Working Paper:

Coaching Mentoring and Counselling: A Comparison of Theory & Practice

Michael T. Roether & Victor Dulewicz

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Synopsis

An ever increasing number of CEOs and General Managers are employing the services of coaches and mentors while other managers also use counsellors. Yet there is much confusion about what these professionals offer and is the most effective service to meet an individual's specific needs. The aims of this article are to define the services provided, highlight important differences and summarise the debate about coaching, mentoring and counselling from the late 1990s. Conclusions will be drawn from the debate and a review of important questions for the future presented.

1. Introduction

In recent years we have seen a rapidly increasing number of CEOs and General and other Managers employing the services of coaches, mentors and counsellors. Yet there is much confusion about what these professionals offer and what is the most effective service to meet an individual's specific needs. Coaching in particular is a steadily growing market worldwide, worth over $2bn annually. (Fillery-Travis and Lane, 2006) and estimated 50,000 coaches into 2007 (Berglas, 2002). Eighty-two per cent of UK-based organisations use coaching for learning and talent development (CIPD, 2010).

During the 1990s professional bodies were founded to professionalise the coaching industry and to satisfy the needs of potential customers and coaches. There are currently six major professional bodies[1], claiming in total more than 45,000 registered members. There is also an increasing number of academic coaching qualifications ranging from Certificates through Master to Doctoral Programmes (Henley Business School, UK; City University, UK; Oxford Brooks University, UK; University of Sydney, Australia; Harvard Medical School, USA).

Since the early 2000s the professional psychological bodies have shown an increasing interest in coaching and the concept of the 'coaching psychologist'[2]. This trend could be a reaction to significant changes in the work patterns of mental health counsellors, psychologists and psychotherapists who seek ways to offer their services in non-therapeutic support fields (Peltier, 2001, Garvey, 2004). More and more Americans seek new ways, leaving the 'talk cure' to a more attractive approach that is fast, not too personal and provides guarantees for success (Peltier, 2001).

Despite the thriving interest of different stakeholders in coaching – practitioners, psychologists and academics – the coaching industry is a relatively new discipline and has not managed to establish the basic requirements to become a true profession (Grant and Cavanagh, 2004; Bluckert, 2005). The problem may arise through the fact that coaching has come to light in a 'post-profession' – early 1990s – context *'without the explicit foundational components of other disciplines'* (Drake, 2008).

Within organisations the terms 'coaching', 'mentoring' and 'counselling' are used interchangeably for different activities (Garvey, 2004). Many descriptions of coaching are too simplistic and can be interpreted as *'an aid to marketing rather than informing the reader in any real sense'* (Buckley, 2007a). Various stakeholders consider that the construct of 'coaching' is confusing and poorly defined (Garvey, 2004; Lawton-Smith and Cox, 2007; Bluckert, 2005; D'Abate et al., 2003) and that the coaching 'banner' may serve as an umbrella for different activities (Maxwell, 2009; van Kessel, 2006).

As new stakeholders join the coaching industry, the need to clearly define its 'boundaries' – with mentoring, counselling and therapy – will become crucial (D'Abate et al., 2003; Bluckert, 2005; Maxwell, 2009). As a consequence of the coaching industry's embryonic stage, the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD, 2008) has issued a buying guide for coaching services that highlighted the concerns of HR buyers, namely: the confusion about the meaning of the term 'coaching', the distinctions between different types of coaching, the difficulties in finding and selecting highly-qualified external coaches and the concerns about the lack of accreditation and regulation of the coaching business.

The aim of this article is to define the services provided, to highlight important differences and to summarise the debate about coaching, mentoring and counselling from the late 1990s. Conclusions will be drawn from the discussion and a review of important questions for the future presented.

2. What is Coaching?

The concept of 'coaching takes many forms, from technical counselling to the psychological domination that flirts with suggestion' (Brunner, 1998). Therefore, an attempt was made in the literature to describe and to define

what coaching constitutes. Coaching is mainly described as a collaborative dyad between two egalitarian people, one with a demand (coachee) and one with the knowledge and expertise (coach) to facilitate the coachee's learning (Brunner, 1998; Grant, 2001; van Kessel, 2006).

Coaching is a helping role to make personal behavioural change or personal development happen (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 1999; Parsloe and Wray, 2000; Grant and Cavanagh, 2004). It is typically goal-directed, solution-focused and result-oriented with a clear focus on performance enhancement, skill development, and success with the consequence for the coachee to take action (Brotman et al., 1998; Parsloe and Wray, 2000; Peltier, 2001; Grant, 2001; Grant and Cavanagh, 2004; Garvey, 2004; Hawkins and Smith, 2006; Ives, 2008). It is most useful in situations where sustained behavioural change and improved effectiveness is needed, based on sound psychological principles and practice (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 1999).

