

Coaching: A Literature Review

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pp 77-

86Abstract

In the course of writing this paper many who saw the topic, asked whether there can be coaching other than that of sports coaching. The concept of coaching has gone beyond sporting arena. It has been embraced as a tool for managing businesses and not for profit organizations. Coaching acceptance is wide spread now. In this paper attempts were made to review the basic literature surrounding the field of coaching with particular emphasis on meaning, approaches, benefits, characteristics and many other essential issues that form a knowledge base for people researching in this area.

Key words: Coaching,
Introduction

Organizations are bound to grow. Growth can be slow and extreme circumstances it sudden and explosive. At any time, it is important to organization at any point awarded for stagnation. necessary and desirable usually would have consequences – pleasant and destructive. every organization wants simply amputate unwanted associated with growth.

intangible beings
Sometimes, the steady. In may also be whatever rate it note that no in time have been Growth though, a phenomenon, attendant and annoying, Consequently, to mitigate or effects that are

approaches, characteristics

Now that a great number of organizations want to keep unpleasurable effects of growth under check, and continue to keep on growing without problems, it has become necessary to most organizations to keep their high flyers working optimally. Curiously, organizations discovered the coaching tool as capable of salvaging their situation. It is at this juncture that coaching as a management practice became apparent. Thus, large numbers of business organizations are beginning to include coaching in their arsenals of management. Great results as often reported about coaching are that of efficacy. In this light that we want to explore the theoretical rudiments of this emerging discipline perhaps, it might help those who are interested in the field.

Conceptual clarification

Coaching according to Evered and Selman (1989) is a means of conveying a valued colleague from where he or she is to where he or she wants to be. Costa and Garmston (2002) view coaching as a desire to enhance another's selfdirectedness: building someone's ability to self manage, monitor and modify behaviour. To Downey (2003), coaching is the art of facilitating the performance, learning and development of another. Sharing this view, Linder-Pelz and Hall (2008) sees coaching as facilitating a client's performance, experience, learning and growth, and about actualizing goals. Parsloe (1995) argues that coaching is a process that enables learning and development to occur and thus performance to improve. To be successful as a coach requires knowledge and understanding of the process as well as the variety of styles, skills and techniques that are appropriate to the context in which the coaching takes place. Whitmore (2009) explained that Coaching is unlocking a person's potential to maximize their own performance. It is helping people to learn rather than teaching them. Grant (2007) focus on the key elements and opines that coaching is a collaborative, solution focused, result – oriented and systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of work performance, life experience, self – directed learning and personal growth of individual from normal (i.e. non – clinical) populations.

Approaches to Coaching

Just like any other discipline, coaching too has enjoyed contributions from other fields that had existed before its emergency as a new area of study. Stober and Grant (2006) combined some of the approaches critical to the development of the field of coaching as thus:

The humanistic perspective

Roger (1951, 1959) argued that coaching is person-centered and that all individuals desire to experience positive change. They further posited that every individual's craving is to become what they are capable of becoming. Therefore, the essence of coaching should be to arouse the curiosity of growth which seems to be innate in everybody. To achieve this goal, the relationship between a coach and a client must be open and ever- ready to address all issues that the coachee

may bring into focus in the coaching relationship.

Behavioural approach

The persona is defined as a mask which is in shape and shades. The understanding of this persona is challenging because many factors – environmental, situation and hereditary affect its formation. This accounts for the complexity associated with explaining what it is. No matter the inhibiting factors, the behavioural approach seeks first the achievement of practical changes in every human being. The behaviourist argues that achieving psychological adjustments will not be too helpful for ones future. This has made the behaviourist approach to be action focused and seems to suggest to coachees to be given to learning which is instrumental to personal development over therapeutic measures.

Adult Development Approach

This approach argues that maturity exposes people to high consciousness, openness, understanding of authority and responsibility, a tendency for greater tolerance of ambiguity. As a coach therefore, your activities should be based upon the ideals of four main stages of development. The approach suggests that coaching at each stage should be focused on the stage of development related to issues in the coaching relationship (Berger, 2006).

