

**The perception that black African executives have of coaching as a tool to
empower them towards business and career success**

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of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Philosophy
at Stellenbosch University



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Declaration

I, Sazi Asanda Ndwandwa, declare that the entire body of work contained in this research assignment is my own, original work; that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

SA Ndwandwa

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Thank you God, for how you've made me. MaNkwali, boBhukula – my ancestors. Halala!

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Abstract

The context of the study is post-apartheid South Africa, where blacks were excluded from participating in corporate and entrepreneurial participation. Black empowerment initiatives relating to black management in the private corporate space are not yielding the results envisioned by the South African government. One of the reasons is a lack of mentoring and coaching for small businesses and for black executives. This study sought to establish the impression that black African executives have of coaching as a tool that can empower them in order to positively contribute towards black empowerment through any benefits that they may derive from such coaching.

The research was performed using a qualitative research methodology. Data was gathered from 13 participants who had executive decision-making responsibilities either within an established corporate structure or in their own businesses (entrepreneurs) for at least two years. The data was collected using semi-structured, face-to-face interviews. Ten of the participants had received coaching. Thematic analysis was performed on the data in order to gain insights for the purposes of the research.

The research has revealed four major themes relating to the value that black executives feel can be gained from coaching which include thinking and advice; personal development; organisational growth and other benefits to society at large. The research also revealed what the black executives felt were success factors critical to coaching; these are the coaching relationship and the measurability and sustainability of relevant coaching benefits.

The study participants felt that everyone should receive coaching, especially when they have leadership responsibilities. The study also seemed to suggest that most executives only realise the value of coaching once they have experienced it; though many know about it and can speak (theoretically) about its benefits, they do not seem to prioritise initiating the process of taking on the services of an executive coach. It is only when they experience successful coaching that they come to appreciate the value not only for the professional lives, but also in their personal lives and relationships. When coaching adds value to the executive, the relationship may extend years beyond the previously intended period or coaching objective(s). In addition to executives fully appreciating the value of coaching after having received it, the study reveals that most of the participants who received coaching were sponsored by their corporate employers, at the time.

Further research could be conducted on a larger scope relating to the same sample group (black African executives) for team coaching, from the coach's perspective and also looking specifically within the public sector. As part of the concluding chapter, the researcher also details the recommendations, conclusions and limitations of the study.

Keywords

Executive coaching;

Small business entrepreneur;

Personal Development;

Coaching benefits;

Coaching success factors;

Black executive;

Business Coaching.

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

doi	digital object identifier
COMMENSA	Coaches and Mentors South Africa
ICF	International Coach Federation

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The study focused on black South Africans who occupy leadership roles at executive level in the corporate sector, with the intention of exploring their perception of coaching as a tool useful for attaining business and career success. Black people in South Africa have begun to participate in the higher level within the corporate sector. Coaching has begun to emerge as a popular leadership development tool; it was, therefore, important to find out how black executives perceive coaching. The issue of transformation was not the focus of the study, but formed a key context that framed the importance of coaching as a tool for addressing the issue of transforming South Africa's executive leadership space.

1.2. BACKGROUND

The Employment Equity Act (Act no. 55 of 1998), as indicated in its preamble, was introduced in order to eliminate unfair discrimination in employment; to ensure the implementation of affirmative equity for redressing the effects of discrimination; and to achieve a diverse workforce broadly representative of the citizens of South Africa. This diversity has not been wholeheartedly accepted or welcomed in many South African organisations (Booyesen, 2017). To date, whites still occupy 69.6% of top level positions in the private sector with 77.7% of these being occupied by white males; in the public sector, this figure is 8.9%, 67% of which relates to white males (Commission for Employment Equity, 2019). The representation of white leadership in the private sector is not aligned when compared to the Community Survey (Statistics South Africa, 2016) which shows that whites make up 8,12 % of the South African population.

Research suggests that most of corporate South Africa is governed by a predominantly Eurocentric leadership style (Booyesen, 2001) and that, with the current drive towards transforming the workplace, there is a need to be more aware of an inclusive and participatory approach to leadership values and styles (Asante, 2011; Khoza, 1994). Factors that result in blacks not being promoted as swiftly as they should be promoted include discrimination; lack of trust; cultural clashes; lack of coaches and mentors; low commitment to employment equity from top management; lack of cultural sensitivity; and a white, male-dominated culture that continues to exclude black recruits (Booyesen, 2007; Matandela, 2008). South African organisations whose human resource professionals try to achieve

transformation still find black employees leaving because of these perceived barriers (Surtee & Hall, 2010).

Some of these factors are also confirmed by Booysen & Nkomo (2010) and Myres (2013) with the lack of coaching and mentoring to address these matters being one of them. They also mention that using white mentors is sometimes met with resistance although, in contrast, Anandlal (2017) found that cross-cultural coaching had great benefits, especially by way of differing perspectives due to diverse cultures and genders.

The study focused on black people who occupy leadership roles at executive level in the corporate sector, with the intention of exploring the perception that they have of coaching as a tool for empowering the for business and career success.

Coaching is used as a tool for enhancing leadership development towards improved performance (Kilburg, 1996; Beck *et al.*, 2009; Avolio & Chan, 2008) and for the proactive development of emerging leaders (The Sherpa Coaching Executive Survey 8th Annual Report, 2013); it has also become an industry that is growing globally (Allen, Manning, Francis & Gentry, 2011). Executive coaching is now accepted as one of the top five leadership development best practices, allowing for accelerated learning in the complex and fast changing workplace (Maltbia, Marsick & Ghosh, 2014).

Although coaching is being widely used as a means for leadership development, little is known regarding CEOs' perceived value of coaching and those factors that influence these perceptions (Walston, 2014; Corporate Leadership Council, 2004). As an executive coach, the researcher was interested to find out if there is a correlation between the slow rate of transformation in executive leadership positions in the South African private sector and the perception that South African black business executives have of coaching. This study, on its own, was not intended to provide this correlation. Instead, the research was intended to provides insights on the latter.

Research may already have been undertaken on the impact of coaching on executives broadly; it has also been undertaken by Fortuin (2016) on the impact of coaching intervention on women entrepreneurs in South Africa; but it has not yet been done on the perception that black executives have on coaching within the South African context.

The study focused on getting the views of the black executives on coaching as a tool that can assist them to compete in an environment which has given their white male counterparts an advantage. This was contrasted with the views that have already been researched and

found in literature. The study also investigated the monetary value that these South African black executives ascribe to coaching as an indicator of the value they attach to it.

This research assignment explored the perceptions that 10 black executives who have undergone coaching, as well as the perceptions of three executives who have not undergone coaching.

1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Executive coaching has evolved from an arbitrary leadership development practice in the late 1980s to being one of the most commonly used tools benefiting leaders (Coutu & Kauffman, 2009; McGovern et al., 2001; Tobias, 1996). It is something that is relatively new and it does not seem to be clearly understood or differentiated from mentoring.

Executive coaching is targeted at business people who are used to having data availability when they decide on the costs and benefits of any time or money they spend; there is not enough research data available to satisfy this costing-benefit requirement for coaching. Despite this, coaching has rapidly become a significant part of many organizations' learning and development strategy. The challenge of transferring learning from training to the workplace and the lack of sustained behavioural change has driven the need for more individualised, more engaged and more context-specific learning (Bacon & Spear, 2003).

In South Africa, blacks have only recently (post 1994, with Employment Equity Act being promulgated in 1996) been provided the opportunity to take up the role of executive leaders. The researcher was uncertain if black executives are aware that coaching exists or what understanding they have of what coaching is (as opposed to mentoring). The researcher was also uncertain what associations the executives ascribe with being coached, as well as the factors they view as important for optimising the effectiveness of coaching or to what extent they view coaching as beneficial and value-adding.

1.4. RESEARCH AIM

This study aimed to explore South African black business executives' perceptions of coaching in order to gain insights into ways of increasing their awareness of coaching as a valuable tool for enhancing their success.

The main research question for the study was:

"What perceptions do South African black corporate executives have about coaching and how do they feel coaching can be beneficial for their career and business success?"

1.5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

To determine what understanding South African black corporate executives have of coaching.

To determine who South African black corporate executives think should get coaching and when coaching is needed.

To determine what factors South African black corporate executives view as important to the effectiveness of coaching.

To determine what benefits and value South African black corporate executives ascribe to coaching.

1.6. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study limited itself to examining blacks in executive roles of various organisations. These were based in Johannesburg, Pretoria and Cape Town. The research confined itself to African black executives.

The study gathered data from 13 participants, ten of whom had personally experienced coaching.

1.7. CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Definitions of some of the key concepts used in this research assignment are described below.

Black

South African black individuals, regardless of age or gender

Corporate

In the context of running or operating a business or any type of institution/ organisation in the private or public sector, whether for profit or not for profit.

Executive

Individuals within the corporate environment who have decision-making powers that affect the organisation, or a major part of the organisation (such as a region or a department). This includes entrepreneurs.

Coaching

A definition of coaching that supported this research was 'a solution-focused, results-orientated systemic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of performance, self-directed learning and personal growth of other individuals' (Grant, 2000 cited in Stout-Rostron, 2012: 40). In this study this term was used interchangeably with 'executive coaching'.

Executive coach

An executive coach works with clients in enhancing their effectiveness in their work role within the corporate system. The term refers to the person doing one-on-one coaching. The terms 'executive coach', 'business coach' and 'coach' were used interchangeably in this study.

Client

The client is the individual receiving executive coaching and is a leader in the corporate sector on executive level. In some literature, 'coachee' and 'client' are used interchangeably.

Having clarified the key concepts of this study, the next section discusses the importance and benefits of the study.

1.8. IMPORTANCE/BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

This study should increase the awareness that South African black corporate executives have of coaching as a mechanism which may be used to increase the success of black South Africans in the corporate sector. This is especially important when linked to the overall goals of transformation in reversing the effects of apartheid which excluded giving blacks the opportunities to operate in executive leadership positions.

The findings which arose from this study are of use to the following people:

- academic institutions by giving perspective on how to better align and promote coaching as a tool for supporting the goal of addressing the country's historical socio-economic challenges;
- the coaching fraternity have a deeper insight in order to better market and provide coaching services to black African executives, as well as to better customise their coaching approach when working with these clients;

- policy-makers and organisational development practitioners who have more information on one of the ways available to speed up transformation (including improved retention of black executives) in the corporate sector;
- funders in the broader black empowerment context may now see the benefit of specifically-allocating funds to coaching services to enhance the success of (entrepreneur-focused) institutions that receive funding; and
- the black executives themselves may gain a broader, deeper and more accurate understanding of what coaching is and the benefits that they and the people they lead can derive from it.

1.9. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.9.1. Rationale for the research approach

The study was an exploration of the subjective internal views of the participants and needed to be approached from an interpretive paradigm. The intention was to gain depth of understanding rather than breadth, as indicated by Ormston *et al* (2013), in accordance with the participants' own lived experiences. Bloomberg and Volpe (2008: 80) reported that qualitative research is concerned with how the complexities of the sociocultural world are experienced, interpreted and understood in a particular context and at a particular point in time; this was relevant for this study as it was based on constructivism (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

1.9.2. The population and sample

The study included black males and/or women who occupy positions at executive level in corporate institutions. This research involved purposeful sampling which includes selecting rich cases for in-depth study (McMillan and Schumacher.1993). Only participants who had decision-making powers that affect the organisation, or a major part of the organisation (such as a region or a department) were included in the study. They needed to have a minimum of two years' experience at this level, including entrepreneurs.

Thirteen participants were interviewed. The executives had to be based in South Africa in order to give feedback relevant to the South African context. The participants were four females and nine males of which ten had personally experienced the coaching process.

In selecting the number of participants to interview, consideration was given to research performed by Morse (1994), Creswell (1998; 2007), Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) as

well as Guest *et al.* (2006). The sample size of 13 was therefore found to be appropriate for the purpose of this study.

1.9.3. Data collection

Data was collected by way of semi-structured pre-scripted interview. The value and appropriateness of this method of data collection was confirmed against research literature. The interviews were recorded in audio format. Ethical considerations were paramount in collecting data, including giving the participants assurance of confidentiality and anonymity and ensuring that they were aware of their rights as participants.

1.9.4. Data analysis

The researcher used Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps method when analysing the data. This entailed the researcher familiarising himself with data before and after transcription, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing the identified themes and patterns, defining and naming the key themes and finally producing the report.

As researcher and coach, the author had to be disciplined not to impose personal knowledge of the research topic on the data. The researcher was conscious of working methodically using the selected thematic analysis methodology. The researcher ensured that the required ethical standards were applied.

1.10. CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 2 contains a more detailed literature review of the theory that underpins this research assignment.

Chapter 3 covers the research methods used, including the reason for selecting these methods in support of the research aim and objectives. The sampling, data collection and data analysis methods are described as well as the limitations and ethical considerations of the study.

Chapter 4 discusses the findings according to the themes drawn from the data analysis. The findings are explored with reference to the literature review in Chapter 2 and emerged themes are discussed and interpretations made.

Chapter 5 summarises the findings, conclusions and recommendations. Limitations of the study and further research opportunities also form part of this chapter.

1.11. SUMMARY

The study focused on black people who occupy leadership roles at executive level in the corporate sector (including entrepreneurs), with the intention of exploring the perception that they have of coaching as a tool for empowering them for business and career success. The research helps to identify and fill in the gaps in the literature pertaining to coaching black executives.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The focus of this research assignment is on the participants' perceptions of coaching and its benefits towards leadership growth and success in the South African context of corporate and entrepreneurial executive leadership.

This chapter explores the key theoretical concepts and evidence which relates to executive coaching. The research approach was to review the various definitions of coaching in the literature and then to suggest the most appropriate definition in the context of my study. The literature further distinguishes executive coaching from mentoring, counselling, training and consulting.

Attention is focused primarily on the effectiveness of leadership development programmes in the literature. The emphasis is on the contribution of coaching towards leadership development.

The participants occupy executive leadership roles, therefore there is an emphasis on the role of coaching people with executive or senior leadership responsibilities. Literature regarding the various benefits and outcomes of coaching on an individual and organisational level is reviewed to further support the research objectives. Measurement systems used to determine the contribution that coaching makes towards an individual and the organisation are considered, thereby giving clarity and understanding on how to approach the research objectives.

2.2. WHAT IS COACHING?

2.2.1. Definitions

There are many definitions of coaching in the literature. Defining coaching is a challenge because coaches range in expertise, are influenced by a variety of disciplines and there is a variable context in which coaching is used (Hamlin, Ellinger & Beattie, 2009: 18; Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001: 224). The literature suggests that coaching definitions can be adapted not only to suit the coaching approach, but also the specific situation and intended outcome (Ives, 2008: 100; Jackson, 2005: 47).

One definition sees coaching as an interactive process aimed at helping the coachee to focus on achieving their clearly defined goals (Ives, 2008: 103; Scheepers, 2012: 17). COMENSA (2013) describes coaching as a 'professional, collaborative and outcomes-driven method of learning that seeks to develop an individual and raise self-awareness so that he or she might achieve specific goals and perform at a more effective level'. Stout-Rostron (2012: 40) highlights that coaching is 'a process that creates sustained shifts in thinking, feeling and behaviour – ultimately in performance'. Douglas and McCauley (1999: 203) support this view by expressing that the aim of executive or life coaching is sustained cognitive, emotional and behavioural changes that facilitate goal attainment and performance enhancement, either in one's work or personal life.

In the research carried out by Hamlin *et al.* (2009: 18), 36 definitions were scrutinised, collated and categorised into four categories, namely – 'coaching', 'executive coaching', 'business coaching' and 'life coaching'. Their research confirmed that there is little substantive difference among them. Common to all four of these variants is that of providing 'help to individuals and organisations through some form of facilitation activity or intervention' as well as the intention of helping individuals to improve their performance in various domains and to enhance their personal effectiveness, development and growth (Hamlin *et al.*, 2009: 18).

Ives (2008: 103) found that the following features surfaced as commonalities, irrespective of the coaching approach, where coaching is:

- i) a systematic, collaborative, process designed to facilitate change - whether cognitive, emotional or behavioural (Grant, 2003: 254; Stout-Rostron, 2012: 40)
- ii) intended for a non-clinical population (Grant; 2003: 254; Grant & Stober, 2006: 2; O'Connor & Lages, 2007: 16)
- iii) an individual, tailor-made approach, rather than a one-size-fits-all type (Orenstein, 2002: 356; Scheepers, 2012: 20) and thus aims to encourage coachees to take charge of their lives
- iv) based on growth areas of awareness and responsibility (Bluckert, 2006: 5)
- v) designed to access the inner resourcefulness of the client
- vi) focused on solutions and goal attainment, rather than analysing problems.