It is a self-directed process of learning and personal growth of the coachee (Grant, 2001). Normally coaching is provided on an 'as-needed' basis or as a supplement to a normal work role (Parsloe and Wray, 2000) and is, for that reason, regarded as a short-term intervention (Hawkins and Smith, 2006). Consequently, most coaching interventions happen in an organisational context – that may influence the coaching goal – (Bachkirova and Cox, 2004; Garvey, 2004) with an external coach (Peltier, 2001).

The coach will work with non-clinical or non-dysfunctional clients, individuals with no acute mental health issues and normal level of psychopathology (Grant, 2001; Grant and Cavanagh, 2004). The coach focuses on what has gone right (solutions) rather than on what has gone wrong (problems) (Grant, 2001; Joseph and Bryant-Jefferies, 2007). *'When you empower people and help them discover what they can do – instead of focusing on what is wrong and what they can't do – you improve their overall mental health and the quality of life, both personally and professionally, dramatically.'* (Williams, 2003).

Coaching Theories

Coaches *'employ a wide range of theoretical perspectives in their work'* (Grant, 2007). A study conducted by Palmer and Whybrow (2007) revealed that 23 different coaching approaches rooted in psychological theory are commonly used, including:

(a) *solution-focused coaching* (SFC), based on the work of Erickson (1954), cognitive behavioural psychology and psychodynamic (Greene and Grant, 2003; O'Connell, 2005). Solution-focused Therapy (SFT) was developed by Steve de Sahzer and his team in the 1980s (O'Connell, 2005) and has much in common with SFC (Grant, 2001; Bluckert, 2005). SFT focuses on present and future solutions and desired achievements rather than on 'problems' and the past, while using the client's strengths and resources to achieve the client's 'vision';

(b) *cognitive behavioural coaching*, *'intrinsically linked to the development of the cognitive behavioural and problem solving therapies'* (Palmer and Szymanska, 2007). Cognitive behavioural therapy is a merger of behavioural and cognitive therapy that focuses on the here and now to solve problems concerning behaviours, emotions and cognitions through systematic goal-oriented procedures;

(c) *goal-focused coaching*, *'helping individuals regulate and direct their interpersonal and intra-personal resources to better attain their goals'* (Grant, 2006a). This self-regulation is based on the psychological theories developed by Bandura (1982) and Collier (1957). *'The coach's role is to facilitate the coachee's movement through the self-regulation cycle'* (Grant, 2006a);

(d) *behavioural coaching*, linked to behavioural psychology, which assumes that all behaviour is learned by interactions with the environment through conditioning, reinforcing desired and eliminating undesired behaviours. Ivan Pavlov, John Watson, B. F. Skinner and Albert Bandura can be regarded as the fathers of behavioural psychology (Peltier, 2001);

(e) *cognitive coaching*, based on cognitive psychology, the study of internal mental processes, i.e. how people think, perceive, learn and solve problems. It is based on the work

of Albert Ellis and Aaron Beck in the 1960s (Peltier, 2001); and

(f) *person-centred coaching*, rooted in the work of Carl Rogers's client-centred talk-psychotherapy (Joseph and Bryant-Jefferies, 2007). It aims to establish a learning environment where the 'helper' is non-judgemental and non-directive, shows empathy and unconditional positive regard towards the client to enable them to find their own solutions (Rogers, 1951, 1961).

3. What is Counselling/Therapy?

'No attempt has been made to separate the counsellor from the psychotherapist or the psychologist' (Buckley, 2007a). It is also very difficult to clearly and unambiguously differentiate the broad variety of psychological therapies and national peculiarities (Buckley, 2007a).

The counsellor will usually treat psychological problems or crises and work with plans to 'fix' them (Parsloe and Wray, 2000; Peltier, 2001; Williams, 2003; American Psychology Association (APA), 2010; American Counselling Association (ACA), 2010; British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP), 2010). The individual determines the limitations of the intervention, therefore counselling *'deals with all respects of the client's life'* (Bachkirova and Cox, 2004). Counselling tends to look into the past to understand what went wrong (Joseph and Bryant-Jefferies, 2007). However, *'it is a huge error to view therapy as being predominantly past-oriented'* (Spinelli, 2008).

The emphasis is on diagnosis and analysis and *'might include testing, prescribed drugs, a focus on early life experience, involvement of other family members'* (Parsloe and Wray, 2000). The focus of the intervention is on changing ineffective thoughts, emotions and/or behaviours (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 1999, APA, 2010); this might be done through *'cognitive, affective, behavioral or systematic intervention strategies'* (ACA, 2010).

Despite the dyadic interaction (Peltier, 2001, Garvey, 2004) counselling can also include work with couples, families and groups (APA, 2010). Rapport is identified as a critical part of the counselling relationship (APA, 2010) as well as the non-directive, non-judgemental, non-exploiting counselling style (BACP, 2010). Furthermore, *'the counsellor will encourage the expression of feelings'* (BACP, 2010; Clutterbuck and Megginson, 1999). The counselling work is normally grounded in broad and deep theory and philosophy (Parsloe and Wray, 2000; BACP, 2010), can either be short-term or long-term and may occur on employer requirement (Parsloe and Wray, 2000).

