



Research Digest

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We are delighted to welcome you to the first issue of the Research Digest, published by the Institute of Coaching, McLean Hospital, Harvard Medical School affiliate.

The Research Digest features selected papers - relevant to coaching theory, research and practice. The selection is based on contribution to developing coaching theory and science; a variety of paradigms and theoretical frameworks, innovative research design and findings; relevance and implications to coaching practice; provocative discussions and debates in the area of coaching. Our team follows the publications in leading journals including: Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research; Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice; Leadership Quarterly; Journal of Positive Psychology; International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring; Harvard Business Review and other journals.

The Digest provides the abstracts, in many cases access to the full text, and for Institute of Coaching members - commentaries regarding implications for practice. Members can link to the full text of most of the articles through our resources database. We trust that you will find the Digest helpful and stimulating and that through this publication you can access current research in the area of Coaching more directly and efficiently. We greatly appreciate the sponsorship of Meyler Campbell which makes the publication of the Institute of Coaching Research Digest possible!

OVERVIEW

Leadership and Organizational Coaching

SELF-DECEPTION IN COACHES: AN ISSUE IN PRINCIPLE AND A CHALLENGE FOR SUPERVISION. Tatiana Bachkirova (2015).

TAKE CARE WHAT YOU BRING WITH YOU: HOW COACHES' MOOD AND INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIOR AFFECT COACHING SUCCESS. Patrizia M. Ianiro, Simone Kauffeld (2014).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STRENGTH-BASED EXECUTIVE COACHING IN ENHANCING FULL RANGE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: A CONTROLLED STUDY. Doug MacKie (2014).

HOW 'OTHER PEOPLE MATTER' IN A CLASSROOM-BASED STRENGTHS INTERVENTION: EXPLORING INTERPERSONAL STRATEGIES AND CLASSROOM OUTCOMES. Denise M. Quinlan, Nicola Swain, Claire Cameron and Dianne A. Vella-Brodrick (2014).

KNOWLEDGE SHARING IN THE ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT: USING SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS AS A COACHING TOOL. Nicky Terblanche (2014).

PROMOTING POST-CONVENTIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN LEADERS: AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS. Niki Vincent, Lynn Ward, Linley Denson (2015).

Health and Wellbeing Coaching

THERE ARE RISKS TO MINDFULNESS AT WORK. David Brendel (2015)

MEDITATION PROGRAMS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS AND WELL-BEING. Madhav Goyal, et al. (2014).

HEALTH BEHAVIOUR OUTCOMES OF CO-ACTIVE COACHING INTERVENTIONS: A SCOPING REVIEW. Rebecca H. Liu, Jennifer D. Irwin, and Don Morrow. (2015).

Reviews and Reflections

LEGACY REFLECTIONS: TEN LESSONS ABOUT BECOMING AN EXECUTIVE COACH. Lee, R. J. F., Michael H. (2015).

GETTING PUBLISHED IN COACHING: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF THEORY, RESEARCH AND PRACTICE- OUR TOP 10 TIPS FOR ENHANCING YOUR WORK. Almuth McDowall (2015).

POSITIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY: A STRENGTH-BASED APPROACH. Tayyab Rashid (2014).

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON COACHING

The papers presented below research different areas of coaching, use a range of methods for data collecting and analysis. We start with a paper that studied the interaction between coach and coachee as a function of coach's mood and interpersonal behavior. The next two papers address the relevance of individual level characteristics and dynamics – specifically strengths in leadership development and self-deception in coaches. We then turn to two papers that focus on the relevance of coaching to wider systems, since relational aspects of coaching are less often studied. The first one evaluates a leadership development program, from which conclusions for coaching can be made. The last paper in this section looks at the connection between individual coaching and the larger organizational context using social network analysis as a tool to guide the coaching.

Take care what you bring with you: How coaches' mood and interpersonal behavior affect coaching success.

Patrizia M. Ianiro, Simone Kauffeld
Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 2014, Vol 66(3), 231-257.

