

Running Head: EXECUTIVE COACHING IN PRACTICE

Executive Coaching in Practice: What Determines Helpfulness for Clients of Coaching?

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Abstract

Executive coaching is gaining in popularity, both as part of personal and organisational development programmes and as a tailored form of individual consulting. This study examined how various aspects of the executive coaching intervention make a difference to the clients themselves. The study involved a web-based questionnaire (163 closed and 3 open questions) completed by 71 executive coaching clients shortly after the beginning of their coaching contract and by 31 of those again approximately six months later. The research found that clients' appreciation of coaching was high with a level of over-all helpfulness of 7.5 on a scale from 1 to 10 (with 10 indicating 'very helpful'). In response to the research question "What determines helpfulness for clients?" a picture emerged of a client valuing the relationship with and the qualities of the coach, making little distinction between specific interventions of that same coach. The findings support a *relational* perspective on executive coaching (DeYoung, 2003), where it is the coaching relationship as perceived by the client that is assumed to be the main predictor of helpfulness.

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The Executive Coaching Intervention

In executive coaching, leaders and managers submit issues from their practice to conversation, the aim of which is to explore and bring those issues forward with the help of an executive coach. The promise of executive coaching is not so much to offer instant, ready-made solutions, but rather to foster learning and change. This learning and change can be achieved by employing a range of interventions, such as listening, summarising, paraphrasing, providing feedback, training of skills, interpreting and discovering links with other themes and with the present coaching interaction itself.

This study sets out to examine which are the aspects of the executive coaching intervention that participants find most helpful in bringing their issues forward. In particular:

- What qualities in their coach?
- Which coaching behaviours demonstrated by their coach?
- Under which conditions are they most helped, i.e. in terms of their own personality and in terms of their objectives with the coaching?

We endeavour to answer these questions with regard to the specific aims that the client had in setting out on the coaching experience, and with regard to the personal learning style (Kolb, 1984) of the client. The questions are explored by means of a study that is largely quantitative but also contains some qualitative questions. Generally (except for three specific instances), the researchers did not know any of the clients, nor were they involved in their coaching contracts.

In this paper we do not aim to demonstrate effectiveness or outcome of the executive coaching intervention objectively: we look at coaching only through the subjective lens of the client of the intervention. Establishing effectiveness objectively would require at least more objective (third-party) measurements and the use of a control group. However, we do believe that indications of over-all effectiveness of executive coaching are gaining in strength (see the literature review below) and also that the excellent and convincing demonstrations in psychotherapy are likely to be true for coaching as well, because of the large effects found (Wampold, 2001) and the basic similarities between the two professions.

Earlier Research into the Learning Effects of Executive Coaching

Although there are many articles describing experiences with and evaluations of coaching interventions, there is as yet little quantitative research into the effectiveness or outcome of coaching. For a detailed summary of the literature with a total of seven empirical research articles, see Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson (2001) and, for a more recent review of ten outcome-research articles, see Feldman & Lankau (2005).

Most empirical research into executive coaching is concerned, like ours, with the value of coaching from the perspective of the client. Usually, the research takes the form of an extensive evaluation among the clients. Occasionally, clients are asked to estimate how much their coaching has contributed to the bottom line of their organisation in financial terms. For example, McGovern, Lindemann, Vergara, Murphy, Barker & Warrenfeltz (2001) evaluated a group of 100 managers in 67 organisations who were coached for between 6 and 12 months. They found that the vast majority of participants were very satisfied with the coaching: their estimate was that the coaching returned, on average, 5.7 times the original

investment. We know of only five studies that explore the effectiveness of coaching by looking at effects other than client satisfaction. These we will describe in more detail here.

Two studies that failed to employ a control group are those of Olivero, Bane & Kopelman (1997), and of Thach (2002). Olivero et al (1997) studied 31 managers from the healthcare sector and Thach (2002) examined 281 managers working for a telecoms multinational. In the case of Olivero et al. (1997) the managers took part in a 3 day training course, followed by 8 weeks of coaching. They found that both the training and the coaching increased productivity considerably, with the bulk of the increase attributable to the coaching (average 22% increase due to training and 88% due to training and coaching). In the case of Thach (2002) the managers underwent a 360° feedback process before and after their coaching. They found an average increase in 'leadership effectiveness' in the eyes of others of 55-60% and in their own eyes of 52-56%, i.e. a result comparable to that of Olivero et al. (1997). Thach (2002) also realised that part of the large effect obtained may be due to the 360° feedback process itself (which would then apply to Olivero et al., 1997, as well). Part of this large improvement, therefore, may be due to a so-called *Hawthorne effect* (Baritz, 1960): a consequence of having the research apparatus and not so much the coaching intervention.

Ragins, Cotton & Miller (2000) studied a group of 1162 professionals from many organisations and looked at the effect of formal or informal mentoring relationships on a range of work and career attitudes. Forty-four percent of the respondents had an informal mentor, 9% a formal mentor as part of a mentoring programme and 47% no mentor (the control group). Their results show that the crucial factor in effectiveness is the mentee's satisfaction with the mentoring *relationship*. In the absence of that satisfaction, there were no demonstrable differences between professionals who were mentored and those who were not. If the satisfaction is present, however, the professionals clearly demonstrate more positive attitudes towards themselves (self-confidence), their work, promotion prospects, organisation

and career, with no significant differences between formal and informal mentoring¹. Evers, Brouwers & Tomic (2006) measured self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectancies, each on three dimensions. Their study compared a pre-intervention and post-intervention measurement and also involved a control group. Whilst their numbers are not very large (30 managers in both the experimental and the control group) they do find some objective evidence for a positive outcome of the coaching intervention. A significant ($p < 0.05$) increment for the coached group over the control group was demonstrated for one of the three dimensions in both self-efficacy beliefs (“setting one’s own goals”) and outcome expectancies (“acting in a balanced way“).

One of the most thorough studies into the effects of executive coaching was undertaken by Smither, London, Flautt, Vargas & Kucine (2003). They worked with a control group and based their conclusions on a more objective criterion than evaluations by the clients, namely evaluations by independent researchers and by the clients’ superiors, colleagues and staff (360° feedback). The research was conducted among 1202 senior managers of the same multinational organisation and involved 360° feedback results from two consecutive years. The researchers found that managers who work with an executive coach are significantly more likely than other managers to:

- set specific goals;
- solicit ideas for improvements from their superiors;
- obtain higher ratings from direct-reports and superiors.

