

# MASTERY IN COACHING

A COMPLETE PSYCHOLOGICAL TOOLKIT  
FOR ADVANCED COACHING

CONTRIBUTORS:

JULIE ALLAN  
TIM ANSTISS  
ULLA CHARLOTTE BECK  
RICHARD BLONNA  
PAUL BROWN  
DENYSE BUSBY-EARLE  
DAVID DRAKE  
PAUL GILBERT OBE  
LIZ HALL  
LINDSAY G OADES  
REINHARD STELTER  
HELEN WHITTEN  
ALISON WHYBROW

EDITED BY  
JONATHAN PASSMORE

# CONTENTS

*About the contributors* xi

*Foreword* xv

## **01 Mastery in coaching** 1

*Jonathan Passmore*

Introduction 1

What is mastery in coaching? 2

Evidence-based practice 8

Conclusion 12

References 13

## **02 Positive psychology coaching** 15

*Lindsay G Oades and Jonathan Passmore*

Introduction 15

Theory and evidence underpinning positive psychology coaching 16

The aims and processes of positive psychology coaching 20

Practice: tools and techniques 25

When might positive psychology coaching be most suitable? 35

Conclusion 35

Developing yourself as a positive psychology coach 36

References 37

## **03 Psychodynamic coaching** 41

*Ulla Charlotte Beck*

Introduction 41

The theoretical foundations 43

Psychodynamic personality and developmental psychology 43

Psychodynamic group psychology 48

Psychodynamic organizational psychology: the system theory 49

Practice in psychodynamic coaching 51

Practice: tools and techniques 51

The future: the expectation of what is to come and what is desired 53

Primary task and role for the coach and client or client group 54

Conclusions, evaluation and leave-taking 55

When does psychodynamic coaching work best? 58

Conclusion 61

Developing yourself as a psychodynamic coach 62  
References 62

## **04 Narrative coaching 65**

*David Drake and Reinhard Stelter*

Introduction 65  
Evidence-based approach to narrative coaching 67  
Practices: tools and techniques 76  
Suitability 82  
Conclusion 88  
Developing yourself as a narrative coach 89  
References 90  
Note 96

## **05 Gestalt approaches 97**

*Alison Whybrow and Julie Allan*

Introduction 97  
The development of gestalt coaching 98  
The evidence base of gestalt coaching 100  
Practice: tools and techniques 108  
Three practices 113  
When might a gestalt approach be most suitable? 120  
Conclusion 121  
Developing yourself as a gestalt coach 121  
References 123

## **06 Neurobehavioural modelling: Applying neuroscience research to the development of coaching practice 127**

*Paul Brown and Denyse Busby-Earle*

Introduction 127  
Evidence-based approach to neurobehavioural modelling (NBM) 130  
Coaching and the practice of NBM 134  
When might this approach be most suitable? 146  
Conclusion 146  
Developing yourself as a neurobehavioural coach 147  
References 148  
Notes 150

## **07 Cognitive behavioural coaching 151**

*Helen Whitten*

Introduction 151  
Evidence-based approach to CBC 153

Practice: CBC tools and techniques	159
Initiating the coaching programme	160
Preparing the ground for coaching	161
Developing client awareness of cognitive habits	163
Challenging and reframing unhelpful thoughts and behaviours	163
Socratic questioning	163
Developing new approaches to problem situations	173
Reviewing and integrating change	178
When might the CBC approach be most suitable?	183
Conclusion	184
Developing yourself as a cognitive behavioural coach	184
References	185

## **08 Mindful coaching** 191

*Liz Hall*

Introduction	191
Evidence-based approach to mindful coaching	192
A multifaceted phenomena	192
The research	193
Coaching-related research	195
Goal-free coaching?	199
Practice: tools and techniques in mindful coaching	200
Mindful sessions	204
Core mindful practices	210
Introducing and adapting mindfulness to clients	212
Cultural context	213
When might the mindful coaching approach be most suitable?	217
Conclusion	219
Developing yourself as a mindful coach	219
References	220

## **09 Compassionate mind coaching** 225

*Tim Anstiss and Paul Gilbert*

Introduction	225
Evidence-based approach to compassionate mind coaching	226
Theoretical and practice	229
Tools and techniques	236
When might compassionate mind coaching be most suitable?	246
Conclusion	246
Developing yourself as a compassionate mind coach	247
References	248

**10 Acceptance and commitment coaching 253***Tim Anstiss and Rich Blonna*

Introduction 253

Evidence-based approach to AC coaching 254

Acceptance and mindfulness 254

Pragmatism 254

Relational Frame Theory 255

Evidence 256

Practice: tools and techniques 257

The Ramp Model of AC coaching 262

When might AC coaching be most suitable? 274

Conclusion 275

Developing yourself as an acceptance and commitment coach 275

References 276

**11 Motivational interviewing 283***Jonathan Passmore*

Introduction 283

The evidence base for motivational interviewing 283

The theory behind MI 284

Does MI work? 286

The active ingredients within MI 288

Practice: tools and techniques 291

The spirit of the approach 291

The principles 292

The core skills (or micro-skills) 294

Tools and techniques 296

When might the MI approach be most suitable? 309

Conclusion 309

Developing yourself as an MI coach 310

References 311

*The Association for Coaching 315**Index 319*

# ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

## The editor

**Professor Jonathan Passmore** is a full professor at the University of Evora, Portugal and the MD for a psychology consulting company. He is a chartered and registered psychologist and holds five degrees and three professional qualifications. Jonathan is the author and editor of over 50 academic papers and 20 books including the popular Association for Coaching series *In Coaching* and *Top Business Psychology Models*, which have been translated into a number of languages. He has presented at conferences all over the world and his company's clients include IKEA, HSBC, BP and Burberry. He was awarded the Association of Coaching Global Impact Award in 2010 and the British Psychological Society SGC? Research Award in 2012. He can be contacted at [jonathancpassmore@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jonathancpassmore@yahoo.co.uk).