The role of the coach is to facilitate the process, not direct the outcome of the coachee; it is helping them to learn rather than teaching them (Whitmore, 2002). Stober and Grant (2006) assert that a skilled coach would know when it is appropriate to act as an authoritative expert and when as a facilitator. However, coaching is more about asking the right questions than telling people what to do (Grant & Stober, 2006). The coachee is held accountable for the choices they make.

Based on the collective definitions of the scholars in this review, I offer this definition of coaching for the purpose of this study:

Coaching is a thinking partnership between a coach and a coachee within a systemic, facilitated and goal-orientated process, where a sustained shift in thinking, feeling and behaviour is created resulting in a higher level of coachee learning, growth, effectiveness and all-round general well-being (Grant & Cavanagh, 2004: 11; Kline, 2009: 138; Stout-Rostron, 2012: 40).

2.2.2 Differentiating coaching from therapy, mentoring and consulting

a. Coaching and therapy

Whilst therapy and coaching differ, Bluckert (2005b) and Judge (1997) both highlight that the two disciplines are similar in their partnership nature and in the pursuit of ultimately enabling the client to resolve challenges. Both these practices target behavioural change, cultivate self-awareness and learning, and are facilitated through professional engagement in the context of a trusting relationship (Hodgetts, 2002). The two however should not be confused.

According to Rogers (2012), the client's mental state is a key distinction across the different practices. Rogers (2012) argues that in therapy, clients are often experiencing distress or a personal challenge, and commonly in a disabling state. In coaching, on the other hand, the client is central in driving the outcomes towards their work and life related goals. Secondly, the skillsets of a coach are different to both a mentor and a therapist (De Haan, 2006). Therapy commonly takes a historical lens, tracing the roots of a problem, whereas coaching commonly focuses on present circumstances and looking into the future (Rogers, 2012; Bachkirova, 2007). A key component of coaching is addressing weaknesses, with a focus on behavioural shifts whereas therapy tackles healing and restoration (Rogers, 2012).

Yet, in certain important and essential ways, coaching and therapy are different and should not be confused (Hodgetts, 2002).

b. Coaching and mentoring

Clutterbuck (2008) argues that there are contextual differences between coaching and mentoring whereas the similarities are that both take either a direct or non-direct approach. In addition, both disciplines utilise the experiences of the client and the coach. Whilst the duration of either practices may differ in length, both practices involve using the client's experience to chart direction; the goals are set by the client; and the client's current circumstances are taken into account and utilized to form personal development goals.

According to Garvey (2010), both mentoring and coaching are connected to learning and education and use a one-to-one approach. Additionally, they share a similar process, skillsets and practices, but are distinguished by environment where the coaching occurs, including the purpose of either practices.

Feldman and Lankau (2005) assert that the majority of executive coaches are external to the organization and get compensated for enabling the improvement of executive performance. Whilst a mentor can act in similar ways as a coach, the difference is that mentors are commonly in-house members, who are working in the organization, and could possibly have other vested interests beyond enhancing the executive's potential.

Table 1 below summarises the definitions of the various counterparts of coaching that are sometimes mistaken for coaching, as cited by various authors.

Table 1: What does not constitute coaching

Mentoring Guides	Mentoring is a one-on-one relationship where a highly experienced person (i.e. mentor) acts as an advisor, guide and role model to a less experienced person (i.e. mentee) and is intended to advance the personal and professional growth of the mentee (Jarvis, 2004; Mullen, 1994 cited in Joo, 2005; Scheepers, 2012; Steinmann, 2006). It is concerned with the longer term acquisition of skills (Fieldon 2005; Jarvis, 2004). In contrast, the coach is a facilitator and need not be an expert in the coachee's field.
Therapy (counselling) Fixes (heals)	Counselling is a remedial process used to help those who are damaged with distressing disorders or in crisis, return to normal (Joo, 2005; Orlinsky, 2007 cited in Rock & Page, 2009; Scheepers, 2012). Scheepers (2012: 27) cites Marquardt (2004), who asserts that the coach's role is to get the client from today to tomorrow, while the therapist seeks to get the client from yesterday to today. Scheepers (2002: 27) adds that 'therapy is about uncovering and recovering, while coaching is about discovering'.
Training Teaches	Training is an organised activity aimed at imparting information or instructions to improve the individual's performance, or to help with the attainment of a required level of knowledge or skill (Businessdictionary.com, 2014). The programme is based on objectives as set out by the trainer following a linear path with an established curriculum, whereas coaching is less linear, without a set curriculum (Lawton-Smith & Cox, 2007). Lawton-

	Smith and Cox (2007: 8) argued that coaching is a process of person-centred development and not just another name for training.
Consulting Advices	Consulting is giving expert advice to the client (McCarthy & Milner, 2013). Often in the form of reports and recommendations and as a result relies 'heavily on telling and selling' (McAdam, 2005 cited in Scheepers, 2012: 28). Coaches use the process of inquiry and reflection to enable the coachee to generate their own solutions on the issue on hand (O'Connor & Lages, 2007).

2.2.3. Business and executive coaching

Executive coaching is a 'one of one' helping partner relationship formed between a client who has managerial authority and responsibility in an organisation and a consultant who uses a wide variety of behavioural techniques and methods to help the client achieve a mutually identified set of goals according to a formally defined coaching agreement (ICF, 2016; Boyce et al. 2010). The goals assist the client to improve his or her professional development, performance and personal satisfaction (Grant, 2001 cited in Hamlin et al., 2009: 19; Kilburg, 2000; Zeus & Skiffington, 2000) and, consequently, to improve the effectiveness of the client's organisation (ICF, 2007 cited in Hamlin et al., 2009; Grant, 2006; Kilburg, 2002; Kilburg, 1996). Horner (2002: 23) found that coaching focused on personal development, rather than immediate work related tasks, is more effective in improving and sustaining leadership competencies and performance.

The match between the client and the coach is considered a key feature in establishing a mutually beneficial relationship (Feldman & Lankau, 2005). Executives operate in the context of a business environment – whether for or not for profit. It is important, therefore to consider the business focus relating to executive coaching. For business and executive coaching, there are two additional principles and guidelines; namely, a business focus and a systems focus (Bluckert, 2006: 6; O'Neil, 2007: 11). The Sherpa Coaching Executive Survey 9th Annual Report (2014) highlights business coaches as working to develop the client's knowledge, skills and performance; and executive coaches as working to permanently enhance business behaviour (Sherman and Freas, 2004).

A key component of coaching is to view the client as the expert in knowing their lives and work (ICF, 2016; Passmore, 2011; Brockbank, 2008). Through this lens the coach recognizes the substantial and multidimensional resources that a client carries. Ultimately the coach has three key responsibilities, namely:

- Empower the client to clarify their goals
- Empower the client to delve deeper, ultimately growing in self-aware and self-discovery
- Empowers the client to take responsibility and accountability

In essence, coaching is about the growth and change of a human being (Stober, 2006).

2.2.4 Justification for coaching

Executive coaching forms part of leadership development and is conducted by a qualified coach through one-on-one conversation or dialogue (Birch & Jones, 2013).

Literature on coaching by De Meuse and Dai & Lee (2009) distinguish two types of executives who undergo coaching. The first type of executive requires coaching to improve performance in their current role, the other type may be a manager who is looking at improving their skills for a future executive role. When they start coaching, they may lack the necessary skills that they would need to perform at their maximum in the targeted role (London, 2002).

Judge (1997) asserts that there is yet another category of coaching participants, like architects, entrepreneurs, as medical practitioners, who are in these high profile professions that tend to struggle with personal development as well as long-term planning. For a while, coaching has commonly focused on executives who were not necessarily good performers (McCall, Lombardo, & Morrison, 1998). The coaching of many managers in today's business world has specifically been intended for their leadership development transitions or issues as well as for their personal development (Coutu & Kauffman, 2009).

2.2.5 Evaluating the positive effects of coaching

Despite the identified successes of coaching amongst executives, there is minimal empirical evidence which supports the direct impact of coaching (Passmore, 2011; De Meuse, et al., 2009; Feldman & Lankau, 2005; Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001). Whilst there has been a rise in studies highlighting the positive effects of coaching (De Meuse, et al., 2009; Grant & Cavanagh, 2004), there is a need for reliable and valid evidence which can prove the impact of coaching on both organizations and leaders. Brockbank and McGill, (2012) assert that embarking on development coaching would necessarily lead to one transformational change. De Haan (2008) meanwhile concurs with the assertion embarking on a coaching intervention would be a developmental journey that in most instances could be utilized by consulting

professionals as well as senior executives. This type of coaching intervention tends to enhance life-long learning which ultimately propels human development, productivity and fulfilment (Whitworth, Kimsey, House, & Sandhal, 1998).

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of coaching, some authors believe that practitioners should implement a stage-based approach (De Meuse et al., 2009). Whereas, Hicks and Peterson (1999) have proposed an approach which has five phases in the development of executives that includes: accountability, real-world practice, motivation, insights, as well as capabilities.

In the end, executives who have undergone coaching, improve their decision-making abilities, their interpersonal skills and they expand their world views (ICF, 2016). The personal impact in the lives of the individuals as a result of executive coaching also extends to the organization where the executives work (de Haan, et al., 2014).

With these gaps in the literature, the aim of this research is to contribute to the evaluation of coaching in the personal and professional lives of black South African executive leaders. As the coaching field grows in South Africa (Attlee, 2013), a good grounding and understanding of the impact is increasingly crucial.

2.3 THE COACHING RELATIONSHIP

A growing body of research has highlighted the value of the coaching relationship (Clutterbuck, 2010; Kampa-Kokesch & a, 2001). Baron & Morin (2009: 86) argue that it is 'a key process variable' which 'constitutes an essential condition for the success of executive coaching'.

2.3.1 Coach-coachee Matching Criteria

In the process of identifying a suitable coach, the client identifies specific attributes, skills or experiences which the coach embodies that fit their needs (Wycherley & Cox, 2008). There is greater variety in the client's selection process when the organization that they work for has a large pool of coaches from which they can draw from. According to Boyce et al. (2010) finding a "good match" in the selection process contributes to the quality of the coaching relationship. A trust relationship has been identified as the most crucial joining factor between a client and coach. This attribute helps in developing and maintaining a relationship where the client's potential can be enhanced (Baron & Morin, 2009; O'Broin & Palmer, 2010, Stout-Roston, 2012). The erosion of trust in this relationship, can affect the clients level of engagement and motivation towards changed behaviour (Ford, et al., 2008).

To facilitate the process of identifying a compatible coach, clients and coaches can be matched according to various commonalities. These commonalities include demographics, professional experiences, like-mindedness, similar management and leadership styles, and skills and experience of the coach (Boyce *et al*, 2010). It is important to note that there is not enough research which shows better matching links between race and gender matching between coach and coachee. Gray and Goregaokar's (2010) research findings suggest that women coaches have a higher preference for coaching women. This can be attributed to compatibility in terms of skills, and professional experiences. On the other hand, male coaches were found to appreciate the sensitivity with which women coaches approached the sessions and how they help them tackle personal challenges. That said, the study did not demonstrate significant preference or better matching by gender. A more recent study conducted by Bozer, Joo & Santora (2015) also shows no significant impact on cross-gender coaching outcomes.

2.3.2 Listening and questioning skills

To build an effective relationship between the coach and client, Rogers (2012) argues that the coach must avoid the temptation to provide advice and pass judgement. Rather, a coach must actively listen and display unconditional acceptance to build rapport and trust (Creane, 2006). Active listening forms a core component of a successful coaching relationship (De Haan, 2008; Drake, 2010; Rogers 2012). For this reason, Reik (1998) argues that coaches must listen "with the third ear". In essence this entails listening with discernment, paying attention to body language and picking up on unsaid messages. Similarly, Egan (2010) highlights that listening is dimensional, involving both verbal and non-verbal communication. Brockbank & McGill (2006) call this "listening to the whole person".

According to Megginson & Clutterbuck (2009), the growth of a coach is their ability to listen in such a way that they understand how the client is making sense of their world. Further, asking key questions is an essential aspect of showcasing well-developed listening skill (Dent & Brent, 2015; Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2009; Rogers 2012).

Questions in coaching are seen as a powerful tool to probe the client to further explore the challenges they are facing, allowing them to find their own solutions. The ability to ask good questions is a skill which is developed with experience. Reflective questions encourage clients to discover new perspectives and possibilities (Dent & Brent, 2015). Good coaches assist clients to challenge their assumptions, ultimately finding alternative ways of seeing a challenge. Further, coaches must have a good balance of asking questions about both facts and emotions (Dent & Brent, 2015). There appears to be universal agreement among

scholars regarding the value of using open-ended questions in coaching (Rogers, 2012; Dent & Brent, 2015).

2.3.3 Characteristics of a coaching relationship

Unlike social mentorship, for instance, there are indispensable characteristics which must guide the professional nature of a coaching relationship. Scholars such as Kilburg (1997) argue that punctuality, place of meeting, time, the price and cancelation all form a part of 'hygiene' factors. Coaching must be predictable and reliable, with both members showcasing respect and consideration towards each other. The coach must act in an authentic manner, so not to appear as unrelatable. Further the coach must enter the relationship with the firm view that the client is resourceful with the capacity to make decisions and take responsibility for their lives.

The client then sets the tone and agenda of the relationship whilst the coach guides the process (Rogers, 2012). The support that the coach provides is crucial, this can be achieved by provided feedback on progress and identified changes in the client (Stober, 2006) and at other times challenging the client (Rogers, 2012). There is consensus across the literature is that empathy, authenticity and a positive regard for one another are fundamental attitudes for the coach-client relationship (Stober. 2006).

Empathy is defined as cognitively and emotionally connecting with the client to feel and better understand their experience (Stober, 2006). This is shifting into the client's world. Positive regard is considering the client's experiences as worthy and valuing them for who they are (Stober, 2006). According to Rogers (2012) when the client and coach enter as equals, working collaboratively through coaching, more can be achieved in the partnership (Cavanagh & Parker, 2010). This thesis applies both Rogers' (2012) and Stober's (2006) insights to explore the benefit and quality of the coaching relationship.

2.4 THE COACHING PROCESS

There are various coaching processes, methods and models. The intention of this study is not to explore the coaching methods themselves. This however, should not be seen to reduce the importance of the coaching process as a possible factor for the client's experience of the coaching. Overall, most coaching processes include the following stages whose sequence may differ (e.g. Bluckert, 2006; Peterson, 2006; Kilburg, 2004):

- Establishing the coaching relationship and contract
- Establishing the coaching need and objectives
- Delivering the coaching
- Real-world practice
- Evaluating the coaching process against the objectives set

Multi-stakeholder contracting can be a challenge around boundary management and confidentiality, so it is important that this stage of the coaching process is addressed at the onset of the relationship, where applicable (Turner & Hawkins, 2015: 2; Pomerantz & Eiting, 2004).

The most common cause of problems that coaches brought to coaching supervision was a “mismatch of expectations at the contracting stage of the relationship” (Clutterbuck, 2015: 1). The ineffective contracting practice of the coach, including not setting adequate boundaries, was cited as the main reason for things going wrong in coaching interventions (Ting & Scisco, 2006: 19; Bluckert, 2005 cited by Fillery-Travis, 2015: 7).

2.5 SUMMARY

This chapter provided contrasts and similarities between coaching, therapy, mentoring and consulting. The common components for coaching methodologies as well as the key factors that are seen to impact the effectiveness of coaching are also explored. The evaluation of coaching effectiveness was also explored as part of this chapter.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the research methodologies that were employed in order to gather data and meet research objectives. In this section, the methodology followed in the research report is explained.

The aim was to ascertain the perception that of black South African executives have of coaching and to obtain their views on what makes for a successful coaching process. The following research objectives were set:

- To identify whether coaching interventions had a positive impact for the executives who had personally experienced coaching, as well as getting clarity on the benefits that were (or can be) derived from coaching;
- To ascertain the factors that contribute to the success of the coaching experience;
- To establish what constitutes a positive coaching experience for the person being coached and why.

