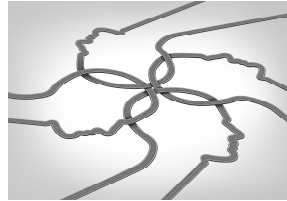


EMCC

European Mentoring &
Coaching Council



22nd Annual Mentoring and Coaching Conference

19-21 November 2015– Istanbul, Turkey

Building Business Engagement

**A new tool to help coachees decide
what roles their coach should play**

Tim Bright, OneWorld Consulting

www.emccconference.org



Session plan

- My research process, reliance on others' work
 - Development of the tool
 - The tool and how it can be used
 - Group discussion
-
- These slides, the different versions of the tool and the background research are all available on www.OneWorldConsulting.com under 'Research'.



Reason for this research

- Coaching very different in different contexts
- National cultural differences around coaching and expectations
- Lack of clarity within the profession about the role of a coach, and lack of a shared language to discuss this
- Not much research done on different roles a coach can play



Borrowing from mentoring research

- *"When you take stuff from one writer it's plagiarism, but when you take from many writers it's called research."* Wilson Mizner (1932)
- Clutterbuck and Megginson offer a list of roles for mentors (1999).
- Over time this was developed into a tool used by mentees and mentors to select the kind of mentor they see themselves as, or the kind of mentor they want to be.
- Instructions to participants – "Allocate 15 points between the roles listed to show your preference for the kind of mentor you see yourself as being" or "the kind of mentor you would like to work with".

Clutterbuck, D. and Megginson, D. (1999) *Mentoring Executives and Directors*, Oxford, Elsevier Butterworth Heinemann.

Original version of the tool (2006)

A Mentor can be –

- **Sounding board** - is independent and shares wisdom & experience
- **Critical friend** - speaks truth to power/challenge and tests the assumptions of the mentee
- **Listener** - allows space, encourages, and reflects back
- **Counsellor** - is an empathic listener, connects with emotions/explore them
- **Career advisor** - helps think through options, goals, and learnt lessons
- **Networker** - provides access to help career or development
- **Coach** – helps with personal behavioural change of the mentee surrounding specific issues

The most recent version (2015)

A Mentor can be a -

- Sounding board - helps the mentee think through their own ideas, out loud. Asks good questions to help the process
- Experience sharer – shares their own experiences in areas that are relevant for the mentee, when appropriate
- Critical friend - speaks the truth as they see it, and challenges and tests the mentee's ideas
- Listener – listens carefully, allows time, and encourages the mentee to reflect
- Counsellor – focuses on the emotional aspects of issues, discusses and explores with empathy
- Career coach - helps think through career options, goals, and learnt lessons
- Networking coach - discusses how to build, maintain and use a professional network
- Behaviour Coach – helps with personal behavioural change of the mentee on specific issues
- Motivator – offers encouragement and helps the mentee build self-belief

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Research questions

- Is there evidence for the importance of the relationship in coaching effectiveness?
- Is there evidence for the positive impact of reflection on learning?
- What work has already been done on different coach roles?
- Are there similar tools already in use? (literature and general online search)



Literature review – reflection and the relationship

- Lots of evidence for the positive impact of reflection in learning (Webster-Wright 2009, Edmondson 2002, Di Stefano et al. 2014, McGrath 2014). In addition Di Stefano et al.'s work suggests that *sharing* the reflection increases learning.
- Abundant work and evidence on the importance of the relationship in coaching effectiveness, even as *the most* important factor in coaching outcomes.



“It is now recognised that the most consistently identified factor seen as contributing to the success of a coaching engagement, of those within the influence of the coach, is the **quality of the relationship between the coach and individual client** (De Haan, 2008, Passmore, 2008).”

This view is shared by studies from psychotherapy where the: ‘Common factors such as empathy, warmth, and the therapeutic relationship have been shown to correlate more highly with client outcome than specialized treatment interventions’ (Lambert and Barley, 2002)”

(Passmore and Fillery-Travis 2011 p.78).