In the small but growing body of outcome-research literature on coaching we have found only one article exploring the question of *what sort* of coaching is effective, in other words,

¹ As the authors themselves concede, they cannot rule out the possibility in this study that the professionals with a more positive mentoring relationship are more satisfied in general, and so more satisfied with themselves, their organisation and their career. As regards the differences between formal and informal mentoring programmes (as between assigned and chosen mentor relationships), it is interesting that Ragins et al. (2001) can demonstrate slightly negative effects for formal mentoring programmes – where the mentees are not able to choose their mentor – when (1) the mentor works in the same department as the mentee and (2) female mentees are assigned to a male mentor.

which coaching models, qualities of coaches or coaching behaviours make a difference to clients? Scoular & Linley (2006) have looked at both:

1. How a 'goal-setting' intervention at the beginning of the conversation impacts perceived helpfulness;
2. Personality (dis-)similarities between coach and client and their impact on perceived effectiveness.

In 117 one-off 30 minute coaching conversations, (random) conditions with and without goal setting were compared and both coach and client completed two personality questionnaires (MBTI and NEO). Outcome measurements at 2 and 8 weeks after the session showed:

1. No difference between 'goal-setting' and 'no goal-setting';
2. That when the coach and client differed more on the personality instruments the outcome scores were significantly higher.

Ours is a similar paradigm to Scoular & Linley (2006), but measuring a larger range of aspects of the executive coaching intervention. Judging from the plethora of training programmes focusing on specific coaching techniques (e.g. regarding step-methods such as the GROW method, solution-focused coaching, or systemic coaching), it is thought by many (see, e.g., Stober & Grant, 2006) that *specific behaviours* make all the difference in executive coaching. In this study we wanted to explore the differences in technique that clients report and look particularly at which techniques or behaviours they find more or less helpful during coaching.

From the previous research literature it can be seen that over-all helpfulness from the perspective of the client of coaching has been sufficiently established. We, therefore, focus on *what particular aspects of coaching* make up this general impression of helpfulness. We examine two main areas that have been suggested in the literature (see, e.g. De Haan &

Burger, 2005): behaviours of the coach and learning styles of the client. Essentially the questions are “what does the coach *do* to make the experience (more) helpful?” and “How does the client *receive* or *work with* the coaching to make the experience (more) helpful?” In order to explore the matter of specific helpfulness of coaching behaviours, we chose ‘Helpfulness’ as our main independent variable, and as many different coaching behaviours as could be found in the literature to be our main dependent variables. Our central question was the following: What aspects of coaches’ behaviours and clients’ learning styles determine the helpfulness of executive coaching for the client?

Method

Participants

The clients of individual executive coaching who participated in this study were selected from four different sources: clients of Ashridge Consulting’s executive coaches (9%), clients of the Ashridge Centre for Leadership’s executive coaches (3%), clients of our colleagues at i-coachacademy (18%), and participants in the Ashridge Leadership Process who as part of that process receive at least four sessions of executive coaching by an Ashridge accredited coach (70%). It can safely be assumed that all these coaches had at least 8 years of experience. At least 82% were accredited through a very rigorous process where they have to submit their practice through tape recording, case studies and live coaching to the scrutiny of experienced colleagues (De Haan, 2008). Many of these would have situated themselves within a broadly humanistic, integrative tradition, and many of the coaches on the Ashridge Leadership Process were explicitly solution-focused in their approach. The average length of the coaching sessions was not measured by us, but we would estimate about 2 hours based on ‘common practice’ at the Ashridge Business School. From these four sources we invited 257

clients to participate and complete our web-based questionnaires. Seventy-one individuals responded to the first questionnaire (Time 1); a response rate of 28%. All of these respondents received an invitation to complete a second questionnaire. Thirty-one clients replied to this invitation; a response rate of 43% for Time 2. The profiles of the groups of participants who completed the two questionnaires can be seen in Table 1.

Individuals were given a small incentive to participate in the research. They were awarded a £10 reduction on coaching/leadership books in the Ashridge bookshop if they completed a questionnaire at both Time 1 and Time 2.

> INSERT TABLE 1 HERE <

Questionnaires

We constructed a web-based questionnaire that could be completed in less than 30 minutes. This questionnaire was sent to participants early in the coaching contract (Time 1), after at least one coaching conversation, and in most cases after two conversations. It was resent in a shorter form (without the questions around learning preferences) after approximately 6 months (a minimum of 3 months, maximum of 9 months and a median of 6.9 months), which was for most participants after the completion of their coaching contract. This follow-up questionnaire was, therefore, at Time 2.

The questionnaire contained 163 closed items in total and three open questions, clustered as follows:

- Demographic information: 4 items;
- Information about the coaching contract: 7 items;
- The Coaching Behaviours Questionnaire: 70 items, that were scored twice, once for 'Frequency' and once for 'Impact';

- The Learning Style Inventory (Kolb, 1984): 12 items;
- Open questions: 3 items.

Information about the Coaching Contract: Participants were asked to consider the coaching sessions they had completed and questions examined:

1. Participation in the coaching:
 - Who took the initiative to participate?
2. Executive coaching experience:
 - How many coaching sessions have you received to date from your coach? Possible responses were 1, 2, 3, 4, 5-10 or more than 10.
 - What is the expected length of your coaching (total number of sessions)? Possible responses were less than 4, 4, 5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20 or more than 20.
3. Aim of the coaching:
 - The participant was requested to select one or two of the following:
 - I would like to learn something new;
 - I would like to strengthen myself, become more resilient;
 - I would like to change my behaviour or approach;
 - I would like to stop doing certain things;
 - I would like to reflect on my practice;
 - Other (max. 5 words).
4. The helpfulness of the coaching:
 - Measured on a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is extremely unhelpful and 10 is extremely helpful.
5. Evaluation of appreciated qualities of the coach.
 - The client was presented with a list of 20 qualities and requested to select:
 - a. Three qualities that you really appreciate in your coach, and

- b. Three qualities that you have perceived but are less relevant for the coaching.

The precise lists of possible aims of the coaching assignment and possible qualities of coaches, were drawn up after a brainstorm of three executive coaches, and were checked by a focus group of other colleagues. For the aims we allowed another one to be inserted by the participant, but this option was rarely taken up so the list can be assumed to be relatively exhaustive. The list of coach qualities also seems to be sufficiently broad, judging from participants' responses.