ABSTRACT

Background: The quality of coaching working alliances is crucial for coaching success. Determining the ingredients that contribute to a high-quality coaching working alliance is an important question for research. Interpersonal behavior is considered to be a vital factor for a successful coach–client working alliance. This study analyzes how a coach's verbal and nonverbal interpersonal behavior affects a client's behavior and perceptions of the working alliance.

Methods: In a preliminary subsequent analysis, we further explored how a coach's mood before coaching affects his or her in-session interpersonal behavior and the client's ratings on working alliance. The interaction of 48 coach–client dyads was videotaped during the first coaching session and analyzed using the discussion coding system.

Findings: As predicted, findings suggest positive relations between dominant-friendly interpersonal behavior of coaches and clients. A coach's dominant-friendly behavior, in turn, was positively related to the client's ratings of the working alliance after the first session and at the end of the 5-session coaching process. Moreover, a coach's pleasant mood predicted the amount of his or her in-session dominant-friendly interpersonal behavior and was also positively related to the client's working alliance ratings.

Discussion: We discuss how coaches' awareness of their own affective states and interpersonal behaviors can help in establishing a successful working alliance.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Findings relevant to practice: suggest that successful coach-client interactions may depend on coaches' mood and how it is expressed during the coaching session. A coach's pleasant mood before the coaching session promotes his or her confident and friendly behavior towards the client within the session. This is important because such coach behavior activates the client and positively affects the working alliance.

Reflections for practice: The results indicate that coaches should be aware of their own mental state and learn how to influence it before they enter the coaching session. Moreover, it appears worthwhile for coaches to work on nonverbal expressions, particularly those associated with confidence and friendliness. The article provides some recommendations for coaches of how to establish conditions that facilitate a positive mood state and expressions of confidence during the coaching session. (P.M. Ianiro)

Self-deception in coaches: an issue in principle and a challenge for supervision.

Tatiana Bachkirova, *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice* 2015

ABSTRACT

Background: This article describes an exploratory study aimed at investigating factors contributing to the phenomenon of self-deception in coaches.

Methods: Six experienced coaching supervisors were interviewed in accordance with the Conceptual Encounter research methodology.

Findings: The results are presented in a model of self-deception in coaches. The model consists of three main sections, which include the nature of self-deception, contextual influences on self-deception and the focused influence on self-deception in coaching supervision. These themes are discussed in light of the structural analysis of the

literature on self-deception performed from a pragmatic perspective.

Conclusions: The paper concludes by considering how the results of the study add to current debates on the nature of self-deception and what implications the findings might have for coaches, coaching supervisors and other practitioners engaged in the development of individuals in organisations.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Findings relevant to practice: The results of the study presented in this paper highlight the complexity of this phenomenon but also the value of understanding the natural human tendency of self-deception in the context of coaching.

Reflections for practice:

- First of all, for coaches of all traditions this article offers a number of concepts and examples from practice, which are useful to reflect on. It clearly highlights the role of practitioner's self in the coaching process asking important questions associated with their own self-deception and its implications for the quality of their practice. The paper can help coaches identify instances of self-deception and their contextual influences as well as to reflect on ways to minimize self-deception in their work. It brings to the fore the role of supervision in coaching (in particular as a place where self-deception can be addressed) that is still unfortunately overlooked in some communities of practice.
- Secondly, this paper is useful for trainers and educators of coaching providing excellent material that needs to be discussed in the process of primary and continuing development of coaches.
- Finally, this paper explores many ideas relevant for coaching supervisors themselves if they are to address the issues of self-deception of coaches in their work. (T. Bachkirova)

LEADERSHIP
QUARTERLY
2015

Promoting post-conventional consciousness in leaders: Australian community leadership programs. Niki Vincent , LynnWard, Linley Denson; *The Leadership Quarterly*, 2015

ABSTRACT

Background: This study explored the impact on consciousness development of participating in either standard or enhanced community leadership programs (CLPs) in Australia. Aligned with Manners' and Durkin's (2000) conceptual framework, CLPs offer experiences that are interpersonal, emotionally engaging, personally salient and structurally disequilibrating for later conventional consciousness stages. Enhanced CLPs include additional psychosocial challenges.

