

Exploring the Relationship Between Gender and Executive Coach
Selection and Evaluation

by

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ABSTRACT

The practice of executive coaching has become an increasingly popular tool for many business professionals and many of today's most successful and most powerful companies support, strategically plan for, and even fund these practices (de Haan, 2012). However, there is little research on the subject of executive coaching, and this has led to action based purely on the hunches and best guesses of coaches and not on empirical data or proven best practices. Furthermore, the existing coaching literature has not addressed how this practice may be shaped or influenced by the gender of either party (coach or client) involved in the coaching relationship. This study examines that relationship, with a specific focus on how coach and client gender affect a client's perception and selection of said coach. Results suggest that while client perceptions of a coach may not differ by coach or client gender, overall selection of a coach does.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The concept of coaching, or extending training to focus on an individual's needs and accomplishments with personalized feedback, has origins as far back as the 1500's (Passmore, 2010). The word coaching first appeared in the academic world in 1830 at Oxford University as another term for tutoring (Passmore, 2010). However, the concept of professional coaching did not take root until well after the turn of the 19th century when the introduction of technology and redesign of the workplace made the concept of competitive business what it is today (McKenna, 2009).

Today's workplace is an often fast-paced, dynamic environment, in which employees are expected to be the best in their field, expert managers, savvy technicians, and strong, engaging leaders in order to progress up the coveted company ladder. Starting in the 1950s, organizations began providing employees with tailored coaching, guidance, and direction in order to help groom and prepare those individuals for competitive promotions and executive-level positions (Passmore, 2010). The use of this customized training has continued to gain popularity in a variety of organizations and fields. In fact, what was once considered a stigma or indication of weak leadership abilities is now a positive symbol of status, power, and high-potential (McKenna, 2009).

While this modern-day symbol of great status and potential has been praised as a miraculous career booster for many professionals, with a more than worthwhile return on investment, there remains some debate on the practice's efficacy and even accessibility with all professionals. It is no secret that the traditional workplace and workforce within it has consisted of a predominantly male population. However, as the corporate world has

evolved and entered the modern-era, more and more females have fought for and earned their place as executives in many of today's organizations. While the increase in the number of women leading organizations and sitting on today's executive boards has been what many consider an overall triumph for the feminist movement, many female professionals still consider the odds of reaching the "C-Suite" to be stacked against them in the predominantly male world of business. The statistics on emerging female business leaders do not discount those perceptions, either. As one executive coaching agency simply put it, "Same workplace, different realities!" (20/20 Executive Coaching, Inc). This difference in the speed and ease with which working men find themselves in organizational leadership positions compared to their female counterparts has led many women to seek assistance in breaking through this professional barrier. One such resource employed by these women is professional, also known as executive, coaching.

While coaching may seem to be the perfect solution to the gender gap problem in business, the point has also been raised that if coaching is only provided to those individuals who find themselves in top tiers of their organizations, the majority of coaching clients are most likely to be men, and many women are sure to be excluded from this professional opportunity. This notion has led some executive coaches and coaching agencies to begin targeting female professionals and tailoring their approaches to better fit their needs in order to help them, "correct career limiting behaviors while building on strengths..." and close that divide between men and women in leadership (Strategic Talent Solutions, 2012). As one coach explained, "coaching should absolutely not be a one-size-fits-all approach, especially when it comes to gender." (Caprino, 2014). More specifically, some of the coaching strategies that have been highlighted as effective

for women include: addressing one's assertiveness in interpersonal relationships, promoting accomplishments, building networks, and addressing expectations (Strategic Talent Solutions, 2012).

Many professionals in the field of executive coaching hope that by customizing their coaching practices to better fit the needs of male and female coaching clients respectively, the process will be perceived as more beneficial to the individual career goals and aspirations of those two groups. It is the truth and validity of this notion which the researchers seek to further investigate with the present study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Professional coaching has grown so much in the United States and internationally that researchers estimate that 51% of senior executives and 34% of CEOs receive some form of executive coaching. Executive coaches can make up to \$3500 an hour with the median salary being \$500 per hour. Approximately 80% of company leaders and boards support this practice in their own organizations (de Haan, 2012). However, while executive coaching may be a popular, familiar concept and common occurrence in today's modern workplace, the limited research and empirical literature on the subject has left many questions unanswered and resulted in limited support and direction for the practice overall (Bono et.al., 2009; de Haan, 2012; Kombarakaran, 2008).

Defining Executive Coaching

Currently, the research that does exist on the subject of coaching has been centered around the preferred practices and approaches of coaches, case studies of coaches, and self-reported evidence from both coaches and clients (Bono et.al., 2009; Boze et.al., 2014; CCL, 2011; de Haan, 2013). This lack of empirical support, including controlled experiments and objective measures of outcomes, is a critical need that leaders in the field see as a top priority in the advancement of this practice. One major issue created by the lack of sound coaching research is that there is no set, agreed upon definition of the practice. In general, executive coaching can be thought of as a form of leadership development that often involves a short-term, interactive process between a qualified coaching figure and a leader or executive focused on goal attainment and the performance improvement of the executive (de Haan, 2013; Hall, 1999; Kombarakan

et.al., 2008). Using these core elements as a guide, researchers have begun to determine what coaching entails but continue to express the need for additional empirical support of these practices.

Best Practices in Executive Coaching

If defining executive coaching is described as a limitation of the literature, then determining the best methods and most effective practices for the executive coaching process might be considered a Herculean feat. The need for universally, well-established best practices for coaching has been noted by nearly every major researcher in the field to date and as such, has become an ongoing theme seen throughout the literature (de Haan, 2012; Mackie, 2014; Passmore, 2007). However, with a variety of coach backgrounds, education, and training as well as a cornucopia of unique settings in which the practice takes place, little progress in the way of determining these guidelines has been made.

Stakeholders

Another component of the existing literature on the subject of executive coaching is the assessment of who should be involved in the coaching relationship and process. It may seem obvious, especially after examining the aforementioned general definition of coaching, that the relationship traditionally involves both a coach and a coaching client. The significance and importance placed upon the coach-client relationship is obvious as it plays a vital role in nearly all existing coaching literature and appears to be as vital as the process itself. As such, researchers of executive coaching have made an effort to examine these roles in an attempt to determine which individuals may be best suited for them as well as the significance of matching these coach/client positions. Determining a generic profile for the positions of coach and client may be too limiting, but in general the

research has found that the following traits may help to establish which individuals will be most effective in the role of coaching client: self-efficacy, willingness to change, and receptiveness to feedback (Passmore, 2010).

Because the expense for coaching in terms of time, energy, and fiscal resources is so great, an analysis of which individuals will be most receptive to and successful in the coaching process is something organizations should make a top priority. On the other side of the coaching relationship, some research has aimed to determine what makes a successful coach in the complex coaching dynamic. The findings of these studies have generally concluded that successful coaches possess a blend of psychological knowledge, business acumen, organizational knowledge, and of course, an understanding and appreciation for the practice of coaching (Ennis, et.al., 2005). Recent research has also sought to determine to what extent the outcomes and effectiveness of coaching are influenced by the match of the coaching dyad on individual traits such as: gender, personality, motivation, and methodology (Boze, 2014; Gray, 2010; Hall, 1999; Passmore, 2010; Skinner, 2012; Stout, 2013). Thus far, research indicates that forming the coaching relationship based upon these traits may not be especially important to the overall outcomes of coaching but may help to make the individuals involved more receptive, open, and comfortable with the process (Boze, 2014; Gray, 2010; Hall, 1999; Passmore, 2010; Skinner, 2012; Stout, 2013).