4. Comparing Coaching and Counselling/Therapy

It is not easy to clarify the boundaries between coaching and psychotherapy or counselling and the differences and similarities are still heavily debated (Summerfield, 2002). Furthermore, it is difficult to generalise all schools of therapy, e.g. long-term psychotherapy concerned with the unconscious processes underlying psychological dysfunctions contrasted with the solution-focused therapy approach (Grant, 2001).

Similarities

Coaching can have many forms from counselling to therapy (Brunner, 1998). The more the coaching profession is moving in transformational development, '*the less it can be distinguished from therapy'* (Spinelli, 2008). Personal and professional developmental coaching is closely related to counselling in terms of '*interventions, transcending the contextual boundaries'* because the '*ultimate goal of the process is the same'* (Bachkirova, 2007).

Counselling and coaching may both deal with change and understanding of the client's emotional and cognitive behaviours that might prevent the client from becoming effective, and increase their performance and well-being. Both the coach and the counsellor need strong interpersonal competences, including deep listening and questioning to establish a valuable and trustworthy relationship with their clients (Brunner, 1998; Bluckert, 2005; Popovic and Boniwell, 2007; Day et al., 2008).

The effective coach cannot work on current and future behaviours without taking into account the client's past and coaching thus includes elements of counselling, e.g. *the 'original establishment of attitudes, prejudices, feelings, values and belief '* (Simons, 2006). This mix needs to be managed and this is not easy, even for the most experienced professional, restricting active boundary management to what they regard as 'safe', appropriate and ethical (Summerfield, 2002, 2006; Maxwell, 2009).

A study that investigated the coach's experience of boundaries between coaching and therapy revealed *'issues, including depression, anxiety attacks, bereavement behavioural issues and relationship problems'*. Interestingly, some of the participants reported these issues to be relatively unusual in contrast to their therapist-coach colleagues reporting that they are more frequently working at the boundary (Maxwell, 2009). The coaches' experiences were that the client, the coach and the organisation shape the boundary, e.g. the client's motivation, willingness and resourcefulness, the coach' ethical stance, perception of the role and personal competences and the contract with the organisation and the sponsor (Maxwell, 2009).

A good coach may therefore be constantly switching between coach and counsellor roles during a single session. This means the coach or counsellor needs to evaluate the person's needs and adapt accordingly (Summerfield, 2002, 2006). Consequently, coaching can be regarded as therapeutic intervention for performance enhancement and/or life experience (Grant, 2001).

Comparing Normal and Clinical Counselling

The principle difference between coaching and counselling/therapy may be the client population and their different problems (Fairley and Stout, 2004; Popovic and Boniwell, 2007; Joseph and Bryant-Jefferies, 2007). It is a continuum (shown in Figure 1) from 'disordered' to 'healthy' expression of personality style with an overlap in these populations (Grant, 2001; Cavanagh, 2005; Popovic and Boniwell, 2007). In counselling, the person is regarded as dysfunctional, broken and in need of healing (Grant, 2001), whereas in coaching the coachee is seen as non-clinical, whole, resourceful and creative (Fairley and Stout, 2004; Cavanagh, 2005; Buckley, 2007a). *'There appears to be a general view that coaching is not aiming to help people with psychological dysfunction, mental health problems or psychopathology'* (Buckley, 2007a). However*, more and more coaches are faced with clients with significant mental health problems. Cavanagh (2005) states that 20% of the general population will show metal health problems in their life, a 10% to 15% will show some form of personality disorder.
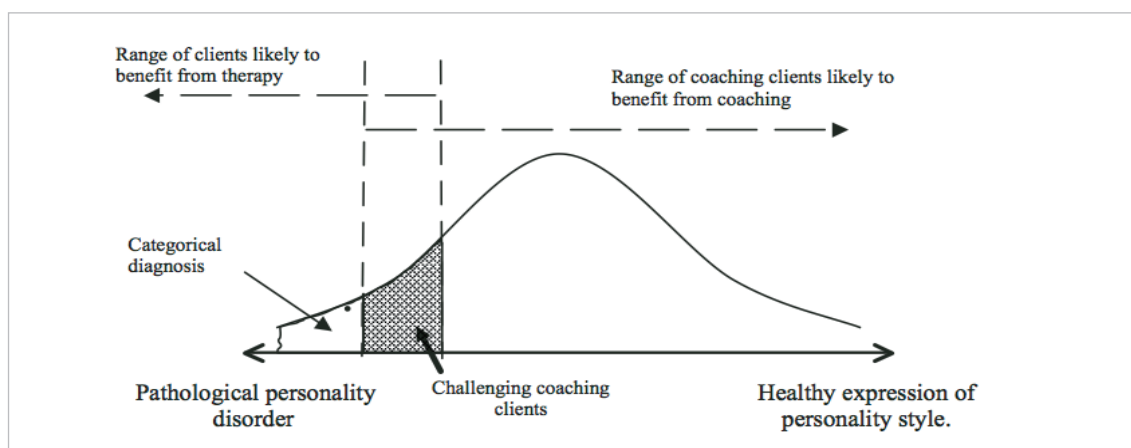

