
Executive Coaching

“What lies ahead?”

Overview

- A search for relevance!
- Executive Coaching defined
- The practice of Executive Coaching today
- What can we learn from developments in Clinical Psychology?
- What profession is best placed to lead the industry in the provision of training and service delivery?

Why is Executive Coaching a boom industry today?

- Current trends impacting on management that demand greater versatility in skill sets and flexibility in management styles
 - Flatter organisations
 - Less middle management and oversight
 - Less time for managers to devote to the management of their staff
- Increasing focus on service based (as opposed to product based) business strategy
- Increasing need to gain advantage through human capital as other competitive advantages erode
- ***A culture of continual improvement***
- Constant change

Coaching Research



A. Grant (2003); Coaching Psychology Unit, School
of Psychology, University of Sydney

Coaching (presently) defined...

“Executive coaching is a solution-focused, result-oriented, systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of ***work performance*** and the self-directed learning and personal growth of the coachee”

Anthony Grant (2002)

So what is coaching in practice?...

- ❑ A conversation and dialogue
- ❑ An application of adult learning principles
- ❑ Facilitation of learning and meaning from experience
- ❑ About personal change
- ❑ Cognitive, Behavioural and Emotional

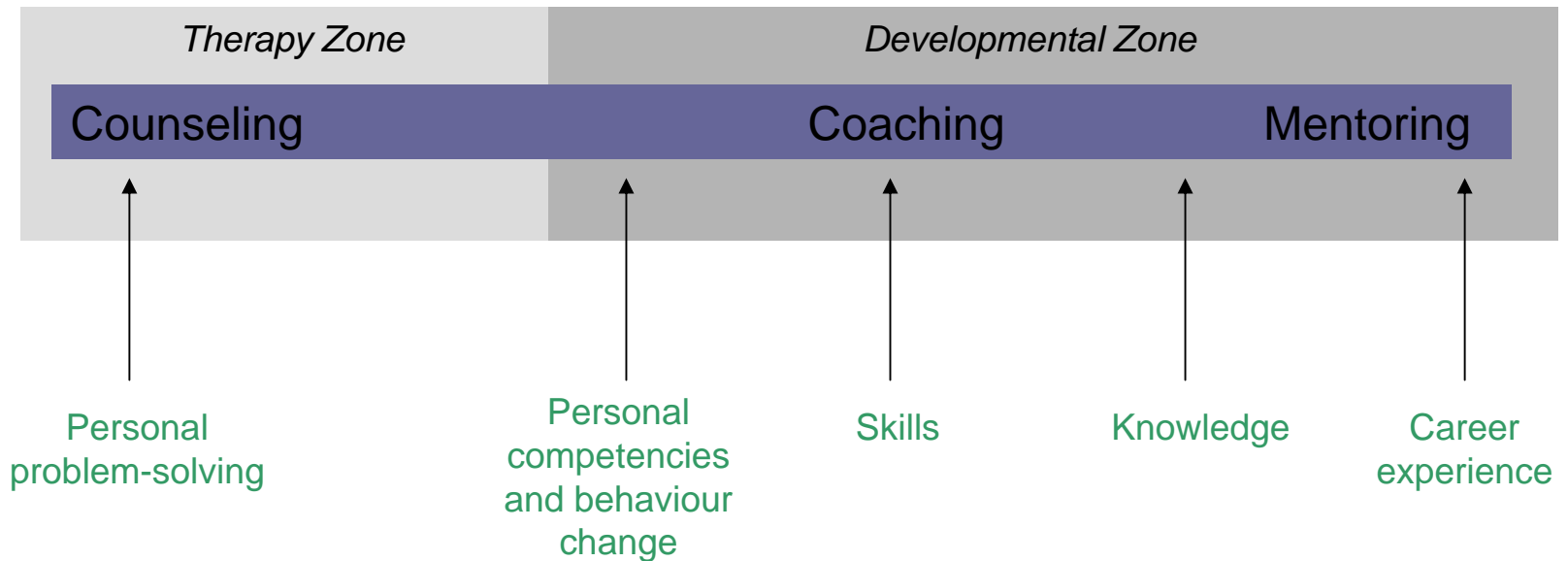
Anthony Grant (2002)

Yes! But how is that different from counselling?