- O’Broin and Palmer note that De Haan (2008) and De Haan et al. (2011) “found in a study on the helpfulness of coaching with executive coachees that the crucial predictor of the outcome of coaching was the coaching relationship as perceived by the *coachee*, rather than specific coach behaviours.” (O’Broin and Palmer, 2010)
- “Our results do seem to indicate that coaches may profitably shift their focus from specific behaviours or interventions towards the quality of the unfolding relationship with their clients” (De Haan et al. 2011)



- “The research studies on the working alliance in counselling are extensive and have found it to be a robust predictor of outcome across diverse perspectives.” (Machin 2010 p.45)

- *alliance* – skilled coachee (Stokes, 2007)



Literature review – coach roles

- There is limited work on different roles a coach can play. Often articles that mention this are really about different types of coaching (e.g. Witherspoon & White 1996).
- There is more work in this area in **mentoring**, often going back to work by Clutterbuck & Megginson and Kram (1985)
- e.g. Kirsten Poulsen - Storyteller, Discussion Partner, Advisor, Knowledge Sharer, Coach, Critic, Networker, Door Opener, Sponsor and Friend.



Coaching practitioner literature

- *The Executive Coaching Roundtable (2005) –*

Sounding Board, Tough Questioner, Witness, Advisor, Teacher, Resource Broker and Cheerleader.



Coaching practitioner literature

- “A Coach is your partner in achieving your personal goals, your champion during turnaround, your trainer in communication and life skills, your sounding board when making choices, your motivator when strong actions are called for, your unconditional support when you take a hit, your mentor in personal development, your co-designer when developing an extraordinary project, your beacon during stormy times, your wake-up call if you don’t hear your own, and most importantly: your partner in living the life you know you’re ready for, personally and professionally.”

(Thomas Leonard)



Search for similar existing tools – literature & online

- I only found one similar tool for use in executive coaching, by Irene Stein (2008 & 09). These roles are designed for **coach reflection** rather than use by coachee.
- Stein's 'discursive identities' - Agenda Facilitator, Business Administrator, Learner, Orchestrator, Exploration Facilitator, Action Facilitator, Narrative Listener, Expert, Guide, Reflector, Practice Player, Problem Solver, Supporter, Challenger, Believer, and Colleague/Friend.



Research process

Early version of the tool for coaching (2013)

An executive coach can be a -

- Sounding board - helps the coachee think through their own ideas, out loud. Asks good questions to help the process
- Critical friend - speaks the truth as they see it, and challenges and tests the coachee's ideas
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- Follow up partner – in agreement with the coachee holds them accountable for goals they set
- Feedback interpreter – gathers or analyses feedback on the coachee and works with them to interpret it and set appropriate actions
- Development adviser – provide ideas and resources that are useful for the coachee in setting and reaching their own development goals
- Subject matter expert – if relevant, share expertise on a specific area, e.g. transition into a new role (Define the area)

Please distribute 20 points amongst these roles, to describe the roles you want your coach to play.

Early version of the tool for coaching (2013)

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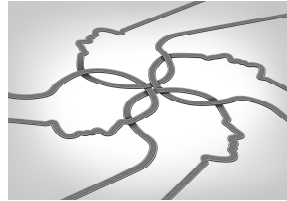
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Research Process – Questionnaire

- ◆ Pilot questionnaire sent to 7 coachees and HR people. Some adjustments made (additional item, and clarification to one of the roles).
- ◆ Survey sent to 94 people, 75 fully completed it. 52% executives who have worked with a coach, 48% HR professionals who organize coaching



Research findings

- Strong support for usefulness of the tool - 99% found the tool as presented 'very useful' or 'useful'.
- 90% said the tool would have improved the effectiveness of their coaching engagement (no-one said it wouldn't have done).
- 92% said it would be useful to share the results with a coach, 87% said useful to share with an HR sponsor.



Why do the participants find the tool useful? (68 answers)

- 46 people see it as useful in clarifying expectations and supporting preparation and contracting process.
- 14 participants see it as useful in terms of raising the coachee's awareness and supporting their reflection on and taking ownership of the process.
- 13 people think the tool can be useful in matching.



When do participants think the tool could be best used?

- 13 people suggested before the coaching, in coordination with Human Resources.
- 24 participants suggested using the tool in the chemistry meeting and to support coach selection.
- 12 people suggested using it at a number of stages throughout a coaching engagement



Responses on the roles

- 8% of participants suggested adding roles – thinker, analyst, corporate political co-navigator, etc.
- 5 participants (from 75) suggested cutting the Subject Matter Expert role, seeing it as closer to mentoring, training or consultancy.
- 3 participants recommended cutting the Counsellor role, seeing it as too close to psychological counsellor.
- Also a diverse range of suggestions, including that there are too many roles in the tool and some of them underlie others.