The Coaching Behaviours Questionnaire: The Coaching Behaviours Questionnaire was originally devised by Richard Philips (and published as Appendix E in De Haan & Burger, 2004) to measure the six categories of coaching intervention proposed by Heron (1975). In our book on executive coaching (De Haan & Burger, 2005), we have shown that Heron's (1975) model covers a full range of behaviours which are used in very distinct approaches to executive coaching. The Coaching Behaviours Questionnaire yields six independent behavioural descriptions; six central coaching styles:

- *Directing* or offering suggestions, advice and recommendations;
- *Informing* or giving information, knowledge and summaries;
- *Challenging* or giving feedback to increase (self-)awareness and exploring assumptions;
- *Discovering* or deepening insight by facilitating self-exploration;
- *Supporting* or raising self-confidence and self-esteem;
- *Releasing* or exploring emotions that are blocking progress.

The Coaching Behaviours Questionnaire requires participants to respond to each item using a 5-point Likert scale with responses ranging from 'Not at all' to 'Very high'. The Cronbach Alphas for the Coaching Behaviours Questionnaire have been computed for a group

of 292 managers (see Curd, 2006) and were 0.86 (directing); 0.83 (informing); 0.88 (challenging); 0.93 (releasing); 0.89 (discovering) and 0.86 (supporting).

The Learning Styles Inventory (Kolb, 1984): The Learning Style Inventory was originally devised by David Kolb (1984). Kolb (1984) demonstrated that his model covers a wide range of approaches to and experiences of learning. The Learning Style Inventory yields two independent dimensions:

- An individual's preference of abstractness over concreteness ('AC-CE');
- An individual's preference of action over reflection ('AE-RO').

The Learning Style Inventory is ipsative in nature: participants are requested to rank four statements from 'Most like you' to 'Least like you' for every item.

Cronbach Alphas for the Learning Style Inventory have been computed for a group of 5023 on-line users (see Kolb & Kolb, 2006) and were 0.82 (AC – CE) and 0.82 (AE – RO).

Additional Items: We added ten other Coaching behaviour items which, whilst not linked to the Heron (1975) model are deemed relevant in various specific approaches to executive coaching (see Table 3 for the 10 items). Individuals were required to respond to these items using the same 5-point Likert scale utilised by the Coaching Behaviours Questionnaire.

Open-Ended Questions: At the end of completing the full questionnaire participants were asked three additional open-ended questions that were intended to be as open as possible to capture any thoughts participants might have on outcomes and helpfulness:

1. Would you like to mention any contributions from your coach that made the coaching particularly helpful to you?
2. Could you name three specific outcomes that you ascribe to the coaching?
3. Is there anything you would like to add regarding your experience with coaching?

Seventy-five percent of the participants answered at least one of these questions.

Procedure

Due to the exclusive, confidential and personal nature of any coaching relationship, it was important for us to approach the participants carefully and always to involve their executive coaches in the approach. For this reason we informed the network of Ashridge executive coaches through email and personal conversations about the nature of this research, and made it as easy as possible for them to 'submit' their clients to us: we asked them to provide only the email addresses of their clients. Via e-mail we invited the client to our web-based questionnaire, outlining the confidential nature of the research and the fact that we would only report general patterns and never specific facts from their particular coaching relationship. We also invited some of our wider networks of coaches to approach their clients in the same way, particularly through the i-coachacademy and the Centre for Excellence and Leadership. In the case of the development programme Ashridge Leadership Process, we obtained the programme director's permission to send an email out to all participants.

As we could not approach a great many clients directly and were, therefore, dependent on other parties to open up their confidential coaching relationships to our research, the data collection was spread out over a relatively long period (December 2004 – April 2007).

Because of constraints in the set-up of this research, we are only inquiring into the coaching contract through the clients' perspectives. We realise that this will only tell part of the story, because coaching is essentially an *organisational* intervention. Because of the constraints of the chosen methodology, we can only analyse the impact of executive coaching in terms of *individual* outcome and we cannot explore any organisational outcomes. Within the same constraints, it is not possible to work with a control group of executives not engaged in coaching, as all our questions on the coaching experience would be pointless for them. However, we believe that ours is nevertheless a good starting point for finding out about the

helpfulness of *specific* coaching interventions, as clients are the first ones to undergo and appreciate them.

In the analysis of our data, we look primarily at correlations or inferential (predictive) test results, to avoid perceptual biases or socially desirable answers to affect our conclusions. We believe that the extent of the (subjective) raw scores such as on (perceived) Helpfulness or (perceived) impact or frequency of Coaching Behaviours will teach us very little about what really goes on in the coaching, because of offsetting, biases, etc. It is out of comparisons between these variables and of measurements at different times that we can really learn about how clients experience the coaching.

Results

Reliability

As was seen in the norm group (Curd, 2006), high Cronbach Alpha's were found for the six categories of Coaching Behaviour (De Haan & Burger, 2005). The Cronbach Alpha scores calculated for the Learning Styles Questionnaire (Kolb, 1984) were also of a similar magnitude to those noted by Kolb and Kolb (2006). See Table 2 for all Cronbach Alpha's.

>INSERT TABLE 2 HERE<

Descriptive Statistics

To take stock of the starting position of the participants in this study, we first examined the distribution of frequencies and percentages over all categories of responses for

the five independent variables, at the two moments of measurement. See Table 3 for an overview.

Table 4 shows the descriptive statistics for the six categories of Coaching Behaviour (De Haan & Burger, 2005) and the 10 additional coaching behaviours included in the questionnaire, at both Time 1 and Time 2. Table 4 also reports descriptive statistics for the Learning Styles Questionnaire (Kolb, 1984) at Time 1 alone (as this section of the questionnaire was not included at Time 2; Learning Styles were not thought to change across such a short time frame). Finally, the descriptive statistics for the measure of coaching helpfulness (“Could you rate the helpfulness of your coaching experience thus far on a scale of 1 -10”) are noted at both Time 1 and Time 2.

>INSERT TABLE 3 HERE<

>INSERT TABLE 4 HERE<

Inferential Statistics

A paired-samples t-test (utilising the 30 participants who completed the questionnaire at both Time 1 and Time 2) found a significant difference between Time 1 and Time 2 helpfulness scores ($t=-2.538$, $df=29$, $p=0.017$) with respondents reporting the coaching to be more helpful at Time 2 ($M=7.87$) than at Time 1 ($M=7.30$).

A series of paired-samples t-tests (with the 30 participants who completed the questionnaire at both Time 1 and Time 2) were also conducted to examine the effect of time on each of the six Coaching Behaviours (directing, informing, challenging, releasing, discovering and supporting) for both the measure of frequency and the measure of impact.