■ Good Question!

- The context of the relationship
- A focus on organisational performance
- The coachee is often not the 'primary client'
- Integration of performance specific psychometrics
- This rose smells much sweeter

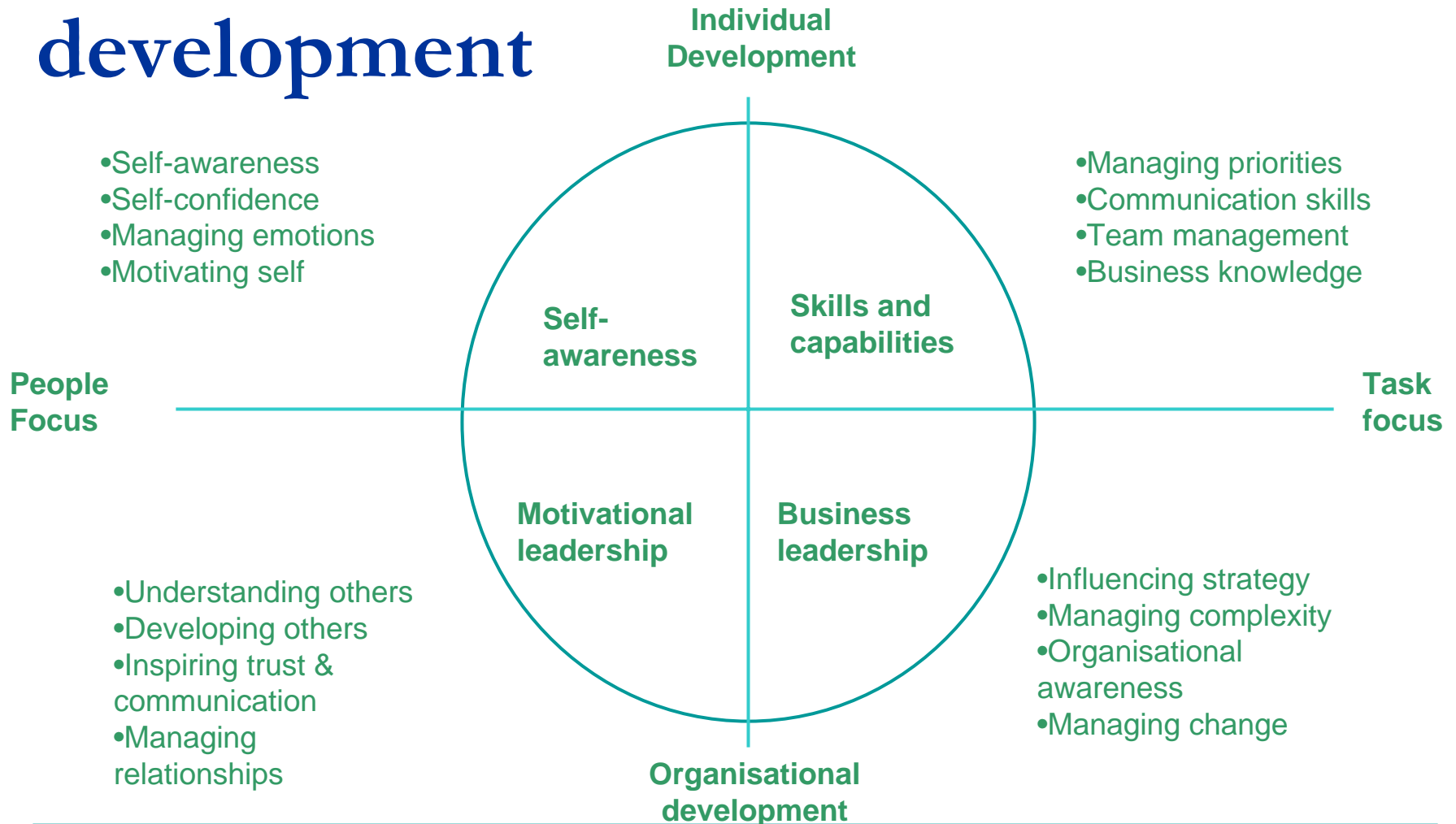
The Coaching Continuum (1)



