism particularly within the business community as to the benefits of coaching within their organisation.

3.2.1 The Coaching Contract

Given the fact that there is currently no independent regulation of the industry, it is the writer’s opinion that the development and implementation of a contract between coach and client is critical. The existence of a contract will protect the interests of both the coach and the client, ensuring that each party is aware of the boundaries of the coaching relationship. According to legal expert, Rebecca Seeley Harris, a contract can enhance the professional image of the coach and safeguard the intellectual property of any materials that they may share with their clients (http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk, 2007).

3.2.2 Accreditation

There are currently several recognised bodies such as the European Coaching Institute (ECI) and International Coaching Federation who offer an accreditation service to training organisations and coaches. This upholds the professional image of the profession and protects the reputation of coaching as a whole.

The ECI has five levels of Individual Coach Accreditation, the first of which is Accredited Practitioner Coach. In order to become accredited to this level a coach must complete and/or submit the following along with their application fee and accreditation fee (http://www.europeancoachinginstitute.org, 2007):

- “150 hours of specific coach training
- Coaching log showing 50 hours of coaching experience of which at least 70% is paid
- Copy of training certificate(s)
The ICF is equally rigorous in their demands of potential members and they have three levels of accreditation. Their minimum requirements state that applicants should submit evidence of 60 learning hours and 100 coaching hours. They must also successfully complete an examination and submit references to be considered for the first level of accreditation - Associate Certified Coach. (http://www.coachfederation.org.uk, 2007)

It is encouraging to note that the ECI currently has representatives in 40 countries and the ICF has 12,000 members in 80 countries (http://www.europeancoachinginstitute.org, 2007) and (http://www.coachfederation.org.uk, 2007). In the writer’s view, this is particularly reassuring for reputable coaches who do not want to be associated with those claiming to be a coach after having spent a few hours on a one-off training course.

3.3 TRAINING

In order to be recognised as an accredited coach with organisations such as the ECI and ICF, a coach must undertake formal training. Membership of one of these bodies can make a significant difference when it comes to competing for business with other, non-recognised coaches. In fact, membership of a professional body is cited by the CIPD as one of the key requirements when selecting a coach. Other factors include experience, qualifications/training and supervision. (Trapp, 2005)

This is particularly pertinent as the issue of training and accreditation of coaches is highlighted in the media. For example, an article in USA Today states that “Virtually anyone can declare himself a life coach” and “...the virtues of what many offer are unproven” (http://www.usatoday.com, 2007).

However, for the more scrupulous and dedicated coach, it is encouraging to know that training is now becoming more advanced with degrees and formal qualifications available from several training organisations. For example, the learning organisation, Edexcel Ltd provide a level 2 BTEC Certificate
in Introduction to Life Coaching Skills and a level 3 BTEC Certificate in Life Coaching Skills and Practice (http://www.edexcel.org.uk, 2007). Similarly, the Oxford School of Coaching and Mentoring offer a Diploma in Professional Coaching and Mentoring, which is equivalent to an undergraduate degree (http://www.oscm.co.uk 2007).

Training is also becoming more important for clients as their knowledge of coaching increases and their expectations of their coach rise at the same time. A study by Tanja Schmidt on individual executive coaching in Germany, Switzerland and Austria showed that the most important success factor for coaching was the qualification of the coach. This included “personal credibility of the coach, education, professional background, experience and expertise as well as overall regard”. (http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk, 2007)

Increasingly, organisations require coaches to demonstrate that their skills are kept up-to-date by making continuing professional development a key component of membership. This also links into coaching supervision, which involves coaches being in a mentoring relationship with another coach and refreshing their skills and knowledge of coaching on a regular basis.

Where internal coaches are used the concept of accreditation would appear to be even less formalised. In a study of coaching cultures, Clutterbuck found that 69% of respondents’ internal coaches were not accredited, certified or licensed. This is particularly concerning as these coaches could still be expected to deliver highly effective coaching programmes. This is consistent with the fact that 52% of the survey respondents cited “lack of internal skills and experience” as one of the key barriers to successfully developing a coaching culture. (CIPD, 2006)

3.4 WORKPLACE COACHING

When it comes to workplace coaching, there are a number of key questions that should be addressed prior to embarking on a coaching programme. These include, “who should do the coaching?” and “who is the customer?”.