Benefits of Coaching

The final recognizable theme in the existing literature is the examination of the overall benefits of coaching. If the benefits of this unique leadership development process are not significant, or rather unknown, then examining various models and determining

who should be involved seems to be a moot point. Fortunately, unlike the themes mentioned above, the existing literature does have a solid stance on the topic of coaching effectiveness. As one article put it, “Executive Coaching: It Works!” (Kombarakaran, 2008). In general, each article, organizational white paper, and coach/client self-report reiterates the claim that overall, executive coaching is an effective and worthwhile leadership development intervention. Specific benefits of the process have been examined from not just the point of view of the client but also from the perspectives of his colleagues, subordinates, supervisors, and organization. In general, researchers have consistently found the following as outcomes of coaching: increased leader effectiveness, communication improvement, conflict management improvement, as well as improvement on other specific goals and skill attainment (Jansen, 2009; Passmore, 2010; Wasylyshyn, 2003). These conclusions have lead researchers to believe that not only do coaching clients feel positively about their experience, their improved performance, growth, and development serve as measurable validation for these feelings as well.

Gender and Coaching

Although there are at least three clearly identifiable research themes in the existing coaching research, this does not an exhaustive literature review make. A noticeable area of insufficient research on the subject is that of gender and leadership coaching. While researchers have recognized this hole in the literature, little effort has been made to establish what effect, if any, gender has on the success of a coaching partnership.

The Glass Ceiling

Perhaps this gap in the literature is due to the fact that there is noticeably very little gender difference amongst today's executives. This lack of equal gender-representation at the top executive level has been coined, "the glass ceiling," (Cook & Glass, 2015; Ezzedeen, et.al., 2015; Matsa & Miller, 2011). The concept of the glass ceiling, an invisible barrier that seems to prevent female professionals from advancing to leadership status in their given fields, has become a popular topic of investigation in news articles, reports, and even political initiatives. However, despite this media spotlight, the glass ceiling is still very much a prevalent problem for today's workforce and one that may not go away anytime soon.

Female Leadership

According to one report, females were underrepresented at the leadership level in almost every professional field, including law, politics, healthcare, advertising, financial services, and entertainment (Warner, 2014). In fact, although women make up 50.8% of the US population, hold 60% of undergraduate and graduate-level degrees, comprise 59% of the college-educated entry-level workforce, they are grossly underrepresented in terms of leadership in almost every field and individual organization (Warner, 2014). This gender-gap in organizational leadership is extremely obvious in terms of CEO's, top leadership positions, executive officers, and pay. Despite recent attention on a select-group of females who have been able to "break through" the glass ceiling, including Facebook's Sheryl Sandberg, GM's Mary Barra, and Yahoo!'s Marissa Mayer, and reports that

companies with a more gender-balanced leadership tend to outperform those that do not, evidence has shown that for the vast majority of female professionals, gender inequality in the workforce is likely still the rule and not the exception. Case in point, according to a report published by the Center for American Progress, only 14.6% of executive officers, 8.1% of top earners, and 4.6% of CEOs in Fortune 500 companies were women. An additional study found that only 14.2% of all top positions in S&P 500 companies were filled by women and the median salary of all female professionals, executive level and below, were significantly lower than the median annual earnings of their male counterparts (Egan, 2015).

Glass Ceiling Causes

There has been much speculation as to the reason for the glass ceiling. Some have suggested that the lack of female representation at the top may be due to: work/life balance pressures, rampant sexual harassment, a strong as ever, “good ol’ boys club”, or a lack of regulation from organizations and the government alike (Feminist Majority Foundation, 2014). Another plausible cause for this gender-based inequality in the workforce is the segregation of men and women in terms of grooming positions (Egan, 2015). That is, women are simply not given the same opportunities as their male colleagues to perform in significant profit-loss positions, which are often used to prepare employees for advancement up the organizational chart. Whatever the reason or reasons for the gender differences felt in today’s workforce, it is apparent that the career opportunities, advancements, and equality

of female workers should be an important initiative of male and female professionals alike.

Gender and Coaching in the Literature

While literature on the glass ceiling, and more generally gender at work, is by no means a new concept, the proportion of research that examines gender and the common business practice of coaching is minimal. As a result, those interested in adding to the empirical support for this practice must look to other, more developed topics of research in an attempt to draw conclusions. That is, researchers and practitioners, not having a clear empirical foundation for coaching, have turned to implementing the well-established themes and models in practices such as training, mentorship, feedback delivery, and even psychological counseling as a jumping off point for better understanding the art of coaching (Frame & Sanders, 2015; Passmore, 2012). This has led to the general conclusion that while these practices are certainly not identical nor interchangeable, the similarities between these developmental initiatives can serve as an educated starting point for additional coaching research, especially that which focuses on gender.

Coaching vs. Mentorship

While there is no agreed upon definition of mentoring, as is the case with executive coaching, there is agreement that the process includes, “aspects of a developmental relationship which enhance.... growth and advancement,” (Gilbert & Rossman, 1992). Additionally, according to Ragins and Scandura (1997), mentoring is a process in which individuals with advanced experience and knowledge are

committed to providing support and guidance for the advancement of their mentees. With these characteristics in mind, it is clear how the research on mentoring may be a viable source of information related to coaching, a practice with similar components.

Mentorship Outcomes

The vast majority of the literature on mentorship has pointed towards generally positive conclusions. That is, mentors and role models in professional settings are often viewed as positively influencing professional development, learning, and performance outcomes in general (Johnson, 2002). Additionally, they are thought to be effective and seen as key ingredients to the career development and progression of mentees in professional organizations (Burles, 1991; Roche, 1979). These conclusions provide general support for the practice of executive coaching, a professional tool with similar ingredients and outcomes.

Mentorship and Gender

Another trend in the mentorship literature has examined the relationship of mentorship and gender. More specifically, many researchers have sought to examine whether mentorship has a significantly different effect on men than women and how the mentor relationship may produce different results for these groups. The general findings from these examinations point to a conclusion that mentorship may in fact be different based upon the gender of the mentor and/or mentee. In fact, according to some researchers, mentor relationships may be more important for women as they can help those individuals to overcome gender barriers and advance

in their work (Noe, 1988; Ragins, 1989). Additionally, some feel that mentors for female professionals may be more important than for male professionals due to females' lack of peer support and adverse forces.

However, while much of the literature on gendered mentorship claims that women have the potential to benefit more from the practice than their male counterparts, studies also show that there are far fewer opportunities for them to receive it, as may be the case with coaching. In fact, according to one study, women face greater barriers to forming mentor relationships than males, reported less access to these relationships, and higher rates of unwillingness and disapproval from supervisors and coworkers alike (Hunter, 2015; Ragins & Cotton, 1991; Ragins & Kram, 2007). Another study reported similar findings in that women reported finding a mentor more difficult (Noe, 1988) and reported that mentor relations with male mentors were harder to navigate and provided them with fewer benefits than their male colleagues (Morrison & Glinow, 1990; Noe, 1988).

This lack of access to and comfort with the mentor relationship for women has led some researchers to further examine the cross-sex dyad in mentoring and its influence on mentorship outcomes. To that point, some researchers have found that the outcomes in mentorships may not be the same for men and women because mentors may have very different expectations for those two groups (Fitt & Newton, 1981). Additionally, the mentor relationship may not be fully functional for some cross-sex dyads due to societal views and norms regarding professional versus sexual relationships (Morgan & Davidson, 2008). A select few researchers have

examined the mentor relationship in terms of this cross-sex dyad. Unfortunately, however, these findings have been somewhat conflicting and have presented little in the way of empirical evidence. Some of these researchers have found that the gender similarity emphasized in the mentoring relationship literature appears to be true and that greater benefits, higher interpersonal comfort, and identification because of shared experiences were realized with a same gender mentorship (Fitt & Newton, 1981). However, other studies have attributed that cross-gender mentorships may be preferred because of an attribution of more relational, psychosocial characteristics to female mentors and more task-oriented, career-developmental characteristics to male mentors (Gray & Goregaokar, 2010). And still other researchers have found that while gender matching may have a positive impact on self awareness, a proximal outcome of success, little to no effect on more permanent, distal outcomes appears to result from this matching (Bozer, et. al., 2015). These conflicting findings provide further support for the present research as it examines whether gender has a significant impact on a mentor-related relationship, in this case, that of a coach and client. This partnered with the resounding empirical support for mentorship-related practices solidifies the need for the present examination of one such practice.