Figure 1. · Coaching within the dimensional approach to personality (Source: Cavanagh, 2005)

It is not clear when the point for discussion of mental health issues is reached. There are certain times when individuals experience different levels of, e.g., stress, fear and concern. Is this a temporary 'dysfunctional' state or is it a 'normal' phenomenon that can be handled by coaching? If the problem is *'limited to certain situation or aspect of the person's life, or does [not] seem to be operating in many areas and at many times'* then the coachee can be regarded as normal (Cavanagh, 2005). *'Mental illness is not something that someone "catches" and there are no straightforward tests available to diagnose problems. It is a sliding scale of signs and behaviours'* (Buckley, 2007b). Therefore, some '*problematic personality features'* (Cavanagh, 2005) do not indicate unsuitability for coaching because they do not always signal personality disorders.

The boundaries between psychopathology and 'normal' range individuals can be difficult to identify (Cavanagh, 2005). Therefore, the difference between non-clinical and clinical is still heavily debated (Bachkirova, 2007). Furthermore, *'there is also a serious ethical issue bound up with identifying people as belonging to a clinical population only on the basis that they have decided to improve the quality of their emotional life with the help of a professional counsellor'* (Bachkirova, 2007).

Differences in Approach
Psychotherapy and counselling are mainly remedial and have usually few 'positive' and 'pro-active' elements, whereas coaching 'can be charged with not addressing deeper, underlying issues, and consequently being superficial'. However, these assumptions *'[have] never been proven in practice'* (Popovic and Boniwell, 2007).

Coaching approaches seem to focus on goal-attainment and tend to be brief to stimulate immediate results, whereas therapeutic approaches tend to be more long-lasting (Ives, 2008). When the professions are 'artificially separated' by time then counselling deals with the past and coaching only with the present and future (Popovic and Boniwell, 2007). From the psychologist's point of view, coaching seems to be atheoretical (Peltier, 2001). Furthermore, coaches may think *'that emotions should only be explored within a counselling setting'*, because emotions may be regarded as interfering with rationality and seen as difficult (Cox and Bachkirova, 2007).

The Coaching Context
In a non-organisational environment coaching and counselling differ in their limitations; coaching focuses solely on specific client areas, whereas counselling deals with the *'fully functioning person'* according to Rogers (Bachkirova and Cox, 2004; Bachkirova, 2007).

In an organisational context, gathering feedback during coaching from various sources including bosses, peers and subordinates, is used quite commonly. In counselling, feedback is limited to a two-way confidentiality between the counsellor and the client (Bluckert, 2005). Furthermore, in the organisational context the coaching goal may be related to organisational goals which could be the reason for the coaching (Bachkirova, 2007).

When the company sponsors the coaching, contracting, accountability and ethical issues arise for the coaching relationship (Brunner, 1998; Spinelli, 2008), as a three-way relationship exists, i.e. coach-coachee, coach-sponsor and coachee-sponsor (Summer, 2002; Bachkirova and Cox, 2004; Bluckert, 2005). However, the same situation arises when the therapy '*is being paid by third party (the child's mother, Social Security, the budget for a training scheme or the budget of a human resource service)'* (Brunner, 1998). *'A great many – and growing – number of therapists who work in public services such as the NHS must also deal with all too similar organisationally derived complications arising from dual accountability'* (Spinelli, 2008).

Formal Characteristics
The formal characteristics of place, frequency, costing and duration differ, e.g. therapy normally lasts for 50 minutes, coaching sessions tend to be much longer; therapy sessions are normally weekly and coaching sessions

are spaced by several weeks (Bluckert, 2005; Day et al., 2008). Higher costs for coaching services increase client's expectations (Bachkirova, 2007). A strong trend can be observed towards the 'remote' client with the increased usage of email, text-messages and video conference calls (McKenna and Davis, 2009),

The coaching focus is normally part of the contract and agreed early on; it lays the foundation for the intervention and is more explicit than typical therapeutic intervention contracts (Bluckert, 2005; Spinelli, 2008). The coaching contract may include roles, responsibilities, limitations and structure, whereas in therapy functional aspects, payment, absence and holidays arrangements are detailed. This enables the therapist to be very flexible in contrast to the coach who is tightly bound to his/her very detailed contract (Spinelli, 2008).