Very little difference between the responses of coachees and HR sponsors –

- Executive coachees more likely to suggest different roles (3 of 39 participants vs 1 of 36 participants).
- 31% of HR sponsors suggested cutting roles, compared to 21% of coachees.
- It may be that coachees have a more liberal view on coaching roles than the HR sponsors.



Useful feedback received on the structure of the tool –

- One suggestion not to offer a scoring example in the instructions so as not to lead participants in a certain direction.
- Another suggestion to force choices, e.g. to choose and rank the top 5 roles, to avoid people giving similar points to all roles.



My observations

- Overall support for and interest in the tool. (within research limitations)
- No consensus on the roles that should be included in the tool.
- Mostly similar views between HR sponsors and executive coachees.
- Conservatism of some of the responses in terms of a relatively narrow view of what coaching is, and an insistence on defining it as different from (and in some cases in opposition to) mentoring and other approaches. The non-directive model is strongly established in Turkey.



Revisions made to the tool

- Instructions improved.
- Wording improved for Follow Up Partner role.
- Two new roles added – Thinking Partner and Corporate Politics Coach.
- 'Any other comments' section added.

Executive Coaching Tool – the roles a coach can play

An executive coach can play a number of roles within the coaching relationship. Please think about what roles you would like your coach to play, using the list below.

Please distribute 20 points among these roles, to describe the relative importance of the roles you want your coach to play. You can distribute points to all roles, or to just a few, as long as the total adds up to 20.

Points	Roles an executive coach can play
	Sounding board - helps the coachee think through their own ideas, out loud. Asks good questions to help the process
	Thinking partner - help the coachee apply structure and process to their thinking
	Critical friend - speaks the truth as they see it, and challenges and tests the coachee's ideas
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	Development adviser - provide ideas and resources that are useful for the coachee in setting and reaching their own development goals
	Subject matter expert - if relevant, the coach shares expertise on a specific area, e.g. transition into a new role (Define the area.)
	A different role or roles - please specify if there are other roles you would like your coach to play.

Please add any other comments you have on your expectations from the coaching engagement.

.....

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.....



No one 'final' version of tool could or should be agreed

- Alternative version prepared so users can modify the tool they offer to coachees.
- This is an adjustable version (Word document), with drop down lists and editable text so users can add and cut roles and alter text.
- Users can just use whichever roles they want, to reduce the number, adjust wordings, and add new roles.

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Click on 'Rate' to select the number of points you want to give to each role.

Rate	Choose a Role
	Choose a Role
Rate	Sounding board - helps the coachee think through their own ideas, out loud. Asks good questions to help the process Thinking partner - help the coachee apply structure and process to their thinking
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Rate	Choose a Role
Rate	Choose a Role
Rate	Choose a Role
Rate	Choose a Role
Rate	Type over this text to add any other role or roles you would like your coach to play

Please add any other comments you have on your expectations from the coaching engagement.

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Impact on my own practice

- Increased focus on contracting, and the relationship.
- Experimenting more consciously with different roles.
- Am using the tool and believe it does add value to coaching engagements.



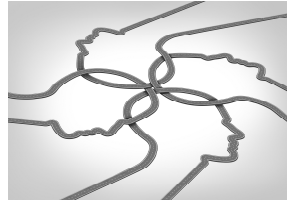
Returning to the literature

- O'Broin and Palmer (2010) suggest the 'coaching alliance' is "jointly negotiated, and renegotiated throughout the coaching process".
- Stober and Grant (2006): "it is important that the coach and client spend some time discussing the nature of their relationship, and that they jointly design the dynamics of their working alliance. Most problems in coaching can be circumvented by having a clearly articulated and shared understanding of the coach-client relationship."



Future directions

- Possible further research on the tool, larger sample.
- Development of different versions, further revisions. Not aiming for one 'final version'.
- Exploration of different language versions. Translation vs transliteration, cultural values within the tool and terminology. e.g. 'sounding board'.
- This tool (or similar) might be used to explore cultural differences around views of coaching, provide a language for this.



Thank You



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Discussion

- Any questions/comments on the research process or the tool development.
- Discussion on other similar tools, possible usage, future directions.

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Styles of mentoring/coaching