Coaching vs. Feedback

Another topic of research that boasts a more comprehensive history than that of coaching, and may provide empirical support for additional research in the area, is feedback seeking and receiving tendencies. In recent years, this topic has

become a popular subject of examination and one that many coaching professionals may view as beneficial to their work. It is no secret that individuals receive feedback in ways that often seem as unique as their own personalities and experiences. As such, many professionals in mentoring, coaching, or supervising roles may find it helpful to know how feedback delivery may be tailored to best benefit certain mentees, clients, or employees.

Feedback and Gender

With this in mind, interested researchers have sought to examine the different ways in which individuals deliver, receive, and implement feedback. These examinations have produced research in many different areas including that of gender and feedback. In general, researchers have found that men tend to externalize feedback while their female counterparts internalize it (Morris, 2015), meaning that men tend to put responsibility on the world around them whereas women tend to put it on themselves. Additionally, the self-esteem of men appears to be rather unaffected in receiving either positive or negative feedback whereas women's self-esteem was slightly improved by positive feedback and substantially dropped with negative feedback (Morris, 2015). Lastly, in the implementation and use of feedback, both positive and negative, women tend to be more responsive and use both forms of feedback in their future performance compared to their male counterparts (Morris, 2015).

These findings on the feedback tendencies of men and women, coupled with the existing literature on gendered mentoring relationships, provides even further

support for the present study, which seeks not only to add to these findings but to also provide previously unknown information on the important practice of executive coaching and ways in which it, along with its related customs, may help to shatter the glass ceiling.

Coaching Goals and Outcomes

The tentative conclusion is that while some clients may express a desire for a particular coach (or mentor) gender, there is little evidence that gender has an effect on the outcomes of the relationship (Gray, 2010; Hall, 1999). Some research has taken the approach of looking at how female executives may benefit from coaching differently than their male colleagues. This examination, however, has revealed not so much that the benefits of this process vary between the two groups but rather that some of the goals and outcomes of coaching may differ for females compared to their male counterparts. These differences may include: an increased focus on family/work balance, integration into organizational culture, and networking (Skinner, 2012; Stout, 2013). These possible differences in coaching goals and client roles in the coaching relationship may be linked to differences in clients' gender roles or gender identities. That is, what is important to some female executives may be important to her because of how she identifies as a female. Additionally, the coaching goals of male executives, or ways in which he approaches the coaching relationship, may be related to how he identifies as a man. The same potential differences between the genders could be true for female and male coaches as well. These differences, if left unaddressed, could lead to an unsuccessful or less effective coaching experience, both for the client and the coach. On the other hand, if these differences were

respected and incorporated into the coaching process, this could lead to an overall more positive coaching experience.

The Present Study

If there are, in fact, differences that play a part in the coaching process based upon gender, either that of the coach or client, little empirical research is currently available to point out these differences and serve as a guide for navigating them. This remains a major hole in the existing literature. With this study, the researchers will contribute to the repository of coaching information by specifically examining the complexity of the practice as it relates to gender. The overarching research questions driving this study will examine how gender impacts the perceived effectiveness of leadership coaching. More specifically, the study will examine how the gender of both the executive coach and the potential coaching client impacts perceptions of coach effectiveness, experience, and qualification as well as overall coach selection.

Additionally, as discussed in the review of the existing literature, some research has suggested that coaching clients' goals and objectives for the coaching relationship may too have an impact on their evaluation of male and female coaches. This study will investigate this claim by examining whether the coaching goals, either more skill-based or interpersonal, of a potential coaching has an impact on the client's evaluation and selection of a coach and whether these goals vary by gender.

Lastly, the present study seeks to silence the conflicting evidence regarding the impact of gender matching on the coaching relationship and process. More specifically, this study will examine any differences in client ratings of happiness, comfortableness, and trust with an executive coach in same sex coaching dyads and cross-gender dyads.

The study will also assess whether self-reported perceptions of coach experience as relevant to one's own, feeling understood by a particular coach, being receptive to a particular coach's feedback, and overall coach selection differs between those clients in a coaching dyad matched on gender and those who are not.

While the topics of both leadership coaching and workplace gender differences have seen some increased attention in recent years, the impact of gender on executive coaching outcomes and overall success is certainly a topic that future research should strive to expound upon for the benefit of not just female executives but also for the field as a whole. It is the researchers' hope that this study did just that.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: Does the gender of an Executive Coach impact participants' ratings of the Executive Coach?

*Research Question 1 a: Does the gender of an Executive Coach impact participants' ratings of the Executive Coach's **experience**?*

*Research Question 1 b: Does the gender of an Executive Coach impact participants' ratings of the Executive Coach's **effectiveness**?*

*Research Question 1 c: Does the gender of an Executive Coach impact participants' ratings of the Executive Coach's **qualifications**?*

Research Question 2: Does the gender of an Executive Coach impact participants' selection of an Executive Coach?

Research Question 3: Does a participant's Gender (self-reported) impact their ratings of an Executive Coach?

*Research Question 3 a: Does a participant's Gender impact their ratings of an Executive Coach's **experience**?*

*Research Question 3 b: Does a participant's Gender impact their ratings of an Executive Coach's **effectiveness**?*

*Research Question 3 c: Does a participant's Gender impact their ratings of an Executive Coach's **qualifications**?*

Research Question 4: Does a participant's Gender score impact their selection of an Executive Coach?

Research Question 5: Do the coaching goals of a participant impact their ratings of an Executive Coach?

*Research Question 5 a: Does a participant's coaching goals impact their ratings of an Executive Coach's **experience**?*

*Research Question 5 b: Does a participant's coaching goals impact their ratings of an Executive Coach's **effectiveness**?*

*Research Question 5 c: Does a participant's coaching goals impact their ratings of an Executive Coach's **qualifications**?*

Research Question 6: Do the coaching goals of a participant impact participants' selection of an Executive

Coach?

Research Question 7: Does gender matching of the coaching dyad impact participants' ratings of an Executive Coach?

Research Question 7 a: Does gender matching impact their ratings of comfortableness with an Executive Coach?

Research Question 7b: Does gender matching impact their ratings of happiness with an Executive Coach?

Research Question 7c: Does gender matching impact their ratings of an Executive Coach's experience as relevant to their own?

Research Question 7d: Does gender matching impact their ratings of feeling understood by an Executive Coach?

Research Question 7e: Does gender matching impact their ratings of trust with an Executive Coach?

Research Question 7f: Does gender matching impact their receptivity to feedback from an Executive Coach?

Research Question 8: Does gender matching of the coaching dyad impact participants' selection of an Executive Coach?

CHAPTER III

METHOD

The current study sought to examine the impact of executive coach gender on the perceptions of executive coaches. To examine the possible relationship between these variables, the researchers administered an online study to participants (hypothetical potential coaching clients), which allowed the participants to review four profiles of executive coaches and asked them to assess the overall perceived effectiveness, qualification, and experience of the four fictitious coaches as well as the potential coaching client's ultimate coach preference. While the current study is part of a larger-scale investigation of many aspects of the coaching practice, the present initiative sought only to examine the relationship between gender and coaching.