5. What is Mentoring?

Mentors incorporate a 'full range' of roles, e.g. as sounding board, counsellor, networker, critical friend and career advisor (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 1999). A mentor is interested in the mentee's long-term career development, progress and support (Parsloe and Wray, 2000; Grant, 2001; Garvey, 2004; Hawkins and Smith, 2006; van Kessel, 2006) and, therefore, they are important for the protégé's success in the organisation (Ragins and Cotton, 1991).Mentoring can be described as an expert–novice relationship to exchange wisdom, where the domain-specific knowledge of the mentor (older and 'wiser') is transferred to the less experienced 'protégée' (Parsloe and Wray, 2000; Grant and Cavanagh, 2004; van Kessel, 2006). This is mostly present in an organisational context in a single dyadic relationship (Higgins and Kram, 2001).

The mentor chooses his protégé and vice versa. The protégé is seen as 'representative of their past' (Ragins, 1997) as their younger versions. In contrast, the mentor is a role model for the protégé and their future. Ragins identified three major influences on mentoring: identification and perceived similarities; perceived competence; and the personal com-

fort level in the relationship.

In addition to the organisational focus of the protégé's career development, mentoring may also be associated with the personal change and development of the mentee by providing personal support, guidance, advice, feedback and practical assistance (Parsloe and Wray, 2000; Hawkins and Smith, 2006; van Kessel, 2006). Higgins and Kram (2001) called the personal and professional development assistance the 'traditional' mentoring relationship. Mentoring is often relevant when the 'protégée' is at a major transitional phase of his life (Garvey, 2004). Mentoring can happen naturally, formally and informally (Parsloe and Wray, 2000). However, informal mentoring relationships seem to be more 'potent' than formal (McBain, 2004) in terms of greater career mobility and satisfaction (Ragins et al., 2000).

Mentoring Theories

In addition to the absence of clear and precise definitions of mentoring, there is also a lack of theoretical basis (Healy and Welchert, 1990; Jacobi, 1991; Gibb, 1999). Despite this lack, there are many theories applied to mentoring research, including:

(a) *social identity theory* that assumes that a person[3] has several 'personal-selfs' that correspond to different social environments and group-memberships. Those social contexts may provoke individuals to act, behave, think and feel according to the underlying context's rules and laws. This determines the extent to which individuals perceive themselves (their self-concept) as a member of the group, the degree of comparison between groups and the perceived relevance of the comparison group (Tajfel and Turner, 1986);

(b) *social exchange theory* that describes social stability and exchange as a negotiation process between parties and individuals resulting in social behaviour. It posits that the basis of all human relationships is an estimation of cost-benefits and the comparison of alternatives, *'voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they bring from others'* (Blau, 1964);

(c) *social cognitive theory and self-efficacy[4]* that describes how individuals acquire and maintain certain behaviours and helps to understand, predict and change human behaviour as a collaboration of the social and physical environment, people, personal factors and personal behaviours, thoughts and actions (Bandura, 1977, 1997). Learning by observation and then imitating happens when an individual watches the actions of another person and notes the results (Bandura, 1997); and

(d) *social networking theory* that describes the existence of many mentoring relationships present at any one point, e.g. with peers, family, senior colleagues and bosses. Therefore, mentoring can also be understood as *'developmental networks'* with multiple concurrent relationships for mutual learning and development (Higgins and Kram, 2001; Kram and Higgins, 2008).

Comparing Coaching and Mentoring

In contrast to the quite extensive discussion about the differences and similarities of coaching and counselling/therapy, there is less about coaching and mentoring.

'The boundary between coaching and mentoring is more blurred than sometimes is suggested' (Passmore, 2007). When we try to clarify the characteristics and functions that make coaching or mentoring effective we create greater confusion (Clutterbuck, 2008). The descriptions of coaching and mentoring are inconsistently and interchangeably used in the literature or *'simply subsumed under the label of the other in successive publications'* (Bokeno, 2009).

Understanding both interactions as 'learning relationship' helps to go *'beyond conventional distinctions altogether'* and to focus in the ultimate outcome irrespective of the interaction's name (Bokeno, 2009). In doing so, we simplify the problem of comparing coaching with mentoring by calling the two approaches 'learning relationships'. This suggests and assumes they share the same intent, goal, attitude and nature of the relationship.

Clutterbuck (2008) suggested that the similarities in specific contexts may: *'require and draw upon the helper's experience; be of long or short duration; involved in giving advice; work with goals set by the learner or for the learner; deal with significant transitions the learner wishes to make; and address broad personal growth ambitions'*. Furthermore, mentoring can be regarded as a broader and more holistic approach to the mentee's life and career progress. In contrast, coaching mostly addresses performance aspects in the individual's work-life (Clutterbuck, 2008).