Methods: Participants were 335 adults who took part in one of 4 standard CLPs, 7 enhanced CLPs and 2 (control) management programs. Modal program length was 10 months.

Findings: Standard and enhanced CLPs were successful in facilitating consciousness development (as measured by the Washington University Sentence Completion Test – WUSCT) within the conventional stages. However, enhanced CLPs were significantly more successful in triggering post-conventional development, and specifically in those participants who had a preference for Sensing (as measured by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator – MBTI).

Conclusions: Enhanced CLPs could provide a model for other development programs aimed at promoting post-conventional consciousness.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Background: This paper is based on the paradigm of post-conventional leader consciousness. Briefly, it is based constructive developmental theory of ego development, a stage theory elaborating how people's ways of constructing meaning changes and matures through the lifespan. The stages move from more ego-centric to more social values and awareness, and in the third or "post-conventional stage", people start to understand the constructed nature of reality, to challenge conventions and norms, to have higher tolerance of uncertainty and multiplicity.

Reflections for practice: Such characteristics are valued as associated with effective leadership dealing with adaptive challenges in current times. The specific leadership development programs which were the focus of the study have particular philosophy and components (such as community engagement, exposure to diverse perspectives and risk taking, reflection). Particularly the "enhanced" programs were associated with development of post-conventional consciousness (as compared to control programs). Thus, coaches working with leaders could consider the relevance of consciousness development for their clients and from this paper, understand approaches which could facilitate it.

Knowledge sharing in the organizational context: using Social Network

Analysis as a coaching tool. Nicky Terblanche; *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, 2014, Vol. 12 (2) 146-164.

ABSTRACT

Background: Knowledge sharing between employees is a critical success factor in knowledge intensive organisations and depends on the quality of an employee's relationships with co-workers. Relatively little research has been done on how to incorporate relationship aspects into a coaching intervention.

Methods: This paper describes an organisational coaching intervention that used Social Network Analysis to analyse relationship patterns between individuals in a team following an action research approach.

Conclusions: Social Network Analysis artefacts were used to help identify coachees, set coaching goals, create selfawareness, identify behavioural changes, and to provide some measure of the coaching efficacy in improving knowledge sharing in a team.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Background: Understanding the social networks in an organization could benefit the coaching engagement - including the individual, the team, the organization and the coach-coachee relationship. When the coachee is aware of their position within the team structure they could have increased self-awareness and subsequent willingness to participate in change.

Reflections for practice:

- Improved relationships as a result of targeted, relationship-sensitive coaching may benefit the team through enhanced collaboration, more optimal flow of information and increased knowledge sharing. This may in turn lead to improved efficiency that may affect employee engagement, wellbeing and ultimately the corporate bottom line.
- In the design and execution of the coaching intervention, visibility of the current relationship patterns in teams may provide insight into who should be coached, on what aspects and with which personal and organizational goals in mind. A coach can use pre- and post-Social Network Analysis assessment to provide some measure of the success of the coaching beyond the individuals who were coached.

- Finally, the coach-coachee relationship could benefit from the systemic insights the SNA results provide. As a coach, when you have a deeper understanding of the coachee's context within their team, you could appropriately express empathy and understanding and thus improving the level of rapport and trust. (N. Terblanche)



CONSULTING
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2014

CHARACTER STRENGTHS

We draw your attention to three papers based on the framework of character strengths, which has implications for coaching in leadership, education, health and others. The first paper is from the *Consulting Psychology Journal* and is an empirical study of leadership development. Further, a recently published special issue of *JOPP* was devoted to Chris Peterson who died in 2012, and his contribution to psychology - specifically the framework of character strengths. All of the papers in the issue are grounded in the framework of character strengths, utilize its potential and expand and reflect on it further. We have selected two papers to highlight from this issue; however all of them are available in the ICPA virtual Library. Coaches would be particularly interested in the articles which explore the implications for coaching of the papers discussing interventions in education and psychotherapy.