Participants

Participants were recruited via email and other forms of communication from graduate business, or related fields, programs at various universities across the country to participate in the present study. Additional participants currently enrolled in business programs, held business degrees, or were working managers in their respective fields were also obtained through the use of social media and "Qualtrics Panels," a service of Qualtrics online survey tool which helped to locate and compensate the study's target sample. This research sample provided the researchers with participants who had a frame of reference for understanding the concepts being examined. As most graduate business students and working professionals may have or will have some form of interaction, either directly or indirectly, with an executive coach and/or an executive receiving coaching, these individuals were able to understand and apply the concept of executive

coaching to the current study. Some participants received course credit based upon the decision of their instructor and those participants obtained via Qualtrics Panels received monetary or other forms of reimbursement for their time; however, the researchers provided no compensation directly to participants. Faculty who agreed to have their students participate in the study were provided with a link to the electronic study on Qualtrics. Those who participated through Qualtrics Panels were recruited and provided the study link directly from Qualtrics.

Of the recruited participants, usable data was obtained for 147 individuals, resulting in a final sample size of 147. Demographic questions were asked of all participants which revealed that a slight majority of the sample was male (52.4%), and most participants fell into the 29-39-year age range (31.9%). The ethnicities of participants included White (68.7%), Asian/Pacific-Islander (10.9%), Hispanic (8.8%), African-American (8.2%), Native American (1.4%), and others (2.0%). Participants' self-reported education revealed that slightly more than half of participants (53.1%) were current graduate students, with the most commonly reported types of programs being MBA and Executive MBA. Other participants reported having a Bachelor's degree, Masters of Sciences/Arts, a Doctoral or professional degree, or being affiliated with another educational program. Of the participants who had already completed one or more degrees, the reported highest level of education was Bachelor's degree (51.7%), followed by MBA (25.9%), Masters of Science/Arts (9.5%), Doctoral/Professional Degrees (6.1%), Executive MBA (4.8%), and other educational levels (2.0%). A vast majority of participants (90.5%) reported being currently employed, with jobs in a variety of work fields including: Healthcare, Education, Finance, Manufacturing, Service Industries and

others. To get a better idea of the work experience of those who were employed, participants were also asked to report their level of supervisory experience.

Approximately one-fourth of participants (22.4%) reported that zero direct reports in their current jobs while 19.7% of participants reported being First-Line Management and Upper Middle Management respectively. The remainder of participants identified as more C-Suite-level managers including: Senior Executive (12.9%), Executive (10.9%), and Top Management (6.8%).

Method

The study was developed and administered using the online research software Qualtrics, and participants were able to access the study via a web link. In opening the link, participants were initially directed to details about the study including: the purpose, intent, and procedures of the study, confidentiality of the participants' responses, and an informed consent outlining the potential risks and benefits of participation (See Appendix A). Participants were prompted to read and electronically sign the informed consent to indicate that they were 18 years of age or older before progressing on to the first question of the survey. Those who did not meet these requirements were not allowed to progress nor participate and were directed to the end of the study.

Study Phase I

Participants began the study by completing a section of questions that evaluated their familiarity with the practice of executive coaching. These included questions such as, "How familiar are you with Executive Coaching (or Executive Coaches)?" and "Which of the following describe what you think an Executive Coach does or should do?" (See Appendix B). Regardless of participants' level of familiarity, brief excerpts

from an article featured in Harvard Business Review detailing the practice of executive coaching followed (See Appendix C). These questions and article excerpts were provided to orient those participants who may not have been as familiar with executive coaching practices and to help ensure that participants understood what the researchers meant by the term “executive coaching.” Additionally, these questions served as a form of manipulation check, notifying the researchers if participants were not actively engaged in the study.

Study Phase II

Participants were then randomly directed to one of four possible conditions. In each condition, participants were instructed to review four fictitious coach profiles (See Appendix D), answer a series of items to confirm the participant carefully examined the coach’s profile, and then evaluate the coaches with questions that followed. The questions that assessed the potential coaching client’s review and understanding of the profiles served as manipulation check items (See Appendix E) while the evaluation questions gaged participants’ actual perceptions of the coaches.

Each coach profile that potential coaching clients evaluated included the following information: a picture, name, degrees and certification, employment history and work experience, coaching philosophy, coaching style, areas of expertise, common coaching practices, preferred coaching method, and a list of some previous clients. While each profile included the aforementioned information, the assignment of these details to a particular coach’s profile was randomized. That is, each participant viewed and rated a total of four coaching profiles but was presented with these profiles in a randomized

order, based upon the condition to which he was assigned. Each condition was unique based upon which four coaching profiles were presented and in what order.

Immediately after viewing each profile, participants were presented with the opportunity to evaluate that coach by rating their level of comfortableness, happiness, and trust with each individual. Additionally, participants shared their perceptions of the coach's experiences as relevant to their own, feelings of being understood, and receptivity to feedback from each particular coach (See Appendix F). Finally, after viewing and completing this initial rating for all four profiles, participants had the chance to rank-order the coaches in terms of experience, effectiveness, and qualifications and to select one of the coaches from whom they would most like to receive coaching, if given the opportunity (See Appendix G). In this phase of the study, participants also indicated the areas on which they would want to focus if given the opportunity to work with an executive coach. These goals included: communication skills, team building skills, effective delegation, assertiveness, networking, time management, work/life balance, and leadership skills (See Appendix H).

Study Phase III

After completion of this step, participants were guided to the study's final section prior to demographics, where they completed a short series of questions which measured their feelings and attitudes towards the practice of executive coaching and executive coaches. This section included questions such as, "I believe that executive coaching would aid in my development," "I have a positive attitude towards executive coaching," and "executive coaching would help me better understand myself." Demographic questions followed. These included questions about participants' gender, age, education,

race, and career and employment status and aspirations (See Appendix I). Here, participants who identified as students also indicated if they were participating in the study for course credit. This assisted the researchers in providing the participating universities with a record of which participants completed the study in its entirety and should be granted course credit. This identifying information was not tied to participants' responses to the survey, ensuring anonymity of responses. After answering these final questions, participants were thanked for their time in completing the study. This concluded the study.

Measures

Gender

A primary focus of the present study is gender. According to the American Psychological Association, gender refers to the, "attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that a given culture associates with a person's biological sex" (American Psychological Association, 2011). The traditional concepts of gender – male and female – was a construct measured within the present study for both the fictional executive coaches and the participants themselves. The gender variable for the fictional executive coaches was communicated to participants by pictures and names of the executive coaches, clearly identifying each coach as either male or female. Participants were also asked to identify coach gender with the following question for each coach profile "Which of the following best describes this coach's gender?" The gender of participants was self-report and gathered via a demographic question on the research survey. This question stated, "Which gender do you most identify with?" and possible answers included: "male, female, or other."

Coaching Client Goals

As discussed in the review of the literature on the subject of executive coaching, some research has indicated that a client's preferred coach gender may depend on their overall goals and objectives for the coaching relationship. As such, the present study sought to evaluate whether overall coaching goals, either interpersonal or skill-focused, had an impact on a potential coaching client's coach evaluation and selection. More specifically, the study aimed to examine if there was a relationship between participants' answers to the question, "If you were given the opportunity to have an Executive Coach, on which of the following areas would you want to focus?" and their overall evaluation (ratings on effectiveness, qualification, and experience) and selection of a coach.

Executive Coach Ratings

As detailed in *Study Phase II*, participants' self-reported levels of comfortableness, happiness, and trust as well as participants' views of the coaches' experience as relevant to their own, feeling understood, and being receptive to the coaches' feedback were examined for each potential coaching client. Participants' ratings of comfortableness, happiness, and viewing the coach's experience as relevant to their own were gathered using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from Very (Happy) to Very (Unhappy). Participants' feelings of trust, being understood, and receptiveness to coach feedback were gathered also using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The researchers sought to explore whether there was a difference in these ratings from participants in a same-sex coaching dyad compare to those in a cross-gender coaching dyad.