Due to the number of t-tests conducted a more stringent alpha level was adopted ($p=0.01$)².

The analysis failed to find any significant differences between Time 1 and Time 2 on any of the measures.

A series of paired-samples t-tests were conducted to examine the effect of time (Time 1 versus Time 2) on each of the 10 additional Coaching Behaviours for both the measure of frequency and the measure of impact, using the more stringent alpha level ($p=0.01$). Only one comparison reached significance; the impact of “rephrase or paraphrase what I have just said”, ($t=2.835$, $df=27$, $p=0.009$) with impact scores at Time 1 significantly higher ($M=3.50$) than impact scores at Time 2 ($M=2.89$).

To determine whether respondents differentiated between frequency and impact on the six Coaching Behaviours at Time 1 a series of paired-samples t-tests were conducted (frequency and impact were measured on the same 5-point Likert scale, and thus the comparison was between the frequency score and the impact score at Time 1 for each of the six Coaching Behaviours). Once again, due to the number of comparisons the alpha level was adjusted to $p=0.01$. Only two comparisons reached significance; directing ($t=-5.719$, $df=69$, $p=0.001$) with respondents scoring directing impact significantly higher ($M=26.71$) than directing frequency ($M=24.01$) and challenging ($t=-3.151$, $df=69$, $p=0.002$) with respondents scoring challenging impact significantly higher ($M=29.56$) than challenging frequency ($M=27.99$). The same analysis was conducted at Time 2 and the paired-samples t-tests failed to find any significant differences between impact and frequency scores for the six Coaching Behaviours.

In a similar way, a series of paired-samples t-tests were conducted on the 10 additional Coaching Behaviours, to examine the difference between impact and frequency at Time 1 and

² An increasing number of psychologists and statisticians believe that a Bonferroni correction is too conservative (see e.g. Perneger, 1998), as controlling the group-wise error rate increases the probability of a Type II error. As multiple comparisons have been made, however, it is acknowledged that the p value should be adjusted. In line with other researchers, a more conservative value of 0.01 has been adopted.

Time 2 (alpha level was adjusted to $p=0.01$). At Time 1 only one comparison reached significance; “Playing the devil’s advocate, bringing out the inconsistency of what I have just said” ($t=-2.637$, $df=68$, $p=0.010$) with respondents scoring impact significantly higher ($M=2.86$) than frequency ($M=2.62$). At Time 2, the paired-samples t-tests failed to find any significant differences between impact and frequency scores for the 10 additional Coaching Behaviours.

Table 5 shows the correlations between helpfulness, the six Coaching Behaviours (for both frequency and impact), the 10 additional coaching behaviours and the Learning Styles questionnaire at Time 1 and Time 2.

>INSERT TABLE 5 HERE<

We also tested for any other significant correlations in the dataset. Gender, Age and Learning styles did not correlate significantly with each other, nor did Gender and Age correlate with Helpfulness, as expected. Of the seven items related to the coaching assignment, only those related to the coaching experience (‘how many sessions have you had’ and ‘expected number of sessions of coaching’) correlated positively with Helpfulness (in both questionnaires; see Table 5). This is a finding that is replicated in our action-learning outcome research (De Haan & De Ridder, 2006). The only other significant correlations found are small and we suggest they are artefacts³.

In order to understand which of the two key sets of measures contained within the questionnaire (Coaching Behaviours and Learning Styles) were the best predictors of

³ Length of coaching variables (both number of sessions and expected number of sessions) correlates significantly with Supporting and with the Learning style AC-CE (all of these: $0.30^{**} < r < 0.45^{**}$), which may be linked to the correlation with Helpfulness. Finally, the Learning style AE-RO correlation with ‘Who took the initiative for the coaching’ ($r = -0.29^*$) appears to be entirely due to those participants who ascribe the initiative for the coaching to the Ashridge programme they were attending. These are the only significant correlations in the dataset other than those with coaching behaviours fully reported in Table 5.

helpfulness, a series of multiple regressions were conducted. For all of the multiple regression analysis, Time 1 data was used as there were insufficient respondents at Time 2.

Initially, two standard multiple regressions were performed; both used helpfulness as the criterion variable and the six Coaching Behaviours (directing, informing, challenging, releasing, discovering and supporting) as the predictor variables. In the first multiple regression the impact scores were used and in the second, frequency scores were used. For both sets of analyses all assumptions for multicollinearity, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity and independence of residuals were met. Table 6 shows the unstandardized regression coefficients, the standardized coefficients, R^2 and adjusted R^2 for impact and the unstandardized regression coefficients, the standardized coefficients, R^2 and adjusted R^2 for frequency.

>INSERT TABLE 6 HERE<

The regression model for impact was significant [$F(6,62)=4.359$, $p=0.001$], with the adjusted R^2 of 0.229 demonstrating that 30% of the variance in helpfulness can be accounted for by the impact of the six Coaching Behaviours, with no single Coaching Behaviour making a significant unique contribution to the model.

The regression model for frequency was also significant [$F(6,62)=3.863$, $p=0.002$], with the adjusted R^2 of 0.199 demonstrating that 20% of the variance in helpfulness can be accounted for by the frequency of the six Coaching Behaviours, with informing frequency making a significant unique contribution to the model. For the 10 'Additional Coaching Behaviours' a multiple regression was not possible with our N, but we do note a similar pattern of over-all clear correlation with Helpfulness (see Table 5).

A third standard multiple regression was conducted with helpfulness as the criterion variable and the two Learning Styles as predictor variables. As previously, all assumptions for multicollinearity, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity and independence of residuals were met. However, the model was not significant suggesting that Learning Styles do not predict perceived helpfulness of the coaching session. However, if we rotate the Learning Styles to new dimensions AC-CE + AE-RO and AC-CE-AE+RO (these dimensions remain independent with a correlation coefficient of 0.02), we do find a significant correlation with Helpfulness for AC-CE+AE-RO⁴ (0.27, significant at $p < 0.05$). These rotated dimensions point into Converging and Assimilating, respectively, so we have found a small positive correlation between the Assimilating versus Accommodating dimension and the perceived Helpfulness of the coaching. In other words, the ‘theorists’ seem to value the coaching more and/or the ‘activists’ seem to value the coaching less than the others.