The effectiveness of strength-based executive coaching in enhancing full range leadership development: A controlled study. Doug MacKie; *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 2014, Vol 66(2) 118-137.

ABSTRACT (Partial)

Background and aims: This study attempts to investigate the effectiveness of a strength-based coaching methodology in enhancing elements of the full range leadership model, especially transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is the process whereby leaders engage and influence their followers toward attaining a shared vision through their capacity to inspire, innovate and personalize their attention.

Methods: A between-subjects nonequivalent control group design was used to explore the impact of strength-based coaching on transformational and transactional leadership behaviors measured in a 360-degree feedback process. Thirty-seven executives and senior managers from a large not-for-profit organization were non-randomly assigned to either a coaching or waitlist cohort. The coaching cohort received six sessions of leadership coaching involving feedback on leadership and strengths, goal setting, and strengths development.

Findings: The results showed that participants experienced highly statistically significant increases in their transformational leadership behavior after coaching and this difference was perceived at all levels within the organization but not by the participants themselves. Adherence to the strength-based protocol was also a significant predictor of ultimate degree of change in transformational leadership behavior.

Conclusions: The results suggest that strength-based coaching may be effective in the development of transformational leaders.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Background: The study illustrates that strengths-based leadership coaching works, since coachees showed a highly significant increase in transformational leadership behaviours following the leadership coaching intervention when compared to the control group.

Reflections for practice: Thus practitioners could consider including a strengths-based approach in their work with leaders, through identifying leader strengths, giving feedback on strengths, and working on strength development.

- The strengths assessment protocol included the peak experiences interview and self-report data from Realise 2 Inventory. The Realise 2 Inventory also provided a useful model for the coaching process as it separates coachee behaviour into four quadrants; realized strengths (those that were known and utilized), unrealized strengths (those that were known but underutilized), learned behaviors (those that were competent but not energizing), and weaknesses (where both competence and energy were low).
- Crucially this study also included the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) 360 which provided transformational leadership data beyond the level of self-report. Strengths were then developed through a four stage process of identification, pairing with other strengths, alignment with business goals and utilisation to check for over or underuse. Adherence to this protocol was predictive of subsequent increases in transformational leadership behavior.
- The impact of this approach was evident beyond the individual: we found highly significant increases in both transformational leadership and leadership outcomes (effectiveness, satisfaction and extra effort) as reported by all raters in the 360 assessment. These changes are perceived differentially throughout the organization: managers were the most sensitive to leader's change in behaviour followed by peers and direct reports. Importantly participants themselves did not report significant changes in their own leadership perceptions after coaching, possibly due to their overestimation of their ratings at the start of the program when compared to all other raters.

Conclusions: Coaches should therefore be vigilant for self-other alignment (SOA) in ratings at the beginning of a coaching process. Using a standard cost/benefit assessment for the organisation, a significant ROI was achieved both in financial terms and in the significant increase in positive leadership behaviours. (D. MacKie)

THE JOURNAL
OF POSITIVE
PSYCHOLOGY
2015

How 'other people matter' in a classroom-based strengths intervention: Exploring interpersonal strategies and classroom outcomes.

Denise M. Quinlan, Nicola Swain, Claire Cameron and Dianne A. Vella-Brodrick
The Journal of Positive Psychology, 2015; Vol. 10 (1) 77-89

ABSTRACT

Background: Interventions that identify and develop character strengths have been shown to benefit well-being, academic engagement and achievement. Strengths research within positive psychology has focused primarily on individual outcomes with less attention on group or relationships effects.

Methods: This study (N = 193) examined the effect of a classroom-based strengths intervention on class cohesion and friction, relatedness, engagement, well-being and strengths use. A six-session programme was trialled with 9-12-year-old students. Students learned to recognise strengths and practised strengths-related goal setting.