Perceptions of Coach Effectiveness

As previously noted, the existing coaching research has generally not provided effective empirical evaluation of the practice. While the present study will not fill that gap in research entirely, it is an important first step in addressing that void by incorporating an actual coach assessment component to the study's measures. Coaching effectiveness can mean a great many different things to a variety of individuals involved in the coaching process. However, rather than leaving this construct open to the interpretation of the study's participants, coach effectiveness in the present study was evaluated with a measurement of four different constructs: perceptions of coach experience, qualification, and effectiveness as well as a selection of which individual the participant would choose if given the opportunity to work with one of the coaches.

This overall snapshot of the coaching clients' perceptions of effectiveness was gathered via the coach ranking questions detailed in the aforementioned *Study Phase II* section. These questions were presented in a rank order fashion where participants ranked the fictitious coaches from most to least experienced, effective, and qualified using a 1(Most) to 4 (Least) scale save the final two questions. On these questions, participants selected just one of the four coaches with whom they would most like to work with if given the opportunity and explained why they made this selection in an open-ended comment.

Materials

Coach Profiles

Fictitious coach profiles were created by the researchers using the profiles found on the International Coaching Federation's website as a guide. These profiles include the

following information for each fictitious coach in an effort to keep the profiles consistent and to control for possible extraneous variables in this study: name, gender, education/degree, years of professional coaching experience, a summary of employment history, preferred method of coaching (face-to-face vs. remotely), coaching philosophy, coaching style, common coaching practices, areas of expertise, and previous coaching clients. Participants were presented with a total of four coaching profiles based upon the condition to which they were randomly assigned. These four profiles included two male coach profiles and two female coach profiles. Additionally, there was one male and one female coach profile for each of the preferred coaching methods (face-to-face vs. remotely) and educational levels (Masters vs. PhD). The use of random condition assignment and randomized profile presentation order was the researchers' attempt to control for possible presentation, carryover, or contrast bias in participants' ratings.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

After participant data collection was completed, the researchers cleaned the data and removed participant data identified as inappropriate for analysis, or that which did not pass the manipulation check questions featured in each of the four coach profiles. More specifically, participants who were unable to correctly identify the gender of each of the coaches whose profiles they viewed were eliminated from further analysis. Additionally, because participants' self-identified gender was also critical to the analysis of several research questions, participants who did not disclose their gender in the demographics section of the study also had their data eliminated from further examination. It should be noted that the sample size for the statistical analyses used to examine each of the present study's research questions did vary slightly as participants who passed all manipulation check questions may not have provided data for each of the survey questions used to conduct each subsequent analysis.

After the data were properly cleaned, basic descriptive statistics on the survey's demographic questions was conducted. This allowed the researchers to summarize the sample of participants that completed the study and measured the extent to which those individuals varied. These statistics included an exploration of the average age, gender, and ethnicity of the participants. Additionally, because a large portion of the data was collected either from graduate students or working professionals, the education level and employment status of participants was also examined. These initial summary tests also served as the basis for subsequent, more extensive analyses, which aided the researchers in making inferences about the study's research questions

Research Question 1

To explore the relationship between the gender of an Executive Coach and participant ratings of said coach, first ratings of coach experience, effectiveness, and qualification were examined. More specifically, because two of the executive coaches presented in each of the conditions were always female and two of the coaches were always male, an average experience, effectiveness, and qualification score was first computed for each coach gender. This was done by averaging each participants' experience, effectiveness, and qualification score for Lisa and Jane and then doing the same for David and James. This resulted in an overall female coach experience, effectiveness, and qualification score as well as an overall male coach experience, effectiveness, and qualification score. From there, T-tests and Chi-squared tests were conducted to examine any differences between the overall scores for these two groups. T-tests suggested significant differences between the two group's scores on participants' ratings of all three traits (experience, qualification, and effectiveness) with the mean score for male coach experience being slightly higher ($M = 2.51$) than female coach experience ($M = 2.49$) whereas participants' ratings of coach effectiveness and qualification showed a higher rating of female coaches ($M = 2.58$ and $M = 2.58$) to male coaches ($M = 2.42$ and $M = 2.42$). While T-tests showed each of the areas to be rated differently based upon coach gender, follow-up Chi-squared tests revealed that only participants' ratings of coach experience were actually statistically significantly different, $X^2 = .004$.

Research Question 2

Looking at possible relationships between coach gender and participants' overall selection of preferred coach, a T-test was also conducted to examine potential differences in overall coach selection based upon coach gender. As previously stated, overall coach selection was measured by asking participants to select the one coach they would most prefer to work with if given the opportunity out of the four profiles they viewed. Because Lisa and Jane were always female coaches, participant selection of either Jane or Lisa was recoded into one variable, female coach selection. The same process was completed for participant selection of either James or David, which was recoded into male coach selection. A T-test examination of overall coach selection suggested that there was a difference between participants' selection of either a female coach versus a male coach, with more participants opting to select one of the two female coaches. A follow-up Chi-squared test supported this observation, $X^2 = .02$, with 59.59% of participants selecting a female coach compared to 40.41% of participants who selected a male coach.

Research Question 3 and Research Question 4

To explore possible connections between participant gender and the evaluation and selection of executive coaches, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to test the effects of participants' self-identified gender on ratings of coach experience, effectiveness, qualification, and of course, overall coach selection. The results of this analysis revealed that only overall coach selection significantly differed based upon participant gender. A follow-up ANOVA test supported this finding, $F(1, 114) = 12.97, p < .001$, with those participants who identified as female selecting female

coaches more often while those participants who identified as male tended to select male coaches.

Research Question 5 and Research Question 6

According to existing research on the subject of executive coaching, the focus and goals of a coaching client may have an effect on the coaching relationship and end-results of the process. An investigation of possible connections between client goals and evaluation/selection of a coach was addressed with research questions five and six.

Because participants had the option to choose more than one coaching goal they would like to focus on if they were given the opportunity to participate in an executive coaching relationship, coaching goals which naturally fell into similar areas of focus were grouped together and collapsed into fewer overall categories of potential goals. These collapsed categories were named: negotiation, delegation, workplace politics, productivity, network/team building, communication, and leadership. The negotiation category included goals centered on improving persuasiveness, becoming more assertive, and honing negotiation skills. Delegation included the goal of learning to delegate more effectively and setting work expectations. The workplace politics category encompassed goals of navigating workplace politics as well as increasing visibility in one's organization while the productivity category included meeting business goals, improving personal time management, focusing on one's work/life balance, and increasing personal productivity. Network and team building included the goals of improving team building skills and building or maintaining a personal network. The communication category included goals centered around improving communication skills and working on conflict

management, and lastly, the leadership category included solely improving one's leadership skills.

Participants who indicated an interest in any one of the areas of focus listed in the aforementioned categories was coded as having that particular coaching goal. For instance, if a participant indicated an interest in improving communication skills, he was coded as having the communication goal just as an individual who marked an interest in improving both communication and conflict management would be coded. Because all but seven participants selected at least one of the areas of focus in each of the aforementioned seven categories, most participants were coded as having all possible coaching goals. This made the variable of participant coaching goal a constant and therefore differences between participants based upon this variable were unidentifiable. That is, because there were no substantial differences found between participants' coaching goals, it was impossible for the researchers to use those goals as a means to predict or identify differences in participants' ratings of coach effectiveness, qualification, experience, or coach selection, the dependent variables in research questions five and six.