## The contributors

**Julie Allan** is a chartered and registered psychologist, a Fellow of the Royal Society for Arts and Manufacture and an experienced coach and praxis supervisor. She has written widely on topics including narratives, gestalt coaching, ethics, supervision and wisdom. She is undertaking a doctorate into metacognition in adult learning.

**Dr Tim Anstiss** is a medical doctor and part-time academic helping clinicians and teams get better at health coaching in long-term conditions. He runs wellbeing, confidence and resilience workshops for staff, and is currently developing some e-health solutions. He has published a number of articles and book chapters on behaviour change and coaching and is a popular speaker and trainer. Tim is a former international athlete and contender on ITV's *Gladiators*.

**Ulla Charlotte Beck** holds an MA in political science and psychology. She has been training himself in organizational psychology, psychoanalytic group therapy, education, and administration and management over the past decade and is the author of *Psychodynamic Coaching: Focus and depth* and

has contributed to *Psychodynamic Organizational Psychology – the more work below the surface – Volume II*. She is a member of the following professional societies: GAS, OPUS, ISPSO and NAPSO.

**Professor Richard Blonna** is a Professor of Public Health at William Paterson University (NJ, US) and an AC Coach in Private Practice. He is the Co-Chair of the Act-Based Coaching SIG of the ACBS and the author of *Maximize Your Coaching Effectiveness with Acceptance and Commitment Therapy*. He is a Board-Certified Coach (BCC), Counsellor (NCC) and Health Education Specialist (CHES) and has over 30 years' experience as an educator, coach, trainer, author and consultant.

**Professor Paul Brown** is a specialist in applied neuroscience in organizations and in the development of individual executive and leadership talent. He has co-authored three professional books, including *Neuropsychology for Coaches: Understanding the basics* (2012), as well as many academic and management papers and articles, and teaches at a number of universities.

**Denyse Busby-Earle** is an accredited NLP practitioner, she holds an MBA and is an Imperial College Biochemistry graduate. She has 25 years' director level experience having worked in the private, public and charitable sector and is a licensed practitioner of a range of psychometric and motivation tools.

**Dr David Drake** is Executive Director of the Center for Narrative Coaching & Leadership in San Francisco and the founder of Narrative Design Labs. He is Associate Editor for *Coaching: An international journal of theory, research and practice*, author of 40 publications, editor of *The Philosophy and Practice of Coaching* (2008, Jossey-Bass), and author of *A Narrative Perspective on Organizational Culture and Coaching* (forthcoming, Routledge).

**Professor Paul Gilbert OBE** is Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Derby and Consultant Clinical Psychologist at the Derbyshire Health Care Foundation Trust. He has researched evolutionary approaches to psychopathology for over 35 years with a special focus on shame and the treatment of shame-based difficulties – for which compassion focused therapy was developed. In 2003 he was president of the BABCP and a member of the first NICE depression guidelines for depression. He has written/edited 20 books and over 150 papers. In 2006 he established the Compassionate Mind Foundation charity with the mission statement: *To promote wellbeing through the scientific understanding and application of compassion* ([www.compassionatemind.co.uk](http://www.compassionatemind.co.uk)). He was awarded an OBE in March 2011.

**Liz Hall** is an award-winning journalist and the editor of *Coaching at Work*, a Senior Practitioner coach and the author of *Mindful Coaching*. Liz has been meditating on and off for 30 years and has studied with mindfulness

teachers including Thich Nhat Hanh. Liz won the Association for Coaching's Award for Impacting (Leadership/External Focus) in 2011.

**Dr Lindsay G Oades** is Director of the Australian Institute of Business Wellbeing and is internally recognized for his work in mental health recovery, measurement of psychological recovery and the development of the Collaborative Recovery Model. He has formal training and experience across Clinical, Health, Coaching and Positive Psychology. He has published over 60 refereed journal publications and book chapters.

**Professor Reinhard Stelter** is Full Professor of Sport and Coaching Psychology at the University of Copenhagen and visiting professor at the Copenhagen Business School (Master of Public Governance). He holds a PhD in psychology and is an accredited coaching psychologist (ISCP). He is an Honorary Vice-President of ISCP and member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Institute of Coaching at Harvard. He has also published widely in journal articles, book chapters and books.

**Helen Whitten** is an Accredited Coach with the Association for Coaching and a Fellow of the International Stress Management Association. She founded *Positiveworks* in 1993 and is a specialist in personal and professional effectiveness applying cognitive behavioural approaches to coach individuals and teams. She has written five books.