3.2 THE POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Only black South Africans who occupy positions at executive level in corporate institutions participated in the study. The participants all have decision-making powers that affect the organisation, or a major part of the organisation (such as a region or a department), were included in the study. This included entrepreneurs.

The researcher identified 49 possible participants from his own and extended network; he then approached 25 of the possible participants out of which one did not respond and another declined.

In selecting the number of participants to interview, consideration was given to the findings of Morse (1994), who recommended at least six participants; and Creswell (1998; 2007), who recommended between five and 25 interviews. Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) found that saturation occurred within the first 12 interviews, although basic elements for metathemes were present as early as after six interviews. Guest *et al.* (2006) further reports that where the aim is to understand common perceptions and experiences among a group of

relatively homogeneous individuals, 12 interviews should suffice. The sample size of 10 to 16 was therefore found to be appropriate for the purpose of this study.

Out of the remaining 23, who had all agreed to participate, the author then selected 16 – of these, one (a male operating in the public sector and based in Johannesburg) had to cancel the appointment due to business travel requirements; the other (a male entrepreneur based in Cape Town) was ill and cancelled the interview within five minutes of having started. The one (operating in the public sector and based in Johannesburg) had to leave because his wife was in hospital and he was not able to focus during the interview. In the end the author conducted 13 interviews which are included in the analysis and discussion chapters.

Thus the sample was made up of thirteen participants. The sample included individuals who had been exposed to a coaching intervention in their past. The selection method was purposive sampling to obtain rich data fitting for the study. Five of these participants were selected at random; access to these participants was gained through the professional network of the researcher. The remaining seven participants were accessed from the researcher's personal network. All participants of this study were asked to respond to the questions posed in the interview schedule. The interview questions were grouped into two categories – those questions posed to participants who indicated that they had received coaching and those who indicated that they had no personal experience of coaching. Early in the interview, the interviewer asked the participants to describe executive coaching, as they understand it. Thereafter, the participants were given a document with some definitions of coaching and mentoring (Appendix E). After they read the document they were asked if their understanding of coaching had changed. This process was given to ensure that participants had a clear understanding of coaching when they responded to the interview questions.

3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.3.1 Rationale for the research approach

The method used is qualitative research which is explorative in nature as it seeks to explore and understand the perception and meaning ascribed to a phenomenon – it is based on constructivism (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The choice between qualitative and quantitative methods is important as the choice will effectively help answer the research question. It is important to note the differentiation between these research tools. Whereas quantitative approaches are used to test pre-determined hypothesis, answer the 'what' questions and create generalizable results,

qualitative approaches will help answer the 'what', as well as the 'why' and 'how' questions; using qualitative approaches is particularly good in understanding dynamics as they are lived in their natural settings rather than in artificial settings.

The study was an exploration of the subjective internal views of the participants and was approached from an interpretive paradigm. The intention was to gain depth of understanding rather than breadth, as indicated by Ormston *et al* (2013). Interpretivism holds the assumption that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they work and live (Creswell, 2009), a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex and forever in a state of flux (Thomas, 2003). In this research, the researcher sought to discover the meaning of coaching to the participants against the backdrop of a country still experiencing the symptoms of a historical system based on racial favouritism when giving opportunities and recognition in the corporate context. Bloomberg and Volpe (2008: 80) reported that qualitative research is concerned with how the complexities of the sociocultural world is experienced, interpreted and understood in a particular context and at a particular point in time; this was also relevant for this study.

3.4 THE DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

The research data was collected by way of semi-structured interviews which allowed for the collection of rich and in-depth data (McMillan and Schumacher. 1993). The value of this method of data collection is that it is based on the belief that individuals actively construct their social worlds and can verbally communicate insights they have about their worlds thereby leading to a better understanding of the personal context of the research phenomenon under study (Lewis & Nicholls. 2013).

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000) also list the following advantages of qualitative interviews:

- Qualitative interviews actively involve the respondents in the research process – thereby, empowering the respondents.
- They allow free interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee.
- They allow opportunities for clarification so that relevant data is captured.
- They maximise description and discovery.
- They offer researchers access to people's ideas, thoughts and memories in their own words, rather than in the words of the researcher.

Semi-structured interviews, based on pre-scripted questions (Appendix A) gave structure to the interviews but also enabled the interviewer flexibility in conducting the interview, including changing the sequence of the questions to minimise disruption to the participants' thinking flow (Runswick-Cole, 2011). The face to face interviews took place in a private setting where there was minimal disruption and to make the participant as comfortable and engaged as possible (Babbie & Mouton, 2006) – these were all conducted by the researcher. At the beginning of each interview, the participant consent form was explained and discussed with the participant who then signed to confirm understanding of, and agreement to, the consent form. The interviews varied in duration from 40 minutes (being the shortest interview) to 90 minutes (which was the longest). All interviews were audio-recorded, with the consent of the participant. The researcher used follow up and clarity-seeking questions to probe and clarify answers; this was to ensure that adequate understanding of the answers given by the participants was obtained and to identify new lines of inquiry directly related to any factors which impact their perception of executive coaching (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a). The intention was to allow flexibility for the participants to contribute other information without distracting from the collection of core data required to pursue the research objectives. Each interview concluded with the participant being given an opportunity to ask whatever questions they might have. The researcher would then confirm if the participant wanted a copy of the final research paper, after the university's processes were completed, to be shared with them.

The recordings were then given to transcribers for transcriptions. A contract addressing the importance of confidentiality was signed with each transcriber before this handover took place (Appendix C). All transcriptions were stored electronically with passwords in place to restrict access to them. After the transcripts of all the interviews were received, the researcher started with the analysis of the data using excel as a tool.

3.5 Data Analysis

The researcher used Braun and Clarke's (2006) suggested six steps in analysing data as follows:

- I. **Becoming familiar with the data:** organising, reading and formatting it for analysis (Creswell, 2009).
- II. **Initial coding:** coding was done after reading the transcripts in detail, line by line, and summarising the data into analytical units which were then be assigned codes (Nieuwenhuis, 2007b).

- III. **Searching for themes:** the codes were grouped together according to themes identifying and combining related thoughts and patterns (Aronson, 1994; Nieuwenhuis, 2007b).
- IV. **Reviewing themes:** in order to ensure that data within themes fit together, the themes that fit together were grouped under one theme, and the themes that could be broken down into separate sub-themes were grouped as sub-themes under the relevant theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006).
- V. **Defining and naming themes:** the researcher identified the essence of each theme and named it accordingly (Braun & Clarke, 2006).
- VI. **Producing a report:** the researcher provided an account of the narrative the data reflected, with and across themes and their related sub-themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The data is represented descriptively, and for the purpose of characterising the benefits of coaching and also for factors which impact the success of the coaching process. In addition to this, discussion points were identified which do not fit under the themes identified, but were important to note for the purposes capturing all the relevant information and a complete discussion in chapter 4.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research report was conducted in such a way as to ensure that the use of the data does not cause any damage or distress to any persons interviewed. The study also ensures that the data used is valid and reliable by sourcing data from peer reviewed journal articles in order to support the data collected. All participants were informed of their rights, particularly of their rights to voluntary-participation, to anonymity and confidentiality. This is a research project that is founded on human-rights based and ethical principles of confidentiality, informed consent, anonymity, voluntarism, dignity, honesty and truthfulness.

The ethical considerations include:

- i. Voluntary participation and informed consent: participants were fully aware of what the study entails and what was expected of them and gave full consent to participate. Participants were aware that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time should they wish to do so;

- ii. The researcher did not get permission to do interviews from the employers of the participants. The researcher did identify a need to do so because the participants were approached as individuals rather than based on the institutions in which they play their executive role;
- iii. The researcher sought permission from the participants to record the interviews;
- iv. The importance of confidentiality and how this was to be treated in the final research was explained to the participants;
- v. Anonymity including the use of pseudonyms was discussed;
- vi. To do no harm – physical or psychological – was one of the key considerations throughout the data collection, analysis and write up; and
- vii. Other ethical requirements required by the university (ethical clearance) were included where recommended.

The participants were all South African black business executives and were interviewed by a researcher who is also a South African black executive as well as being a coach. These factors and their possible impact on the data collection process (interviews) as well as the analysis (coding and theme identification/ grouping) need to be acknowledged and reflected on in evaluating the credibility of the research findings (Teo, 2015).

As researcher and coach, the author had to be disciplined not to impose personal knowledge of the research topic on the data. The researcher was conscious of working methodically according to the six-step thematic analysis of Braun and Clarke (2006) in coding the data and identifying themes. The researcher created space for the data to tell the story. This approach was in alignment with the explorative purpose selected for the research (Babbie & Mouton, 2014). The researcher also attempted to identify and remove personal feelings or biases through the use of research reflections and journaling (Tufford & Newman, 2012).

The researcher ensured that the ethical standards, as agreed to in the academic institution's ethics checklist, were applied.

3.7 SUMMARY

This chapter explained the research methodology that was used in order to collate and analyse data. Ethical considerations were described, as well as research limitations explained and their impact considered. The population, sampling and the research

methodologies were also described and documented. In the following chapter, the data will be presented and analysed, and findings explained.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the findings are presented and examined. The main objective of this part of the research was to provide the structure for the presentation of the arguments that support the research question. The findings were derived from interviewing different participants that were relevant to the study. The researcher has included a number of direct quotations from the participants so that their meaning, especially where the researcher felt that the participant's own words expressed their views more clearly, would be retained.

4.2 PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND COACHING EXPERIENCES

Information about the 13 participants is included in the table 2 below:

No.	Participant	Location	Gender	Sector	Industry	Owner or Employed	No of years as exec	No of people led	Coached before?	Type of coaching	Coaching arranged by	Coaching beneficial?
1	AF	Gauteng	Male	Public	Auditing	Employed	10+	500+	Yes	One on one for a longer-term period	Organisation as part of development	Yes
2	NW	Gauteng	Male	Private	Auditing	Employed	2+	100+	No	N/a	N/A	N/A
3	OP	Cape Town	Male	Private	Construction	Owner	6+	30+	Yes	One on one for a short period	Organisation as part of development	No
4	NXL	Cape Town	Male	Private	Construction	Owner	5+	100+	Yes	One on one for a short period	Organisation as part of training program	Yes
5	RXF	Gauteng	Male	Private	Accounting and Training	Owner	4+	15+	Yes	One of one for longer term with different coaches	Organisation - as part of coaching accreditation training	Yes
6	HU	Cape Town	Male	Private	Wealth Management	Owner	5+	100+	Yes	One on one for a longer-term period	Organisation as part of development	Yes
7	SXM	Cape Town	Male	Private	Information Technology	Owner	3+	3	No	N/a	N/A	N/A
8	AZF	Gauteng	Female	Private	Auditing	Owner	5+	30+	Yes	One on one for a longer-term period	Self - informal	Yes

No.	Participant	Location	Gender	Sector	Industry	Owner or Employed	No of years as exec	No of people led	Coached before?	Type of coaching	Coaching arranged by	Coaching beneficial?
9	ZAX	Gauteng	Female	Public	Media	Employed	10+	100+	Yes	One on one for a longer-term period	Organisation as part of development	Yes
10	AAA	Gauteng	Male	Private	Automobile Sales	Employed	5+	40+	Yes	One on one for a short period	Organisation as part of training program	Yes
11	BBB	Cape Town	Female	Private	Property Development	Owner	5+	10+	No	N/A	N/A	N/A
12	SU	Gauteng	Female	Public	Auditing	Employed	10+	500+	Yes	One on one for a short period	Self - formal	No
13	RRU	Cape Town	Male	Private	Fossil Fuels	Owner	2+	90+	Yes	One on one for a longer-term period	Organisation as part of development	Yes

Location: seven of the participants are based in Gauteng and six in Cape Town.

Gender: nine are males and four females.

Sector: three are in the public sector and 10 in the private sector.

Equity: eight own the organisations and five are employed as executives.

Executive experience: four participants have less than five years' experience; six have 5 to 10 years; and three have more than ten years of executive experience.

Received coaching: Three participants have not experienced coaching; ten have been coached. Of the ten who have been coached, eight had received coaching which was sponsored by their organisation whilst two had personally arranged it for themselves outside of their employer.

Of the 10 participants who have been coached, eight found the process beneficial. Two of the participants (SU and OP) who had experienced coaching had found it not to be personally beneficial. The two participants (SU and OP) who had received no value from the coaching also form part of the three participants who received coaching which lasted for less than three months (the other being AAA). SU said this of her coaching experience:

"I found the engagements a little bit less helpful than I hoped for. Maybe we just didn't scope it properly or I wasn't convinced that he was putting in the work to guide and hold me accountable in the way that I'd hoped. I found him a little bit too casual...". SU

Despite having no personal experience of coaching, all three affected participants were still able to give inputs to the research because they know friends or colleagues who have experienced coaching. In addition, BBB had an experience during a training course where an assessment tool was applied on the team she was part of and from this assessment some of the dynamics within and already known to the team were identified and causes therefore explained.

"I remember when I was doing some of the leadership courses, they give you a spreadsheet with questions and answers to determine what type of personality you are. And, for me, those kind of coaching, if they're coaching or whatever it is that they are, those kind of questions, that kind of insight does something to you".

From this experience, which was facilitated by a coach, she also saw some of the possible benefits from a relationship-management and self-management perspective.

Nine of participants' coaching experiences had been formally arranged with a coaching professional. AZF, on the other hand, had initially said that she had not experienced

coaching. It was during the interview that she realized that she does have a coaching relationship which is informal. In her own words:

“I always thought coaching would be more formal and more formalised versus mentoring; I didn’t see that a coach could be a non-certified person. It’s the process itself”.

All participants were of the view that coaching is relevant and beneficial for everyone, but is especially important for those who have leadership roles requiring strategic thinking and relationship management.

4.3 THEMES

The aim of the study was to explore the perception of executive coaching amongst black African executives in the South African context. The data from the interviews revealed six main themes, each with its underlying sub-themes, which are presented in Table 4.1. The sub-themes are used to explain and clarify the data. Details which include underlying codes are included as Appendix F to this document.

Table 3: Themes

No.	Themes	Sub-themes
1.1	Coaching as a thinking and advisory tool	Long-term strategic thinking
1.2		Short-term problem-solving
1.3		Mentorship/ Guidance/ consulting
2.1	Coaching as a training tool for developing the individual	Leadership Development
2.2		Change management
2.3		Addressing challenges in the work environment
2.4		Relationship management
2.5		Networking
2.6		Motivation and morale
2.7		Self-awareness
2.8		Holistic Growth
2.9		Career Benefits
2.10		Personal Achievement
2.11		Leveraging Strengths
2.12		Developing one's potential
3.1	Coaching as a tool for organisational growth	Team benefits
3.2		Succession and retention
3.3		Corporate strategic goals

No.	Themes	Sub-themes
3.4		Enhancing Corporate performance
4.1	Other benefits of coaching	Societal benefits
4.2		Benefits to the coach
5.1	The Coaching relationship	Human Factor
5.2		Coaching Environment
5.3		Respect
5.4		Boundaries and ethics - coach
5.5		Coach's experience
5.6		Boundaries and ethics - sponsor
5.7		Technical Coaching ability
5.8		Coach's Mindset/ attitude
5.9		Coach availability
5.10		Coachee's mindset/ attitude
6.1	Successful coaching	Relevance of coaching
6.2		Measuring and monitoring coaching success
6.3		Sustainability of benefits

4.3.1. Theme 1 – coaching as a thinking and advisory tool

Participants' experiences tended to align to Crompton and Smyrnios' (2011) and Reynolds' (2011) findings that coaching developed new ways of thinking. They found the coach to be a sounding board and experienced the coaching relationship itself as a reflective space which is a valuable to assist their thinking.

“As executives, we’re always busy trying to win a client, give the best quality of work, manage staff, and manage revenues, and manage the business ... it becomes so hectic that we don’t have time to sit and self-reflect.” RXF

The quality of the thinking also, then, impacts the quality of the decisions made by enhancing the decision-making process (ICF, 2016). RXF further stated:

“Now I’m aware that in making decisions, I don’t need to just consider me, as business leader; I also need to consider the environment itself.”