The Coaching Continuum (2)



Targets for development



Factors Contributing to Failure and Negative Coaching Outcomes

In Clients

- Serious psychological problems
- Serious interpersonal problems
- Lack of motivation
- Unrealistic expectations of the coach or the coaching process
- Lack of follow-through on homework or intervention suggestions

In the Coach

- Insufficient empathy for the client
- Lack of expertise or interest in the client's problems or issues
- Underestimation of the severity of the client's problems or issues
- Unresolved disagreements with the client about the coaching
- Poor technique (e.g. inaccurate assessment, lack of clarity on coaching contract, poor selection and/or implementation of methods)

(Richard Kilburg, Failure and Negative Outcomes: The Taboo Topic in Executive Coaching, in *Executive Coaching, Practices and Perspectives*, Catherine Fitzgerald and Jennifer Garvey Berger, Eds., Davies Black Publishing, 2002.)

Personal perspective on what defines Executive Coaching

“The Client/Coachee”

Availability of resources

Emotional

Physical

Interpersonal

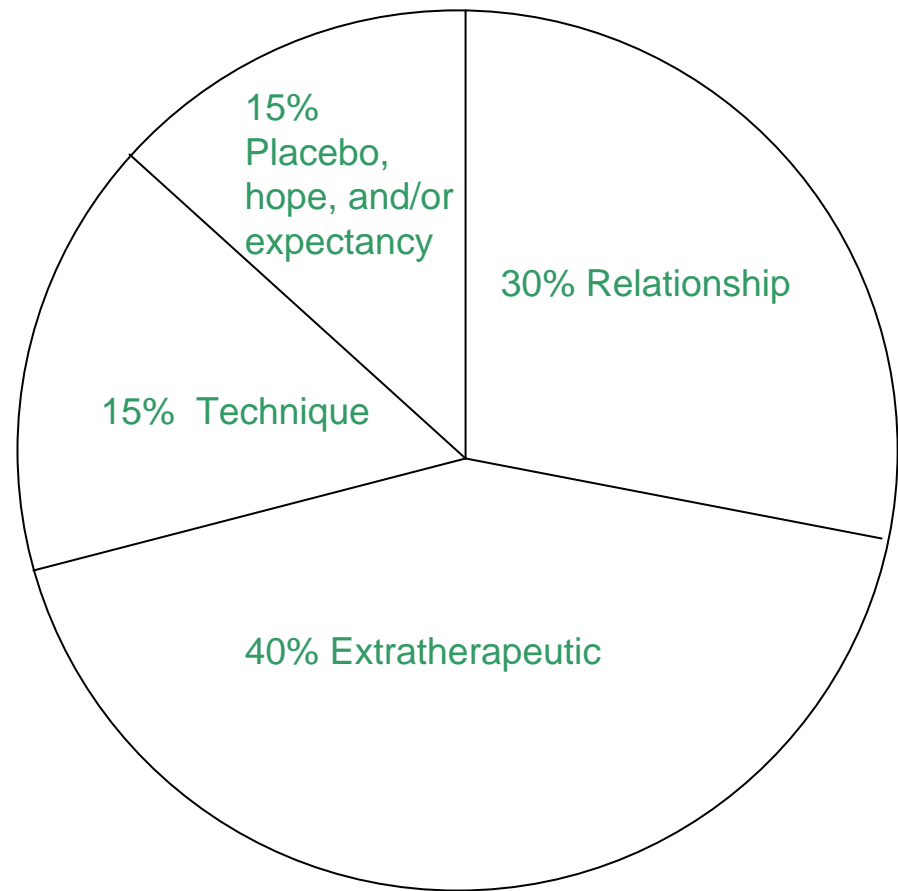
Competencies from which to leverage

Readiness for change

Common Factors

Research on Common Factors in Clinical Practice

Research points to the existence of four factors common to all forms of therapy despite theoretical orientation (dynamic, cognitive, etc.), mode (individual, group, couples, family, etc.), dosage (frequency and number of sessions), or specialty (problem type, professional discipline, etc.).