**Dr Alison Whybrow** is a Chartered and Registered Psychologist whose practice encompasses working with individual leaders, teams and organizational systems. Alison sits on the editorial board of three peer reviewed coaching publications, and has written previously on gestalt coaching and values in action. She is described by colleagues as 'insatiably curious'.



# FOREWORD

**M**asterful coaching is a thing of beauty, a rich tapestry of art, experience and deep knowledge. But what makes for a masterful coach? What separates the very good from the great coach who can walk clients through transformative odysseys?

At Harvard Business School, leadership is taught from the ‘know – do – be’ model. As you’ll see here, masterful leadership tracks perfectly to masterful coaching. While this book is entitled *Mastery in Coaching: A complete psychological toolkit for advanced coaching*, in fact, it offers far more than a toolkit. It will help you along your coaching journey by offering a wide array of research and perspectives. At the Institute of Coaching at Harvard Medical School we see that the greatest challenge facing coaches today is to bridge good theory and research to best practices.

The Association for Coaching and Jonathan Passmore achieve this difficult challenge with ease and grace. This work will walk you across that bridge. Along the way you will find more than a pathway from knowing to doing. As you absorb the information presented here, the theory, its application and case examples will help you pull knowledge and wisdom from your mind to your heart and gut. It can also shift you further. My hope is that you take what is offered here even deeper. Like coaching, it can shift your mindset and change who you are as a coach – that is, your coaching identity and way of being. In turn, this creates a positive spiral: the more you know, and expand your repertoire of doing and ‘being’ skills, the more you can serve your clients. The more you serve the clients, the more you learn and grow yourself.

Carol Kauffman PhD ABPP  
Assistant Professor, Harvard Medical School  
Founder & Executive Director, Institute of Coaching

# Mastery in coaching

01

**JONATHAN PASSMORE**

## Introduction

The rise of coaching seems unstoppable. Over the past two decades coaching has continued to grow in popularity, application and understanding. There now may be as many as 100,000 coaches practising globally, with a growing number of this group having received some formal training. The application of coaching has spread from sports and business to health, wellbeing, driving, education and beyond, as managers, policy makers and educators recognize the contribution coaching can make to learning, personal development and performance. Further, coaching research since 2000 has exploded. While it was difficult in 2001 to support the assertion that ‘coaching works’, the evidence from a substantial and growing number of randomized control trials and, more recently, meta analysis papers is providing the scientific evidence to demonstrate coaching’s contribution in these areas. It is now possible to say that coaching is a positive tool in personal change and development.

The Association for Coaching (AC), along with other professional bodies such as the International Coaching Federation (ICF) and European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC), have played a significant role in the development and professionalization of coaching. In this sense coaching over the past decade has moved from a search for excellence to an understanding of what mastery looks like.

*Mastery in Coaching* (the Association for Coaching’s sixth book) is aimed at the advanced practitioner, meaning coaches who have hundreds of hours of experience. They are likely to have also completed post-graduate coach training and are now looking for their next step in their continued professional development (CPD).

This book offers advanced practitioners chapters by leading names in selected areas of practice. Each chapter provides an evidence-based platform, before offering insights into tools and techniques of practice, combined with a short case study to explore how experienced coaches apply their ideas.

Most advanced practitioners are familiar with more than one coaching model. Most will integrate two or three models into their practice. They

often select the model to apply based on the client, the issue and their judgement of what will best help their client to move forward. They have read the key books relevant to the models they use, they are likely to have reviewed the research about their model and are skilled in the application of the tools and techniques of the approach.

However, we hope that even the most experienced practitioner will find new and useful insights from the wide range of chapters on offer in *Mastery in Coaching*. By offering an in-depth review of the model, supported by research and how such approaches can be applied, we hope advanced practitioners will be able to add to their knowledge. Further we are confident that almost all practitioners will find one or more models that they are less familiar with and thus can add to their knowledge, and repertoire of skills. In short we hope this title is CPD for advanced coaching practitioners on their journey of continual pursuit of coaching mastery.

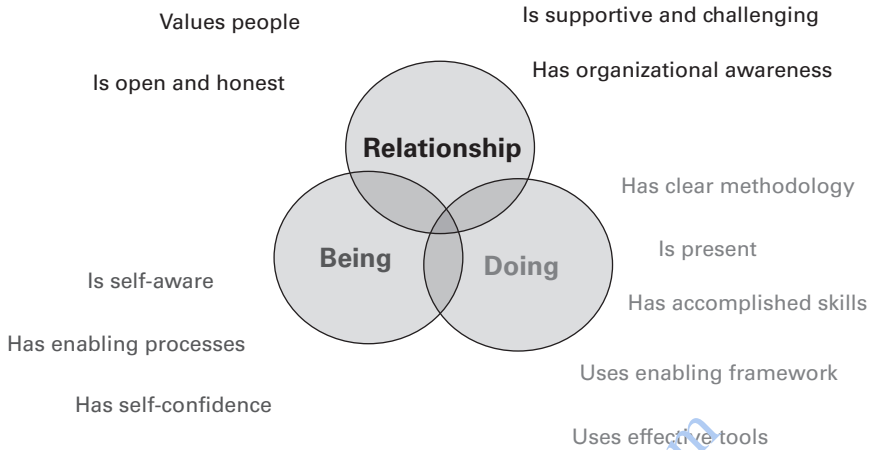
## What is mastery in coaching?