The EMCC (2010) write in their code of ethics *'Boundary Management 3). The coach/ mentor will: At all times operate within the limits of their own competence, recognise where that competence has the potential to be exceeded and where necessary refer the client either to a more experienced coach/mentor, or support the client in seeking the help of another professional'*. It is the nature of this professional body that they do not differentiate between the coach and the mentor at all.

The traditional hierarchical relationship (knowledge, wisdom, seniority and hierarchical level) in mentoring is contrary to the collaborative dyad between two egalitarian people (no expert in the coachee's field of learning) in coaching that *'aims [to] facilitate the learning in the coachee'* and to enhance the coachee's performance (Grant, 2001). Grant concludes that *'mentoring per se does not need coaching skills'*. However, Fairley and Stout (2004) argue that there are differences between coaching and mentoring relationships; mentoring is usually: (1) free; (2) informal; and (3) without specifically agreed goals with measurable results.

6. Differences between Mentoring, Coaching and Counselling

In order to highlight the differences between Mentoring, Coaching and Counselling/Therapy across various relevant dimensions (aspects of the services), a summary is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Differences between Mentoring, Coaching and Counselling /Therapy

Aspect	Mentoring	Coaching	Counselling/Therapy
Scope/ Approach	Career development, progress and support in the organisational context and possibly personal and professional development (Ragins and Cotton, 1991; Parsloe and Wray, 2000; Grant, 2001; Hawkins and Smith, 2006)	Focuses solely on specific client areas (Bachkirova and Cox, 2004; Bachkirova, 2007) 'Positive' and 'pro-active', focusing on goal-attainment, solutions and tends to be brief with immediate results, with a focus on performance enhancement, skill development, and success (Brotman et al., 1998; Parsloe and Wray, 2000; Garvey, 2004; Ives, 2008).	Deals with the *'fully functioning person'* (Bachkirova and Cox, 2004; Bachkirova, 2007) Deep, to cover psychological problems or crises and their underlying issues to explore the client's feelings during longer-lasting interventions with plans to 'fix' them (Peltier, 2001; Williams, 2003; APA, 2010; ACA, 2010; BACP, 2010). The emphasis is on diagnosis and analysis (Parsloe and Wray, 2000).
Tenor	Mentor is regarded as 'wise', experienced with domain-specific knowledge. Protégé is novice, younger and less experienced. (Parsloe and Wray, 2000; Grant and Cavanagh, 2004; van Kessel, 2006)	Coachee is seen as whole, resourceful and creative (Fairley and Stout, 2004; Cavanagh, 2005; Buckley, 2007a)	Client is seen as dysfunctional, broken and in need of healing (Grant, 2001)
Orientation	Present and future (Ragins and Cotton, 1991; Garvey, 2004; Hawkins and Smith, 2006; van Kessel, 2006)	Present and future - what can go right and what can be done more (Grant, 2001; Joseph and Bryant-Jefferies, 2009)	Past, to understand what went wrong (Joseph and Bryant-Jefferies, 2009)
Population	Often relevant for people in a major transition phase (Garvey, 2004)	Psychological functioning individuals that have no acute mental health issue and a normal level of psychopathology (Grant, 2001, Grant and Cavanagh, 2004)	No restrictions, the individual determines the limitations of the intervention (Bachkirova and Cox, 2004)
Grounding	Managerial and life experience with domain-specific knowledge (Grant, 2001; Grant and Cavanagh 2004)	'Atheoretical', practical and theoretical (beginning) (Peltier, 2001)	Broad and deep theory and philosophy (Parsloe and Wray, 2000; BACP, 2010)
Relationship	Voluntary single dyadic relationship, where the protégé may have several mentors at one point in time (Higgins and Kram, 2001) based on perceived similarities (identification), perceived competence (management experience) and personal comfort level (Ragins, 1997)	Collaborative dyad between two egalitarian people (Brunner, 1998; Grant, 2001; van Kessel, 2006)	Treating dyadic interaction (Peltier, 2001, Garvey, 2004), but can also include the work with couples, families and groups (APA, 2010).
Environment and Implications	Mainly organisational environments and a few non-organisational environments (Higgins and Kram, 2001). No blending of personal and organisation interests (Higgins and Kram, 2001)	Mainly organisational environments and less non-organisational environments (Bachkirova and Cox, 2004; Garvey, 2004). Intervention goals are linked to organisational and sponsor goals (Bachkirova, 2007)	Mainly non-organisational environments (Bachkirova and Cox, 2004; Garvey, 2004)
Contracting	Mostly informal mentoring without a contract (Parsloe and Wray, 2000; McBain, 2004)	Detailed and tightly bound contracts, coaching areas are predefined, roles are explicit, responsibilities, limitations and structure of the relationship are negotiated (Bluckert, 2005; Spinelli, 2008)	Very flexible contrasts, because only functional aspects, payment, absence and holidays arrangements are agreed (Bachkirova, 2007; Spinelli, 2008)
Feedback	Dyadic advice and guidance from the mentor (Higgins and Kram, 2001)	Organisational context, coach – coachee, 360° (Bluckert, 2005)	Confidential dyad context (Bluckert, 2005)
Formal characteristics	Regular No costs (Fairley and Stout, 2004) One-to-one (Higgins and Kram, 2001)	Less frequently, longer sessions (Bluckert, 2005; Day et al., 2008) Higher costs (Bluckert, 2005; Bachkirova, 2007) 'Remote client', use of emails, text messaging and video conferences (McKenna and Davis, 2009)	Weekly, normally 50-minute sessions (Bluckert, 2005; Day et al., 2008) Lower costs (Bachkirova, 2007) One-to-one meetings with less usage of media (McKenna and Davis, 2009)