Three examples emerged which related to long-term strategic thinking, short-term problem solving and coaching providing information by way of mentoring, guidance and consulting.

a. Long-term strategic thinking

In the context of executive leadership, coaches offer an opportunity to discover new perspectives and to analyse existing information by fulfilling the role of a strategic thinking partner to the client (Rostron, 2009). The strategic view includes a need to focus on the organisation's vision in order to ensure that strategies aligned to the vision are prioritized. This long-term thinking which may be facilitated by the coaching process also assists with managing the organisation's brand. The prevention of crises was cited by some participants as a key strategic thinking benefit from the coaching experience.

SXM put it this way,

"In a small business, you get to wear different hats; sometimes you lose the bigger picture because you are so involved in a day to day running of a business and sometimes you even forget why you even started the business in the first place because you are dealing with so many things... you always have to look at the bigger picture, you need someone who's going to remind you why you are doing what you are doing."

"The benefit for me has been the quality of thinking that you end up being forced to do, and also be able to identify and focus on what's important." HU.

For AZF, the most notable change from individual coaching being taken up by herself and her two business partners was on the focus. The team focused more on the key drivers of the business – the vision, purpose and values.

b. Short-term problem solving

Sometimes coaching is sought when there is a specific challenge that needs to be addressed. None of the participants had sought coaching specifically for this regard (except perhaps for those who received coaching when transitioning into new roles), but during the coaching they were able to think through specific situations that they had to solve. They found the coaching conversations to be good for creative thinking (as a brainstorming platform), scenario-planning (what if?), testing of ideas which aided towards innovation and thinking through and simplifying complex issues.

"When you speak to someone outside, then you're forced to explain the problem with someone who's not in your business, you end up simplifying it and, in that

simplification, you actually realise these are the important things and the other things are actually just noise.” HU

c. Mentoring, guidance and consulting

When the coach has relevant experience and knowledge relating to something that the client is dealing with, the coaching conversation can also take on the form of information-sharing, teaching, guidance, mentoring or even consulting by the coach regardless of whether the matter is a technical one in which the coach has expertise and knowledge or a leadership competency-related matter with which the coach has experience and advice. The coach, in this way, becomes a helper and source of support to the client.

4.3.2. Theme 2 – coaching as a training tool for developing the individual

Despite her own negative coaching experience, SU reflected positively on the impact of coaching from experience that she has of members of her team having undergone coaching, especially with regards to relationship management and improvement in performance.

a. Change management

When there is change, including taking on a new role or project, one of the challenges that the participants talked about was feeling doubt and overwhelm. For those who had coaching during this time, they found coaching to have helped them to address the self-doubt and to boost their morale.

“For me it was to understand that, as much as in my mind I’ll be saying, ‘This is just one thing I would not do if given a choice’, is that the indirect feedback is that since you are being trusted with these things, don’t doubt yourself.” AF

In many instances, people perform well in the more technical roles and the next logical step is to promote them into leadership positions where they now depend not on their own ability and self-management to deliver, but have to lead other people. This is a complete change from how they had functioned previously. With this promotion also comes the need to change the way they think about the business – focusing more on the bigger picture of the organisation rather than just the more technical aspects of it. Coaching assists in coping with and speeding up this transitionary phase (Judge, 1997; Coutu & Kauffman, 2009).

“I do believe coaching is very useful and required when an individual is “transitioning” to a position or a role where human interaction is going to become a great or greater part of their role... I started in a very, very technical role less dependent on human

interaction and more around one's creativity and technical ability, but it became critical to be able to motivate and remove myself from the micro aspect of the business and start thinking from the macro level and start inspiring or having to inspire and motivate and be able to convince the next person on how to deliver." RRU

One participant, RXF, said that they were undergoing a merger with two other companies and that coaching was useful in managing this change in the work environment.

"Coaching becomes very important because there's a lot of strategic planning that needs to happen; there's a lot of change in the environment which destabilises the original strategic plans that one might have had... So I think, for me personally, that's where coaching becomes important because I need to navigate through this thing and still figure out..."

b. Leadership development

Executives are leaders. They need to get things done through the efforts of other people. This requires that they develop leadership competencies including strategic thinking, financial management, motivating people and delegation of work in the best way possible. It was acknowledged by some of the participants that there are different leadership styles and they can all be effective, but people management is the key competency which is needed for sustainable success, regardless the leadership style. Coaching, in this sense, also becomes a leadership development and training tool and can be relevant for recently promoted executives or for those who have been leaders for some time, but need to enhance their leadership capabilities.

"I'm operating in a technical environment, with architects, engineers and so forth; it's all about focus. But now, they grow within that sphere and they reach a ceiling and Then you pluck them into an executive role. They'll fail... so once you bring in a coach so that they understand now they're dealing with people and they need to see beyond their technical ability, they need to get things done through others and you need to delegate... they want things done their own way and an element of trust affects them not to delegate so it's only a mentor or a coach that will sort of ask the relevant questions to make that individual think and see things possible through others". NXL

This aspect of transitioning is also relevant where technical experts decide to open their own businesses; they need coaching on how to manage a business and function in this new executive role.

“I met someone who owns a mine, but I realised that this person is great as an engineer, but as a business person, not really. And sometimes we take those things for granted. From there, I started engaging a lot of people that own small businesses and I realise there’s a huge demand and a huge need, especially in the black community, to work with those people and help them grow their companies through coaching.” RXF

c. Addressing challenges in the work environment

The workplace can be a minefield – power dynamics, office politics and sometimes the environment can be toxic and hostile. Coaching, especially from a coach who has experience with dealing with such challenges, has been useful to some of the participants for them to successfully navigate the work environment (Colquitt, LePine, & Noe, 2000) without compromising themselves or their values. In the context of corporate South Africa which is predominantly dominated by white males, the black executive can be isolated and unable to contribute. Coaching is especially relevant in such instances, as articulated by SXM below:

“So what normally happens is when you are promoted into an executive position, the first thing that comes to mind, even if you’ve got the qualifications, is that you are an EE candidate. In most instances you’ll probably be the only black in the boardroom... these guys all look the same and they seem to be of the same opinion, you tend to be more reserved.”

SXM goes further to state that the lone black executive may benefit from coaching in order to build courage to speak up without being seen as stubborn or resorting to unpleasant conflicts in order to get his/ her opinions heard. He also states that this is also important so that you may gain the respect of your team as a leader. In this way, coaching may assist with building up one’s courage and also balancing that with managing relationships with peers and subordinates within the organisation even to the point of having to work in an environment that feels hostile towards the black executive.

In other instances, the environment that one needs to navigate relates to centres of power within the organisation or working team that the executive needs to navigate. As RRU attests to below, the coaching helped him to navigate such power dynamics in a way that ensured that the work was done without having to sacrifice certain relationships or compromise on personal values.

“We had a lot of team dynamics... there were two centres of power and... without the coaching I probably would have chosen a side. With the coaching one was able to just go look through the noise and just deliver... for the betterment of the team”. RRU

d. Relationship management

One key responsibility that an executive has to fulfil is managing relationships both within the organisation and also outside of the organisation with clients, suppliers and other stakeholders which are important for the organisation. Managing relationships, then, is a key skill and competence that the executives need as a fundamental part of their role. The underlying ingredients with which coaching has helped the participants are emotional intelligence, social awareness, cultural diversity and other aspects of people management. This has enabled the executives to be more effective in managing clients, collaborating to gain synergies and being more influential. The thing that the participants seemed to appreciate the most was receiving unsolicited feedback (Hicks; 1996) about positive changes in relationship management-related behaviours. AF gave an example:

“It was not only me who noticed the difference and gave the feedback. It’s even people around me, whether it’s at home or the colleagues. Unsolicited feedback.” AF

Coaching, in many instances, also assists in managing one's relationships outside of the work environment because the skills that one learns are good for managing all relationships including personal relationships. Participants noted that the benefits from coaching extended to their homes and social circles in either more positive behaviours having been practiced or a lessening of the negative behaviours which affected relationships (Peterson, 2006). Again, AF testified to this:

“My wife, even till this day, she does comment that I’m a different person. I’m far less quick sort of to judge or quick to have a view. I listen to her, I’ve got much more patience and she feels much more regarded.” AF

e. Networking

An executive coach, by the nature of the clientele that s/he has and whilst observing the professional coaching code of ethical conduct, can give access to a wide network of other executives where this is beneficial to the coaching clients. This is one example the NXL found to be of great benefit:

“An executive coach does not only assist in terms of your thinking and how you apply your mind. They can also give you access to that social capital based on the network that he or she has.”

The understanding of the importance of networking, enhancing the capability to do so and identifying opportunities for networking are skills that may also be gained from coaching because they are important to the role of the executive leader as part of the relationship management competence. Further, the ability not only to build, sustain and make proper use of a network as and when needed in a reciprocity way is something that the coach may help the coaching client to instil within themselves and their team.

f. Motivation and morale

The coach is an invaluable encourager, affirmer and motivator (Latham & Pinder, 2005). Participants who had positive coaching experiences found that their coaches motivated and inspired them when they doubted themselves; the coaches reminded the participants of past successes and so helped them during times of stress, low self-confidence and overwhelm. This kind of motivation was situational, as and when negative emotions arose due to certain circumstances.

On a deeper level, coaching also helped to bring to light and deal with deep-seated self-esteem issues that the participants had struggled with for a long time. These were sometimes the root causes behind some behavioural and self-limiting leadership styles which stemmed from insecurities that the participants may have had. One participant went further to say that they now they increased peace (AF) and another (BBB) said that they feel that coaching contributes to happiness by taking one out of their comfort zone and exploring more of their potential.

“The coach constantly pushes you to perform above your comfort zone or out of your comfort zone and think out of the box. If that’s what you get out of coaching, then it means it will help you achieve your true potential, which then means you are, overall, a happy individual, which is what I think everybody wants to be - happy. And I don’t think anybody is happy if they are not achieving their true potential, whether they know it or not.” BBB

g. Self-awareness

Many of the executives grew in the corporate space because of coaching, but the benefits were for the individual as a whole. This included self-awareness and a positive impact on their personal lives. When asked about some of the benefits she had seen from members of her team from experiencing coaching, SU said:

“I think a greater level of self-awareness. I think that’s a big gain in the all the instances where I’ve seen shifts. Just that self-awareness. Because it’s one thing for people to give you feedback, but quite another matter when you kind of own yourself, your strengths and your flaws. I think not enough of us spend time on that”.

The idea of being aware of how you are constituted is important because you then know how to manage yourself and the situations in which you may find yourself. You also gain an awareness of how you are in relation to the people with whom you interact and work so that you are better able to manage your own time and energy and also the relationships and personalities around you.

“Coaching becomes critical because it brings about a lot of self-awareness...it’s lot about you. It focuses on you. You get to understand your weaknesses and your strengths a lot better and then from there you understand your value add and you understand a lot better where you fit in and how to fit in and how to bring everyone together having understood where you are lacking... For running one’s own business, I think it is paramount that one is very self-aware...” RRU

This self-awareness seemed to have a more permanent impact on the participants in that they find that they get into the habit of being honest to themselves and so gain the ability to self-reflect and to coach themselves. This includes cultivating more humility, managing their temperaments, being more patient with other people and being less judgemental.

h. Holistic growth

The coaching experience may impact the entire person, not just the professional life. This holistic approach may be something that is clearly defined in the beginning of the coaching relationship. It may also arise as the relationship develops and the coaching conversations become more open. In this way, participants spoke of personal relationships improving, balancing time and priorities between work and private lives – managing personal relationships, health and generally taking the participants out of their comfort zones in order to address things in their lives that they might otherwise have left unattended to. This whole-

life impact was a major and unexpected benefit for the participants who experienced it in their coaching.

“It was not only looking at my professional aspect of my life, but it was also looking at some elements around personal and some issues around health.... I have less stress because it was also teaching me about sort of how to manage stress, how to do breathing techniques...” AF

“I’m finding that the person I’m engaging with is interrogating me to think a lot more about my personal well-being, ... my ability to handle, cope, manage the other facets of my life outside of business... we apply lot of our minds to the business and we expect to wing everything else.” RRU

An aspect of this holistic growth relates to managing success which may cause one to become arrogant or even complacent. SXM expressed the point regarding to arrogance stemming from success:

“So you’ll find out that there are people who, naturally they are leaders but those people as well need coaching because sometimes when things go your way, because you tend to be arrogant ... then you might lose yourself in that process.”

i. Career benefits

Managing one’s career is an important topic that may be addressed during the coaching – whether it is planning the desired career path of the individual, accelerating growth towards a certain job, remaining relevant or re-inventing oneself or even revitalizing a career that has become stagnant. The benefits that participants linked to the coaching they received were higher performance and rewards, increased professionalism and promotion.

j. Personal achievement

Setting goals for oneself is important and the participants were of the view that coaching can help one to discover their potential so that they may set their goals based on this knowledge. This is something especially relevant for black South Africans within the context of the apartheid system which sought to achieve the opposite in and for black people – to downplay their potential and to restrict their aspirations.

“I think there’s people that don’t know their potential, they don’t know what is out there because they grew up in a village or wherever, especially amongst our black people.

So they have never been exposed to more than the space that they were in, to be able to dream bigger.” BBB

Setting the right goals is important because *“the goals should be realistic”* (NW) – not unachievable and not too low. The coach can contribute to this process.

“Sometimes we set our goals too high, right? Sometimes we set them too low. But if you have someone else looking at your goals and they have recognised your potential, then that’s when they can say to you, “argh...these goals are too low or too high, maybe you can adjust them a bit.” SXM

The coach, because of their different perspective, assists in identifying opportunities in situations where the coachee might not have otherwise done so on their own.

Accountability was viewed as a strong factor in achieving one’s goals and was seen as a feature that distinguishes executive coaching from other forms of training (Smither, & Adsit, 1997; Peterson & Muros, 2008). This accountability talked to accounting for actions committed to in coaching sessions, and also more on the overall assessment of having achieved one’s goals and looking at implementing corrective action where this is required.

“If you have set yourself some goals and you communicate those goals to your coach, then you will have somebody who you are accountable to... you could procrastinate or whatever or justify to yourself why you haven’t achieved that.” SXM

The importance of this accountability, therefore, also relates to avoiding procrastination and making excuses to oneself for goals not achieved or actions not taken. The higher you are in the organisation, the more difficult it may be to find an accountability partner within the same organisation.

“I think there are some things that would be difficult to have an accountability partner, the more senior you are, an internal one.” SU

“If we had spoken about something and I said I’ll check or I will do something...next time I would have to report back.” ZAX

k. Leveraging strengths

From the coaching, some participants gained an awareness of strengths that they had not known they had. From this awareness they were able to appreciate the impact and how to leverage their strengths. The clients were also able to work on how to further develop or

cater for their weaknesses. It is important to note that the coaching process did not always try to develop weaknesses identified – some coaches focused more on avoiding ineffectiveness because of the weaknesses rather than eliminating the weaknesses altogether.

I. Developing one's potential

During the coaching process, it may also happen that the client discovers potential within themselves that they had previously not been aware of or had not explored. The impact of this can be profound and cause one to change the direction of one's entire career, as was the case with BBB who sums it up,

“Had I not received those two [coaching and mentoring] combined, then I would probably still be a lawyer somewhere and, I think, wasted my true potential”.

Alternatively, the idea that, having reached executive level, the participants still had potential that they had not identified or fully developed was a pleasant surprise to them. This helped some to find a new passion in how they do their work or in their personal lives (Harter, Schmidt and Hayes, 2002). This was true also in the area of business acumen which, having been in the corporate world for their entire working careers, many of the executives had taken for granted.

This is an issue that, according to BBB, causes wastage of organizational resources and may be addressed through coaching:

“You have a lot of people in the executive space that will tell you that the company is paying, so they see the company as this person that has endless resources - whether they work for state or whatever, it doesn't matter. So they can abuse the resources because the company is paying.”

An important aspect of the participants developing their potential was again relating to work they had to do in taking responsibility for developing this potential even where things seemed to be working well. This was especially difficult, like leveraging of strengths, because it often required forming new habits.

4.3.3. Theme 3 – coaching as a tool for organisational growth

Coaching benefits are not limited to the individual's development. Many participants highlighted benefits which extended to their teams as well as the organization as a whole. For RRU, the impact on the organisation and his consequent financial gains were quite dramatic:

“I re-engineered the process and convinced my line manager... they gave me what I thought I was supposed to get and that number was put on the table which was three times jump from the year before”.

a. Team benefits

Organisations are structured such that most people are part of working teams. The participants, as executives, lead teams as an inherent part of their work. This includes all the entrepreneurs who were interviewed as part of this study. Some of the participants were part of executive teams under the leadership of a more senior executive. It is important, therefore, to reflect on what impact coaching had on their teams.