The selection of the term ‘mastery’ reflects the view that coaching is a skill. While scientific knowledge underpins the skill, coaching is foremost about the application of the skill, in the same way that a chef or surgeon needs to understand the science of food or the science of the human body, as well as being able to master the use of their tools. However, what makes a master chef or consultant surgeon is the application of their knowledge to a specific plate of food or specific patient undergoing a specific procedure.

Coaching’s leading professional bodies have helped in this process through their development of competency frameworks to define and clarify what competence in coaching should look like. The reason why input measures remain the focus for accreditation is because they are easier to collect and assess than seeking to differentiate between levels of competence in coaches through assessing output measures. However, in my view output measures of performance must be the direction we continue to travel in, as assessed through peer review, in the same way consultant surgeons and master chefs are assessed by their peers. The use of diaries, transcripts and examinations are the way forward, along with more high quality research. To achieve this we need to work harder at understanding the key ingredients of coaching, and what makes the difference between good outcomes and outstanding outcomes.

A number of models of competence have been offered by various writers, as well as by professional bodies such as the Association for Coaching. The AC’s Executive Coaching Framework is summarized in Table 1.1, with a full copy of the competencies contained in Table 1.2. This is a scheme that was updated in 2012, to align more with the ways organizations select coaches.

Since 2005 a number of organizations have considered and developed competency frameworks for coaches. David Lane’s work for the British

**FIGURE 1.1** Being, doing and relating

Psychological Society Special Interest Group in Coaching led to the development of a comprehensive model for coaching psychologists.

Other professional bodies, such as the International Coaching Federation, have also produced frameworks for practitioners. These have subsequently been incorporated into the assessment frameworks for membership grades, along with a requirement to complete a specified number of hours.

One of the simplest is Ben Renshaw and Graham Alexander's 'Being, doing and knowing' model described in *Supercoaching* (Renshaw and Alexander, 2005). The model sets out the modes which the coach must master and while based on experience rather than primary research, the model combines both insight and simplicity.

While competencies have emerged over the past five years we need to do more work to refine these, making them more behaviourally based, so it's possible to observe the behaviour during an assessed coaching session, as well as to underpin each aspect with evidence. This is difficult and the field of counselling is still struggling to fully achieve this after 50 years of attempts of codifying intervention methods.

Despite some challenges we now have methods for assessing levels of competence and thus mastery and an evidence base which supports our knowledge of whether coaching works, what coaching can positive impact upon and how it works.

As increasing numbers of coaches qualify through various commercial and academic institutions the new challenge is supporting these individuals to continue their personal development journey on to mastery.

**TABLE 1.1** Association for Coaching Framework

<b>Coach competencies for general coaches</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meeting ethical, legal and professional guidelines</li> <li>2. Establishing the coaching agreement and outcomes</li> <li>3. Establishing a trust-based relationship with the client</li> <li>4. Managing self and maintaining coaching presence</li> <li>5. Communicating effectively</li> <li>6. Raising awareness and insight</li> <li>7. Designing strategies and actions</li> <li>8. Maintaining forward momentum and evaluation</li> <li>9. Undertaking continuous coach development</li> </ol>
<b>Additional competencies for executive coaches</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Working within the organizational context</li> <li>11. Understanding leadership issues</li> <li>12. Working in partnership with the organization</li> </ol>

**TABLE 1.2** Association for Coaching Competencies

<b>AC COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK</b> Revised June 2012	
<b>Coaching competencies for all coaches</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meeting ethical, legal and professional guidelines</li> <li>2. Establishing the coaching agreement and outcomes</li> <li>3. Establishing a trust-based relationship with the client</li> <li>4. Managing self and maintaining coaching presence</li> <li>5. Communicating effectively</li> <li>6. Raising awareness and insight</li> <li>7. Designing strategies and actions</li> <li>8. Maintaining forward momentum and evaluation</li> <li>9. Undertaking continuous coach development</li> </ol>	
<b>Additional competencies for executive coaches</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Working within the organizational context</li> <li>11. Understanding leadership issues</li> <li>12. Working in partnership with the organization</li> </ol>	

**TABLE 1.2** *continued*

<b>COACH COMPETENCIES AND INDICATORS – ALL COACHES</b>
<p><b>1. Meeting ethical, legal and professional guidelines</b></p> <p><i>Indicators of competence:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Follows the AC's professional standards and codes of conduct, including the AC's Code of Ethics and Good Practice and Statement of Shared Professional Values</li> <li>● Acts ethically and with the highest integrity</li> <li>● Promotes the coaching profession in a positive light to all stakeholders</li> <li>● Complies with the prevailing laws of the country in which the coaching takes place and/or client organization is operating, whichever is the most applicable and stringent</li> <li>● Clearly communicates how coaching is different from other helping professions</li> <li>● Is aware of professional boundaries and refers on to another professional as appropriate</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Establishing the coaching agreement and outcomes</b></p> <p><i>Indicators of competence:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clearly explains the coaching process and own coaching approach, models and techniques</li> <li>● Helps the client establish coaching goals and outcomes and agrees an approach to working with the client that will achieve them</li> <li>● Agrees a formal coaching agreement with client and all stakeholders, including clear and measurable outcomes, plus confidentiality, logistics of coaching sessions (duration, frequency, location), purpose, contingencies, monitoring and reporting on progress, and commercial arrangements</li> <li>● Establishes clear roles, responsibilities and boundaries between the different stakeholders, including coach and client</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Establishing a trust-based relationship with the client</b></p> <p><i>Indicators of competence:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Treats people equally and fairly, with respect and dignity</li> <li>● Is optimistic for and encourages self-belief in the client</li> <li>● Establishes a high level of rapport to build an open dialogue with the client</li> <li>● Accepts the client 'as is' and believes in the client's potential and capability</li> <li>● Acts openly and honestly, including tackling difficult conversations with the client, using self and personal reactions to offer client feedback, avoiding colluding with the client on issues that block progress</li> <li>● Maintains agreed levels of confidentiality</li> </ul>