Cognitive approach

This approach acknowledges the diversity or multiplicity of individualism. It posits that coaching is essentially a cognitive process. Fundamental to coaching as a cognitive process is the conclusion that one's feelings and emotions are a function of his thoughts which is made up of perceptions, mental attitudes, and beliefs. Cognitive therapy helps clients to substitute maladaptive and inaccurate cognitions (Ellis, 1979; Burns, 1980). Under the cognitive approach, the primary function of the coach is to assist in challenging and surmounting maladaptive and distorted perceptions (Auerbach, 2006).

Adult learning approach

This is an approach designed to provoke deep learning. The approach emanates from a basket of learning theories: for instance

Andragogy (Knowles, 1980), *Reflective Practice*

(Boud et al 1994), and *Experiential Learning* (Kolb, 1984). These theories argue correspondingly that adults learn by reflecting on experiences. Consequently, Cox (2006) agrees similarly, pointing out that coaching should thus be seen as a learning approach designed to nurture with the aim of facilitating goal-focused, self-directed learners who are determined to draw on their reservoir of previous experience with a view to solving real life puzzles. Gray (2006) on the other hand, advocates a *transformative learning coach model* where a coachee's critical reflection capabilities are raised to a level of questioning assumptions. Gray sees coaching essentially as a tool for informal, self directed learning in organizations. However, many literatures see a coaching relationship as being formal now (Diedrich, 1996).

Positive Psychology Model

Kauffman (2006) explained that coaches are to identify and build on the strengths of their clients all with the aim of galvanising hope and happiness for those concerned. Positive psychology simply identifies what is good in us and encourages us to reinforce such positivism continually. Those positive emotions do not only widen ones focus of attention and broadens access to intellectual and psychological resources but result to enhanced performance. The essence of positive coaching model aside from facilitating the achievement of specific goals is also designed to assist general improvement and life balance (Neenan and Dryden, 2002). Life coaching's thrust is built on positive psychology and focuses on changing perceptions and attitudes.

Adventure-based model

Is a concept of coaching whereby the coach and coachees simultaneously agree to go beyond the boundaries. To them, it is worthwhile to explore new frontiers and horizons probably working assiduously towards setting new records. Agreeably, this is risky as it involves analyzing the status quo, designing new milestones and concocting appropriate strategies to achieving them. Except this approach is undertaken, personal growth will be a mirage. In adventure model, participants as a measure of

test are required to assess themselves against behavioural, emotional and cognitive competencies with a goal to effecting desirable behavioural dispositional attitudes towards situations seem important. Priest (1999) explained that adventure is a process and not an activity. Whatever learning that is achieved during adventure process, they are expected to be warehoused for application in life situation experiences.

Systemic approach

It is designed to capture from the beginning unnoticed patterns of behaviour of the coachee so that they can be seen in different ways. Humans are complex systems by nature but capable of adaptation most especially when there is a need to interact with other systems. Holistically, this approach encourages a coach to view circumstances that led to the coaching relationship under which relevance aspect of unnoticed behaviour may be (Carver and Scheier, 1998). The system however, communize complexity, unpredictability and contextual factors and instead emphasis the uniqueness of small changes. It also reiterates openness, creativity and growth. In a nutshell, the systemic approach views the balance between stability and instability as optimal for performance (Cavanagh, 2006).

Goal-oriented Approach

Grant (2006) said that coaching is about the coachee's ability at regulating and directing their interpersonal resources to better attain their goals. Consequently, a coach is required in this instance to encourage a coachee to identify, set goals and develop strategies to achieving them. In stimulating a coachee towards setting goals, a coach has to take into cognizance the coachee's main life values and interest and respectfully protect them. It is important for a coach to avoid persuading a coachee into adjusting her values and beliefs as immediate results will be realized against fatal consequences later.

In goal – oriented approach, coaching is concerned essentially with raising performance and the support of effective actions other than addressing feelings and thoughts as the latter are resolved through a commitment to obtaining positive results (Grant 2003). Goal – oriented approach is also called brief coaching because it

is aimed at achieving target result at relatively short period of time.

Benefits of Coaching

A CIPD report (2009) listed benefits that coaching activities stand to offer an individual and an organization to include: Learn to solve own problems, improve managerial and interpersonal skills, have better relationships with colleagues, learn how to identify and act on development needs, have greater confidence, become more effective, assertive in dealing with people, have a positive impact on performance, have a greater self – awareness and gain of new perspectives, acquire new skills and abilities, develop greater adaptability to change, improve work – life balance. To the organization, coaching improve productivity, quality, customer service and shareholder value; can gain increased employee commitment; demonstrate to employees that an organization is committed to developing its staff and helping them improve their skills; support employees who have been promoted to cope with new responsibilities; help employees to sort out personal issues that might otherwise affect performance at work; gain a satisfactory process for self – development; support other teaching and developmental initiatives e.g. reduce leakage from teaching courses.