In Table 5 we also find two of the significant correlations are between Learning styles of the client and Coaching behaviours of the coach. One is between the client’s Preference for abstractness over concreteness (AC-CE) and Supporting coaching behaviour ($r = 0.24$), and the other is between the client’s Preference for action over reflection (AE-RO) and Directing coaching behaviour ($r = 0.29$).

Qualitative Analysis

In the first questionnaire 38 participants provided a total of 73 responses to the first question, regarding contributions from the coach that made the coaching helpful. Using grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 1990) we came up with 10 categories describing critical aspects of this data and two of the authors (JC and EDH) were independently able to assign all of the quotations to one of those ten categories: insight/awareness, knowledge/experience,

⁴And the correlation of the orthogonal dimension, AC - CE - AE + RO with Helpfulness is 0.04.

coach attributes, challenge, support, listening, space/balance, planning, role modelling and courage/confidence (see Table 7). It appears from Table 7 that the participants believe that the top three contributions made by their coach to the coaching process were (1) insight into and awareness of the client's issues, (2) knowledge and experience and (3) support for the client throughout the process.

>INSERT TABLE 7 HERE<

Direct quotes from the participants serve to illustrate these most frequently used categories:

1. Increase of self-awareness and insight into the client's behaviour/issues/motivations:

- “It has made me more aware of things that I do and it has helped me to live in the moment and to act.”
- “Recognising what has gone on – and what is going on.”
- “Honesty to myself made me aware of ‘deeper’ underlying feelings and reasons for my behaviour.”

2. The coach's knowledge and experience:

- “Understanding about my work situation and offering sound, practical and inspirational advice.”
- “My coach started with a psychometric questionnaire which set a common language for our communications and also encouraged depth of thought in terms of motivations.”
- “Sharing some material on different types of leaders.”

3. The coach's support, availability, and being attuned to the needs of the client:

- “Very focused on my needs for development.”
- “Good understanding of my needs.”

- “Having the opportunity to discuss ‘stuck’ issues in an unthreatening environment.”
- “Using the coach as a sounding board to test my thinking.”
- “Helpful to go through what I had worked out in my own mind with someone removed from the situation.”

The personal attributes of the coaches that the participants found helpful were mostly related to personal qualities and the relationship between the coach and the client. Some of the attributes that were emphasised were how kind and courteous the coach was, how interested they seemed to be in the life of the client and how open and available they were for the client. An example of feedback received is:

- “Always found my coach to be very approachable, quick to respond to my mails and proffering timely and very useful feedback.”

All of the individuals who commented on attributes of their coach and their coaching relationship also rated the helpfulness of their coaching experience highly. The average helpfulness score for those who commented on their coach attributes was 8.25. It appears that the better the perceived relationship with the coach, the higher the helpfulness of the coaching process is rated (as is also the case in psychotherapy, see Wampold, 2001).

When it came to the second qualitative question regarding specific outcomes that individuals received from coaching, 65% of participants were able to list one or more outcomes from their coaching (see Table 9). The three outcomes emphasised most were (1) courage and self-confidence, (2) a set of skills and tools to take away and (3) insight and awareness into their own behaviour or issues.

Here are some direct quotes from the participants to illustrate these most frequently used categories:

1. Increased courage and self-confidence:

- “Confirmation of style and where to focus.”

- “Given myself confidence to tackle projects that would not have come across my radar screen.”
- “Ability to face my fears and by doing so become more comfortable showing my vulnerability.”
- “I have raised concerns with my boss that I would have otherwise kept to myself.”
- “Growing self-esteem.”
- “Increased self-confidence.”

2. Development of new skills:

- “I now have a structured way of attacking any problem that comes across my way.”
- “Better performance in management meetings.”
- “Helped me create more cohesive management and team.”

3. Increase of self-awareness and insight into the clients behaviour/issues/motivations:

- “I can better see how my behaviour is perceived by others.”
- “Ways of learning to listen more and say less which is now in practice.”
- “Greater understanding of my leadership style.”
- “Higher levels of self-awareness.”
- “I have learnt to recognise the good things in me; previously I was only aware of the negative things.”

Participants used the third open question (“Is there anything you would like to add?”) mainly to communicate that they have found the coaching to be a very valuable experience, which replicates other findings with similar open questions (such as in Blackman, 2006). The results of the questionnaire at Time 2 confirmed the picture as Time 1 (see the first two open questions, Table 7). To sum the results of our qualitative analysis, the respondents at both Time 1 and Time 2 overwhelmingly stated that it had been a positive and valuable experience which some did not want to see come to an end. As one respondent noted:

- “Coaching has been the best personal leadership development programme. It has been life changing for me. I appreciate the learning and support. Leadership is lonely and my coach has become a fantastic source of learning, new perspectives and support.”

Discussion

Helpfulness is a Generic Experience

Other studies have also shown (see, e.g., McGovern et al. 2001; Thach, 2002; Smither et al., 2003 or Blackman, 2006) that the helpfulness of executive coaching is generally perceived as high. In this study we demonstrated helpfulness scores of 7.21 (first questionnaire) and 7.87 (second questionnaire) with a t-test showing this significant improvement between Time 1 and Time 2. It is, however, impossible to say whether coaching is experienced as more helpful over time by this group, or just that those who find the coaching more helpful over time are more willing to complete the second questionnaire (a possible confounding occurrence of self-selection).

We also looked from the perspective of different aims (question 3, above). In the first place, it was interesting to see that our list of aims looked exhaustive, as there were only three participants on the first questionnaire who suggested other aims (“Being reminded of certain things regularly”, “Improve self-confidence” and “Become an effective leader”). Secondly, if we compare Helpfulness scores for all the aims, then there is very little spread: the highest is “I would like to strengthen myself, become more resilient” with 7.43 and the lowest is “I would like to stop doing certain things” with 6.80, all within a quarter of a standard deviation from the mean. The aims scores do not correlate with any of the other variables.

The main result of the multiple regressions between Helpfulness and Coaching behaviours demonstrate that for both frequency and impact measures, the six Heron

categories *together* significantly predict helpfulness. Clients do not appear to prioritise any one category of behaviour above others. The same seems to be true for the Additional Coaching Behaviours, except for some individual ones such as ‘Playing the devil’s advocate’ and ‘Converting objections into opportunities’, where no significant correlation was found. We suggest that this is due to insufficient data: these are just singular variables, so it is more difficult to demonstrate correlations.