Core Problems in Differentiating the Helping 'Professions'/Services

As coaching is a relatively young discipline it is not surprising that it lacks the key attributes that other well established professions possess, e.g. standards, competency requirements, definitions, regulations and ethics. *'Coaches must therefore be prepared to work with the "whole human" whilst maintaining a focus on the agreed contract'* (Maxwell, 2009). D'Abate et al. (2003) found two problem levels in developmental interaction constructs: *'First, conceptual confusion occurs when descriptions of the same construct vary from author to author. For instance, there is a lack of agreement within the [...] mentoring community [...] about the meaning of the construct. Second, conceptual confusion is evident when exploring the similarities and differences between constructs.'*

An Undefined 'Helping-by-Talking' Market

Executive coaching, despite its growing market, is still a poorly defined and unregulated market (Brotman et al., 1998). To date the construct 'coaching' has no agreed definition (Grant and Cavanagh, 2004; Ives, 2008; Hawkins, 2008) with the consequence that many different definitions exist (Peltier, 2001; Grant, 2006b; Palmer and Wyhbrow, 2006; Spinelli, 2008). The term coaching has been used for a broad variety of issues and activities (Grant and Cavanagh, 2004). But this is also true for the related disciplines (counselling, therapy and mentoring) that have *'different meanings in different contexts'* (Popovic and Boniwell, 2007). This may mean that development requirements are unclear because of this conceptual uncertainty and that expectations cannot be matched as they are mainly based on the helper's and client's assumptions (D'Abate et al., 2003).

Depending on their backgrounds, different power groups will create their own particular definitions to claim the territory they wish to acquire or to protect. It is therefore crucial that those groups define what they mean and understand by their terms, irrespective of the context and approach (Garvey, 2004; van Kessel, 2006) culminating in a common language and schema to facilitate comprehension (D'Abate et al., 2003).

This would help the purchaser of such services, or the client himself, to make an informed judgement about which offer to choose. Consequently, there is a need to describe and define the goals, outlines and methods of coaching (D'Abate et al., 2003; van Kessel, 2006). *'Therefore, the name does matter but perhaps what matters more is the meaning we place on the name'* (Garvey, 2004).

Through increased interest in coaching research, professional coaching *'will need to find a way to establish a clear identity, and it must do this by establishing clear boundaries around what is professional coaching and what is not'* (Grant and Cavanagh, 2004). The question remains what is the best choice for such criteria?

Does the client's motivation differentiate the 'helping-by-talking' professions? Bachkirova and Cox (2004) argue that distinction in similarities and differences is based on the client's motivation and the ultimate goal of the helping intervention. In their view, this dynamic will coin the helping relationship.

7. The Future of Coaching

Business consulting, organisational development, psychotherapy, counselling and personal training and development can be regarded as the roots of coaching (Williams, 2003). Having said this, do we then ask the right question to find similarities and differences? Or should we ask how much of all these areas is incorporated into coaching, or is coaching a combination of all these disciplines?

This paper has reviewed the literature of coaching relative to its related disciplines: mentoring, counselling and therapy. The authors initially thought it would be easy to collect all arguments of the different professions, review their definitions and their self-understanding to be able to clearly formulate the similarities and differences between coaching and related disciplines. It turned out to

be a very difficult task because of the field's life-cycle stage (Bluckert, 2005). This early stage implies that coaching is currently undefined and used for many activities in different contexts. There is a huge variety of descriptions and interpretations that make it difficult to give the term 'coaching' a commonly agreed definition (Parsloe and Wray, 2000; Peltier, 2001). *'These uniform types of practice are then attributed with some assumed features. The difficulty described is often exacerbated when attempts to differentiate coaching from counselling or psychotherapy are made by practitioners of coaching or practitioners of counselling in isolation, when neither is qualified to make an informed judgement about the other area of practice'* (Bachkirova, 2007). Furthermore, it turned out that mentoring has no commonly agreed definition either, nor have counselling and therapy managed to differentiate themselves to date.