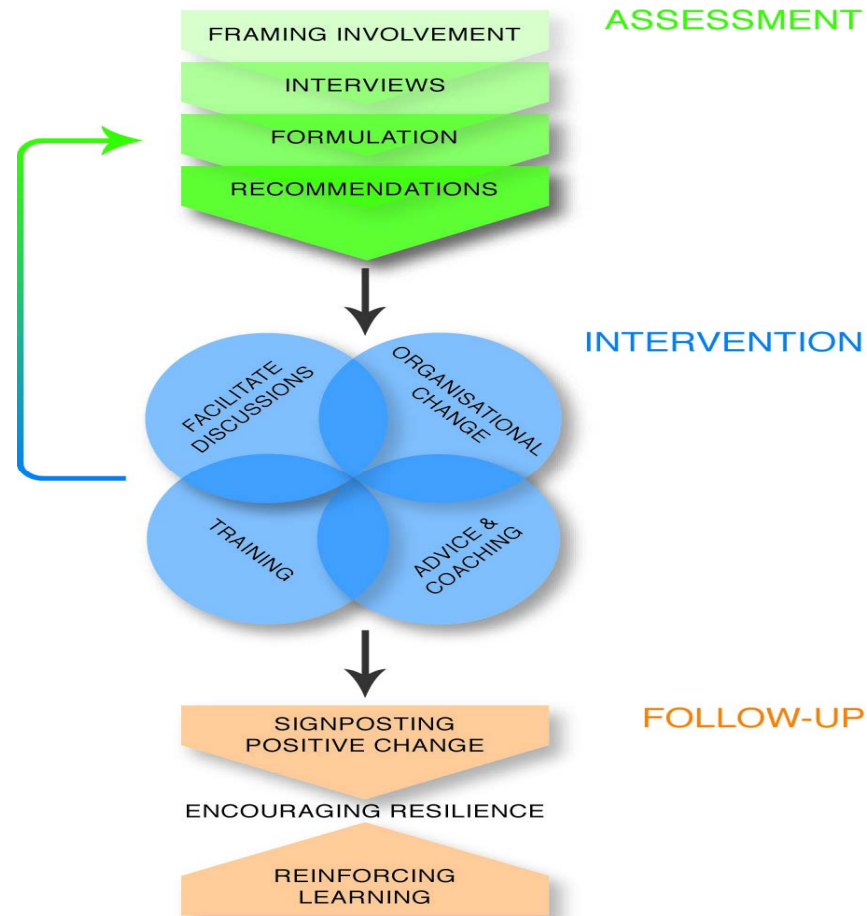
(S. Miller, 1999. *The heart & soul of change*)

Is Evidence Based Practice Practical?