Many of the participants found that they started focusing more on people-related matters whereas, they had previously been more concerned about operational and client-related aspects of the organisation.

“Every battle needed to be fought, every battle needed to be won, it was about being right. The coaching changed the approach and the perception and the thinking around what's worth fighting... There definitely was an EQ change and the awareness of my role within my team - the kind of energy that I give off and the kind of energy that I want to give off. I was able to then better structure my offering as a human being within the team”. RRU

Whereas coaching may be beneficial to the individual who receives that coaching, as leaders and as members of leadership teams, the benefits also extend (through self-awareness and improved emotional intelligence) to the teams within which the individual works. The participants identified this benefit for their teams because of the positive changes within themselves which affected how they interacted within the teams – resulting in them being able to understand and inspire team members more and also to avoid some conflicts which were based on ego to the detriment of the team.

“So the conversations even in the boardroom are a bit better because you come from a place of understanding, not a place of, this is how I’m used to doing things and therefore we’re going to do them... it has brought a lot of harmony towards myself and understanding that we are all in the business to grow it... and my way may not necessarily be the best way”. RXF

They found that there was also more engagement within their teams and increased role clarity and autonomy which frees up more of their time to focus on thinking.

b. Succession and retention

The participants now find themselves focusing more on developing staff and looking towards improving retention within their organisations. They pay closer attention to stability in the workforce, developing staff within the business and retention of staff.

“If you’d come here two years ago to today, definitely a massive change! A stable workforce. Less turnover, the employee turnover has definitely declined. Happier workforce, a more committed workforce.” AZF

“I’d like to believe it’s made me more focused on personal development of people; so even in my business now my conversation, besides health of the business, is more around development... and training.” RRU

c. Corporate strategic goals

Organisations are made up of individuals who have their own personal goals. Coaching assisted to ensure that there is alignment between these individual goals and those of the organisation.

Executives were also able to focus on aligning the organisation’s strategic objectives to those of the different departments, teams and individuals based on their roles and responsibilities. This required thinking about how to communicate the strategy and how to gain buy-in from the staff for sustained strategic success of the organisation within a defined vision and desired culture.

d. Enhancing corporate performance

It is one thing to plan and strategise; it is another to implement successfully in a consistent way. Executives can use coaching as a tool for maintaining focus on performance against strategic objectives, setting up business processes that support these objectives, ensuring innovation to keep up with dynamic business environments, optimal resource management.

In short, coaching can enhance the ability of executive teams to commit to corporate strategies.

As a black entrepreneur, NM feels that coaching would be invaluable to people like herself from two main perspectives – financial education for accountability which she feels is critical for the business to grow and enter into agreement with other businesses; and for those entrepreneurs who did not gain insight into business processes and people management from having previously worked in corporate structures (Bluckert, 2006: 6; O’Niel, 2007).

“Management of business accounts and financial education is where, as a business person, you constantly need coaching... which is what we’ve seen with a lot of businesses that don’t make it.” BBB

AAA’s view was that there is a need in corporate South Africa for coaching for executives to gain the ability to formulate strategies that yield genuine sustainable business success, as opposed to profits driven by cost-cutting measures which impact the economy and society negatively.

“I’m yet to see a CEO now that comes and just makes profit clearly on strategies... downsizing, some departments being closed, call it whatever you wanna call it. Re-engineering and all these other things that at the end, push numbers... Execs are to think strategically for the betterment of the employees, for the betterment of the company.” AAA

4.3.4. Theme 4 – other benefits of coaching

a. Societal benefits

The South African corporate space is impacted by socio-economic issues relating to transformation towards race, gender and class equality. These dynamics affect and have to be catered for by executives. In this way, coaching is able to contribute to the greater socio-economic understanding of executives. The assumption has been that coaching is needed for executives who are appointed for purposes of enforced transformation, even though they may not yet be ready for executive responsibilities. The reality is that those with such prejudices can benefit from coaching in order to overcome their biases. They may not know it, but the prejudices limit their thinking and commercial progress. AAA identified the intertwining nature of social and economic issues and the value that coaching brings in resolving them in this statement:

“Coaching is very dynamic and we need it. We need it at all levels... because before you are anything you are yourself. It’s very broad, it’s a network of things, but the exec is mainly concerned about numbers. There is a desire and a need, it’s a necessity, to change the mind-set of the corporate sector; to be more receptive to previously disadvantaged people, more in particular the females. So there are a lot of things that are happening in South Africa and we need coaches to offer that service.” AAA

b. Benefits to the coach

Coaches, by asking questions, get to learn from their clients’ experiences even as clients themselves reach solutions and clarity. Coaches gain diverse knowledge on various industries and each client is a potential member of their network, so their influence also grows in this way.

Many coaches seem, according to the participants, to genuinely enjoy helping other people to reach their full potential and so the coaches gain a sense of fulfilment from their work.

4.3.5. Theme 5 – the coaching relationship

From the extensive responses received from the participants, the relationship between the coach and the client is the most important factor for ensuring that coaching benefits are optimized (Kemp, 2008a, 2008b; McKenna & Davis, 2009).

One of the more important aspects is one of trust – from the perspective of perceived good intentions by the coach and also relating to the credibility of the coach regarding ethical conduct and technical coaching ability (Ahern, 2003). This concept of trust was pervasive from all participants (Baron & Morin, 2009; Canfield & Chee, 2013; Gan & Chong, 2015; Kelley, 2016; Markovic, McAtavey & Fischweicher, 2014; O’Broin & Palmer, 2010, Stout-Roston, 2012).

a. Getting along

Of the ten participants who have experienced coaching, for eight the coaching had been arranged by the organisations in which they were employed as part of a training course or as part of their formalized leadership development process. This is an important factor because the way in which the coaching relationship is initiated may affect the success of the coaching process.

i. Chemistry

It is important that the coach and the client have a natural affinity. For AF, the chemistry between him and his coach was important in getting him to be open which then meant that the coaching conversations were that much more beneficial to him.

“I don’t think without the chemistry, this thing could have worked and I doubt that I would even have trusted her, basically to open up. And also even during the sessions, I could feel that she’s on my side.”

RXF also felt that this was something that could even negative the coach’s technical ability.

“You can be a great coach, but if there’s no chemistry between you and the coachee... you’ll continue missing each other.”

Some participants described the relationship as a ‘professional friendship’ and that it was important that the client selects his/ her own coach rather than the coach being imposed on them.

ii. Coach’s mindset/ attitude

The coaching space is facilitated by the coach, but the coachee needs to own the solutions. It is for this reason that most of the participants felt that the coach should be as non-directive as possible, but should spend most of the time asking questions in order for the coachee to think through things themselves (O’Connor & Lages, 2007; Stober & Grant, 2006). Work from Dent & Brent (2015) upholds that asking good questions encourages self-reflection and promotes resourcefulness in clients. RXF, however, felt that there may be a need for the coach to be more directive depending on the client being coached (Stober and Grant, 2006):

“There are some people that need more directive coaching. There’s some people that need less directive coaching, depending on their needs and how mindful they may be of what’s happening.”

The coach also needs to be objective and be open-minded in accepting the beliefs, culture and other characteristics of the coachee which may differ. Abbott et al. (2006) emphasize the importance of being aware of the coach’s own cultural background, as well as the client’s cultural background and the need to be adaptable to other cultures. It is important to note, however, Anandlal’s (2017) finding that cross-cultural coaching had great benefits, especially by way of differing perspectives due to diverse cultures and genders.

“The coach needs to set aside their prejudices and beliefs” RXF.

The coach needs to be genuine (Kilburg, 1997) and have good intentions for the coaching client. This also means that the coach demonstrates, in various ways, that he or she is in the client's corner and wants the client to succeed.

“I think authenticity, for me, is a big thing and... it allows you to trust that, okay, this is who I am dealing with and then this is what we're here for”. HU

“The person [coachee] needs to understand that you have good intentions, you want them to succeed. I think that is the most important thing that needs to be there - that the person needs to feel that you are in their corner, you want them to succeed.” SXM

The coach needs to behave professionally and this extends to them taking an interest to gain contextual understanding of the client's environment and industry. Rogers (2012) and Stober (2006) emphasize the importance of the coach continuously demonstrating a candid interest in his/her clients. This does not mean that the coach needs to be an expert, but that they demonstrate respect for the coaching relationship by educating themselves about the fundamentals of the coachee's work. Taking an interest and demonstrating it to the client influences the coaching relationship (Ackerman & Hilsenroth, 2003).

“Last year he [the coach] was asking me about fund flows, which is something I know very well that he wasn't clear on. So he went and understood what fund flows was... so, for me, it demonstrated a level of competence that even if I do not need to, it's my business to educate myself about my client's business. I owe it to this relationship to go and find out and see what that means”. HU

Linking to one of the emotional benefits of coaching is that the coach should be understanding, non-judgemental and encouraging towards the client. There was acknowledgement by the participants that sometimes the coaching conversations are not easy because the coach needs to challenge the thinking and assumptions of the client, as well as to hold the client accountable for actions that were to be taken. This, however, needs to be done in a respectful manner that does not undermine the coaching relationship by creating a parent-child dynamic. It is also for this reason that the participants thought that the coach needs to be emotionally intelligent in order to have empathy (in line with Rogers, 2012), passion and be open to disagreement from the client.

A final point which, in OP's view, is critical for the coach to be effective is that the coach has to be in a good mental state:

"You're giving guidance to somebody else's life so one of the fundamental things is that you need to be in a good space as a coach. You can have a qualified coach; you can have an experienced person, but if that coach, just generally, during the coaching, is not in a good head space or is experiencing some things in life, then that coaching is more likely to be ineffective."

This mental state also includes the coach focusing on coaching clients or a market which is motivating for the coach:

"There's a demand and almost everybody needs a coach, but the coach needs to niche themselves in a market that they can thrive in, that also motivates them... to give the coachee the best that they can." RXF

iii. Coachee's mindset/ attitude

Voluntary participation in the coaching process is key; the coaching should not be organized by the organisation as something that is forced upon the coachee or because it is not being genuinely offered.

"I was very skeptical. My initial experience was really a window-dressing exercise - oh there's this black guy and oh, by the way, he's getting executive coaching so he's not like the other black guys... I actually ended up finding more use for it for myself; I don't think the business got any value out of it, to be honest." said HU.

He then went on,

"So currently I do have one (a coach) and I'm not answerable to anyone. I do it for myself and it's been very helpful in thinking through some of the complex issues that I've faced and I would recommend it to anyone too".

Also important are the client's mental and emotional maturity and willingness to learn. SXM referred to this as the client being 'humble and teachable'. It is worth noting that the chemistry between coach and client has an impact on the coachee being able to be honest and open. HU expressed this point well:

“Where I think it can be frustrating is if the fit or the match between the coachee and the coach isn’t right... So I don’t think it’s necessarily a type of person that can’t be coached, but I think the fit, for me, becomes critical”. HU

The coaching client has to be open to coaching and many participants felt it was important for the client to own the process and to implement actions committed during coaching.

“My belief is that the coachee has to own this thing. It’s got to be something that is a priority for such a coachee and they’ve got to be active in the journey...Then it works.” SU

“I think it’s that commitment to the process, on my part, that made it effective.” AF

This point also carried through to the client being open to the coaching process, but also to open up during the coaching sessions in order to benefit.

“You have to be open in the process if you want to get value out of it and some people struggle with that, so I don’t know if it would be beneficial for them.” ZAX

b. Trust

The coaching professional needs to ensure that the coaching relationship is fruitful. This requires that the coaching client is open and honest during the coaching sessions and conversations. The coach gains the trust of the client by conveying good intent towards the client - you are important to me and I am on your side – and by demonstrating technical competence - I know what I am doing.

i. The Coaching environment

The physical coaching environment needs to be comfortable and supportive of the coaching process. The level of privacy, the noise and being away from sources of disruption all need to work towards creating a good coaching space for the client.

These factors contribute to creating what some of the participants called a ‘safe space’. More importantly, the participants felt that the coaching space needs to be one where they can rely on honest feedback (Rogers, 2012) and accountability from the coach and where they are able to own the space as their own. When coaching clients own the coaching space they are able to ensure that the things that are discussed are the things that are important to them and that the decisions that are made are decisions that they can own.

ii. **Boundaries and ethics relating to the sponsor**

Of those participants that had experienced coaching, the majority of the coaching had been sponsored by the organisations which employed them at the time. This creates a relationship dynamic consisting of the coach, the coaching client and the sponsoring organisation (sponsor). The sponsor may have an idea of why the client should be coached and may even have objectives that they discuss with the coach. Despite having the sponsor, the coachee needs to remain the primary client and boundaries about confidentiality of information shared during coaching sessions need to be clarified upfront. ZAX had to address such an issue with her coach when the coach suggested that they address a particular competence:

“I said, ‘Can you help me be a better leader, but don’t try and bring outside forces because now what I don’t know is if what we are saying is now gonna get to the source of the person that gave you this document, I don’t know that now’”.

This incident, she says, caused her to be more guarded during the following coaching sessions.

The content and detail of the feedback to be given to the sponsor also needs to be agreed on upfront with the coaching client being fully involved in this decision. When the time does come for the coach to share feedback on progress of the coaching with the sponsor, sharing this feedback and ensuring comfort of the coaching client seems to go a long way in building and enhancing trust within the coaching relationship.

“... She came and told me what feedback she’s going to give... to get a sense whether I’m comfortable... That just enhanced the trust, you know... this person is on my side 100% and she’s going to protect whatever this space that we are operating in.” AF

This is not to imply that the coaching relationship has to be protected from the sponsor in a negative way. The sponsor is also important in this relationship and needs to be kept up to date since they are paying in money and time taken from work. SU, who also spoke from the perspective of having sponsored coaching as a line manager to her team of executives, gave this view which showed that there is respect for the details of what is discussed during coaching, but feedback needs to be given to the sponsor so that the organisation is able to support the coaching process:

“Regular, concise feedback needs to be made with the line manager so that the support can be provided internally because the coach is not there all the time... you

don't want to trample on the sanctity of the two-way between the coach and the coachee."

a) Boundaries and ethics – for the coach

The coach should ensure that boundaries, rules and expectations are clarified upfront. In some instances, coaches required the coaching clients to sign coaching contracts which clarified these matters.

For coaching to be successful, the coaching client needs to participate fully by being open and honest about themselves to the point of accepting responsibility for their shortcomings. Participants felt that they would need to trust that the coach would not divulge information that would harm them in their careers or personally – all information would be treated confidentially. This also spoke about the coaching space being contained and protected by the coach from anyone outside of it.

"...they were able to get me to a point where I could think and speak openly and it's only when I could do that that I could really tap into my mind. So the trust element and believing that this conversation is going to be contained fully - that for me was the most critical." RRU

iii. Coach availability

The feedback from participants relating to availability of the coach was a desire for the duration of the sessions to be flexible based on the need – to avoid cutting off a session because the time had run out, thus leaving coaching clients with a feeling of incompleteness – and it talked to the frequency of the coaching sessions and time lag in-between sessions. This is important because the coach needs to be available based on the urgency of the matters being discussed and the need to consider the client's ability to implement actions agreed on by the next session. So, the coaching sessions, if they are to be effective must be neither too frequent nor too far apart so as to be irrelevant or to lose momentum.

"The interval must definitely have a correlation with the result that you have to yield... Experiences must be able to be discussed as you experience them and as you remember them. If the intervals are too long, it might have some impact. So the intervals would definitely play a factor in how you are being coached." OP

"Going at the coachee's pace, I think, becomes a very critical success factor." RXF

Some participants felt that the coach needs to be accessible even without appointments and without having to go through a secretary or an administrator. In this way they *"felt prioritized*

and not like a chore" (NW). In the context of executives being under pressure to make decisions due to dynamic environments, it is important that they have access to their coach should they quickly need to think through important but urgent matters.

"Once a month for an hour (we met), but there was limitless engagement in terms of online or telephone; anytime I required to have a sounding board on certain issues..."

NXL

One of the reasons that OP cites for the coaching he received (in 2005) not having a great impact in his life was the duration of the coaching relationship being too short. He is careful to state that the idea is not to create dependence on the coach.