3.4.1 Internal or external coach?

In response to the first question, “who should do the coaching?”, an organisation can either train managers to coach their own staff or they could employ independent specialists in the field. Internal
coaches often have a background in human resources and will undertake coaching as part of their wider role within the organisation. Alternatively, an organisation can choose to employ wholly independent external coaches.

3.4.2 The Internal Coach

Where internal people are trained as coaches, it is believed by some that the senior management team should still be coached by external coaches (Eldridge & Dembkowski, 2004 - 2). The writer supports this view as it would be very difficult for a subordinate to coach those who are much higher up the corporate ladder than they are. It also raises questions about the extent to which the client would feel comfortable discussing their issues and therefore they may not get the maximum benefit from the coaching relationship. Furthermore, it could put the coach in a difficult position as they are potentially exposed to highly sensitive information that could impact their own career and that of their colleagues.

Allan Mackintosh supports this stance as he was previously employed as an internal coach and experienced some of these challenges. He states, “the biggest challenge I found as an internal coach was being pressurised to divulge information that a coachee had confidently confided to me”. He goes on to say that internal coaches should be wary of unrealistic expectations from managers and the misconception that the coach is there to ‘fix’ all of the problems in the organisation. (http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk, 2006)

He also advocates that internal coaches “contract their coaching role” to ensure everyone is clear of the roles and responsibilities involved in the coaching programme (http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk, 2006). However, a study by David Clutterbuck in 2005 revealed that 41% of organisations said that although they were training their managers to coach people, coaching was not incorporated into their job descriptions. Additionally, 54% of the organisations admitted that those employees involved in coaching people were not recognised or rewarded for doing so. It is the writer’s opinion that such actions could seriously hinder internal coaching efforts and therefore, ultimately, individual and business performance. (CIPD, 2006)

3.4.3 The External Coach

Where an external coach is employed, the choice of coach can be a complicated decision. An organisation will be faced with many coaching providers from various backgrounds each with varying styles. Additionally, they may have different viewpoints on who the customer is and this in turn will impact the confidentiality of the sessions. (http://www.downeycoaching.com, 2007)
The selection of a coach can be further complicated when taking into account the needs of the individual coachee. Although it may be down to an HR professional to select the coach, the managers being coached should also have an input into the decision making process. Nicole Denham, Head of Training & Development at Dixons, selects coaches by firstly interviewing them and then giving the manager (coachee) a choice of two (Hipkiss, May 2006).

Eldridge and Dembkowski (2004 - 2) have identified selection criteria that should be considered when making such a decision. These include:

- Does the person fit in with the organisational culture?
- What is the coach’s level of training and expertise?
- Is the coach in a coaching supervision relationship?
- Does the coach have experience of corporate coaching?
- Do they belong to a recognised coaching organisation?

This is by no means an exhaustive list and should be adapted to suit the coachee, the organisation and their expectations of the coaching relationship.

3.4.4 Preparing to be coached

Coaching in the workplace is still viewed by some as a sign of weakness or failure. In a study of coaching cultures, Clutterbuck asked organisations “to what extent is coaching seen primarily as a positive development tool rather than a remedial intervention?”. Disappointingly, 10% stated “not at all” whilst a further 46% responded “to a small extent”. (CIPD, 2006)

This is rather concerning given the highly positive results that can be gained from the deployment of a true coaching culture. In another study by Clutterbuck and Megginson (2005), they revealed that the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority actually provide more training to coachees than they do to those undertaking the role of coach.

Hipkiss (July 2006) also outlines the importance of preparing people to be coached. She states that non-directive coaching can be somewhat of a culture shock for some people as they are used to being taught and told what to do from a very early age. She goes on to say that preparation is necessary to eliminate any misconceptions about the coaching process, a common one being that coaching is some
form of counselling. Additionally, preparation is a useful process by which the expectations of the coach, the coachee and the organisation can be defined for all to see.

The Bank of England subscribes to the need for preparation and start at the outset with their new graduates. They provide training for graduates to be coached and also for senior graduates to deliver coaching. This indoctrinates them into the coaching culture straight away and ensures that the Bank’s future managers will be fully conversant with the skills and abilities of a coach. (Hipkiss, July 2006)

4 THE FUTURE OF COACHING

4.1 ACCREDITATION

The issue of accreditation looks set to remain high on the agenda for existing and potential coaches alike. It is hoped that it will become more formal in the future which will reduce the number of unscrupulous coaches. It could also make it more challenging for new coaches to enter the industry as the requirement to undertake comprehensive training will undoubtedly come at a price.