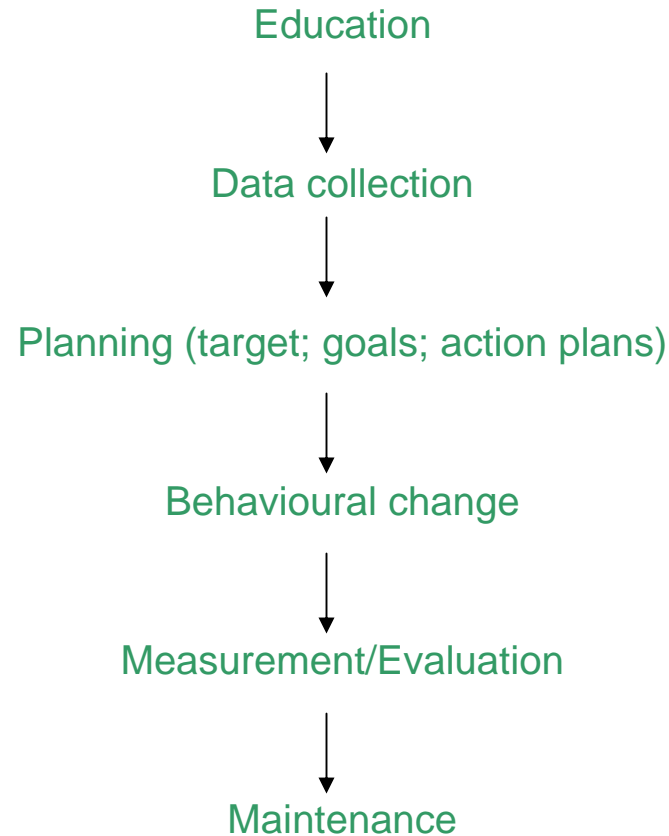
- Evidence-based practice is all the rage.
- The assumption, is that training therapist or coaches to practice specific models or approaches will improve outcome.
- Volumes of research show little difference in outcome between competing treatment approaches in clinical counselling.
- For years, the data has shown that therapists become less committed to particular treatment approaches with time and experience.
- A recent study demonstrated that little has changed in 15 years. In spite of being "official policy" of professional organisations and training, the dominant theoretical orientation of practicing clinicians is...you guessed it: Eclectic! More than double the number of those claiming to be cognitive in orientation.
- The number of those claiming to be eclectic grows even larger the longer one is in practice.
- A study by Najavits and colleagues at Harvard Medical School examined therapist satisfaction and competence with four manual-based treatments. On average, it took therapists 8 months to become "comfortable" with the treatment approach. More to the point, however, "few" indicated that they would be willing to use the treatment without modifications following the study. Treatment, in their opinion, needed to fit the client, rather than the client being made to fit the treatment.

Najavits, L. et al. (2003). Therapist satisfaction with four manual based treatments. *Psychotherapy*, 41(1), 13-25.
Norcross, J. et al. (2002). Psychologists conducting psychotherapy in 2001. *Psychotherapy*, 39(1), 97-102.