"I think for me it was very temporary because it was a once-off event and I think that's why it didn't have the impact that much. I think coaching should be really a continuous thing but it should at-least get to a point where there's no...you don't place reliance on the coach to run your life..."

"To have those conversations with the same person, on a rhythm; it allows you then to continuously build on that view and that theme. So, for me, that's been hugely valuable" HU

The coaching relationship, when successful, can last a very long time. It can even grow beyond the initial reason for getting coaching. This not because the coaching client develops a dependency on the coach, but rather because of the value that they gain from the coaching and the kind of relationship they have built. In this sense, the continuity itself becomes valuable because the coaching professional already has knowledge of the coaching client and of their context and background (Norcross (2001). This seems to have come as a surprise to the participants because their intention would have been to get coaching for a limited duration of time to address a specific time or issue in their professional lives.

"Surprisingly, when I did it, I thought it would be a two-year thing... I've continued and now I'm entering the fourth year and I still feel coaching is just as important..." HU.

"I went through coaching and it ended sometime around 2016 or so. So I still keep in touch with the coach but at an unofficial level". AF

iii. Credibility of the coach

a. Respect

Respect is a subjective and personal thing. The participants acknowledged this, but they still insisted that they want to be coached by someone that they respect. If they cannot respect the coach, it is difficult for them to respect and value the coaching relationship.

“I think the first thing would be getting coaching from someone you respect. I think that is very important, you need to respect your coach.” SXM

Some participants thought that a coach who needs earn their respect by having achieved success in their own rights.

Other participants felt that coaching had to be a meeting of equals and that there needs to be mutual respect for the relationship to be collaborative. Both have equal authority in the coaching relationship.

“The fact that she was older and Black and a woman, so yes I did respect her... but there was no hierarchy.” ZAX

This mutual respect is demonstrated by, and ensures that, both show commitment to and professionalism in the coaching space – both must value the coaching relationship (Boyce et al., 2010; Kilburg 1997).

b. Coach’s experience

The coach needs to have experience of executive life and experience in exercising their craft as a coach. This will ensure that they understand and can relate to corporate dynamics and leadership challenges.

“It would be nice to have somebody who says, ‘You know I have done it; I’m good, but this is what I’ve learnt from having done it and this is what I had to change about myself to get to this point... and I could actually help you in that journey... I don’t know any people like that.’ ZAX

Coaching received from a coach who had coached other executives also increases the likelihood of the coach bringing diverse experience from the scenarios and conversations held with previous clients. This adds value and relevance to the coaching relationship. Participants who had positive experiences from coaching felt that knowing they were being

coached by someone who had executive working and coaching experience made a big difference to how open they were to the coach – the coaches had achieved their own success and they were not speaking from theory.

“I think she was experienced in coaching and she had coached people at even higher levels than me. I think she had worked for a number of years at an executive level... you could then have a sense that this person is not speaking from the point of a book. It's a lived experience.” AF

“If you've never been an executive, how are you going to give me executive coaching? If you've never led anybody, how are you going to teach me on leadership? Because theory is one thing, practical is another.” BBB

“I think that inspired confidence in me that, okay this person seems to know. You relax when someone sounds like they've been through it... they demonstrated a very good level of understanding of corporate dynamics.” RRU

Some participants did acknowledge that lack of executive experience did not necessarily mean that the coach could not add value, but the issue that the coach has is their credibility.

“That's not to say there aren't great coaches who wouldn't have had that experience, but I think it would difficult for someone who has not operated in a similar context, to be wholly supported.” SU

c. Technical coaching ability

The coach, as a fundamental for any service supplier, needs to be trained in the fundamental competencies which (in the case of coaching) include interviewing, communication and listening skills. Some literature like that of Egan (2010) and Brockbank & McGill (2006) covers a type of listening skill that requires one to listen to a person, non-verbal as well as verbal responses and they refer to this as active and holistic listening.

“It's being able to listen and pay attention to, okay but when you said this, your eyes did that and you did that. There's something about it, you paying attention and really being engaged. The person was really, really engaged.” RRU

The coach's coaching method also needs to be clearly defined (Bluckert, 2006, Kilburg, 2001; Corbett & Coleman, 2006), even if not known by the client.

There were differing views from the participants regarding the need for the coach to be professionally certified by a regulating body in order to ensure that they have and adhere to a code of ethics. Some participants felt that anyone who has the coaching ability may be a coach, even to the point of being an informal coach – no formal coaching agreement, just conversations which facilitate thinking towards the same benefits.

One participant (RXF) also felt that it is good for a coach to have their own coach so that they may also constantly improve on their abilities.

The coach also has to be able to show that s/he has a successful track record by way of testimonials from current or previous clients.

4.3.6. Theme 6 – successful coaching

Coaching has a cost – you get billed a fairly high tariff for the coaching sessions and you also have to take time out as an executive to attend the coaching sessions, as well as any coaching assignments that you have to do between sessions. It is important to know if the coaching has been successful and added value to the coaching client. This assessment may not be an easy one to determine as some of the benefits are not directly relatable to financial gains for the individual or for the organisation. The important consideration is that the coaching client feels that they have benefited in an important way. There did not seem to be a great emphasis on the assessment of the benefits from the sponsoring organisation's perspective.

This analysis focuses on the factors that impact on the success of the coaching process, other than those that relate to the coaching relationship, as discussed above.

a. Relevance of coaching

Coaching should align with the cultural and socio-economic context of the coaching client – not with the intention of adopting it for themselves, but to understand it and consider it as part of the coaching context. This was not a theme that came through very strongly; some participants even said that race, gender and cultural differences between the coach and the client were not a big factor so long as the coach was open-minded, did not impose their beliefs and biases, and was not judgemental. Judgement by the coach has the potential to ruin the relationship (Rogers, 2012; Stober, 2006; and Shams & Lane, 2011), whereas reserving judgment can build stronger coaching relationships.

The participants again emphasized the need for the coach to have at least a basic understanding of the coachee's industry and work in addition to understanding the working

context. As far as possible, coaching should be relevant to the executive's role and responsibilities.

"... part of the issues that the executive will face in that industry, that they will articulate, are things that, if you don't understand the context of what is being said, may or may not allow you to ask the right questions..." HU

OP felt that there was no link between his role and the coaching; this made the coaching irrelevant because his expectation is that he should be coached in relation to his current work situation:

"The programme of coaching should be very much linked to your day to day activities. If there's a mix match between the role and what you are being coached at, then you cannot apply it in any event..."

b. Measuring and monitoring coaching success

It seems, especially in the context of OP's experience as quoted above, that the coaching objectives need to be clarified upfront in order to ensure that the coaching process is relevant to the needs and role of the coaching client.

Many of the participants felt that the coaching objectives need to be set and achieved, or at least progress made, if the coaching is to be considered successful.

"Coaching in my experience has been useful because I've been very clear in what I want to get out of it. And it's not necessarily that you've done or haven't done it, it's being able to track what the objectives are and what was achieved. And, for me, that's a successful process." HU.

Sometimes it happens that the coaching client is not able, at the beginning to articulate clear coaching objectives, but is able to identify positive benefits from the coaching, especially from a behavioural perspective – the participants saw this as a successful coaching process.

"I was aggressive and I've since calmed down since I've done the coaching. So, success of coaching is something only a coachee can tell you." BBB

c. Sustainability of benefits

The more permanent the benefits, the more valuable is the coaching service. The idea that participants insisted on was the sustainability of the benefits and avoiding creating dependence on the coach.

OP felt that the intervals between coaching sessions were not to be so frequent so as to rob the coachee an opportunity to put the learnings from coaching into practice. In this way, he felt that this would cause the coaching client to become a dependent on the coach.

“The intervals can also be too short, it must allow a space for you to integrate in your life, the type of coaching you receive to be able to do the application as well because at the end of the day the coachee has to be...has to still have his own strength and independence to work at things but being guided not as a sort of as a blueprint of the coach itself. So the intervals help you to apply and give you that space to be independent of your coach.”

A few did acknowledge that they are still continuing with the coaching and would probably continue to do so indefinitely, not because they are dependent on the coach, but because they still derive value from someone objective with whom they could test their thinking.

Some participants also acknowledged that, especially relating to behavioural matters, it is quite easy to revert to old habits and so they like to check in with the coach from time to time in order to sustain those benefits.

“You start seeing yourself as starting to revert back to the negative way of doing things that your coach had helped you to gain that greater awareness. I think, in my mind, it becomes important at that point in time, to say, hey, I need to basically tap into a coach”. AF

Those who did not struggle to sustain positive behavioural benefits said that alignment to their values as part of the coaching process was something that made the change easier to maintain without excessively strenuous mental and emotional effort/ self-discipline. The extent to which the coachee owned the decisions made during the coaching process also impacted on their ability to sustain behavioural changes.

Although he maintains that everyone needs coaching, RXF found that one of the benefits of coaching is his ability to coach himself

“I find myself coaching myself even when I’m alone and I’m not with my coach. I start asking myself those critical questions... I carry the coaching with me everywhere that I go.”

4.4. Other discussion points

4.4.1 Who needs a coach?

The participants were of the view that everyone needs a coach, especially when carrying leadership responsibilities. This was also in light of the fact that many participants were aware that coaching could be to address various objectives and that there are different kinds of coaches such as life coaches, spiritual and health coaches, besides executive or business coaches.

“I would think that everyone needs to have a coach, because I don’t think there’s a single individual that is perfect in all respects or is not fallible in one way or the other. So I don’t think it’s confined to any specific type of individual, and I think any leader that desires to be successful needs to have a coach.” AF

4.4.2 What Rand value would you put to coaching?

“What value do I attach to just being a better person to the people around you? I don’t know how you... what value do you attach to that? What value do I...? Hey, how do you Rand amount these things?” AF

In the end, AF said that he would be willing to pay as much as R60 000 for coaching.

ZAX equated the coaching to life-changing educational programs at master’s level with the additional consideration that the coaching is an investment in bettering the person without some of the technical aspects of the master’s programs which one does not always use in in real life:

“If it’s done right, it’s as important as doing even the Masters in Corporate Finance because both are an investment in yourself.”

For many of the candidates, especially those who had good experiences with coaching, it was difficult to place a value to the benefits they derived from it – to changing one’s life for the better. In this way, they linked it to the value of the service based on the benefits they would receive. This also entailed that they would be skeptical of coaching rates that they perceived as being too low because this may be an indicator of the quality and value of the service as not being worthwhile – so it could not be too low.

When pushed to give a value, some candidates would be willing to pay according to their own professions or industries, such as having an hourly charge out rate. Others compared it to how much they would pay to get similar services such as health practitioners.

4.4.3 Why had you not taken up coaching before?

“I can never tell you why I never had coaching, but, again, I only say it’s ignorance, thinking that you are okay... because it’s not even that it was an idea that I’d rejected, just as an idea that I had never thought of.” AF

Of the three participants who have not taken up coaching recently, I wanted to find out their reasons for not doing so. There were two main reasons given – one being that, despite not having taken up formal coaching, they were getting the coaching informally through their mentoring relationships. The idea is to have at least one person that they can talk to to bounce ideas and get advice, even though the final decision is made by the executive.

The other reason was simply that the participant, though having identified the need for coaching, had not prioritized getting the coaching

“I’ve had moments where I’m like, it actually would be great to go and find a coach who can help me navigate this particular thing I’m dealing with... it’s just not been something I’ve prioritized.” SU

4.4.4 Should corporates pay more for coaching than if the individual gets coaching services?

The question posed to participants was to gauge if they felt that coaching should have a different cost if the organisation pays for the individual to be coached instead of the person paying for it in their private capacity.

The responses given by the participants were divided because they reasoned differently. The considerations used in answering this question were based on whether it is ethical to do, in which case those participants who considered this said that the cost should be the same; some considered the fact that the corporate is able to claim a tax deduction whereas the individual is not able to do the same so the organisation should pay more.

4.4.5 Should organisations offer coaching as part of their training?

The participants felt that coaching should form part of the executive training program within organisations. The coaching enabled continuity and customisation of what areas were

developed based on the individual's need – regardless of how that development need is identified.

4.5 SUMMARY

The benefits of executive coaching are well-known and attested to by all the participants. These benefits are not only benefits for the executive being coached within their workspace, but also in their personal lives and relationships. These benefits are also enjoyed by the organisations in which the executives operate even if the particular needs may differ between an executive who is employed by a corporate or one who is an entrepreneur within their own business.

Taking up coaching, by itself, does not guarantee these benefits – two of the participants did not benefit from their coaching experience – so it is important that all participants in the coaching relationship (the coach, the coachee and the sponsoring organisation) play their part. The most important aspects of this are the trust within the coaching relationship which enables the coachee to open up and also the ability and availability of the coach which enables the coaching client to own the coaching so that the coaching benefits may be sustainable – the coachee should not become dependent on the coach.

Those who have not taken up coaching, though seeing its benefits, do not seem to prioritise it. Most of the participants were exposed to coaching because their organisations paid for it. They acknowledged that they only fully appreciated the benefits of coaching after having experienced it for themselves. Some of them have even continued with the coaching relationship at their own cost.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, findings are discussed with a view of finding commonalities and differences with existing literature as well as discussing any contradicting feedback from any of the participants, if any.

This is done in the backdrop of the post-apartheid transformation context of South African executive leadership; transformation, despite being enacted into law, has not yet been attained in the private sector. White males still dominate the leadership positions in corporate South Africa. Broad-Based Black Employment Equity (BBBEE) measures, amongst other factors, black ownership and involvement of blacks in the management of businesses (Section 1(b) of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act No. 53 of 2003).

In the public sector, where black executive leadership is more prominent, public institutions are seen to be failing in some key areas such as corporate governance, service delivery and financial sustainability (Public Service Commission, 2019; Auditor-General, 2019; National Planning Commission, 2011).

The research has sought to ascertain, from the perspective of black African executives, if coaching can be used a tool for addressing the leadership development needs (Birch & Jones, 2013) and also as a tool to empower them in addressing the issues that contribute to limited transformation within the corporate environment. This is from both the point of executives who are in management structures in corporate spaces and also entrepreneurs who are executives by virtue of having executive authority within their companies.

5.2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The researcher set out of achieve the following research objectives:

- to determine what understanding South African black corporate executives have of coaching;
- to determine who South African black corporate executives think should get coaching and when it is appropriate;
- to determine what factors South African black corporate executives view as important to the effectiveness of coaching; and

- to determine what benefits and value South African black corporate executives ascribe to coaching.

5.2.1. The understanding that South African black executives have of coaching

The executives who had personally experienced coaching, including the two whose experience had not been positive, all viewed coaching as a collaborative relationship of equals (Passmore, 2011) which is intended to assist the coachee based on agreed coaching objectives in a way that ensures that the coachee takes ownership of the solutions and actions. This is best achieved when clients are allowed to set their own agenda and take charge of the content, with guidance from the coach (Rogers, 2012; Stober, 2006). In contrast, three of the participants who have not personally experienced coaching used the terms 'coaching' and 'mentoring' interchangeably with an emphasis on the coach teaching and advising the coachee from a position of superior knowledge and experience.

5.2.2. Benefits and value ascribed to coaching

Of the ten participants who had experienced coaching, two indicated that they did not derive the benefits. These two participants were still able to give inputs on the benefits of coaching based on having observed colleagues who had successfully received coaching. Barring the interchangeable understanding of coaching and mentoring, the participants who had not received coaching also gave valuable and consistent inputs on the benefits of coaching – the difference was mainly relating to the methods and the nature of the mentor-mentee relationship in contrast to that of coach-coachee.

a. Thinking and advisory tool

The participants found that coaching assisted with the strategic responsibility by helping them to think through strategic issues in, sometimes a more systematic way, and in other instances by allowing the opportunity to think about matters from a different perspective. This included specific activities such as planning, analysis, prioritization and reflection.

The thinking benefits also extended to solving complex problems for the short-term where the coaching was found to be a creative space for brainstorming, scenario planning (Tziner, Haccoun, & Kadish, 1991) and testing new ideas (Rock & Page, 2009).