Indeed, it may become increasingly expensive as structured training programmes and membership of a recognised body become an essential component of accreditation. This could also result in training providers raising their prices as they too have a responsibility to prove the worth of their training courses and could potentially face regular audits to assess the robustness of their service provision.

This may deter some people from entering the industry which is not necessarily a bad thing as it could discourage those who originally thought of coaching as an ‘easy’ way to make money. This would have the desired effect of maintaining the credibility of the coaching profession as a whole and safeguarding the reputation of those who do adhere to high coaching standards.

Therefore, a more formal system of accreditation would be a reassuring concept, not only for the client but also for the coach and the coaching community as a whole.

4.2 COACHING SUPERVISION

The need for coaching supervision looks set to become more widespread as the accreditation process is increasingly formalised and the industry faces regulation in the future.
Coaching supervision involves a coach having their own coach and/or mentor coach to provide support, review their performance and challenge them. They may also make a commitment to continuing professional development activities as a way of keeping up-to-date with the latest trends in the coaching arena and refreshing their approach. (Association for Coaching Information Sheet, 2006)

Unfortunately this does not appear to be a universal phenomenon. A paper prepared for the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development revealed that less than half of all coaches involved in the research had any coaching supervision (Hawkins & Schwenk, 2006). This could have a potentially damaging impact on the reputation of the coaching industry as a whole and it is the writer’s opinion that each coach has a responsibility to ensure they continue to develop and improve.

Furthermore, the Association for Coaching would recommend that coaching supervision be formalised through the creation of a contract as this ensures all parties are clear regarding the boundaries of the relationship and the different roles and responsibilities (Association for Coaching Information Sheet, 2006). In addition, Christine Bachini states that “formal supervision arrangements cost money” but it can also be a selling point to clients as they feel they are getting a higher level of coaching (Association for Coaching Bulletin, 2006).

In order to preserve the credibility of the coaching profession, it is the writer’s view that all coaches should start their coaching career by completing a recognised training course with a well-respected training provider and build on this learning with continuing professional development. This further compounds the case for accreditation within the industry to protect the client, the coaching relationship and the reputation of the entire coaching community.

4.3 WORKPLACE COACHING

4.3.1 Coaching Culture
The future of workplace coaching looks good as more and more organisations strive to embed coaching into their organisational culture. This can be attributed to the fact that organisations are increasingly seeing the impact that coaching can have on the bottom line. There are also many ‘softer’ benefits such as retention of staff, increased morale and greater confidence amongst employees. (Hipkiss, May 2006)

The writer believes that workplace coaching will become embedded in many organisations as
strive to develop a coaching culture but it is widely acknowledged that this cannot happen overnight. According to Clutterbuck and Megginson (2005), the development of a coaching culture passes through the following four stages to become embedded in an organisation:

1. Nascent stage – at this stage a coaching culture is basically non-existent. There may be pockets of coaching taking place but this is uncoordinated and is not necessary done for the right reasons i.e. it is performed as a result of poor performance.

2. Tactical stage – organisations at this point have undertaken to adopt a coaching culture but the practical implications of this remain somewhat of a mystery. Coaching does take place but coaching behaviours are not integrated into management styles.

3. Strategic stage – at this level, coaching has been widely implemented and senior managers act as role models by coaching others. However, there is still some progress required in integrating coaching with other HR systems and ensuring the informal coaching process is supported.

4. Embedded stage – when an organisation reaches this stage, there is a maturity to their coaching activity. All levels are involved in formal and informal coaching; it is intrinsically linked other HR operations and 360° feedback is commonplace.

The writer believes that in the future there will be more evidence of organisations at stage 4 but there must be top management commitment and effective support mechanisms in place if it is to be a success.

Internal or external coach?
In order to truly embed a coaching culture in an organisation some believe that it can only be achieved through the creation of a network of coaches employed within the organisation. This could be one of the reasons for the apparent slow-down in the demand for external coaches. According to the CIPD Training and Development 2005 survey, 13% of respondents anticipate some decrease in external coaching activity. Conversely, 74% reported that they expected their internal coaching to increase. (Jarvis, 2005) This supports the view that there will be a move to more internal coaches in the future (de Haan, 2005).

Internal coaching is a cost-effective option and means that organisations can reach a wider audience, thus realising greater benefits. However, if this approach is to work, it is important to distinguish between “task orientated business meetings” and coaching sessions (Wright, 2005). There are also other forms of internal coaching that represent value for money such as group coaching and co-
coaching where two members of staff coach each other.