Findings: At three-months post-test, multi-level modelling indicated that intervention group participants scored significantly higher on class cohesion and relatedness need satisfaction, and lower on class friction than the non-randomised control group. Programme participants also reported higher levels of positive affect, classroom engagement, autonomy need satisfaction and strengths use.

Conclusions: School-based strengths interventions may influence individual perceptions of class climate, engagement and student relatedness in addition to individual well-being.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Background: The research presented in this paper assessed a brief classroom intervention with students, based on the framework of character strengths. The hypothesis of the research was that such a multi-dimensional intervention would be beneficial not only for student well-being and strengths use, but also for enhanced relatedness within the classroom. The intervention addressed not only individual strengths, but also paid attention to relationships in the classroom between teachers and students and among peers.

Reflections for practice: This approach encouraged teacher and peer support through “strengths spotting” – i.e. recognizing strengths in each other. It illustrated that relational cohesion remained stable during the school year for the group in the program (while it decreased in the control group). Thus, coaches can reflect on the relevance of a broader strengths-based approach in their work, which pays attention to identifying and developing strengths in the client, as well as discussing the potential for enhancing the client’s relationships through mutual support of strengths.

Positive psychotherapy: A strength-based approach. Tayyab Rashid; *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 2015; Vol. 10 (1) 25–40

ABSTRACT

Background: Positive psychotherapy (PPT) is a therapeutic approach broadly based on the principles of positive psychology. Rooted in Chris Peterson’s groundbreaking work on character strengths, PPT integrates symptoms with strengths, resources with risks, weaknesses with values, and hopes with regrets in order to understand the inherent complexities of human experiences in a way that is more balanced than the traditional deficit-oriented approach to psychotherapy.

Discussion and Conclusions: This paper makes the case of an alternative approach to psychotherapy that pays equal attention and effort to negatives and positives. It discusses PPT’s assumptions and describes in detail how PPT exercises work in clinical settings. The paper summarizes results of pilot studies using this approach, discusses caveats in conducting PPT, and suggests potential directions.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Relevance of conclusions from PPT to coaching: Positive psychology interventions such as Positive Psychotherapy (PPT) have implications for nonclinical patrons on several levels.

Reflections for practice:

- First, these interventions resonate with people because people want to know what makes life worth living. While traditional psychotherapy effectively remediates emotional turmoil, untwists faulty thinking or untangles troubled relationship but it falls short of making people’s lives more fulfilling and worth living.
- Secondly, stigma against mental health, financial constraints, and limited number of trained professionals keep psychotherapy relatively inaccessible. Coaching on the other hand, through its non-pathological framework offers individuals an additional avenue to foster self-development by learning to use their strengths adaptively.
- Finally, positive psychology interventions are more relevant to Millennials who are largely urban, culturally diverse, ambitious, communally engaged (online & otherwise), and digitally and visual connected in real time with the trends and twists of every moment. Millennials just don't want to be less sad, anxious or angry but they want to realize their potential. (T. Rashid)



REFLECTIONS ON PRACTICE

In this section we present a recent reflection on including mindfulness in coaching, published in the Harvard Business Review (HBR). The author, Dr. Brendel is a physician and executive coach, who uses mindfulness in his coaching practice and reflects on its benefits and potential problems that he has identified in applying the practice. This paper links to other publicly available papers on mindfulness in the HBR, as well as to a meta-analysis of mindfulness practice published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, presented in the next section. We also include a reflective paper by Lee and Frisch about their journey in becoming an Executive Coach. A paper from Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, guides authors to publishing their research in this journal and could be helpful to those planning to publish there.

HARVARD
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There are risks to Mindfulness at work

David Brendel; *Harvard Business Review*, February 11, 2015

ABSTRACT

In this article the author reflects on the benefits of mindfulness in his practice as a physician and executive coach, as well as discusses several risks, including “The avoidance risk” and “The groupthink risk”.

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Legacy reflections: Ten lessons about becoming an executive coach.

Robert J. Lee; Michael H. Frisch; *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 2015, Vol. 67,1; 3-16.