Research Question 7 and Research Question 8

Existing research on executive coaching also hinted that clients may have different responses to a coach or coaching interaction if the parties involved are the same gender compared to those coaching dyads who do not share a gender. To investigate possible connections here, first the researchers chose different participant reactions to examine than those which were looked at in the previous research questions. The responses which were measured included: participant comfort, happiness, and trust of an

executive coach as well as their ratings of the executive coach's experience as relevant to their own, feeling understood by the coach, and being receptive to feedback from the executive coach. Looking at these responses allowed the researchers to examine additional aspects of the coaching relationship not explored in previous analyses. First, participant responses for each of the six aforementioned questions were collapsed for the Lisa and Jane and then David and James, similarly to what was done in the analyses for research questions one and two. This resulted in an overall comfortableness, happiness, trust, experience as relevant, receptivity to feedback, and feeling understood score for female coaches and then the male coaches. Next a Repeated Measures ANOVA was conducted in which those newly computed scores was evaluated by participant gender. The results of this analysis revealed significant differences in ratings of trust of female coaches and male coaches, $F(1,145) = 6.32, p = .013$, as well as ratings of happiness, $F(1,145) = 8.35, p = .004$, of female and male coaches by female and male participants. More specifically, female participants were more likely to rate female coaches more favorably in terms of both trust and happiness with them as their coach while male participants tended to rate female coaches and male coaches similarly in terms of trust but expressed greater happiness with male coaches.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

General Discussion

As previously mentioned, there is a limited amount of existing empirical research on the subject of executive coaching in general, with a particular lack of examination of how coach and client gender may affect the coaching relationship, process, or outcomes. The results of this study suggest that while there may be slight differences in a client's perception of a coach, specifically judgment of said coach's experience, qualification, and overall effectiveness, based upon that coach's gender, only statistically significant differences were found in terms of perceived experience and overall coach selection. As research question one revealed only partially significant findings, it would seem that for the most part, perceptions of coaching professionals do not vary greatly based upon the gender of those individuals; however, given that research question two highlighted significant differences, it is likely that even with similar perceptions of their qualifications and background, coaches are still selected at different rates based upon their gender.

Similarly, findings for research questions three and four suggest that perceptions of a coach's qualifications, experience, and effectiveness do not differ very much based upon gender, this time involving the client's gender. However, again, statistically significant differences found in the overall selection of a coach between the two genders, suggested that client gender does influence one's coach selection process.

Due to a limitation in the variance of participants' ratings of coaching goals, few inferences can be drawn about how a client's focus, plan, or desired results may influence

their perception of the coaching relationship or how their own role in the partnership may be shaped by those objectives. However, it is interesting to note that nearly all potential coaching clients expressed interest in pursuing all coaching goals mentioned in the study should executive coaching ever become a reality for them. This may suggest that coaching clients sometimes have a difficult time identifying their individual areas for improvement and thus may wish to have the support of a coach to pinpoint said areas. Another possible explanation is that coaching clients recognize and appreciate the wide variety of business areas that can be improved by the focused attention of a coaching interaction, leading them to desire an improvement in a multitude of these areas.

Findings for research questions seven and eight suggest that clients may have a more favorable opinion of a coaching relationship when the dyad is matched on gender. That is, when a coaching dyad consists of two females or two males in the client/coach roles, participants tended to rate their coach more favorably in terms of both trust and happiness. This information could be very helpful in the decision matching process, for both clients and coaches. It will likely be very important to both parties that the client feel happiness towards and trust for their coach. As such, it may be important to consider matching coaches and clients based upon gender when possible to ensure optimum trust and happiness with the relationship.

Limitations and Future Research

One potential limitation of the present study is that the perspective of participants may have varied greatly between those who were executives at the time of participation and those who were not, including students. Although data was only used for those participants which met the study's specified population criteria, these varying levels of

exposure to actual executives and/or executive coaching may have impacted the perceptions and subsequently the self-reported data of some participants.

Although the present study took a bold first step in closing the empirical research gap that exists in the existing coaching literature, another possible limitation may have been that this study did not examine the interactions of actual coaching professionals and their clients. Therefore, the perceptions of the fictitious coaches in this study may not be a true representation of how actual coaching clients may perceive, rate, and select their coaches. Additionally, this study did not directly take into account that in many circumstances, individuals who have themselves requested or have been asked to participate in executive coaching are not given the opportunity to select their own coach from a lineup but rather are assigned a coach, usually by their supervisor or organization.

A third limitation may have been the amount of information presented in the current study. As a part of a much larger research project, the survey used to collect data for the present study included a vast amount of information on the subject of executive coaching and a multitude of survey questions which aimed to collect participant data on more variables than just gender. The breadth of information that participants had to work through in order to complete the survey resulted in a significant average survey completion time and subsequently a somewhat lower completion rate than the researchers had originally hoped for.

As previously mentioned, the present study is part of a larger, potentially long-term examination of the practice of executive coaching. It would be interesting to take an even more in-depth look at gender's impact on this practice through future research. For instance, examining how gender identity influences the coaching relationship may take

the investigation done in the present study one step further. Further examination of actual coaching dyads who are matched or not matched based upon gender would also be an interesting next step. More specifically, because both male and female participants expressed similar ratings for female coaches in terms of trusting them, it would be interesting to see if females are trusted more than males across the board or if this is something unique to a coach/client relationship. Additionally, looking more granularly at the coaching goals of clients to establish a greater variance between clients might also lead to enhanced findings regarding a client's attitude towards coaching and a great ability to predict his perceptions of the process. Lastly, examining how actual business outcomes, not just client perceptions, are changed by the coaching process could likely provide a great deal of additional insight on the best practices of executive coaching in future study.

Conclusion

The present study is an important step towards investigating the practice of executive coaching through an empirical lens. The findings of the current study have provided valuable knowledge which those involved in coaching relationships may find helpful and insightful. More specifically, the study provides some evidence that a coach's gender as well as the gender of the coaching client may not have as large an impact on a client's perception of the coach's effectiveness than originally proposed. However, this study has also provided evidence that there may, in fact, be a relationship between a client's overall coach selection and the gender of both the coach and the client.

While it was impossible to make inferences based upon the coaching goals of this study's participants, existing literature suggests that this variable may have a profound

influence on a client's coach evaluation and selection. Thus, future research should aim to expand upon this study's exploration of those objectives and the impact they may have on one's coaching experience.

Additionally, it appears that there is some truth to the belief that coaching clients view their coach, and perhaps the entire coaching process, more favorably when both parties share the same gender. Specifically, two critical components of an open, productive relationship, trust and happiness, tended to be rated more positively when coaching clients were matched with a coach of the same gender. Future research should aim to examine in greater detail the extent to which gender matching influences a client's satisfaction with the relationship as well as the overall success of the coaching process.

Overall, while this study did not produce definitive results concerning all the ways in which executive coaching, its participants, and its outcomes may be influenced by the construct of gender, it did help to provide some valuable insight on a relatively underdeveloped subject and to pave the way for future research on this ever-growing business practice.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: COACHING STUDY INTRO

Project Title:

Which executive coach could best serve you?

Purpose of Project:

To gain a better understanding of the factors that lead to selecting an executive coach.

Procedures:

Participants will be asked to answer questions about themselves, their, beliefs, their values, and review four resumes to determine the best executive coach. The study will take approximately 30-45 minutes.

Risks/Benefits:

There are no expected risks to participants. While it is unlikely, it is possible that some participants may find that some questions in the study could illicit feelings of discomfort. Participants' involvement will help researchers gain a better understanding of the factors that lead to more accurate selection of executive coaches.

Confidentiality:

Every attempt will be made to see that your study results are kept confidential. A copy of the records from this study will be securely stored in the Department of Psychology for at least three (3) years after the end of this research. The results of this study may be published and/or presented at meetings without naming you as a subject. Although your rights and privacy will be maintained, the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, the MTSU IRB, and personnel particular to this research (Dr. Mark Frame) have access to the study records. Your responses, informed consent document, and records will be kept completely confidential according to current legal requirements. They will not be revealed unless required by law, or as noted above.

Principal Investigator / Contact Information:

If you should have any questions or concerns about this research study, please feel free to contact Mark Frame, Ph.D. at Mark.Frame@mtsu.edu or at (615) 898-2565. Participating in this project is voluntary, and refusal to participate or withdrawing from participation at any time during the project will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled. All efforts, within reason, will be made to keep the personal information in your research record private but total privacy cannot be promised, for example, your information may be shared with the Middle Tennessee State University Institutional Review Board. In the event of questions or difficulties of any kind during or following participation, the subject may contact the Principal Investigator as indicated above. For additional information about giving consent or your rights as a participant in this study, please feel free to contact the MTSU Office of Compliance at (615) 494-8918.