**TABLE 1.2** *continued***4. Managing self and maintaining coaching presence***Indicators of competence:*

- Pays close attention to the client, staying fully present and engaged
- Remains focused on the agreed client agenda and outcomes
- Acts flexibly whilst staying aligned to own coaching approach
- Stays aligned to personal values whilst respecting the values of the client
- Works to ensure interventions get the best outcome for the client

**5. Communicating effectively***Indicators of competence:*

- Demonstrates effective listening and clarifying skills and differentiates between what is said and what's left unsaid
- Uses straightforward, easy-to-understand language that moves the client towards the agreed outcomes
- Adapts communication style to reflect the client's needs and outcomes
- Provides relevant information and feedback to serve the client's learning and goals
- Communicates clearly, confidently and credibly with the client

**6. Raising awareness and insight***Indicators of competence:*

- Asks questions to challenge client's assumptions, elicit new insights, raise self-awareness and gain learning
- Helps broaden a client's perception of an issue and challenges to stimulate new possibilities
- Supports the client to generate options to achieve agreed outcomes
- Provides observational feedback where relevant, leaving client free to choose to act upon it or not
- Uses 'self' as a resource for the development of the client's self-awareness and learning by offering 'here and now' feedback

**7. Designing strategies and actions***Indicators of competence:*

- Supports the client to build strategies to meet their outcomes
- Inspires the client to identify and implement self-directed learning opportunities
- Leaves accountability with the client while following through on own actions and commitments
- Encourages the client to seek support from others to help achieve the client outcomes
- Provides support while the client tries out new ways of working/behaviours

**TABLE 1.2** *continued***8. Maintaining forward momentum and evaluation***Indicators of competence:*

- Maintains an outcome-focused approach
- Asks powerful questions that move the client forwards towards the agreed outcome
- Checks and acknowledges client progress and achievements
- Explores what is working, what is getting in the way and challenges lack of progress
- Discourages dependency on the coach and develops the client's ability to self-coach
- Checks the client's motivation to apply learning from the coaching
- Measures effectiveness of coaching

**9. Undertaking continuous coach development***Indicators of competence:*

- Regularly requests client feedback
- Actively reflects on coaching practice and outcomes
- Acts on own critical reflections and client feedback to improve coaching practice
- Participates in regular coaching supervision to reflect on, and improve, practice
- Participates in continuous professional development (CPD) activities

## ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES AND INDICATORS – EXECUTIVE COACHES

**10. Working within the organizational context***Indicators of competence:*

- Understands the organizational context in which the client operates (eg is aware of the long term vision, mission, values, strategic objectives, market/competitive pressures, etc)
- Understands the client's role, position and authority within the organizational system
- Is aware of key stakeholders (internal and external) within the organizational system
- Aligns coaching goals to support organizational aims and objectives
- Understands the relationship between the coach, client and internal sponsor(s) of coaching
- Is aware of, and works with the organization's values, policies and practices, including human resource and people policies and practices
- Takes a systemic approach to coaching the client, encompassing the complexities of multiple stakeholders, different perspectives and conflicting priorities



**TABLE 1.2** *continued***11. Understanding leadership issues***Indicators of competence:*

- Recognizes the challenges faced by leaders working in organizations
- Identifies ways of, and opportunities for, developing leadership behaviours and attributes through coaching
- Demonstrates knowledge and experience of working with organizational leaders
- Uses language appropriate for, and recognized by, the client and organization
- Constructively challenges the leader to raise his/her standards in areas key to the organization
- Understands the leader's sphere of influence

**12. Working in partnership with the organization***Indicators of competence:*

- Develops relevant networks and strategic partnerships in the organization
- Designs an effective coaching contract, commercial agreement and working alliance with the client, line manager and coaching sponsor(s) within organizational parameters and policies for coaching
- Actively involves key stakeholders in the set-up, monitoring and evaluation of the coaching, whilst maintaining agreed levels of confidentiality
- Communicates the progress of the coaching with key stakeholders openly and honestly, whilst maintaining agreed levels of confidentiality
- Identifies ways of adding value to the client at the individual, team and organizational level

**SOURCE:** [www.associationforcoaching.com](http://www.associationforcoaching.com)

## Evidence-based practice

In 2001, as the coaching revolution got fully underway, the rush to coaching led to what I considered to be inflated claims. These claims were often based

on personal experience and ad hoc case studies. Some claimed coaching would enable personal transformation, almost like a light switch. Just ask a question and their client saw the light and was transformed. Too often I hear practitioners lay claim to the ‘magic of coaching’. Others suggested that coaching is the solution to all organizational and personal problems: a ‘silver bullet’.