In our earlier research into how participants learn during the process of peer coaching or action learning we found exactly the same pattern of results (see Table 3 of De Haan & De Ridder, 2006). It points to the conclusion that clients experience helpfulness in a *generic* way: if they find the coaching helpful, they will view a wide range of particular aspects of coaching also as helpful. Therefore, even if they can distinguish carefully between the different Coaching behaviours of their coaches (compare the considerable size of all standard deviations and the large Cronbach Alphas for these dimensions), they will indicate more impact for all of these behaviours, and a higher frequency of all behaviours, if the coaching was perceived by them as more helpful.

When comparing impact and frequency scores, only Directing and Challenging showed a small difference, suggesting that these coaching behaviours are relatively impactful. In a similar way, “Playing the devil’s advocate, bringing out the inconsistency of what I have just said” was the only Additional Coaching Behaviour that showed a significant difference between impact and frequency. However, a stronger link to general Helpfulness of these interventions could not be demonstrated.

Our conclusion is that clients perceive the helpfulness of their coach *almost indiscriminately* across all possible coaching behaviours. We believe that this offers some support for the importance of so-called *common factors* in coaching (general factors that are present in every coaching relationship, such as expectancy, working alliance, or personality

characteristics, as opposed to specific behaviours, models or strategies – see De Haan, 2008). More corroboration for the importance of common factors comes from Scoular & Linley (2006), who show that the specific intervention of goal-setting makes no difference to outcome, whilst the common factor of personality matching does.

Listening, Understanding and Encouragement from the Coach are Deemed most Helpful

If we look at the qualities that were most appreciated in a coach (Table 3), then there are clearly three that stood out in that they were ticked by over 30% of respondents: Listening, Understanding and Encouragement. They were followed by Knowledge and then Empathy, Authenticity and Involvement. Other qualities that were observed but deemed less relevant to the coaching were Calmness, Humour and Warmth. However, there was a much larger spread in the responses to this question about ‘qualities of the coach, less relevant for the coaching’, so it seems those answers are more about the individual traits of the coach and less about the qualities valuable for the client.

Participants with Different Learning Styles respond Differently to the Coaching

As reported in the Results section, there are a few interesting correlations between Learning Styles and Helpfulness / Coaching Behaviours. One is that clients who have a more ‘abstract’ (theoretical) learning style perceive and value supportive coaching more, whilst clients with a more ‘activist’ learning style perceive and value directive coaching more. Intuitively, we can understand that in particular the latter might be the case: ‘activists’ appreciate a more ‘interventionist’ coach, and they value more suggestions and feedback. Also, we can imagine that ‘theorists’ value some support for the often more lonely work that they do. Moreover, this finding helps in understanding the other correlation found between

the activist – theorist (AC-CE+AE-RO) axis and perceived Helpfulness: ‘directing’ is often seen as less of a coaching behaviour whilst supporting is seen by many as the ‘most’ coaching behaviour (Heron, 1975).

Conclusion

In summary, the results of this study have shown that these clients of executive coaching interventions perceive *all* of the behaviours of their coaches as good predictors of how helpful they rate the coaching experience, without prioritising specific behaviours. This is clear support for a *relational* perspective on executive coaching (DeYoung, 2003; De Haan, 2008). In this relational perspective the *generic* quality of the relationship or alliance between coach and client as perceived by the client and not the *specific* behaviours of either is the crucial predictor of helpfulness. This relational view was also supported by the kind of qualities that clients value most (Listening, Understanding and Encouragement, see Table 3), and by the positive attributes that were given to coaches when the coaching had been seen as more helpful than average (Openness, Flexibility, Kindness, Availability, etc; see the responses to the open questions). It seems therefore that both from our quantitative and our qualitative findings we can conclude that most clients first try to establish a strong working relationship or working alliance, and then primarily focus on their own issues without worrying too much about the specific behaviours of their coaches.

Looking in detail at all these responses of clients to their coaching experience, we find strong corroboration for the existence of generic, ‘common’ factors at work (Wampold, 2001), and we also find some support for Carl Rogers’ (1957) idea that what they appreciate most in their coach is general support, encouragement, listening and understanding.

More generally, we find a confirmation of another finding in psychotherapy (Horvath & Marx, 1990 and Tallman & Bohart, 1999), namely that the perspectives of clients and their

therapists on the process are really quite different. While we know that most coaches spend a lot of time deliberating upon and perfecting their coaching models, approaches and/or specific behaviours, and while they find models of different coaching interventions like that of Heron (1975) relevant and distinctive, this does not seem to be the case for their clients.

The fact that the language we coaches use to distinguish coaching interventions is not very distinctive for our clients, teaches us that we still have to find a meaningful vocabulary *for clients*. In other words, for anyone including ourselves, we must consider taking up the *role* of client. This means more research is needed into what makes coaching critical for the client and into the factors that determine the client's outcome:

- What is the *language* or conceptual model that best describe the coaching from the perspective of the client?
- What are the most important *distinctions* we should apply when comparing different coaching experiences from the client's perspective?
- Which of the *common factors* are experienced to be most relevant by clients?

The categories that came out of our analysis of the open question (insight, knowledge, support, etc.) may provide a good starting point for formulating more relevant discriminators for clients. A first paper on the language or conceptual model of the coaching client, based on the reports of *critical moments* by coaching clients, has already been submitted to this journal (De Haan, Day, Bertie and Sills, 2008).

In spite of the high statistical significance of most our findings, the above conclusions can at best be only provisional and have to be treated with caution: only 71 coaching clients have contributed to this research, and we had to work without a control group. We believe that in future research, a similar paradigm and a larger sample size will more convincingly demonstrate which generic or 'common' aspects of coaching contribute to which aspects of helpfulness. We intend to pursue this line of research, focusing next on more relational

aspects such as (elements of) the working alliance, the personality of coach or client, expectancy of a positive outcome.

Research such as this can be highly relevant for coaching practice and for the training and continuous professional development of coaches. Our results seem to indicate that coaches can begin to worry less about their specific interventions and focus more on the quality of the unfolding relationship with their clients. Similarly, the results show that coaching education and supervision could be less focused on specific behaviours and more on the establishment of a helpful relationship or working alliance. More generally, it seems important to educate and supervise coaches more from the perspective of the coaching *client* and from what clients tend to experience as truly helpful, than strictly according to established routines and ‘coaching models’ in the profession.