Characteristics of Coaching in Organizations

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), lists some characteristics of coaching in organizations that are generally agreed on by most coaching professionals. They include:

It consists of one-to-one developmental discussions; provides people with feedback on both their strengths and weaknesses; aims at specific issues/areas, its relatively short-term activity except in executive coaching which tends to have a longer time-frame; Its essentially a non-directive form of development; it focuses on improving performance and developing/enhancing individual's skills; It is used to address a wide range of issues; Have both organizational and individual goals; It assumes that the individual is psychologically healthy and does not require a clinical intervention; It works on the premise that clients are self-aware, or can achieve self-awareness; It is time-bounded; It is

a skilled activity; Personal issues may be discussed but the emphasis is on performance of work.

Coaching Responsibilities

Coaches according to *Kampa-Kosech* and *Anderson* (2001), *Peterson* (1996) and *Witherspoon* and *White* (1996a) have the following responsibilities: Provision of feedback, forging a partnership, inspiring commitment, facilitating the growth of new skills, promoting persistence towards goals, encourages the client to maximum use of environment and helps executives to learn, grow and change. This involves coaching for skills and developing performance while keeping the focus on the executive's agenda.

Conditions Necessary for Coaching Success

Some of the conditions necessary for coaches to succeed according to *Kampa-Kosech* and *Anderson* (2001) include but not limited to:

You have to be willing to change: Success comes with hardwork done smartly. There are no shortcuts. Your inability to show commitment will meet with monumental failure. Where coaching was adopted to facilitate the change and minimal or no success was recorded, you may have to abandon it (coaching) for some other method or magic.

Be open and honest to yourself: Feedback, it is said to be the cornerstone of improvement. Allow people access into you. Especially relatives, workers and superiors that you respect their views to tell you what they think of you. There are instances when their views may be biting but I guarantee you, it will be beneficial if you take it in good faith and do amends.

Measure yourself: Remember the principles of setting goals – SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound). Specificity will only be achieved if measured against some parameters within a period of time. You or your workers or some others can assess you against your targets to determine your performance.

Listen: There are many or a reason why we were given two ears and just one mouth. If this

assertion is true, *keep quiet and listen to feedback(s)*. Really listen and thereafter think or ask others about alternative action. Furthermore, justify every alternative and select the best for the situation.

Enjoy the process: Coaching is about establishing a dialogue. You will not be judged as there is no sure or wrong approach. Take the step and be faithful. It may end up amazingly beautiful.

Types of Coaching

Peterson (1996) has identified three different types of coaching offered by the firm.

Target coaching: Consists of minimal assessment such as interview, 360-degree survey and a discussion with the sponsor of the client's organization. It is focused on one or two skill areas, such as team leadership or communication for example. The coach is not motivated and well aware of the objectives of the intervention. The coach and the client meet 4 or 5 half-day sessions during 3 to 4 months. The organizational sponsors are somewhat involved, and this sort of intervention only requires minimal follow-up on part of the coach.

Intensive coaching: Requires in-depth assessment of the client's psychological and cognitive abilities, work simulations, interviews and 360-degree survey. This type of coaching is used with clients who need assistance in behavioural changes and role changes. In these situations, the need for change is obvious but the actual objectives of the engagement may not be spelled out. The client may, or may not be motivated to change. During intensive coaching, the coach and the coachee meet for 5 to 6 full-day sessions during a 6 to 9 month period. The organizational sponsors are involved through ongoing, in-depth consultation. They follow up within 3 to 6 months in order to make sure that the behavioural changes are sustained.

Executive coaching: Under this type of coaching, the assessment of the individual depends upon the needs of the coachee. The focus on the intervention is on the challenges that face the coachee, and often involves discussions regarding options and effective

implications. The coachee often has a clear goal he or she wants to obtain as a result of the intervention. The session takes place in the form of 1 – 2 hour meetings, either as needed or according to a schedule. The coachee is usually the one who communicates the progress to the organizational sponsors. With Executive Coaching, follow-up and on-going consultation is the response to the coachee's report.