While at the time I shared the sense that clients have both enjoyed and benefited from the time we had together in coaching conversations, I felt, as a psychologist, that I lacked the evidence to respond to the question, ‘so does it work?’ with an answer that would satisfy a critical mind with compelling research evidence. However, I was certain that coaching was no magic – and I was no magician.

Partly in trying to respond to this challenge, I undertook doctoral research into coaching in an attempt to better understand the behaviours that contributed to positive outcomes. Like studies before and since, the general conclusion was that outcomes were influenced by the ability of the coach to build and maintain a relationship with their client, along with wider competence in adapting to and working with a wide range of individuals, issues and frameworks responding in the moment flexibly and empathically towards their client.

Not surprisingly these finding echoed earlier work in counselling that has shown the centrality of the client–therapist relationship and specifically the contribution of empathy as the single biggest factor in building and maintaining the relationship (see Table 1.3).

Since 2000 the number of randomized controlled trial (RCT) studies has increased. Between 2001 and 2010 we saw a growing number of RCT studies

**TABLE 1.3** Sample of early Between-Subject Design studies

Study	Intervention overview	Type of study	Findings
Miller (1990)	33 employees. Some received coaching by their managers over four weeks.	Quasi-experimental field study: (a) coaching group; (b) control group.	No sig. differences pre-post for interpersonal communication skill.
Grant (2002)	62 trainee accountants received group coaching over one semester.	Randomized controlled study: (a) cognitive coaching only; (b) behavioural coaching only; (c) combined – Cognitive and behavioural coaching; (d) control groups for each condition.	Combined cognitive and behavioural coaching most effective in increasing grade point average, study skills, self-regulation, and mental health. GPA gains maintained in 12 month follow-up.

**TABLE 1.4** Sample of RCT studies 2001–2014

Study	Intervention overview	Type of study	Findings
Evers, Brouwers & Tomic (2006)	60 managers of the federal government.	Quasi-experimental field study: (a) coaching group; (b) control group.	Coaching increased outcome expectancies and self-efficacy.
Green, Grant & Rynsaardt (2007)	56 female high school students took part in SF-CB life coaching program for 10 individual coaching sessions over two school terms.	Randomized controlled study: (a) coaching group; (b) waitlist control group.	Coaching increased cognitive hardiness, mental health and hope.

that have demonstrated the positive effects of coaching on clients' wellbeing, learning and skills development.

The research has also shown, as did previous work on behavioural change, that change is hard work and occurs slowly over time. The work achieved by clients, supported and facilitated by their coaches, is not magic, but human. It reveals the power of humans to learn, adapt and change when encouraged, supported and challenged to do so (see Table 1.4).

In addition to the 40-plus RCT papers published to date, there is the emergence of a number of meta-analysis published studies. It has been argued that RCT is the gold standard in evidence-based practice. This is because, unlike a case study, qualitative research that is open to personal bias and contamination factors, a well conducted RCT enables a true comparison between one intervention and another (or a control group). It is for this reason that RCTs are the standard method for assessing drugs prior to licensing.

More recently, however, statistical techniques have allowed meta-studies to supersede the RCT as the ultimate research methodology for demonstrating impact (measured by effect size). The meta-analysis involves combining results from different RCT studies, with the aim of identifying patterns among study results. In its simplest form, the meta-analysis is done to identify the average effect size from these previous studies, such as those listed in Table 1.3. This average is then weighted relative to the sample sizes within the individual studies, to reduce the impact of small-scale studies on the overall results. By combining results, the method removes variables such as differences in individual population groups, researchers or individual coaches. In this sense the meta-analysis results provide a more accurate view as to the effect or impact of a particular method.

**TABLE 1.5** Effect size explained

Effect size (often described as g)	Effect
0.3	Small
0.31–0.5	Moderate
Over 0.5	Large

(based on Cohen, 1988)

The first published meta-analysis identified 12 papers that it reduced to four studies for inclusion in the analysis (De Meuse *et al*, 2009). The four studies included contained wide variations, but the authors noted that ‘executive coaching generally leads to a moderate to large amount of improvement in the coachee’s skills and/or performance rating’ (de Meuse *et al*, 2009, p 120). The coachees estimated the effect size on their skill/performance to be 1.27, while managers were considerably more cautious with an effect size estimated at 0.5. To put this in perspective, an effect size of 0.3 would be considered small, while 0.31–0.5 is considered moderate and over 0.5 is considered a strong effect (see Table 1.5). The authors, however, rightly noted that extreme caution should be used in generalizing their results, given the small number of studies.