Liz Hall, editor of the CIPD’s Coaching at Work magazine states, “The fact that internal coaches have a better understanding of the business is another major factor prompting organisations to bring coaching in-house.” (http://www.peoplemanagement.co.uk, 2006)

However, external coaches provide a degree of objectivity that can be particularly useful when dealing with senior staff and giving feedback to them (http://www.trainingpressreleases.com, 2007). They may also have more influence as they are seen as a ‘professional’ in their field as opposed to an internal member of staff who undertakes coaching as an additional responsibility and not as their core function.

It is the writer’s view that organisations will increasingly train internal staff to undertake coaching as part of their day-to-day responsibilities but that there will continue to be a role for external coaches especially for senior executives and when dealing with major organisational change programmes.

Evaluation Framework
Regardless of the coaching provider, it is imperative that an organisation sets out some key success criteria prior to embarking on a coaching programme. The absence of an evaluation framework will make it difficult to assess the benefits that have been derived from the introduction of coaching in the workplace. Eldridge and Dembkowski (2004 - 2) have said that they “...have come across a lack of clarity about desired outcomes for coaching. This leads to organisations being unclear about how to evaluate coaches and the outcome of specific coaching programmes.”

One organisation, MaST learning and development, has developed a structured approach to evaluation that ensures each party is clear about the outcomes that should be achieved from coaching (http://www.mast.co.uk, 2007). The diagram in figure 5 below illustrated their evaluation framework.
In the writer’s view, this framework provides a very solid foundation upon which to build any organisational coaching programme. It also gives some useful insights for coaches and clients who are participating in a one-to-one coaching relationship outwith the workplace as it is equally important to be clear about the outcomes of such coaching sessions.

**POPULARITY OF COACHING**

4.4.1 Coaching in the Media
The rise in popularity of coaching is set to continue, as it is now becoming a common feature in many forms of media. The shelves of most bookstores are bulging with ‘self-help’ and personal development literature, offering an overview of coaching and instructions on how to coach people to achieve their goals. Radio programmes feature life coaches on a regular basis and there are even radio stations and podcasts dedicated to the subject (http://www.embody.co.uk, 2007), (http://www.lciablog.com, 2007)
Coaching is profiled in many popular magazines and there are increasing occurrences of coaching on television with programmes such as the Oprah Winfrey show highlighting the results that can be achieved by adopting the help of a coach (http://www2.oprah.com, 2007). Although not exclusively focused on coaching, the worldwide phenomenon, The Secret, which was also featured on the Oprah show, illustrates many of the same principles that could be used in coaching and it could encourage people to seek the assistance of a coach to progress their lives.

4.4.2 Coaching Trends
Myles Downey supports the view that coaching is rising in popularity and likens coaching to status symbols such as the Porsche as the latest must-have item in the business world. He cites the ever-increasing challenges faced by today’s managers as one of the key reasons behind the rise of the coaching industry. (http://www.downeycoaching.com, 2007)

The writer also believes that the growth in the industry can partly be attributed to the notion that increasingly people are conscious of the need for a balance between their work and personal life. They see coaching as a way to achieve such equilibrium in all areas of their life. John Whitmore supports this view as he describes the rise in the number of business people that are asking themselves, “what is my life all about?” and “what is the value of what I am doing?” (Whitmore, 2001)

Coaching specialisms are also becoming commonplace, a trend which is anticipated to continue in the future. There are now coaches dedicated to wedding coaching for brides-to-be as they cope with the stresses and strains of preparing for their big day (http://www.weddingcoaching.co.uk, 2007) and there are coaches who specialise in helping people become better parents and raise happy children (http://www.parentcoaching.co.uk, 2007).

It would appear that no area of life is ‘out of bounds’ as far as coaching is concerned and the writer predicts that these niche-coaching practices will continue to be developed.
5. CONCLUSION

Coaching has experienced a meteoric rise in use and popularity over the years and there is no evidence to suggest that this will stop anytime soon. In fact, in some circles it has now become ‘fashionable’ to employ the skills of a life coach to make improvements in one’s life.

