

Consensual Qualitative Investigation of Training Executive Coaches

CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

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#### **PURPOSE**

To explore the experiences of executive coaches in training as part of an executive coaching research program, we had two goals:

- A. to document the reflective experiences of executive coaches in training, and
- B. to identify opportunities for developing coaching expertise.

### **METHODS**

We used the strategy of consensual qualitative research (CQR; Hill et al., 1997, 2005) to investigate the experiences of members of an executive coaching research team (N = 8). The desired outcome was a rich and detailed description of the executive coaching research experience as experienced by executive coaches in training.



## SUMMARY OF DOMAINS & CORE IDEAS OF EXECUTIVE COACHES IN TRAINING

Goal

- Goals were defined as specific, measurable outcomes desired by executive coaches, including individual goals, goals for the research team and aspirations of any executive coach.
- Two core ideas emerged within this domain: a need for an organized library of executive coaching articles and executive coaching goals

Reality

- Reality was defined as environmental factors or external variables, including constraints.
- Four core ideas emerged within this domain: background, what worked well, personal motivations of executive coaches, and real issues uncovered.



- Options was defined as individual tools or methods employed by executive coaches to assist the client in identifying and selecting preferred solutions.
- Core ideas within this domain were: selfawareness, methods for executive coaching, and using research as an executive coaching tool

Wrap-Up Way Forward

- Wrap-up/way forward included general, system-level comments about possible implications, future obstacles, and improvement opportunities.
- Core ideas within this domain were: recommendations for improving team management, ways to improve the clients' experience, comparisons of virtual and faceto-face coaching, and difficulties scheduling sessions

GROW model (Alexander & Renshaw, 2005)



# IMPLICATIONS FOR TRAINING COACHES

Apply the Dreyfus and Dreyfus' (2005) Five Stage Model of the Acquisition of Expertise to training executive coaches. The model suggests that skills are acquired and developed along five progressive stages: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient and expert. As individuals develop along the five stages, a novice progresses from rule-following to becoming an expert acting intuitively, identifying problems, goals, plans, and actions (Gloria & Jorgen, 2006).

#### Adapted from the Dreyfus "Novice to Expert" Model of Skill Acquisition

- Exper
- The ability to understand the problem and the solution simultaneously.

  Application: Encourage pursuit of complex coaching engagements that feature subtle elements that would be unnoticed by coaches with lower levels of coaching expertise.
- Proficient

Possess a gestalt that reflects a good understanding of the figure and ground of the situation and implication for action.

Application: Assist the development of personalized coaching tool-box and the ability to employ different models and techniques based on needs of the client and context of coaching situations.

• Competent

Intentional in planning and goal setting showing increased flexibility in applying rules and procedures.

Application: Provide opportunity to apply a coaching model and framework to a variety of coaching situations.

Advanced Beginner

Develop context-related rules via practical experience.

Application: Provide supervised coaching experience based on a "Growth Mindset" along with group supervision. Provide a systemic coaching framework, such as Leadership Coaching Framework (Boyce & Hernex-Broome, 2007).

Novice

Rigid adherence to taught rules and plans independent of context.

Application: Provide a model of key executive coaching competencies, such as the ICF core competencies.