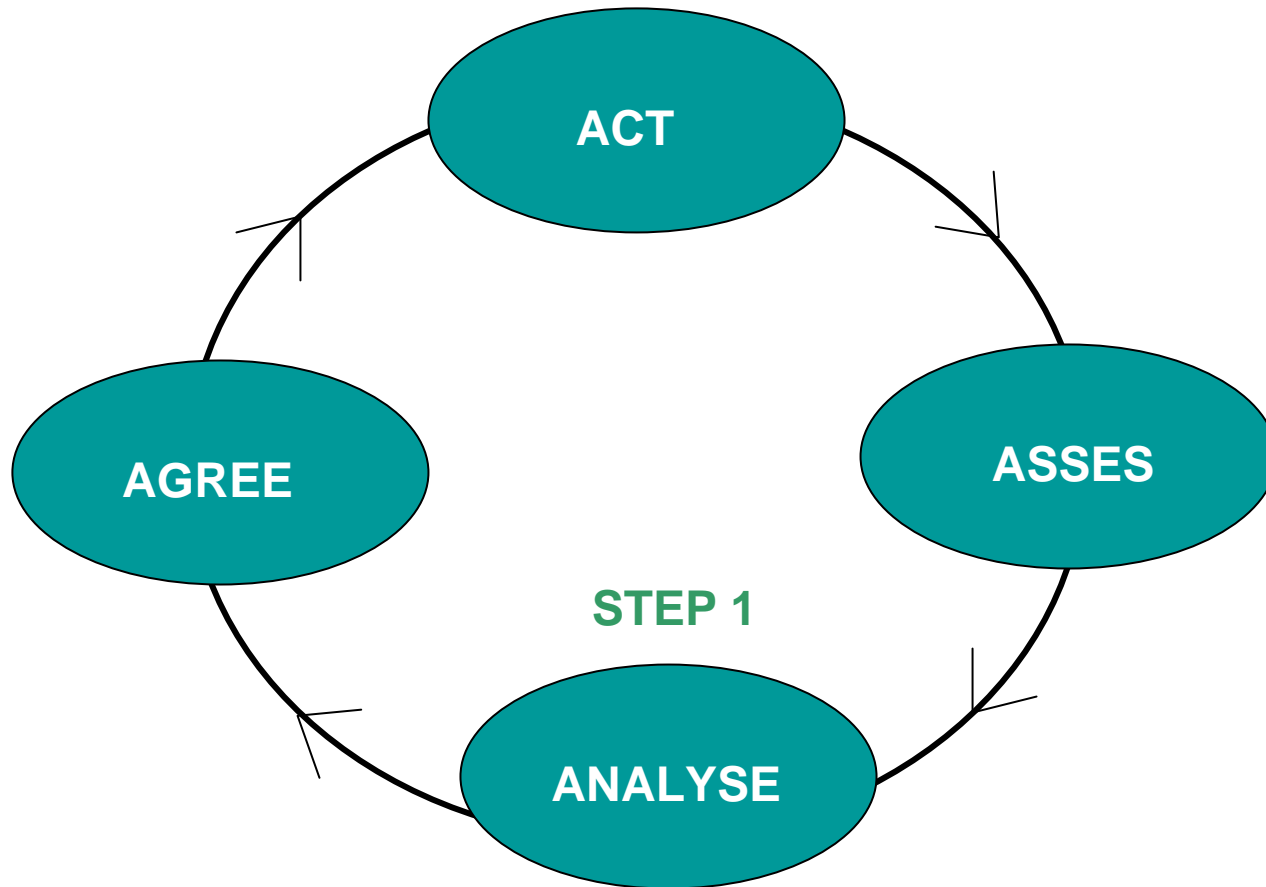
My model of practice



The 'scientist' practitioner/coach

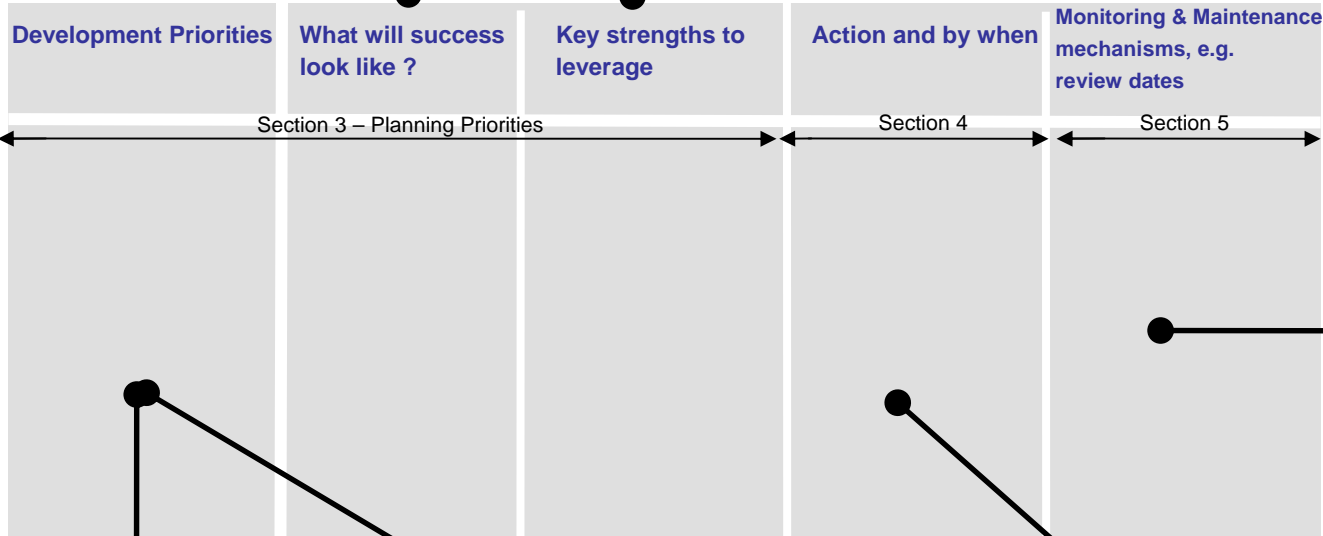


Review of best practice



Development Plan Guide

Describe in clear terms what success will look like against each development theme. Ask yourself what you will see, hear or feel that is different to skills and behaviours observed today. To help you with this it is also useful to describe what current skills and behaviours look like.