Other types of coaching as identified by *Thach* and *Heinselman* (1999) are:

Feedback coaching: Is based on a format where the coach provides the coachee with feedback and helps to create a developmental plan focused on specific areas. This coaching engagement can be conducted over the phone or face-to-face and usually lasts from 1 to 6 months. The coaching activity is based on information gathered through a 360-degree assessment tool, which also forms the foundation of the engagement.

In-depth developmental coaching: Consists of an engagement lasting up to 12 months. The intervention is based on an extensive data gathering using 360-degree tools, Myers Briggs, and Firo-B, as well as interviews with staff, peers, managers and in some cases even family members. The coach and the coachee collaboratively create a developmental plan, which is shared with the coachee's manager. The coach meets with the client for 2 to 4 hours, at least once a month. Shadowing is common throughout this engagement, during which the coach provides immediate feedback.

Content coaching: (*Thach* and *Heinselman*, 1999), or *Coaching for Skills* (*Witherspoon & White*, 1996); appears to have semblance of targeted coaching consists of a coach providing specific knowledge and guidance to the coachee in a specific skill area, such as marketing or finance, for example. This type of engagement has clear and specific goals; the client agrees on the purpose and need of the intervention and believes that it is possible to learn such skills. Experts often provide this sort of coaching in certain cases through external workshops. However, considering time limitations often facing executives, one-to-one coaching can be a better alternative. Alternative sources such as books can also be used to assist the client.

Personal and life coaching: This is the approach where the coach appears to focus more on the coachee's personal life, rather than on the individual's performance in relation to an organization. Personal and life coaching seem to focus on a number of intra-personal issues such as life transitions, divorce, individual goal setting and individual improvement within a number of different areas.

Balance in- life coaching

A life balance coach will first teach you to recognize that you simply don't have the tools to do everything all the time. Once you understand this reality, then the next difficult task is having you abandon the pipe dream of keeping twenty balls in the air at the same time. The old adage is true: "there are only so many hours in a day", meaning you can only accomplish a finite number of tasks in a day.

This means that you will have to make some decisions. In other words, put your priorities in order, to either focus on your day job, moonlighting, family, or health. It is possible to handle perhaps two or three of these elements but all of them together makes for an unsatisfying life. With a life coach, you can begin prioritizing your duties and determining which of them holds the most value for you and where your attention should be focused.

Building Coach-Client Relationship

To assist in the success of a coaching business/assignment, it is required that a relationship exists. Essentially, the relationship as drawn by Maynard (2006) as follows:

One-on-one relationship: Many authorities on coaching are in agreement on this point and explained that, it is entered into with mutual agreement. According to these authorities, the relationship is one-on-one, but adds that within an organizational setting, it may take place in a variety of contexts such as during team building meetings and within a network of individuals formed to support one another (Garman et al, 2000; Schnell, 2005; Stern 2004; Winum, 1999).

The collaborative process: Relationship must serve dual purpose. When using the systems approach within an organization. The one-on-

one nature of the coaching relationship must be tailored to include the needs of the organization as a whole. *Kiel et al* (1996) stated that although the individual is the primary client, the organization is also the client and its needs must be addressed within the development plan. To fully develop the coach/client relationship, referred power must be given by the organization, typically in the form of a boss who explicitly supports the coaching process and the goals decided upon.

Trust: Blattner, 2005; Frisch; 2001) argue that this is essential in the coach-client relationship. Therefore, coaches must really get to know their clients both professionally and personally through extensive data collection. A battery of psychological tests for personality assessment and others imaginable can be helpful in this information gathering for the purpose of knowing the client.

Quality of work alliance: Determines eventually, the ultimate importance of relationship. *Kilburg* (2001) regarded a meaningful and effective therapeutic alliance as the single most important factor contributing to a positive outcome in any helping intervention. Furthermore, creating a strong alliance for managing change (*Goodstone and Diamente, 1998*) is a major factor in producing positive results when facilitating behavioural change (for better than feedback, reduction of incongruity or increased self-awareness). *Goodstone and Diamente* added, unconditional positive regard and empathy are features critical to establishing a successful coach.