Consent

I have read the above information and my questions have been answered satisfactorily by project staff. I believe I understand the purpose, benefits, and risks of the study and give my informed and free consent to be a participant.

APPENDIX B: FAMILIARITY WITH COACHING ITEMS

1. How familiar are you with Executive Coaching (or Executive Coaches)?
 - I have an Executive Coach
 - I am very familiar with Executive Coaching and Executive Coaches
 - I know someone who has benefited from Executive Coaching
 - I have heard of Executive Coaching but I'm not sure what an Executive Coach does
 - I am not at all familiar with Executive Coaching and Executive Coaches

2. Which of the following describes what you think an Executive Coach does?
Choose all that apply.
 - Diagnose and treat dysfunctional people
 - Motivate people in large sessions or events
 - Keep poor performers from losing their job
 - Tell a business person what to do in a given situation
 - Tell a person how to fix their behavioral problems
 - Be an adviser on business issues and problems
 - Help people discover their own path to success
 - Focus on helping people change ineffective behavior
 - Other (please specify) _____

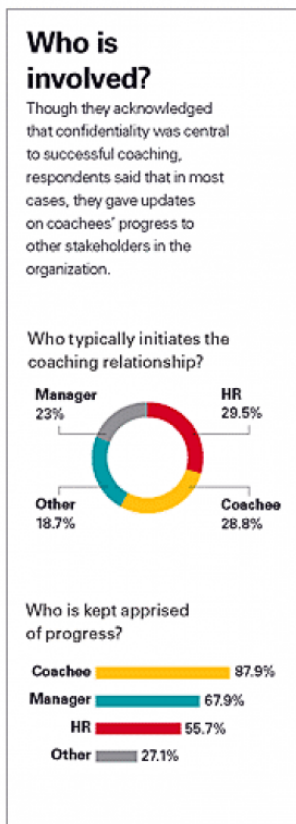
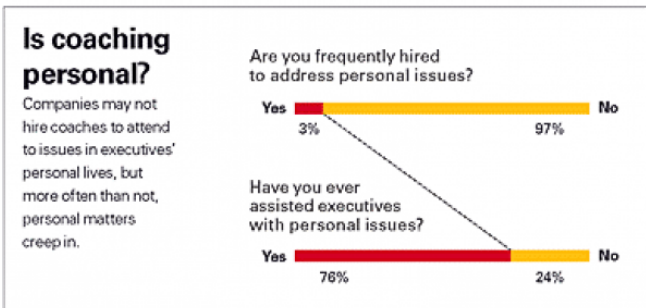
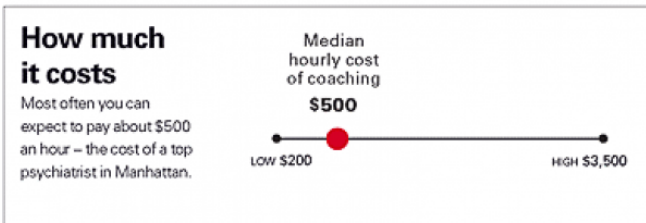
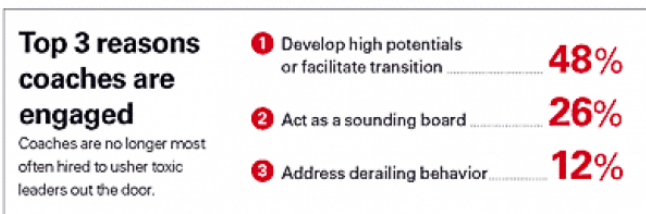
3. Which of the following describes what you think an Executive Coach *should* do?
Choose all that apply.
 - Diagnose and treat dysfunctional people
 - Motivate people in large sessions or events
 - Keep poor performers from losing their job
 - Tell a business person what to do in a given situation
 - Tell a person how to fix their behavioral problems
 - Be an adviser on business issues and problems
 - Help people discover their own path to success
 - Focus on helping people change ineffective behavior
 - Other (please specify) _____

APPENDIX C: HBR EXECUTIVE COACHING INFORMATION

Today’s business leaders often have advisers called Executive Coaches.

To understand what an Executive Coach does, Harvard Business Review (Coutu & Kauffman, 2009) conducted a survey of 140 leading coaches. They found that most coaching is about developing the capabilities of high-potential performers. As a result there is ambiguity around how coaches define the scope of coaching relationships, how they measure and report on progress, and the credentials a coach should have in order to be considered qualified.

Did you know...

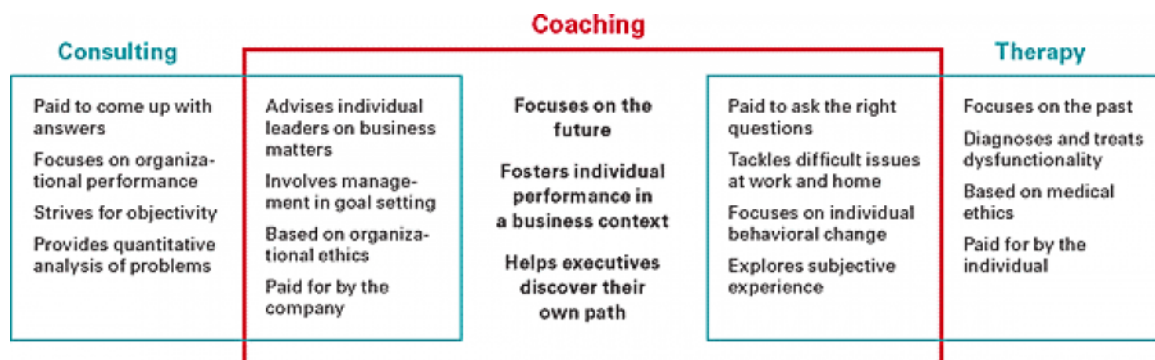


As the business environment becomes more complex, business leaders will increasingly turn to coaches for help in understanding how to act. Twenty years ago, coaching was mainly directed at talented but abrasive executives who were likely to be fired if something didn't change.

Today, coaching is a popular and effective method for ensuring top performance from an organization's most critical talent.

Almost half the coaches surveyed in this study reported that they are hired primarily to work with executives on the positive side of coaching—developing high-potential talent and facilitating a transition in or up. Another 26% said that they are most often called in to act as a sounding board on organizational dynamics or strategic matters. Relatively few coaches said that organizations most often hire them to address a derailing behavior.

While it can be difficult to draw explicit links between coaching intervention and an executive's performance, it is certainly not difficult to obtain basic information about improvements in that executive's managerial behaviors. Coaching is a time-intensive and expensive process, and organizations that hire coaches should insist on getting regular and formal progress reviews, even if they are only qualitative.



APPENDIX D: EXAMPLE COACHING PROFILE

David Reynolds

Ph.D., Villanova University
 Executive MBA, Washington University
 15+ years of coaching experience

**Current Employment:**

Partner at Talent Management Services

Previous Experience (Abbreviated):

August 2010-December 2014: Certified Management Consultant at OMRI
 May 2003-August 2010: HR Talent Management Supervisor at Build It, Inc.
 February 2000-April 2003: External Consultant at Oracle

Coaching Summary or Philosophy:

"I see coaching as a relationship. A relationship between the coach the person being coached. Good coaches know how to balance giving direct feedback and input with asking questions and seeking clarity of understanding. I believe that achieving this balance is one of my core strengths."

Coaching Style:

I evaluate the effectiveness of my coaching based upon the results obtained by my clients. Sometimes those results are relational, other times they are more planning and operational in nature. I aim to find the right balance of these relationship and execution improvements for each of my clients.