Performance is best enhanced by making the most of our strengths, so when thinking about development you need to give focus to your relevant and distinctive strengths and seek ways to leverage them more.

Your success outcomes should give you a target to measure progress against, as you monitor and review your plan. Most importantly, you should see your plan as 'work in progress'. It is a living document that you will change, add to and update. By fixing review dates you will encourage a discipline that ensures you keep on track against your actions/ goals. You also need to anticipate potential blockages and barriers to your development.

Development priorities could be functional skills gaps, areas for improvement or areas relating to your career plan; they could relate to experience gaps or could be behavioural in nature. They could also be about leveraging strengths. They should relate to a leadership capability area.

Development priorities will change over time but should provide specific focus to help you further leverage a strength, build new capabilities or change behaviours. You should focus your attention on 2/3 priority themes at any one time, work through them and then update your plan.

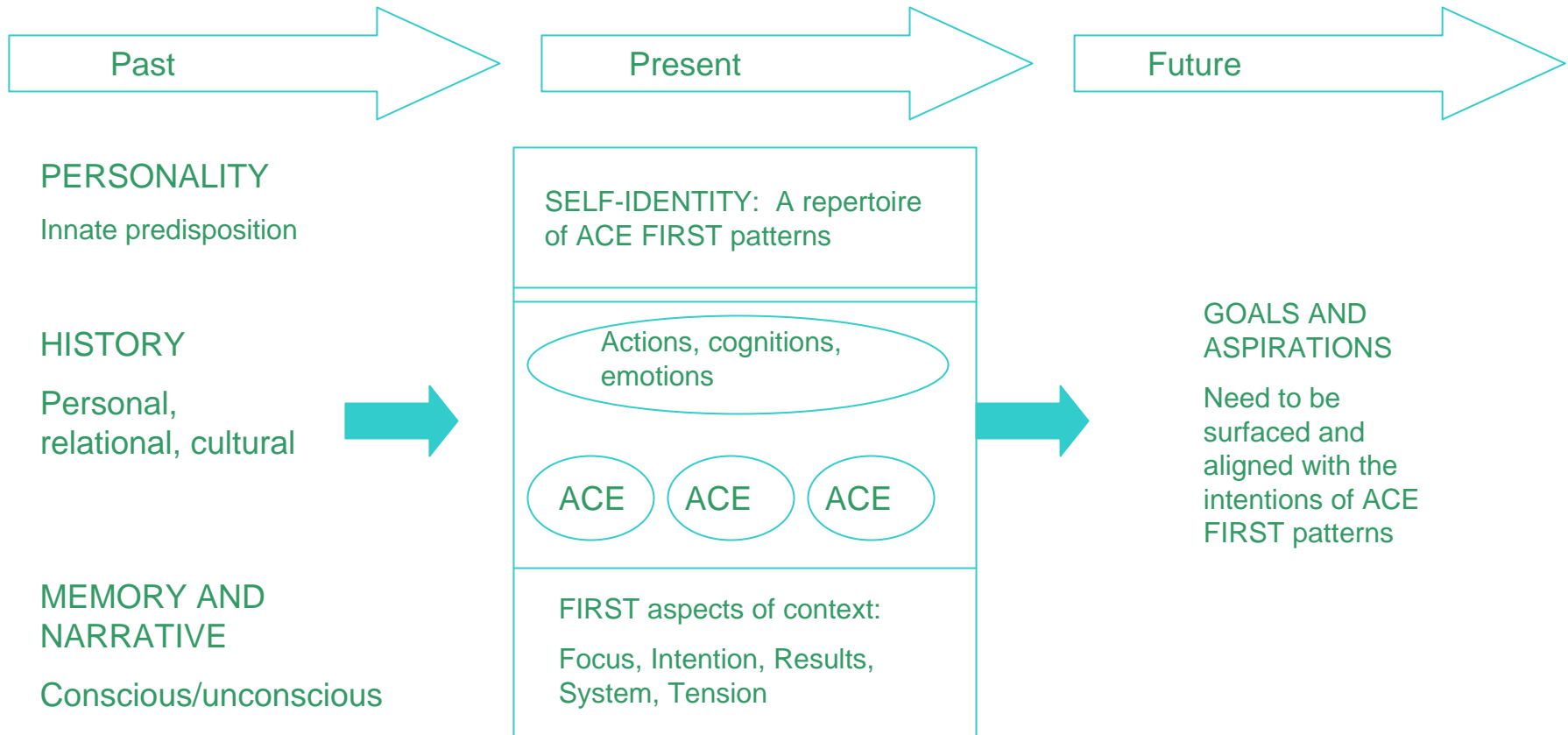
Capture what actions need to be taken for each development priority. Be specific in identifying what you will do, who will be involved and what support/resources are needed These actions need to be tangible, stretching and measurable.