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Table 1

Characteristics of the Participants in this Survey

Descriptor	Range	Questionnaire 1		Questionnaire 2	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	45	63.38	23	74.19
	Female	26	36.62	8	25.81
Age	26 – 30	3	4.29	1	3.23
	31 - 35	13	18.57	3	9.68
	36 – 40	16	22.86	9	29.03
	41 - 45	19	27.14	11	35.48
	46 - 50	10	14.29	5	16.13
	51 - 55	7	10.00	2	6.45
	56 and over	2	2.86	0	0.00
	Professional Role	Director	26	36.62	12
Manager		29	40.85	11	35.48
Consultant		5	7.04	2	6.45
Project Leader		5	7.04	2	6.45
Other		6	8.45	4	12.90
Nationality	Unknown	18	25.35	7	22.58
	Arabian	1	1.41	1	3.23

Belgian	1	1.41	0	0.00
British	35	49.30	14	45.16
Danish	1	1.41	0	0.00
Dutch	1	1.41	1	3.23
Egyptian	2	2.82	2	6.45
German	3	4.23	1	3.23
Greek	1	1.41	1	3.23
Irish	4	5.63	2	6.45
Nigerian	1	1.41	1	3.23
Peruvian	1	1.41	1	0.00
Spanish	1	1.41	1	3.23
Swiss	1	1.41	1	3.23

Table 2

Cronbach Alpha Scores for the Six Coaching Behaviour and Two Learning Style Measures at Time 1

Scales		α
Coaching Behaviour - Impact	Directing	.90
	Informing	.87
	Challenging	.84
	Releasing	.87
	Discovering	.84
	Supporting	.80
Coaching Behaviour - Frequency	Directing	.93
	Informing	.88
	Challenging	.85
	Releasing	.86
	Discovering	.83
	Supporting	.82
Learning Styles	AC-CE	.85
	AE-RO	.85

Table 3

Frequencies and Percentages for all Response Categories by Independent Variable for Both Questionnaires

Independent Variable	Ranges	Questionnaire 1		Questionnaire 2	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Who took the initiative for this coaching contract?	Yourself	41	57.75	20	66.67
	Your employer	18	25.35	5	16.67
	Part of Ashridge programme	9	12.68	4	13.33
	Other	3	4.23	1	3.33
How many sessions have you received from your coach?	1	4	5.63	4	13.33
	2	44	61.97	6	20.00
	3	7	9.86	4	13.33
	4	4	5.63	8	26.67
	5 - 10	7	9.86	4	13.33
	More than 10	5	7.04	4	13.33
What is the expected length of your coaching (total number of sessions)?	Less than 4	11	15.49	9	30.00
	4	33	46.48	8	26.67
	5	8	11.27	3	10.00
	6 - 10	10	14.08	5	16.67
	Eleven to fifteen	2	2.82	1	3.33

	16 - 20	3	4.23	2	6.67
	More than 20	4	5.63	2	6.67
What do you hope to achieve through coaching?	I would like to learn something new	24	17.14	8	25.81
	I would like to strengthen myself, become more resilient	28	20.00	11	35.48
	I would like to change my behaviour or approach	39	27.86	6	19.35
	I would like to stop doing certain things	10	7.14	1	3.23
	I would like to reflect on my practice	36	25.71	5	16.13
	Other	3	2.14	0	0.00
Could you rate the helpfulness of your coaching experience thus far on a scale of 1 – 10?	2	0	0.00	1	3.23
	3	3	4.29	0	0.00
	4	3	4.29	1	3.23
	5	4	5.71	0	0.00
	6	8	11.43	1	3.23
	7	15	21.43	4	12.90
	8	23	32.86	15	48.39
	9	13	18.57	6	19.35
	10	1	1.43	3	9.68
		Could you please select three qualities from the list that you really appreciate	Select three other qualities that you have perceived but which are less relevant for		

	in your coach				your coaching			
	Questionnaire 1		Questionnaire 2		Questionnaire 1		Questionnaire 2	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Availability	5	2.43	6	5.77	13	6.34	2	2.15
Warmth	8	3.88	6	5.77	17	8.29	9	9.68
Composure	2	.97	-	-	8	3.90	5	5.38
Understanding	30	14.56	11	10.58	10	4.88	5	5.38
Tolerance	4	1.94	-	-	11	5.37	3	3.23
Encouragement	25	12.14	11	10.58	10	4.88	8	8.60
Authenticity	11	5.34	3	2.88	6	2.93	3	3.23
Detachment	5	2.43	2	1.92	10	4.88	4	4.30
Respect	2	.97	-	-	11	5.37	7	7.53
Humour	1	.49	2	1.92	18	8.78	5	5.38
Calmness	6	2.91	4	3.85	20	9.76	5	5.38
Listening	34	16.50	19	18.27	7	3.41	3	3.23
Openness	9	4.37	5	4.81	8	3.90	5	5.38
Involvement	11	5.34	-	-	5	2.44	3	3.23
Creativity	6	2.91	-	-	14	6.83	2	2.15
Empathy	11	5.34	7	6.73	11	5.37	9	9.68
Knowledge	19	9.22	12	11.54	5	2.44	1	1.08
Genuineness	7	3.40	3	2.88	7	3.41	6	6.45
Service	1	.49	-	-	6	2.93	1	1.08
Experience	9	4.37	13	12.50	8	3.90	7	7.53

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Coaching Behaviour, Learning Styles and Helpfulness at Time 1 and Time 2

Measurement	Time 1		Time 2	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
<i>Six Coaching Behaviours</i>				
Directing - Impact	2.67	.91	2.78	.88
Informing - Impact	3.01	.83	3.09	.71
Challenging - Impact	2.95	.80	3.20	.65
Releasing - Impact	2.87	.88	3.12	.72
Discovering - Impact	3.59	.74	3.65	.71
Supporting - Impact	3.06	.77	3.10	.80
Directing - Frequency	2.40	.92	2.58	.81
Informing - Frequency	2.93	.85	3.03	.72
Challenging - Frequency	2.79	.75	3.00	.68
Releasing - Frequency	2.80	.84	3.01	.73
Discovering - Frequency	3.63	.69	3.60	.70
Supporting - Frequency	3.12	.78	3.13	.77
<i>Additional Coaching Behaviours</i>				
Respond to some of the things I say with lightness and humour - Impact	3.56	1.18	3.48	1.12