Areas of Expertise:

- Talent management
- Strategic planning
- Conflict resolution
- 360-degree feedback
- Goal setting
- Coaching

Common Coaching Practices:

- Psychology of change training
- Conflict resolution training
- Work/life balance strategies
- Work burnout interventions
- Communication workshops

Preferred Coaching Method:

Remotely (Over the Phone)

Dr. Reynolds has successfully worked with clients at the following organizations:

- Goodwill
- Nestle
- Richardson Technology Inc.
- Hickman University

APPENDIX E: COACH PROFILE MANIPULATION CHECK ITEMS

1. This coach had one or more graduate degrees.
True False

2. Which of the following best describes this coaches gender?
Man Woman

3. This coach had one or more years of hands-on coaching experience.
True False

4. What was this coach's preferred method of communication?
Face to Face
Remotely (Over the Phone)
Other

5. Select one of this coach's commonly used coaching practices.

<input type="radio"/> Coaching assessment centers	<input type="radio"/> On the job training
<input type="radio"/> Communication workshops	<input type="radio"/> Psychology of change training
<input type="radio"/> Conflict resolution training	<input type="radio"/> Role-playing exercises
<input type="radio"/> Cultural awareness workshops	<input type="radio"/> Strategic planning workshops
<input type="radio"/> Delegation strategies	<input type="radio"/> Time management and planning workshops
<input type="radio"/> Individual and team goal setting	<input type="radio"/> Training needs analyses
<input type="radio"/> Leaderless group exercises	<input type="radio"/> Work burnout interventions
<input type="radio"/> Leadership modeling	<input type="radio"/> Work/life balance strategies

- | |
|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Executive and leadership coaching assessment centers |
|--|

6. Name one of this coach's areas of expertise.

<input type="radio"/> 360-degree feedback	<input type="radio"/> Performance management
<input type="radio"/> Change management	<input type="radio"/> Project management
<input type="radio"/> Coaching	<input type="radio"/> Rebranding
<input type="radio"/> Conflict resolution	<input type="radio"/> Recruiting
<input type="radio"/> Emotional intelligence	<input type="radio"/> Strategic planning
<input type="radio"/> Employee branding	<input type="radio"/> Talent management
<input type="radio"/> Goal setting	<input type="radio"/> Training
<input type="radio"/> HR consulting	

7. Where does this coach currently work?
Talent Management Services
NNIT
Leadership Foundation, Inc.
Growth Consulting, Inc.

APPENDIX F: COACH EVALUATION ITEMS

Experience

1. Please select the degree to which you consider the individual's work experience relevant to their role as a professional coach.

Very irrelevant	Irrelevant	Slightly irrelevant
Neutral		
Slightly relevant	Relevant	Very relevant

2. Please select the degree to which the coach's experiences are relevant to your experiences.

Very irrelevant	Irrelevant	Slightly irrelevant
Neutral		
Slightly relevant	Relevant	Very relevant

Effectiveness

1. I am confident in this individual's ability to help me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
Agree	Strongly Agree	

2. I believe the way that this individual would work on my development would be correct.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
Agree	Strongly Agree	

Qualifications

1. Please select the degree to which you would consider this individual to be a qualified coach.

Very unqualified	Unqualified	Slightly unqualified
Neutral		
Slightly qualified	Qualified	Very Qualified

2. Please select the individuals to whom you would consider this coach qualified to give professional coaching. (More than one can be selected.)

- Entry-level employee
- Manager/Director
- Mid-level executive
- Vice-President or a company
- CEO of a company

APPENDIX G: COACH RANKING ITEMS

1. Of the four coaches that you evaluated, whom do you consider to be the most experienced coach? Rank Order them from most experienced (1) to least experienced (4).
 - _____ Lisa Gregory
 - _____ David Reynolds
 - _____ Jane Thompson
 - _____ James Knott

2. Of the four coaches that you evaluated, whom do you consider to be the most effective coach? Rank Order them from most effective (1) to least effective (4).
 - _____ Lisa Gregory
 - _____ David Reynolds
 - _____ Jane Thompson
 - _____ James Knott

3. Of the four coaches that you evaluated, whom do you consider to be the most qualified coach? Rank Order them from most qualified (1) to least qualified (4).
 - _____ Lisa Gregory
 - _____ David Reynolds
 - _____ Jane Thompson
 - _____ James Knott

4. Of the four coaches that you evaluated, which one would you select if you were given the opportunity to have one of them as your Coach? (Choose ONLY one)
 - Lisa Gregory
 - David Reynolds
 - Jane Thompson
 - James Knott

APPENDIX H: CLIENT GOAL QUESTION

Q338 if you were given the opportunity to have an Executive Coach (or if you currently work with an Executive Coach), on which of the following areas would you want focus? (Choose ALL that apply)

	Yes (1)	No (2)
Communication Skills (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ability to Delegate Effectively (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conflict Management Skills (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Team Building Skills (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving Persuasiveness (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assertiveness (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing Visibility in the Organization (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Building/Maintaining Networks (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Setting Expectations (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Navigating Organizational Politics (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meeting Business Goals (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time Management (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work-Life Balance (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership Skills (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal Productivity (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Negotiation Skills (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

APPENDIX I: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

1. In what year were you born?

2. Which of the following do you identify with most?
Man Woman
3. What is your race?
White
Black
Hispanic
Asian/ Pacific-islander
Native American
Other _____
4. What is your cumulative GPA:
Below 2.0
2.0 and 2.49
2.5 and 2.99
3.00 and 3.49
3.5 to 3.99
4.00
5. What is the highest level of education your parents (mother and father) have completed:
Less than High School/ GED
High School/GED
Associates Degree
Bachelors Degree
Masters Degree
Doctoral/Professional Degree (PhD, MD, JD)
I don't know
6. Highest level of education YOU have completed:
High School/GED
Associates Degree
Bachelors Degree
Masters Degree
Doctoral/Professional Degree (PhD, MD, JD)
7. Are you taking this survey in order to earn credit for a course in which you are currently enrolled? (YES/NO)

APPENDIX J: IRB APPROVAL LETTER

**IRB
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**

Office of Research Compliance,
010A Sam Ingram Building,
2269 Middle Tennessee Blvd
Murfreesboro, TN 37129

**EXEMPT APPROVAL NOTICE**

9/25/2015

Investigator(s): Grant Batchelor; Kallie Revels; Colbe Wilson
 Department: Psychology
 Investigator(s) Email: gb2t@mtmail.mtsu.edu; ksr3p@mtmail.mtsu.edu; csw4k@mtmail.mtsu.edu
 Protocol Title: "Which Executive Coach could best serve you? "
 Protocol ID: 16-1061

Dear Investigator(s),

The MTSU Institutional Review Board, or a representative of the IRB, has reviewed the research proposal identified above and this study has been designated to be EXEMPT.. The exemption is pursuant to 45 CFR 46.101(b) **(2) Educational Tests, Surveys, Interviews, or Observations**

The following changes to this protocol must be reported prior to implementation:

- Addition of new subject population or exclusion of currently approved demographics
- Addition/removal of investigators
- Addition of new procedures
- Other changes that may make this study to be no longer be considered exempt

The following changes do not have to be reported:

- Editorial/administrative revisions to the consent of other study documents
- Changes to the number of subjects from the original proposal

All research materials must be retained by the PI or the faculty advisor (if the PI is a student) for at least three (3) years after study completion. Subsequently, the researcher may destroy the data in a manner that maintains confidentiality and anonymity. IRB reserves the right to modify, change or cancel the terms of this letter without prior notice. Be advised that IRB also reserves the right to inspect or audit your records if needed.

Sincerely,

Institutional Review Board
Middle Tennessee State University

NOTE: All necessary forms can be obtained from www.mtsu.edu/irb.