The second published study (Theeboom *et al*, 2013) included 107 studies. These were ultimately reduced to 18 studies used in the actual analysis. The study focused on the effect of coaching in five categories: performance/skills, wellbeing, coping, work attitudes and goal-directed self-regulation (see Table 1.6). The results indicate that coaching interventions had a significant positive effects on all outcome categories: performance and skills ( $g = 0.60$ , 95% CI, 0.04–0.60,  $p = 0.036$ ), wellbeing ( $g = 0.46$ , 95% CI, 0.28–0.62,  $p < 0.001$ ), coping ( $g = 0.43$ , 95% CI, 0.25–0.61,  $p < 0.001$ ), work attitudes ( $g = 0.54$ , 95% CI, 0.34–0.73,  $p < 0.001$ ), and goal-directed self-regulation ( $g = 0.74$ , 95% CI, 0.42–1.06,  $p < 0.001$ ). In reviewing these results the authors concluded that coaching was ‘an effective intervention in organizations’.

A third meta-analysis study (Jones *et al*, 2014) considered the value of executive coaching across different styles of intervention. Three were included: face-to-face ( $d = 0.27$ ), internal ( $d = 0.19$ ) and external coaching ( $d = 0.69$ ). These results too reveal positive impact, as measured by effect size, from each of these styles of intervention. Jones *et al* (2014) also urged caution due to the relatively small sample of studies they reviewed – which was limited to 24 studies.

These three meta-analysis papers need to be considered in the light of previous organizational research reviewing the efficacy of other interventions

**TABLE 1.6** Weighted effect sizes of coaching interventions for studies by number of coaching sessions

Measures	Effect size (fewer than five interventions)	Effect size (five or more interventions)
Coping	0.54	0.35
Goal-directed self-regulation	1.02	0.52
Performance/skills	0.11	0.26
Attitudes	0.35	0.67
Wellbeing	0.46	0.47

Adapted from Theeboom *et al*, 2013

that have shown ranging effect size from 0.60 to 0.63 for training effectiveness (Arthur *et al*, 2003), 0.24 for managerial training effectiveness (Powell and Yalcin, 2010) and 0.5 to 0.15 for appraisal/multi-source feedback (Smither, London and Reilly, 2005).

As can be noted, the evidence from the initial coaching studies confirms that coaching is as powerful an intervention as training and feedback, which are commonly used by managers to help performance improvement. Further, the results from the three studies suggest a moderate effect of coaching overall.

This evidence means that master practitioners can now respond with confidence to questions about efficacy by drawing on research to inform clients about the power of coaching, as one tool to support learning, behavioural change and performance improvement.

These meta-studies, when combined with the growing literature on coaching using RCT methodologies, provides conclusive evidence that coaching does work. With this knowledge in place practitioners can now support their claims with scientific evidence. The power of coaching is not magic, it is science.

## Conclusion

The journey of building mastery is a continuous one. The most dangerous position is to claim that we are a master coach now and can thus stop learning. Master coaches are always seeking new approaches, fresh insights and leading edge research to help them reflect, refine and finesse their approach. They are hungry for new knowledge with which to experiment. For

the master coach, mastery is a journey that can enhance their service to their clients, but is also one of pleasure and enjoyment as they learn, develop and grow.

## References

- Arthur, W, Bennett, W, Edens, P S and Bell, S T (2003) Effectiveness of training in organizations: a meta-analysis of design and evaluation features, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88 (2), pp 234–35
- Cohen, J (1988) *Statistical power analysis for the behavioural sciences*, Lawrence Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ
- De Meuse, K, Dai, G and Lee, R (2009) Evaluating the effectiveness of executive coaching: beyond ROI, *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 2 (2), pp 117–34
- Deviney, D E (1994) The effects of coaching using multiple rater feedback to change supervisor behavior, *Dissertation Abstracts International Section A*, 55, p 114
- Duijts, S F A P, Kant, I P, van den Brandt, P A P and Swaen, G M H P (2008) Effectiveness of a preventive coaching intervention for employees at risk for sickness absence due to psychosocial health complaints: results of a randomized controlled trial, *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 50 (7), pp 765–76
- Evers, W J, Brouwers, A and Tomic, W (2005) A quasi-experimental study on management coaching effectiveness, *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and research*, 58, pp 174–82
- Franklin, J and Franklin, A (2012) The long term independent assessed benefits of coaching, *International Coaching Psychology Review*, 7 (1), pp 33–38
- Gattellari, M, Donnelly, N, Taylor, N, Meerkin, M, Hirst, G and Ward, J (2005) Does ‘peer coaching’ increase GP capacity to promote informed decision making about PSA screening? A cluster randomised trial, *Family Practice*, 22 (3), pp 253–67
- Grant, A M (2002) Towards a psychology of coaching: the impact of coaching on metacognition, mental health and goal attainment, *Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences*, 63 (12), pp 6094 (June)
- Grant, A M (2012) Making positive change: a randomized study comparing solution-focused vs. problem focused coaching questions, *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 31 (2), pp 21–35
- Grant, A M, Frith, L and Burton, G (2009) Executive coaching enhances goal attainment, resilience and workplace well-being: a randomised controlled study, *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 4 (5), pp 396–407
- Grant, A M, Passmore, J, Cavanagh, M and Parker, H (2010) The state of play in coaching, *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 25, pp 125–68
- Green, L S, Grant, A M and Rynsaardt, J (2007) Evidence-based life coaching for senior high school students: building hardiness and hope, *International Coaching Psychology Review*, 2 (1), pp 24–32