This follows the trend that took place in the 1990s to employ personal fitness trainers. Indeed in 2000, Gerard O’Donovan predicted that by 2004 it would be just as common for people to hire a life coach as it was to hire a personal trainer (Financial Adviser, 2000). The analogy between the two professions does not stop there. According to life coach Elaine MacDonald, “A life coach does for the rest of your life what a personal trainer does for your health and fitness.” (http://www.brainyquote.com, 2007)

However, as the coaching profession continues to grow, so too do the challenges that are set to face the modern coach. Not only must they react to the changing legislative environment that is all too imminent, they must compete for work in an ever expanding industry. This further compounds the case for coaching supervision as it provides a supportive environment from which a coach can grow and develop as they encourage their clients to do the same.

Indeed, it is the writer’s conclusion that coaching delivers many benefits to the client, the coach and those around them. It is a key contribution to many organisational improvement frameworks and it is encouraging to see many companies taking action to embed a coaching culture.

The writer also believes that as coaching is evaluated and there is further research to confirm its benefits, more and more individuals and organisations will seek the services of a coach to help them make improvements in their life and work. However, this vision will only be realised if the reputation of the industry is untarnished by so-called coaches who undertake minimal training and have little or no qualifications. This is where the role of accreditation and regulation is vital in protecting the industry and those credible coaches who already exist. Without this formal framework, the industry is in jeopardy of being damaged by the minority who fail to maintain high professional coaching standards.

Furthermore, it is the writer’s firm belief that accreditation and regulation should be complemented by coaching supervision to maintain these high standards and ensure the continuous development of all coaches. After all, the whole ethos of coaching is to encourage the client to improve, so it is only right that the coach also seeks continuous improvement opportunities and aims to develop their coaching.
Finally, in the words of John Russell, Managing Director of Harley-Davidson Europe Ltd., "I never cease to be amazed at the power of the coaching process to draw out the skills or talent that was previously hidden within an individual, and which invariably finds a way to solve a problem previously thought unsolvable." (http://www.susandunn.cc, 2007)
REFERENCES

PUBLICATIONS


Berman Fortgang, L. (2005) Take Yourself to the Top: Success from the Inside Out, USA, Tarcher/Penguin

CIPD (2006) Annual survey report – Learning and Development

Clutterbuck, D. & Megginson, D (2005) Your Organisation: where is it on the road to becoming a coaching culture?, Training Journal, June 2005


PUBLICATIONS (Cont.)


WEB SITES

http://en.wikipedia.org http://www.lifecoachsolutions.co.uk
http://theinnergame.com http://www.mast.co.uk
http://www.chicagotribune.com http://www.nlpacademy.co.uk
http://www.coachfederation.org.uk http://www.oscm.co.uk
http://www.coachinc.com http://www.parentcoaching.co.uk
http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk http://www.peoplemanagement.co.uk
WEB SITES (Cont.)

http://www.coachville.com                   http://www.performance-am.com
http://www.embody.co.uk                     http://www.susandunn.cc
http://www.inspire-coaching.co.uk           http://www.usatoday.com
http://www.lciablog.com                     http://www.learndirect-advice.co.uk

OTHER

 Association for Coaching – Coaching Supervision Information Sheet (2006)
 Financial Adviser – 11th May 2000
 Life Coach Pod Cast – http://www.coachtrainingalliance.com
 The Secret DVD (Prime Time Productions) – Rhonda Byrne
BIBLIOGRAPHY

PUBLICATIONS


PUBLICATIONS (Cont.)


UK, Nicholas Brealey Publishing

WEB SITES

- http://observer.guardian.co.uk
- http://www.alifecoaching.com
- http://www.becomeacoach.com
- http://www.businessleader.com
- http://www.chrisgribble.com
- http://www.coaching.com
- http://www.fionaharrold.com
- http://www.greatday.com
- http://www.hayhouseradio.com
- http://www.minndtools.com
- http://www.minnesotacoaches.org
- http://www.oncoaching.com
- http://www.peoplemanagement.co.uk
- http://www.personallifemedia.com
- http://www.seeleysolutions.com
- http://www.thedevco.com
- http://www.timesonline.co.uk
- http://www.trainingzone.co.uk

OTHER

- The Coaching Psychologist, Volume 3, No. 1, April 2007
- Noble Manhattan Conference Calls
- Noble Manhattan Life Coaching Modules
Are you interested in finding out about the courses and trainings offered worldwide by
Noble Manhattan Coaching Ltd.
Please contact our friendly customer care team

Contact Details

International Head Office
Noble Manhattan Coaching Ltd
No 5
105 The Esplanade
Weymouth
Dorset
DT4 7EA

Tel    +44 1305 769411
Email   info@noble-manhattan.com
Web    www.noble-manhattan.com