The coaches also, in limited instances where they had faced similar issues, gave advice, guidance and direction for the coachee to consider. In this way, coaching provided consulting and advisory benefits. There are some coaches and academics who feel strongly

against coaches giving advice (O'Connor & Lages, 2007). The preference is for coaches to give advice sparingly because neurological and social psychology research confirms that clients are more likely to act on self-generated ideas and solutions (Rock & Page, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2008).

b. Training to develop the individual

The coaching benefits for the executive for personal development were both at building their leadership competencies (Allen, Manning, Francis & Gentry, 2011), change management (Rogers, 2012; Stober, 2006) – including taking on a new role (London, 2002), addressing challenges in the work environment and their networking abilities using a number of methods which include identification of the leader's potential and areas of strength and also leveraging the strengths (Sheridan et al., 2004; Smith, 2006).

Another aspect of the personal development related to the emotional aspect starting mainly with increased self-awareness and being a source of motivation and encouragement for the coaching client (Bluckert, 2006; Joo, 2005; Latham & Pinder, 2005).

This personal development evidenced itself through increased performance and achievement which resulted in career growth and progression, improvement in the coaching client's ability to manage professional and personal relationships (ICF, 2016), and overall improvement in their lifestyle – their general wellbeing and overall fulfilment improved (Whitworth, Kimsey-House, & Sandhal, 1998).

c. Benefits for the organisation

The benefits for the organisation, arising from the executive being coached (Brockbank, 2008; De Meuse, et al., 2009; de Haan, et al., 2014; and Passmore, 2011), are at many levels within the organisation starting with the teams that work with the executive – those being led by the coaching client and those to which the client belongs – through the executive being more aware of how he/ she contributes to the performance and dynamics of the team.

The performance of the organisation is also positively impacted through increased strategic implementation, increased focus on productivity and accountability, and sustained focus to prevent complacency.

Perhaps the most significant benefit that was identified for the organisation was the improvement in succession planning practices (especially with some participants indicating that they have a stronger focus on staff development since receiving coaching) and

increased focus on the organisation's strategy and vision; this included alignment of the organizational goals, values and culture to the strategy of the vision and strategy in order to ensure buy-in from the staff towards sustained organizational success.

d. Other benefits

Some participants saw the coaching as beneficial to the coaches themselves because the coaches could add to their learning and professional networks, keeping ethics around confidentiality in mind; many of the participants found that their coaches seemed to get genuine fulfilment in being able to help their coachees.

In the context of South Africa, coaching also provides societal benefits (ICF, 2016) by indirectly capacitating individuals and companies to deal with cultural and other prejudices such as gender and race inequality, prejudices and assumed incompetence of black African executives in corporate South Africa.

5.2.3. Who should get coaching and when is it appropriate?

All the participants agreed that everyone should be coached because of its benefits to the individual's entire lifestyle; they also felt that anyone who is in a leadership role within an organisation should receive coaching. Most also felt that coaching should be ongoing because of the dynamic nature of leadership responsibilities and complexities, but not with the intention of creating dependency on the coach.

5.2.4. Factors viewed as important to the effectiveness of coaching

The strength and quality of the coaching relationship appears to be the most important consideration for effective coaching. There also appears, from the responses given by the participants, to be a strong link between the chemistry shared between the coach and coachee, the level of trust involved and the openness and honesty that the coachee brings to the coaching relationship (Feldman & Lankau, 2005). In contrast Ford, et al., (2008) and Peterson (2006) argued that a breakdown of trust can be linked to lower levels of motivation and a lack of aspiration to change from the coachee. In contrast, some coaches feel that motivation can be improved using coaching frameworks designed specifically for this coaching objective (Miller & Rollnick, 2002; Passmore, 2007; Prochaska & DiClemente, 1984; Prochaska & Norcross, 2001; Locke & Latham, 2002).

a. Relationship of the coach and coachee

The coach and coachee must have chemistry in order for a relationship to form where the coachee finds it easier to be open and honest. This was seen as the most important factor for a successful coaching relationship (Kemp, 2008a, 2008b; McKenna & Davis, 2009; Feldman & Lankau, 2005) – this is not to be confused as them becoming friends, but highlighted the importance of the coachee selecting his/ her own coach by assessing how well they will get along.

The coachee also needs to trust the coach's good intent towards him/her. Many of the participants said they felt that the coach was on their side, wanting them to succeed (Stout-Roston, 2012; O'Broin & Palmer, 2010; Baron & Morin, 2009; Stober, 2006). Trust in the coach's ethical conduct (Canfield & Chee, 2013; Boyce, et al., 2010), especially relating to confidentiality (Alvey & Barclay, 2007), was also seen as important to the coaching relationship. The third aspect that related to trust was coaching ability. Coaching experience, executive experience (the coach having worked as an executive so as to better understand the coachee's context) and technical training were used as indicators by the participants to gauge coaching ability (Wycherley & Cox, 2008).

Some authors (MacKie, 2007; Palmer (2007) have argued the ability to build rapport with the client is a competency that the coach can and should develop (Auerbach, 2001; Bacon & Spear, 2003). They also argue that clients may not tell how the relationship is made successful and may link it to chemistry, even if it is a result of the coaching techniques.

The coach should respect the client at all times (Canfield & Chee, 2013). In fact, there needs to be mutual respect, which also conveys itself as respect for the coaching relationship and the honouring of commitments made (Kilburg, 1997). This respect was also seen to ensure that the coach is able to hold the coachee accountable (ICF, 2016; Canfield & Chee, 2013) by giving honest feedback in a respectful manner.

b. Mindsets and availability

The coachee should be open and ready for coaching, willing to learn and committed to the coaching process, which includes scheduling of sessions based on the frequency agreed with the coach. The coachee should also be willing to challenge and question the coach should they feel the need to do so. In this way, the coachee should be emotionally and mentally available for coaching.

Peterson (2007) writes about cross-cultural coaching and its importance in establishing a relationship based on trust and understanding between the coach and the client. The participants did not feel that gender differences or commonalities between the coach and the client were significant (Bozer, Joo & Santora, 2015; Gray and Goregaokar, 2010). The participants confirmed that it is important that the coach be non-judgemental (Rogers, 2012; Wales, 2003).) to the point of setting aside their own beliefs and biases, be non-directive (Grant & Stober, 2006) and be willing to share information and suggestions whilst also being open to learning from and about the coachee. It was the expectation of the participants that the coach should be good with people – emotionally intelligent, encouraging and able to deliver feedback (Feldman & Lankau, 2005; Kampa & White, 2002) in ways that will increase the coachee's receptiveness (Stober, 2006). The participants also indicated that the coach should be available as needed by the coachee with regards to the frequency of coaching sessions, making contact in-between sessions should the need arise and the coach should be directly accessible without having to go through a secretary or administrator (this was not a prevalent view from the participants).

The duration of the coaching relationship seemed to affect the magnitude and depth of the benefits derived from the coaching. Some participants experienced coaching as part of a training program; the coaching was characterized by fewer sessions within a shorter space of time. Those participants whose coaching sessions were initiated and scheduled on the basis of the coaching need (as opposed to being part of a training program) seem to have greater and longer-lasting benefits. However, the participants were of the view that coaching should form part of an overall training program for leaders.

c. Measuring the success of coaching

The participants who seemed to have derived the most value from the coaching had clear objectives for the coaching relationship from the beginning – they entered the coaching relationship to address specific strategic situations or to address specific developmental or behavioural competencies (Clutterbuck, 2015; Ting & Scisco, 2006; Alexander, 2006; Bluckert, 2005 cited by Fillery-Travis, 2015:). Some of the participants also benefitted from the coaching despite not having set specific objectives or reasons for the coaching – these benefits seemed to be mostly behavioural (Stober, 2006) and emotional (including increased self-awareness).

Sustaining the benefits of coaching was a big concern and the need to avoid dependence on the coach was cited by a number of the participants. In this regard, some participants maintained the relationships with their coaches for years beyond the original time intended

for the coaching relationship – some because new challenges or complexities arose for which they sought further coaching and others because old habits would start to resurface and the coaching then was a course-correction mechanism.

d. Coach's competence

The participants felt that the coach should have extensive coaching experience in order to coach executive leaders. They also felt that the executive coach should have operated as an executive in order to understand the context of the coachee, including organizational dynamics.

The coach should also be technically trained in some of the coaching competencies such as listening, communicating and interviewing skills (Auerbach, 2006). There is various literature that confirms that listening and questioning skills are at the centre of coaching engagement (De Haan, 2008; Drake, 2010; Rogers, 2012; Shams & Lane, 2011; Canfield & Chee, 2013).

Lastly, the coach should be accredited with a professional body through an accreditation process (Birch & Jones, 2013).

These things would add to the credibility of the coach to which the participants linked their ability to trust and respect the coach as a professional service provider.

e. Role of the sponsor

For many of the participants who had received coaching, the organisation sponsored the coaching. It was important that the reason for the coaching was genuine, and not a 'window-dressing' exercise, with the coachee not being forced to participate in the coaching process (Dembkowski et al., 2006). The sponsor (especially the coachee's line manager) should support the coaching process (Colquitt, LePine, & Noe, 2000).

In managing the coaching relationship, the boundaries need to be clarified upfront to ensure that the coachee remains the primary client despite the organisation paying for it as sponsor (Turner & Hawkins, 2015: 2; Pomerantz & Eiting, 2004). In this way, the coaching process and solutions could be owned by the coachee who would also be able to experience the coaching environment as a safe space in which to be open and honest (Rogers, 2012).

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS IN LIGHT OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

Key recommendations are based on the six broad themes that were highlighted by the research findings being:

- coaching as a thinking and advisory tool
- coaching as a training tool for developing the individual
- coaching as a tool for organizational growth
- other benefits of coaching to the coach and to society
- the coaching relationship
- successful coaching

Though limited, the representation of the participants included the public and private sectors as well executives operating in mature corporate structures as well as those operating in the entrepreneurial space.

Perhaps the most important finding in this research is that black executives may know about coaching and its many possible benefits, but are unlikely to prioritise getting the services of a coach; it is only after a positive coaching experience that they pursue a longer-term coaching relationship. This research is of benefit to black executives for them to consider placing more priority to experiencing the services of an executive coach; and to coaching practitioners for them to ensure that they have a better understanding the thoughts and needs of the black executive in selling and designing their coaching services. Executive coaches should also study this research to gain further understanding of the factors that impact on the success of a coaching relationship.

Human resource management and development professionals may gain deeper insights into the many ways in which coaching may be of use to them; to improve retention of black executive talent, to increase the speed and success-rate of new appointees in executive roles (the research supports the idea that this is applicable to all executives, not just those who are black) (London, 2002).

Coaching should, as far as the executive is willing to be coached, form part of the executive leadership training plan.

Academic and other institutions of higher learning may also use this research to enhance their curriculum in the area of leadership development in a way that is even more relevant to the black African executive within the South African context. In this way, these institutions may further impact their positive transformational impact on the country.

The South African government and policy makers have identified entrepreneurs as key role players the health of the South African economy and to creating employment (National Planning Commission, 2011). In this regard, government offers various forms of funding and support to entrepreneurs. Despite this, entrepreneurs in South Africa still have a low success rate (National Planning Commission, 2011). Government should consider how coaching may be incorporated as part of the strategies to uplift and support entrepreneurs and small businesses in South Africa as a key aspect of its economic transformation agenda.

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The research contributed to existing research conducted on coaching women entrepreneurs and leaders in the public sector, among other topics. The research was conducted within a small group of black African executives within the South African context.

More extensive research may be conducted on the themes identified specifically relating to black African executives and this may also incorporate the perspectives of coaching professionals and human resource practitioners for the same demographic context (black African executive operating in South Africa). This may shed more light on other factors (such as coaching models used and coaches' experience) which may impact the coaching relationship and success.

Research relating specifically on coaching within the public sector space, in general, may be enhanced. Research has been within a particular department (Erasmus, 2011), but not the public sector as a whole.

The dynamic of team coaching may also be further explored from the perspective of black African executives who are coached in the context of team coaching (which may include mixed-raced teams).

5.5. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

5.5.1. Research methodology and sample size

The sample on which the research was conducted was limited to only 13 individuals. A further limitation is that the researcher had intended on obtaining feedback from a balanced sample of executives who have received coaching and those who have not. During the research, it was found that some of the participants who indicated that they had not received coaching had, in fact received it. This has limited the feedback received from those who had not received coaching to an even smaller sample of only three individuals.

Some of the participants had received coaching more than five years ago. This impacted their ability to recall some of the points because so much time had elapsed. When probed, they were not always able to remember some of the details relating to their coaching experience.

Similarly, only three of the participants operate in the public sector. This limited the researcher's ability to correlate feedback against the transformation statistics for the public and private sectors.

Individual coaching and not team coaching was the subject of the research and so some of the benefits relating to the organisation were not further explored beyond the individual being coached, as opposed to the team being coached.

The study only focused on getting feedback from executives who had received coaching and not on coaches who had offered coaching to such individuals or from human resource (or equivalent) practitioners who had been involved in setting up coaching programs within their corporate environments.

The nature of the research methodology was qualitative, which makes the analysis of the data subjective to the researcher.

These two factors (qualitative research methodology and limited sample) reduce the generalizability of the finds, though they are of value.

5.5.2. Limitations of the researcher

Having an accounting background, this was first exposure that the researcher had to research methodologies and conducting a qualitative research methodology. Despite the support received from the university and the supervisor, as they key research instrument, the

researcher's inexperience as an interviewer and with analysis of data are likely to have caused a limitation on the outcome of the research.

Performing the research whilst fully involved in normal executive responsibilities also impacted the timing of the different phases in the research study – as an example, there was a time lag between the interviews being conducted and the analysis of the data due to increased international work responsibilities of the researcher. This impacted the recollection of some of the interviews which may have impacted the analysis of the data.

5.6. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Coaching, when successfully conducted, can be a powerful tool for transforming the organisation and the individual executive leader; it has positive impacts on the professional life of the individual and also on their personal life in a holistic manner that can include the person's entire health and lifestyle (ICF, 2016). In this way, coaching can contribute towards addressing some societal issues stemming from apartheid and the stresses of life in general – so wide-reaching are its benefits.

The importance of this impact puts a responsibility on coaching professional bodies to ensure that their members conduct themselves in a manner that is ethical, especially with regards to respecting the coaching relationship and confidentiality, and based on sound technical coaching ability. This responsibility exists in the inherent limitations stemming from the human factors which impact the coaching relationship – these are both the mental attitudes and the beliefs of the coach and the coaching client. The key starting point to a successful and open coaching relationship, overriding all other factors, is the 'chemistry' between the coach and the client – this, if absent, can negate the technical coaching ability of the coach and cause the coaching relationship to be ineffective.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW PROCESS AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Interview Process

Ask for permission to start recording. If participant does not agree to recording, explain need to take notes for purposes of the research. If participant objects to this, then indicate that the interview may not be used for research purposes and will just be a conversation – or end the interview (at researcher's own discretion).

Greet the participant and thank them for agreeing to participate in the study.

Explain, briefly the title of the study.

Go through the informed consent form (whether it has been signed beforehand or not). If the form has not been signed, request the participant to sign it.

Questionnaire

The predetermined questions to be asked during interviews are:

1. Please confirm your name and surname
2. Give an indication of your current role and responsibilities
3. How many people do you have under your direct and indirect supervision and responsibility?
4. How long have you occupied this position, or similar executive positions?
5. How would you describe executive coaching?
6. Have you ever received executive or any other kind of coaching before?

At this point I would hand over a sheet of paper with some definitions of coaching to the participant (separate document)

7. Having read these definitions of coaching, has your understanding of coaching changed? (**If yes:** How do you see it differently?)