- Green, L, Oades, L and Grant, A (2006) Cognitive-behavioral, solution-focused life coaching: enhancing goal striving, well-being, and hope, *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 1 (3), pp 142–49
- Gyllensten, K and Palmer, S (2005) Can coaching reduce workplace stress: a quasi-experimental study, *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, 3 (2), pp 75–85
- Jones, R J, Woods, S A and Guillaume, Y (2014) *A meta-analysis of the effectiveness of executive coaching at improving work-based performance and moderators of coaching effectiveness*. Paper presented to the British Psychological Society Division of Occupational Psychology Conference in January 2014
- Miller, D J (1990) The effect of managerial coaching on transfer of training, *Dissertation Abstracts International Section B*, 50 (2435)
- Miller, W R, Yahne, C E, Moyers, T B, Martinez, J and Pirritano, M (2004) A randomized trial of methods to help clinicians learn motivational interviewing, *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 72 (6), pp 1050–62
- Passmore, J and Rehman, H (2012) Coaching as a learning methodology – a mixed methods study in driver development – a Randomised Controlled Trial and thematic analysis, *International Coaching Psychology Review*, 7 (2), pp 166–84
- Passmore, J and Velez, M J (2012) Coaching fleet drivers – a randomized controlled trial (RCT) of ‘short coaching’ interventions to improve driver safety in fleet drivers, *The Coaching Psychologist*, 8 (1), pp 20–26
- Powell, K S and Yalcin, S (2010) Managerial training effectiveness: a meta-analysis 1952–2002, *Personnel Review*, 39 (2), pp 227–41
- Renshaw, B and Alexander, G (2005) *Supercoaching*, Random House, London
- Smither, J W, London, M and Reilly, P R (2005) Does performance improve following multisource feedback? A theoretical model, meta-analysis, and a review of empirical findings, *Personnel Psychology*, 54, pp 33–66, 3–9760
- Spence, G B, Cavanagh, M J and Grant, A M (2008) The integration of mindfulness training and health coaching: an exploratory study, *Coaching: An international journal of theory, research and practice*, 1 (2), pp 145–63
- Spence, G B and Grant, A (2007) Professional and peer life coaching and the enhancement of goal striving and well-being: an exploratory study, *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 2, pp 185–94
- Sue-Chan, C and Latham, G P (2004) The relative effectiveness of expert, peer and self coaches, *Applied Psychology*, 53 (2), pp 260–78
- Taylor, L M (1997) The relation between resilience, coaching, coping skills training, and perceived stress during a career-threatening milestone [Empirical, PhD, WS] DAI-B 58/05, p 2738, November 1997
- Theeboom, T, Beersma, B and van Vianen, A E M (2013) Does coaching work? A meta-analysis on the effects of coaching on individual level outcomes in an organizational context, *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 8 (6), pp 174–96

***“Mastery in Coaching, the sixth book in the AC series, skilfully draws upon a rich body of knowledge, demonstrating that ‘coaching works’... It is a significant contribution to the profession, based on the premise that mastery is not a destination in itself, but a journey of lifelong learning.”***

***Katherine Tulpa, CEO and Co-founder, Association for Coaching***

***“While this book is entitled Mastery in Coaching: A complete psychological toolkit for advanced coaching, in fact, it offers far more than a toolkit. It will help you along your coaching journey by offering a wide array of research and perspectives. At the Institute of Coaching at Harvard Medical School we see that the greatest challenge facing coaches today is to bridge good theory and research to best practices.***

***“The Association for Coaching and Jonathan Passmore achieve this difficult challenge with ease and grace... As you absorb the information presented here, the theory, its application and case examples will help you pull knowledge and wisdom from your mind to your heart and gut.”***

***Carol Kauffman PhD ABPP, Assistant Professor, Harvard Medical School, Founder & Executive Director, Institute of Coaching***

***Mastery in Coaching*** brings together the latest thinking on the most powerful psychological techniques that coaches can use with their clients. Written by an international range of expert thought leaders and practitioners, this cutting-edge guide gives you the knowledge you need to take your coaching expertise up to the next level. Every chapter is written by a leading practitioner in the field, and takes a rigorous, evidence-based approach to give you a practical understanding of each method, supported with examples, and underpinned by the theory of the key psychological concepts. With the topics covered ranging from cognitive behavioural coaching, gestalt approaches and positive psychology to neuroscience and mindfulness, this indispensable book will give any serious coach the tools they need to get the best from their clients.

***Jonathan Passmore*** is a professor of psychology with an international reputation, and the managing director of a consulting company. He speaks at conferences around the world and is the editor of Kogan Page’s prestigious Association for Coaching book series. He is also the co-author of *Top Business Psychology Models* and *Appreciative Inquiry for Change Management*.



Established in 2002, The Association for Coaching® (AC) is one of the leading, independent, not-for-profit coaching bodies with the aim to advance the profession of coaching, worldwide. Its members are made up of professional coaches, educators and providers of coaching, and organizations building coaching cultures, in over 50 countries.  
**[www.associationforcoaching.com](http://www.associationforcoaching.com)** “promoting excellence & ethics in coaching”.

**Kogan Page**  
London  
Philadelphia  
New Delhi  
**[www.koganpage.com](http://www.koganpage.com)**

ISBN: 978-0-7494-7179-8



9 780749 471798

Coaching