Coaching Theory

- The psychology of executive coaching
(Bruce Peltier, 2001)
 - Assessment
 - The psychodynamic view
 - Behavioural concepts
 - The person-centered approach
 - Cognitive psychology and cognitive therapy
 - Family therapy and systems thinking
 - Hypnotic communication
 - Social psychology and coaching
 - The existential stance

- Predominant paradigm CBT & Solution-Focused
 - Very jazzy packaging of concepts

The ACE FIRST model of change



G. Lee. (2003). Leadership Coaching. CIPD House, London

What do coaching clients prioritise?

1. Credentials
 - Graduate training in psychology
 - Understanding of Business
 - Reputation as a coach
2. Personal Characteristics
 - Ability to form a strong working alliance/relationship
 - Professionalism
 - Use of clear and sound methodology
3. Indicators of success
 - Behaviour change
 - Increased awareness
 - Improved leadership

(Executive Coaching: An Outcome Study. Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, Vol. 55, No2, 94-106)

What do Psychologists have to offer the coaching profession?

- ***Psychometric assessment.***
 - Psychologists are qualified and trained to conduct assessment processes that are both valid and reliable. In the provision of executive coaching we are able to draw from a vast array of assessment methods and tools .
- ***The science of human behaviour.***
 - The science of psychology offers a vast knowledge base devoted to the very core elements that underlie leadership behaviour and development.
- ***Well-developed professional code of ethics.***
 - All of the professional activities of psychologists are guided by an ethical code of conduct expressly designed to protect the clients interests.
- ***Scientifically validated methods of facilitating behaviour change.***
 - Psychologists are trained to question and assess the validity of intervention strategies and to select behaviour change strategies that have been proven through research to be effective.
- ***Psychologists have specialised training in the measurement of results.***

Paul Winum (2003). Developing Leadership: What is distinctive about what psychologists can offer.

Coach Training

- Predominantly “cookie cutter” approaches
- GROW model – predominant model for coaches
- Behavioural Coaching
 - Suzanne Skiffington

“Training in one specific coaching methodology alone will be unlikely to represent value to the client/coachee, and escalates the probability of doing harm”

A recent article in the Harvard Business Review (Berglas 2002) laments the fact that too many executive coaches lack training in human psychology. Berglas asserts that some coaching professionals may come from the sports and motivational speaking fields with little background or competency in dealing with the complexities of personalities and behavior.

Future avenues for research

- ❑ Is a typology of coaching areas possible?
- ❑ Are there definable coaching styles?
- ❑ What are the critical elements of a successful coaching program? (e.g. the relationship; goal setting; the number of sessions; session focus)?
- ❑ Are there significant difference in outcomes for truly voluntary coachees and for those who are “referred”?

(Skiffington & Perry, 2003)

Gianni Versace ‘revisited’

- Clothing is to designer fashion as coaching is to counselling.
- Credentials are important. What fashion house do you have behind your name?
- Specialisation is important: Creating synergy in your practice
Leadership/Coaching/Conflict Management
- A very personal affair
- Reputation is important
- You have to possess a genuine interest in business and performance.
- Focus on **needs** of very specific target market
- Its all about the client, rather than what selling lots of expensive dresses can do for your lifestyle.
- Physical setting – you cannot sell a \$7000 piece of clothing from an rack in a Milk Bar.

Questions!

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APS Coaching Interest Group

“A great avenue for networking and professional development in Coaching Psychology”

Cost: \$15 – Knowledge and professional networking: Priceless