Manage my expectations explicitly - Impact	3.18	1.23	2.81	1.14
Rephrase or paraphrase what I have just said - Impact	3.30	1.12	2.74	1.21
Draw attention to specific words or metaphors that I use - Impact	3.23	1.33	3.35	1.31
Play the devil's advocate bringing out the inconsistency of what I've just said - Impact	2.89	1.41	3.48	1.24
Convert my objections into opportunities - Impact	2.86	1.35	3.10	1.17
Suggest and review 'homework' for between the sessions - Impact	2.78	1.35	2.87	1.36
Engage in 'live' exercises such as role-play, mind-mapping etc. - Impact	2.07	1.26	2.23	1.26
Approach concerns that I raise from a very different and new perspective - Impact	3.27	1.30	3.45	1.09
Make explicit the patterns of behaviours that I seem to engage in - Impact	3.29	1.32	3.58	1.15
Respond to some of the things I say with lightness and humour - Frequency	3.51	1.12	3.48	1.03
Manage my expectations explicitly - Frequency	3.20	1.09	2.87	1.06
Rephrase or paraphrase what I have just said - Frequency	3.30	1.09	2.90	1.27
Draw attention to specific words or metaphors that I use - Frequency	3.32	1.36	3.42	1.12
Play the devil's advocate bringing out the inconsistency of what I've just said - Frequency	2.61	1.34	3.20	1.16
Convert my objections into opportunities - Frequency	2.74	1.27	3.10	1.01
Suggest and review 'homework' for between the sessions - Frequency	2.73	1.40	2.72	1.25
Engage in 'live' exercises such as role-play, mind-mapping etc. - Frequency	1.83	1.23	2.03	1.20
Approach concerns that I raise from a very different and new	3.06	1.23	3.29	.864

perspective - Frequency				
Make explicit the patterns of behaviours that I seem to engage in - Frequency	3.07	1.25	3.32	1.077
<i>Learning Styles</i>				
AC-CE	-3.23	12.10	-	-
AE-RO	-5.51	11.92	-	-
<i>Helpfulness</i>				
Helpfulness of the coaching experience	7.21	1.61	7.87	1.61

Table 5

Correlations between Coaching Behaviours and Helpfulness / Learning Styles, at Time 1 and Time 2

	Time 1			Time 2
	Helpfulness	AC-CE	AE-RO	Helpfulness
Directing - Impact	.31**	-.00	.29*	.09
Informing - Impact	.46**	.05	.15	.12
Challenging - Impact	.40**	.13	.13	.16
Releasing - Impact	.46**	.23	.15	.15
Discovering - Impact	.40**	-.00	-.01	.08
Supporting - Impact	.48**	.24*	.08	.25
Directing - Frequency	.21	.05	.24*	.09
Informing - Frequency	.43**	.02	.15	.20
Challenging - Frequency	.42**	.15	.10	.21
Releasing - Frequency	.40**	.28*	.16	.08
Discovering - Frequency	.37**	-.07	-.06	.14
Supporting - Frequency	.29*	.15	.08	.17
Respond to some of the things I say with lightness and humour - Impact	.27*	.10	-.02	.13
Manage my expectations explicitly - Impact	.28*	.17	.21	.15
Rephrase or paraphrase what I have just said - Impact	.28*	.19	.05	-.02
Draw attention to specific words or metaphors that I	.35**	.32**	.19	.25

use - Impact				
Play the devil's advocate bringing out the inconsistency of what I've just said - Impact	-.00	.18	.33**	.12
Convert my objections into opportunities - Impact	.22	.10	.31**	-.03
Suggest and review 'homework' for between the sessions - Impact	.36**	.09	.14	.30
Engage in 'live' exercises such as role-play, mind-mapping etc. - Impact	.23	.24*	.20	.20
Approach concerns that I raise from a very different and new perspective - Impact	.46**	.39**	.00	.17
Make explicit the patterns of behaviours that I seem to engage in - Impact	.31**	.26*	.01	.13
Respond to some of the things I say with lightness and humour - Frequency	.29*	.11	.17	.08
Manage my expectations explicitly - Frequency	.33**	.17	.12	.26
Rephrase or paraphrase what I have just said - Frequency	-.02	.20	.06	-.20
Draw attention to specific words or metaphors that I use - Frequency	.25*	.24*	.11	.36*
Play the devil's advocate bringing out the inconsistency of what I've just said - Frequency	.09	.24*	.27*	.15
Convert my objections into opportunities - Frequency	.22	.07	.22	-.09
Suggest and review 'homework' for between the sessions - Frequency	.44**	.04	.07	.35

Engage in 'live' exercises such as role-play, mind-mapping etc. - Frequency	.37**	.36**	.14	.19
Approach concerns that I raise from a very different and new perspective - Frequency	.47**	.30*	.12	.12
Make explicit the patterns of behaviours that I seem to engage in - Frequency	.39**	.27*	.03	.26

Note. * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 6a

Multiple Regression Tables for Helpfulness (Criterion Variable) and Coaching Behaviour
(Predictor Variables) for Impact

	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig
Directing Impact	-0.03	-0.16	-0.97	0.37
Informing Impact	0.05	0.27	1.57	0.12
Challenging Impact	0.00	0.001	0.05	0.96
Releasing Impact	0.04	0.22	1.21	0.23
Discovering Impact	0.01	0.03	0.22	0.83
Supporting Impact	0.05	0.22	1.21	0.23

Note. The overall model was significant [F(6,68)=4.359, p=0.001], $R^2=0.30$, Adjusted $R^2=0.23$.

Table 6b

Multiple Regression Tables for Helpfulness (Criterion Variable) and Coaching Behaviour
(Predictor Variables) for Frequency

	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig
Directing Frequency	-0.03	-0.15	-0.94	0.35
Informing Frequency	0.08	0.40	2.10	0.04
Challenging Frequency	0.01	0.03	0.11	0.91
Releasing Frequency	0.06	0.31	1.43	0.16
Discovering Frequency	0.05	0.21	1.38	0.20
Supporting Frequency	0.06	-0.27	-1.35	0.18

Note. The overall model was significant [F(6,69)=3.863, p=0.002], $R^2=0.27$, Adjusted $R^2=0.20$.

Table 7

Content Analysis of the First Two Open-Ended Questions

Categories of Response	Would you like to mention any contributions from your coach that made the coaching particularly helpful to you?		Could you name three specific outcomes that you ascribe to the coaching?	
	Time 1	Time 2	Time 1	Time 2
	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
Awareness/Insight	16	2	19	16
Knowledge/Experience	10	6		
Coach Attributes	7			
Challenge	4			
Support	9	1		
Listening	2			
Space/Balance	6		2	2
Planning	5	2	6	3
Role Modelling	5			
Courage/Confidence	7	1	25	13
Relationships			13	5
Skills			22	19
Change			8	1