Delineation of boundaries: The coaching relationship is informal. Consequently, it is important that clear-cut boundaries be maintained between social and professional roles. *Kiel et al* (1996) suggested that social invitations be declined, although meetings with the client at his/her home or off-site location such as a hotel are appropriate if the tone is kept professional rather than social. *Kilburg* (1997) noted the relationship needs to be predictable and reliable for the client. All administrative issues such as fees, confidentiality, cancellations, places and times for meetings, information exchange, and technical responsibilities on the part of the client or coach

should be agreed upon and made clear in a formal working agreement.

Openness: *Bugos and Silberscahtz* (2000) examined coaching behaviours of patients in a therapeutic relationship.

Reasons that account for the increase in coaching services

Many reasons have accounted for a consistent increase in the demand and supply of coaching services. Among the myriad of reasons are (*Liljenstrand, 2003:5*):

Changing work environment: *Permanency* defines what is said to be change. *Immediate propellers of change* are fast technological changes, a hitherto tall organizational structure suddenly becoming flattened, changing composition of economic powers and the population structure. There is also the benefits' driving a shift from production to serviceoriented industries.

The digital technology has revolutionized production activities. Today, people are easily and quickly accessed through information technology mechanism like e-mail and GSM phones and the social media. These has not only changed the way people work and interact but also have placed high demand and higher expectations on organizations. *Liljenstrand* (2003:5) explained that such scenarios present opportunities where a professional coach can assist the individual in functioning more effectively in areas such as interpersonal communication, delegation or balancing work and personal life, career amongst others.

Major changes within coaching: The coaching field is relatively young, however, there has been a major force contributing to the increasing need for coaching services. From the beginning, coaching was done for managers thought to have performance challenges. In the contemporary world, a coach is demanded to help in boosting the performance of successful individuals. Thus, the change from coaching a non-performing to a top performer, had made a whole lot of difference in the way people view coaching services.

Currently, having a personal coach has become a status symbol other than anything else (*Berglas, 2007*). In essence, the change in the perception of coaching services and those who hire coaches had aided the development of this field. *Maynard* (2006)

Increased target market: The list of those demanding for coaching services is ever increasing. This is largely because; it is a helpful process with potentials for diverse application in different settings for a variety of engagements. Coaches take different titles. These varying nomenclatures define the main focus areas for the coach. The major focus areas are communication career, personal and performance coaching just to mention a few.

Result-oriented: The relatively young nature of coaching notwithstanding, it had proven to be effective, cost-wise and better over traditional approaches to executive development. Prominent among companies that have used coaching extensively for development are CocaCola, Polaroid and a California utility company (*Judge and Cowell: 1997*).

Consequently, the interesting efficacy of coaching has led many proactive organizations to concentrate on its use as a *sin qua non* for meeting their bottom lines.

Minimal entry requirements. The most important requirement is your ability to market your services face-to-face or ICT mechanisms – the web, cell phones, billboards and handbills can be used. At the beginning, an office may not be necessary because of prohibitive cost. Also, the handsome remuneration that accompanies this fledgling profession is another motivating factor (*Hellkamp, Zins, Ferguson and Hodge, 1998*).

Similarly, the fact that people are free to work from their homes has encouraged many to own businesses. Furthermore, there are no recognized standards in place that prohibits individuals from offering coaching services.

Providers of Coaching Services

Liljenstrand (2003) argued that for now, there are no known and strictly enforced standard for coaching. Moreover, there has been a surge in the demand for coaching services.

Consequently, there has been a variety of people with diverse experiences, qualifications and educational qualifications entering the profession.

Judge and Cowell (1997) pointed out that psychologists, MBA's, Ph.D's, and even drama instructors – all are pitching in to help improve the work performance of top executives. Majority of the providers of coaching services are said to hold a masters degree in business and social sciences. Only a small percentage of the service providers in this field were said to hold a first degree or below.

At this point, we can ask, with diverse qualification possessed by coaches, who then should be an ideal coach? *Eggers and Clark* (2000) explained that hence there are no standards of training currently in existence to guarantee coaching quality and strive for consistency in the delivery of services, *Brotman et al* (1998) warns that, it is important for organizations to make an informed and competent decision when hiring a coach. This is critical when putting the high cost involved in such consultancy services as well as the high level of work executive coaching consist of.

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