The borders of coaching, mentoring, counselling and therapy are blurred and sometimes artificial. The literature review revealed that there are many similarities and differences. This paper suggests the following main areas of differentiation: (a) scope/approach; (b) tenor; (c) orientation; (d) population; (e) grounding; (f) relationship; (g) environment and implications; (h) contracting; (i) feedback; and (j) formal characteristics.

Development over Time

Coaching is a young profession and consequently faces difficulties in entering an existing 'helping-by-talking' market. The normal reaction of the existing players is to limit the potential market, through restricting coaching to specific areas, topics and target groups by excluding parts of the population, e.g. can only serve on very few aspects of the coachee, cannot handle emotions, is not able to deal with the whole individual, is too formal, etc. Due to the fact that the law does not currently regulate the coaching market, this can only be done by the existing stakeholders, who try to justify their contention that these limitations do exist through publications and research, depending on the author's territory. *'Almost*

every related profession has participated in a land-grab, trying to stake out its own coaching territory, with definitions, rules and practices based on its own particular perspectives and interests' (Clutterbuck, 2008).

A new trend has been observed since 2000, in the formation of a body of coaching knowledge, mainly driven by academia and the psychological professional bodies like the BPS and the APS. Research and publications have helped to justify the coaching approach and to prove its value. In the course of this work the formal limitations and restrictions seem to be progressively vanishing.

Future Topics

The increased use of coaching in organisations combined with high costs for this service will lead to a more standardised approach for buying coaching services. Coaching services will increasingly lose the status of just being attractive and have to compete against other services in the near future. Then Return on Investment will be measured and the need to demonstrate the value that is delivered through coaching will increase (Hawkins, 2008).

Is Coaching the Substitute for the Helping-By-Talking Disciplines?

Coaching cannot be described and identified precisely and lacks clear boundaries to the already established helping-by-talking disciplines. This is potentially why coaching can be seen as a substitute for already established professions. Coaching seems to be able to deliver all the benefits without the disadvantages of the established professions in a trendy and attractive manner for a lucrative market. Being coached and enabled to highest performance – as in sports – is more attractive for potential clients than going to therapy or being treated. This opens coaches' access to a broad, financially potent population and therefore limits the market for other professionals. Consequently, the market competition is dramatically changing while challenging psychologists to compete with non-psychologists, even untrained or unqualified coaches in a business context. There seems only one

issue remaining, that coaching is expected to deliver anything and handle everything. This might end in an overestimation of the coach's competence and capabilities.

Coaching seems not to be the substitute but it is a valuable developing profession 'pari passu' with other helping-by-talking disciplines to facilitate the client's self-directed learning and growth. In order to develop the coaching profession it needs obligatory prerequisites for professional qualification and regulations about the scope of the coach's work to guarantee that the client/coachee obtains highly qualitative coaching services.

About the Authors

Dr Michael Roether has a certificate of executive coaching, an Executive MBA and a DBA from Henley Business School. He has worked as senior strategy consultant and executive coach for international companies in different countries. Today he is Managing Partner of Roether | Huwald GbR and is specialised on executive coaching and business / corporate strategy. He researches on executive coaching, the coaching relationship, self-determination theory, goal self-concordance, basic psychological need and trust.

Professor Victor Dulewicz, PhD, is Managing Partner of VDA Consultants and Emeritus Professor at Henley Business School, where he was previously Head of HRM & OB and Director of the Centre for Board Effectiveness. He researches and lectures on personnel selection, leadership, emotional intelligence, team performance and management assessment and development. Previously, he worked as a Chartered Occupational Psychologist for Rank Xerox, the Civil Service Department and STC Telecoms Group. He has co-authored five books, written over 150 articles and presented at numerous national and international conferences. He is a Fellow of both the BPS and the CIPD.

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Endnotes

1 European Mentoring and Coaching Council, EMCC, founded 1992; The International Coach Federation, ICF, founded 1995; The World Association of Business Coaches, WABC, founded 1997; Association for Coaching, AC, founded 2002; International Association for Coaching, founded 2003, Association for Professional Executive Coaching and Supervisors, APECS; Charted Institute of Personnel and Development CIPD: Faculty Coaching at Work.

2 Australian Psychology Society, Interest Group in Coaching Psychology, founded 2002; British Psychology BPS: Coaching Psychology, founded 2004; Federation of Swiss Psychologists, Swiss Society for Coaching Psychology 2006; British Association for Counselling an Psychotherapy BACP: Coaching Forum, founded 2010; Danish Psychology Association, Society for Evidence-based Coaching.

3 The term 'persona' is derived from Latin and '[refers] to the mask worn by Etruscan mimes' Encyclopædia Britannica (2009). Carl Jung's archetype (1959) 'persona' describes a way that enable individuals to connect and adapt to the their social environment by echoing their social role they play and at the same time to differentiate their authentic inner self.

4 The term 'self-efficacy' is coined by Bandura (1977) and describes the individual's perception of their ability to attain a specific goal through planning and taking action.