ABSTRACT

This article presents 10 important lessons about becoming an executive coach that the authors gained in the course of a long career as a consultant, educator, and executive coach: (1) Shape your own set of best practices through multifaceted learning; (2) Convey a concise understanding of coaching; (3) Be clear about who is the client; (4) Work the interplay between relationship and contract; (5) Manage anxiety: the client’s, the sponsors’, and your own; (6) Leverage feedback; (7) Convey confidence along with humility; (8) Toggle between internal and external processes; (9) Choose executive coaching as a career with full awareness; and (10) Stay the course as you evolve. An introduction presents the background that frames the author’s perspectives and a conclusion is offered with the final lesson.

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PUBLISHING YOUR RESEARCH

Getting published in Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice - our top 10 tips for enhancing your work.

Almuth McDowall; *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*

ABSTRACT

We need to further the evidence base for coaching, to increase our knowledge base and enhance our understanding. Based on our editorial experience, we provide our readers with a framework for enhancing manuscript quality and therefore chances of publication. **Our top 10 tips** address the entire writing and submission cycle from the



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shaping of initial submissions, adhering to journal guidelines, making use of the peer review process (where a manuscript progresses) and also learning from previously published work. We hope that through this guidance we demystify the publication process, encourage future submissions and enhance impactful publications in the coaching field.

REVIEWS

In this section we present two review papers, particularly in the area of health with implications for coaching. The meta-analysis by Goyal et al is based on 47 selected citations (with a total of 3515 participants), selected from over 18,000 citations. Though geared toward clinical practice, through this wide review, the paper illustrates the areas in which mindfulness practice has shown most benefits. Thus it is helpful for coaches in increasing awareness of areas in which mindfulness has shown effectiveness.

Meditation programs for psychological stress and well-being: A systematic review and meta-analysis. Madhav Goyal, et al; *JAMA Intern Med.* 2014;174(3):357-368.

ABSTRACT (Partial)

Importance: Many people meditate to reduce psychological stress and stress-related health problems. To counsel people appropriately, clinicians need to know what the evidence says about the health benefits of meditation.

Objective: To determine the efficacy of meditation programs in improving stress-related outcomes (anxiety, depression, stress/distress, positive mood, mental health-related quality of life, attention, substance use, eating habits, sleep, pain, and weight) in diverse adult clinical populations.

Conclusions and Relevance: Clinicians should be aware that meditation programs can result in small to moderate reductions of multiple negative dimensions of psychological stress. Thus, clinicians should be prepared to talk with their patients about the role that a meditation program could have in addressing psychological stress. Stronger study designs are needed to determine the effects of meditation programs in improving the positive dimensions of mental health and stress-related behavior.

Health behaviour outcomes of Co-Active Coaching interventions: A scoping Review. Rebecca H. Liu, Jennifer D. Irwin, and Don Morrow; *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, 2015, Vol. 13 (1), 15

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this paper was to conduct a scoping review on Co- active (Life) Coaching (CALC) literature related to health behaviour change.

Methods: The scoping methodological framework developed by Arksey and O'Malley (2005) informed the retrieval of appropriate articles. Six questions provided an in-depth exploration of CALC in the health coaching literature. This paper provides a broad overview of the current status of CALC literature in the area and underscores its utility to help facilitate health behavior related outcomes.

Conclusions: The CALC approach offers a promising intervention for a variety of health conditions. Future larger-scale studies with increased experimental rigor are recommended.



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Coaching in Leadership and Healthcare Conference 2015

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- **Posters:** Accepted posters will be arranged in an exhibit during the poster session, with opportunities to interact with authors and audience.

The purpose of these sessions is to have a stimulating exchange of information and discussions about coaching theory, research and its relevance to practice, as well as to expand the network of coaching researchers. All poster applications invited to submit a full poster will be entered into a competition for Best Poster. The deadline for the receipt of paper and poster applications is

June 30th, 2015 11:59 PM EDT

For more details visit the 2015 [Conference website](#)

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RESEARCH AND GRANTS

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