(Respondent is comfortable with their understanding/ definition of coaching proceed with the questions)

If 'No' to question 6, the following questions apply:

Question	Probing Question Depending on the response to the main questions, the interviewer may explore the main question through the following prompts and notes.
In what instances do you think that executive coaching is appropriate?	<p>Listen for positive reasons and for negative reasons</p> <p>Listen for assumptions and follow up on these, where appropriate.</p>
In your opinion are there specific (types of) people who should typically receive coaching?	<p>Listen for categorisations being used and follow up if not 'broad' enough.</p> <p>Performance</p> <p>Development</p> <p>Transition</p> <p>Personal vs professional life</p> <p>Experienced vs not experienced</p> <p>role</p>

Question	Probing Question Depending on the response to the main questions, the interviewer may explore the main question through the following prompts and notes.
. What benefits (if any) do you think can be derived from coaching? (Have you noticed a difference from the “before” to the “after” when someone received coaching)?	Listen for categorisations in comparison to the above, being Performance, development, transition, personal vs professional life, awareness
. What factors do you think would impact the effectiveness of the executive coaching?	Listen for factors relating to: Coach (personal preferences) Coachee (education level) Environment or organizational support for coaching Support Duration or timing Relationship (trust, collaboration) Culture and race and gender Process/ model

Question	Probing Question Depending on the response to the main questions, the interviewer may explore the main question through the following prompts and notes.
	Price/ cost
. How would you know a coaching <u>intervention</u> has been effective?	Listen for measurement units and link to benefits response above (question 9): Different connotation for effective vs successful?
. How much (in Rands) would you be willing to pay for an hour session of executive coaching?	What is the considerations applied?
. Do you think there should be a difference in cost for an individual seeking coaching, versus a corporate paying for the coaching? If so, what should the cost difference be? What are your reasons for supporting a cost difference?	What are the considerations applied?
. Do you think all corporates should include executive coaching as part of their learning and development offering? (Why?)	
. How much of the success of the executives you know, would you	

Question	Probing Question Depending on the response to the main questions, the interviewer may explore the main question through the following prompts and notes.
attribute to the coaching they received? (rough percentage)	
What/ who in your opinion has shaped your perception of coaching?	Try to link response to previous discussions during the interview. If any inconsistencies, follow up.

If 'Yes' to question 6 the following questions apply:

Question	Probing Question
In what instances is coaching appropriate?	
In your opinion are there specific (types of) people who should typically receive coaching?	
Have you noticed a difference from the "before" to the "after" when you received coaching?	
What benefits (if any) did you gain from your executive coaching received?	

Question	Probing Question
. What factors do you think impacted the effectiveness of the coaching you received?	
. How would you know a coaching intervention has been effective?	
. How much (in Rands) is the coaching you received worth to you, per hour?	
. Do you think there should be a difference in cost for an individual seeking coaching, versus a corporate paying for the coaching? If so, what should the cost difference be? What are your reasons for supporting a cost difference?	

APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM



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jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

You are invited to take part in a study conducted by Sazi Ndwandwa, from the Business School at Stellenbosch University. You were approached as a possible participant because you are an African black who carries executive decision-making responsibilities.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study aims to get insights into the understanding and perceptions that African black executives have of executive coaching, the benefits that can be derived from executive coaching and the value that they ascribe to this coaching process.

2. WHAT WILL BE ASKED OF ME?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be interviewed for 45 to 60 minutes. You will be asked to answer a number of questions based on your personal understanding, perceptions and experiences of coaching.

The interviews will be audio recorded to ensure that information is captured accurately. The recordings will be transcribed verbatim and discarded appropriately after the research has been completed in its entirety. The interview will take place in a venue that is comfortable for you, within practical means.

3. POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

It is not foreseen that any possible risks will arise to you due to participation in this study because your confidentiality will be maintained through the use of pseudonyms in the final research paper.

There should be minimal discomfort that you may expect to experience because there will be no requirement to share experiences of a personal nature, unless you choose to do so. Should you experience any discomfort or feel at risk in any way, you will have the right to discontinue your participation in the study.

4. POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO THE SOCIETY

You may benefit from participating in this study by probing, more deeply, your understanding of and perceptions about executive coaching.

The final research paper will be made available to you should you wish to read it. From this you may gain insights of the perceptions that other participants (African black executives) have of coaching and the value that it adds to business success.

The study will also benefit coaching practitioners and the academic fraternity by giving insights on the perspectives that African black executives have of coaching.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

No payment will be received or given for participation in the study.

6. PROTECTION OF YOUR INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY AND IDENTITY

Any information you share with me during this study and that could possibly identify you as a participant will be protected. This will be done by ensuring that:

- All electronic devices used (for recording the interviews and for writing up the research report) will be password or finger print protected
- All service providers contracted to transcribe the interview from audio to written format will be required to consent confidentiality.
- All work pertaining to the research will be stored in a locked storage space within an access-controlled building.

The audio recordings and transcriptions will only be used for this study and will be destroyed once the research report is finalised.

These will not be shared with any other party/ agency, other than the academic supervisor.

Pseudonyms will be used in the final research paper to maintain your anonymity.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you agree to take part in this study, you may withdraw at any time without any consequence. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. The researcher may withdraw you from this study if the logistical requirements for the interview are not feasible, or for any other reason that would make your involvement in the study impractical. Should this happen, the researcher will notify you.

8. RESEARCHERS' CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Sazi Ndwandwa at cell phone number (079)213-1566 (email address: sazi.ndwandwa@gmail.com), and/or the supervisor, Janine Truter, at email address janine.truter@usb.ac.za.

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE PARTICIPANT

As the participant I confirm that:

- I have read the above information and it is written in a language that I am comfortable with.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been answered.
- All issues related to privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information I provide, have been explained.

By signing below, I _____ (*name of participant*) agree to take part in this research study, as conducted by Sazi Ndwandwa.

Signature of Participant

Date

DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

As the **principal investigator**, I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the participant. I also declare that the participant has been encouraged (and has been given ample time) to ask any questions. In addition, I would like to select the following option:

	The conversation with the participant was conducted in a language in which the participant is fluent.
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	<p>The conversation with the participant was conducted with the assistance of a translator (who has signed a non-disclosure agreement), and this "Consent Form" is available to the participant in a language in which the participant is fluent.</p>

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date

APPENDIX C:

CONTRACT WITH TRANSCRIBERS

INTRODUCTION

_____ (**The Researcher**) has entered into a service level agreement (SLA) with _____ (**The service provider**) to provide transcription services of audio files to MS Word document.

The services include the delivery of the transcripts recorded within the specified timeframes as detailed further in this document.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

All communication shall be via email and via cellphone where necessary.

The contact details for the researcher are as follows:

Email: sazi.ndwandwa@gmail.com

Cell phone: 079 213 1566

The contact details of the transcriber are as follows:

Email: _____

Cell phone: _____

DELIVERY OF TRANSCRIPTS

The service provider is required to submit the transcribed records to the researcher in line with the following turnaround times:

The transcript must be emailed to the researcher within 48 hours (2 business days) after receipt of the audio file. For urgent transcripts, the timelines will be negotiated between the transcriber and the researcher.

The transcription must be a word-for-word version of the audio interview, with no alteration to the interview content.

FORMAT OF TRANSCRIPTS

- The transcription must be produced as a MS Word document.
- All transcribed records must be typed in size 11 Arial format; 1,5 line spacing and left alignment, page numbered.
- The document name must be the same as the audio file.

TRANSCRIBER'S CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

By signing this agreement, the transcriber confirms that:

- That names and any other identifying information about research participants are completely confidential.
- The transcriber will not to divulge, publish, or otherwise make known to unauthorized persons or to the public any information obtained in the course of this research project, unless specifically required to do so by law or court order, or clinical need. In these instances, the transcriber shall inform the researcher by email as soon as possible of what was divulged, when it was divulged, the reasons for doing so, to whom it was divulged and the format or manner.
- The transcriber may not contact any participant in relation to the research or mention to the participant, should they ever meet, the transcription of the interview or participation of the participant in the research.
- The transcriber shall delete all files or notes relating to the research once the researcher has confirmed receipt of, and satisfaction with, the transcription document.

Any violation of this agreement would constitute a serious breach of ethical standards, and the transcriber could face legal action from any affected party.

QUALITY STANDARDS

The quality of the transcripts is compromised if there are errors. Errors include but are not limited to incorrect words, exclusion of text or non-adherence to the specified format.

Incorrect words

The definition of an incorrect word in the transcript includes but is not limited to the following items:

- Misspelt word,
- Omitted word,
- Mistaken identity of the speaker,
- A wrong punctuation which alters the meaning of the text and context.

FINANCIAL

- The transcriber will receive payment based on the service provided according to the rates agreed to in this document
- Payment will be made within 48 hours (2 working days) of confirmation of receipt by the researcher.
- A fee of R..... per audio minute will be payable for each transcription
- Payments will be made to the following bank account

Account Name:

Bank Name:

Account Type:

Account Number:

Reference to be used:

Signed by the researcher.

Signed at on the day of 2018.

Researcher

Name:

Signature:

Signed by the transcriber.

Signed at on the day of 2018.

Transcriber

Name:

Signature:

APPENDIX D: DEFINITIONS OF COACHING AND MENTORING SHARED WITH PARTICIPANTS

MENTORING (Jarvis, 2004:20; Joo, 2005: 474; Shceepers, 2012: 28)

This means helping the protégé(mentee) succeed by providing guidance. The mentor-mentee relationship is characterized by a more experienced person (mentor) helping the less-experienced person (mentee) with political advice, information and guidance about a company, an

industry or his or her career:

- Mentors are usually older, more experienced and higher up in the organization, but outside the protégé's chain of command.
- Mentors act as role models, advisors and guides
- They focus on political skills and encourage self-development.
- They provide advice on career next steps and can recommend the mentee for visible positions or attractive compensation packages.
- The mentor-protégé relationship works well when someone is starting out in a career or entering a new role.

COACHING (COMENSA, 2013; Stout-Rostron, 2012:40; Whitmore, 2002: 8)

Coaching is a thinking partnership between a coach and a coachee within a systemic, facilitated and goal-orientated process, where a sustained shift in thinking, feeling and behaviour is created resulting in a higher level of coachee learning, performance, growth and effectiveness (Grant & Cavanagh, 2004: 11; Kline, 2009: 138; Stout-Rostron, 2012: 40).

The focus of coaching is to improve self-awareness, performance and skills. The coach-coachee relationship is collaborative, a relationship of peers.

It is also a certifiable skill. The International Coaching Federation (ICF) and Coaches and Mentors South Africa (COMENSA) certify coaches and provide core competencies and a

code of ethics. Traditionally, whether a coach is internal or external, the details of a coaching session are confidential. A good coach-coachee relationship is based on trust and collaboration. External coaches can be brought in to offer an external strategic perspective; internal coaches have both a company and strategic perspective. Coaching usually supports the coachee in taking steps and actions that move him or her forward to achieve a goal; people are more likely to be engaged and accountable for solutions and goals they have designed.

Here are some guidelines for the coach-coachee relationship:

- It is collaborative and starts from the coachee's strengths.
- Coaches ask open-ended questions to help the coachee strategize solutions and facilitate problem solving.
- Coaches do not give advice; they provide encouragement and urge continuous improvement.
- Coaches hold the coachee accountable for trying new things and using his or her strengths to get results.
- Coaches offer objective perspective and support the coachee's efforts to try new actions.

APPENDIX E:
SUMMARY OF THEMES, SUB-THEMES AND CODES

No.	Theme	Sub-themes	Underlying Codes
1.1	Coaching as a thinking and advisory tool	Long-term strategic thinking	sounding board, reflection space, new perspectives, planning, strategising, vision focus, forming own opinion, analysis, crisis prevention, thinking methods, prioritisation, brand management, , focus on business values, focus on vision and purpose
1.2		Short-term problem-solving	brain-storming, scenario-planning, innovation, creativity, testing ideas, complex issues
1.3		Mentorship/ Guidance/ consulting	experienced guide, help for leaders, mentoring, advice, direction
2.1	Coaching as a training tool for developing the individual	Leadership Development	strategy, delegation, communication, leadership style, people management, people development, financial management
2.2		Change management	new role, organisational culture, induction,
2.3		Addressing challenges in the work environment	hostile environment, power dynamics, office politics

No.	Theme	Sub-themes	Underlying Codes
2.4		Relationship management	people management, expectations, emotional intelligence, client relations, collaboration, more influence, people appreciation, social awareness, picking one's fights, diversity,
2.5		Networking	access, networking skill, leveraging relationships, coach as sponsor
2.6		Motivation and morale	Encouragement, affirmation, Motivation, addressing self-doubt, self-esteem and confidence, happiness, dealing with overwhelm, reduced stress, more peace and less anxiety, affirms progress
2.7		Self-awareness	Identifying upbringing issues, more self-honesty, ability to coach oneself, knowing own strengths and flaws, managing temperament, cultivating humility, patience and understanding (non-judgement),
2.8		Holistic Growth	Life and business management, personal life, managing success, worklife balance, parenting, constant growth, outside of comfort zone, self-management, addressing personal matters, Improved health, improved awareness, managing personal relationships.

No.	Theme	Sub-themes	Underlying Codes
2.9		Career Benefits	Career planning, stagnation to revitalisation, accelerated growth, higher salary and rewards, progression, professionalism, re-invention and staying relevant,
2.10		Personal Achievement	Goal attainment, dreaming new dreams, Meeting coaching objectives, minimises procrastination and excuses, accountability to coach, setting realistic and challenging goals, identifying opportunities, consistency, quicker success, tracking life goals.
2.11		Leveraging Strengths	strengths identification and focus, leverage strengths, identify talents, addressing mental limitations, unlocking potential, developing strengths,
2.12		Developing one's potential	addressing development areas, business acumen, negative behaviours, taking personal responsibility, unsolicited positive feedback, awareness of development areas, better listener, addressing key weaknesses, new positive habits, willingness to receive feedback, identify and address blind spots.
3.1	Coaching as a tool for	Team benefits	team reflection, more team interactions, staff autonomy, identify business drivers, awareness of impact on team, trust, staff retention, role

No.	Theme	Sub-themes	Underlying Codes
	organisational growth		clarity, delegation, staff morale and engagement,
3.2		Succession and retention	stability, developing leaders, retention, staff development,
3.3		Corporate strategic goals	aligning persona and corporate goals, goal-setting, strategic alignment, strategy communication, strategy buy-in, sustained organisational success, sustain vision, culture alignment, sustain momentum
3.4		Enhancing Corporate performance	strategy implementation, performance focus, prevents complacency/ sustains high performance, setting up business processes, financial accountability, sustaining innovation, Optimal resource management, ability to commit, productivity, effectiveness,
4.1	Other benefits of coaching	Societal benefits	socio-economic issues, gender inequalities, social contribution, prejudices, minorities in workplace, assumed incompetence prejudice,
4.2		Benefits to the coach	Personal Fulfilment, learning
5.1	The Coaching relationship	Human Factor	informal, chemistry, openness, common interests, compatibility, coaching choice of coachee, professional friendship, long-term relationship.

No.	Theme	Sub-themes	Underlying Codes
5.2		Coaching Environment	safe space, honest feedback, accountability, comfortable environment, coachee owns space
5.3		Respect	role model, positional authority, collaboration, mutual respect, value the coaching space, commitment, professionalism, equals.
5.4		Boundaries and ethics - coachee	character, confidentiality, ethics, contracting, professionalism
5.5		Coach's experience	understands corporate dynamics, life experience, achievements, corporate experience, diverse experience, executive experience, leadership experience,
5.6		Boundaries and ethics - sponsor	genuine company support, coachee is primary client, positive reason for coaching, upfront clarification of communication rules with sponsor.
5.7		Technical Coaching ability	interviewing, communication and listening skills, coach has own coach, professional qualifications and training, non-judgemental, coaching experience, coaching success record, maturity and age, clear coaching method, identify key points

No.	Theme	Sub-themes	Underlying Codes
5.8		Coach Mindset/ attitude	Objective, challenging, different perspective, understanding, encouraging, non-directive, shares own knowledge, believes in and cheers coachee on, open-minded, inspirational, willing to learn, open to disagreement, culturally diverse, positive mindset, people's person, passion, emotional intelligence, empathy, authentic, sets aside own beliefs and biases, mental and emotional preparation for sessions, questions and withholds own opinions, gives suggestions and alternatives
5.9		Coach availability	Directly accessible, prioritisation, available, needs-based sessions, duration of coaching relationship, frequency vs desired impact of sessions, flexible duration of sessions, communication in-between sessions,
5.10		Coachee mindset/ attitude	Availability, willing to be/ open to being coached, emotional and mental maturity, humility, willing to learn and to change, willing to challenge coach, implements commitments, committed to coaching process, open and honest, voluntary participation in coaching,
6.1	Successful coaching	Relevance of coaching	culture and socio-economic context, understand coachee context,

No.	Theme	Sub-themes	Underlying Codes
			relevant knowledge and experience, coaching relevant to role
6.2		Measuring and monitoring coaching success	achieve coaching goals/ objectives, written goals, practical coaching process, upfront agreement on clear coaching objectives
6.3		Sustainability of benefits	Benefits not guaranteed or sustainable, avoid creating dependency, alignment of coachee values, relevance to role, realistic expectations of coaching, coachee owns decisions,