

Coaching for brave leadership: an action research study

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Abstract

There appears to be a gap between the behaviours of leaders and the expectations of followers and other stakeholders. This gap may be due to an absence of brave leadership. An action research study was designed for use with six leaders who undertook to help evolve and also be coached using a brave leadership coaching model. The data was analysed using a retroductive and thematic approach. The use of the brave leadership model appears to indicate that it can assist in decision making and that bravery may be enhanced, at least from a subjective perspective. It would also appear that the idea of brave leadership may complement other leadership theories.

Key Words: Brave leadership; leadership; coaching; action research

Introduction

There is a plethora of leadership training and coaching available worldwide, indeed some organisations and individuals specialise exclusively in the area of leadership coaching, and there are even academic institutions which offer qualifications in the area. In addition there is a wide variety of leadership texts. However, despite this range of advice there appears to be a gap between the behaviours of leaders and the expectations of followers, even when some form of leadership development has been made available (Burke 2006). Indeed, Lipman-Blumen (2005) discusses the pitfalls of being in the thrall of 'toxic leaders'.

The relatively recent cases of company failures such as Enron and Arthur Andersen seem to point to a malaise within the very fabric of business. Companies such as these will have had their own particular set of systemic issues which led to their demise, but what caused this is probably far from simply a failure of a process or a policy. Such examples seem to support the old Chinese proverb and more recently Garratt's claim that the 'fish rots from the head' (Garratt 2011), i.e. organisations begin to deteriorate from the top. In fact there appears to have been one leadership scandal after another, culminating in the recent resignation of a high ranking executive in connection to the apparent fixing of the lending rate between UK banks (The Wall Street Journal online, Schaefer Munoz & Colchester, July 4th 2012).

A common thread running through much of the literature about authentic leadership, ethical leadership and transformational leadership, but which is not commonly or overtly alluded to, is bravery. Having considered this at some length, I concluded that the only way to be consistently ethical, authentic and transformational, was to be able to be brave when the situation dictated it, to consider all the factors and to make the right choice, despite potentially feeling fear, and despite the consequences. This was at the core of what authenticity and ethical behaviour required.

This was the starting point for this action research study: the current state of corporate affairs; the plethora of leadership texts; the apparent discrepancy between the brave new leadership world and

the behaviours of some leaders; and the (in my opinion) underuse of professional coaching for leaders. The question this research explores, then, is ‘can a coaching model be designed which could help to enhance bravery in a leader?’ The objectives of the research were to design and implement a brave leadership coaching model and collect data from six leaders, who would be coached using the model in order to critically review their experience during and after having been coached.

Methodology

As the aim of the study was to answer a question which I considered would ultimately be subjective, I believed that the research approach at its broadest level had to be interpretivist in some way. On the other hand, I had never been entirely comfortable with a purely phenomenological approach. I was driven by a need to help to generate change in certain areas of leadership. I did not simply want to find out people’s opinions, or indeed their world views. I was keen to help evolve a model which may, in some way, be able to challenge the status quo of what I had perceived to be ‘weaker’ leadership.

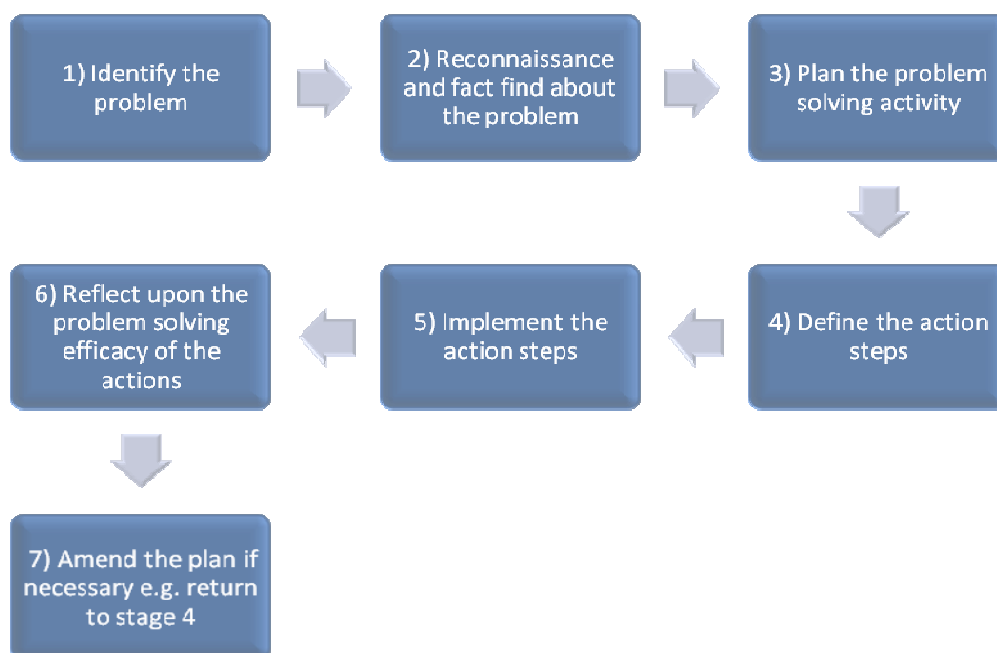
As I considered my desire for change and my particular epistemological and ontological perspective, it appeared to me that I was what could be described as a critical realist. I am entirely comfortable, from an epistemological perspective, that our knowledge of the real world is constructed from our conditioning, beliefs, social groupings and even emotional state.

Action Research

The strong correlation between the critical realist’s need to make change and Action Research, and particularly Participatory Action Research (PAR), is noted by Baum, MacDougal and Smith (2006, p.854) who explain how PAR seeks to understand and improve the world by changing it. They say that “at its heart is collective, self-reflective inquiry that researchers and co-researchers undertake, so they can understand and improve upon the practices in which they participate and the situations in which they find themselves. The reflective process is directly linked to action”.

In order to design the process, I adapted McKay and Marshall’s (2001, pp.50–51) Action Research cycle. Figure 1 illustrates the sequence of the research.

Figure 1 – The action research sequence



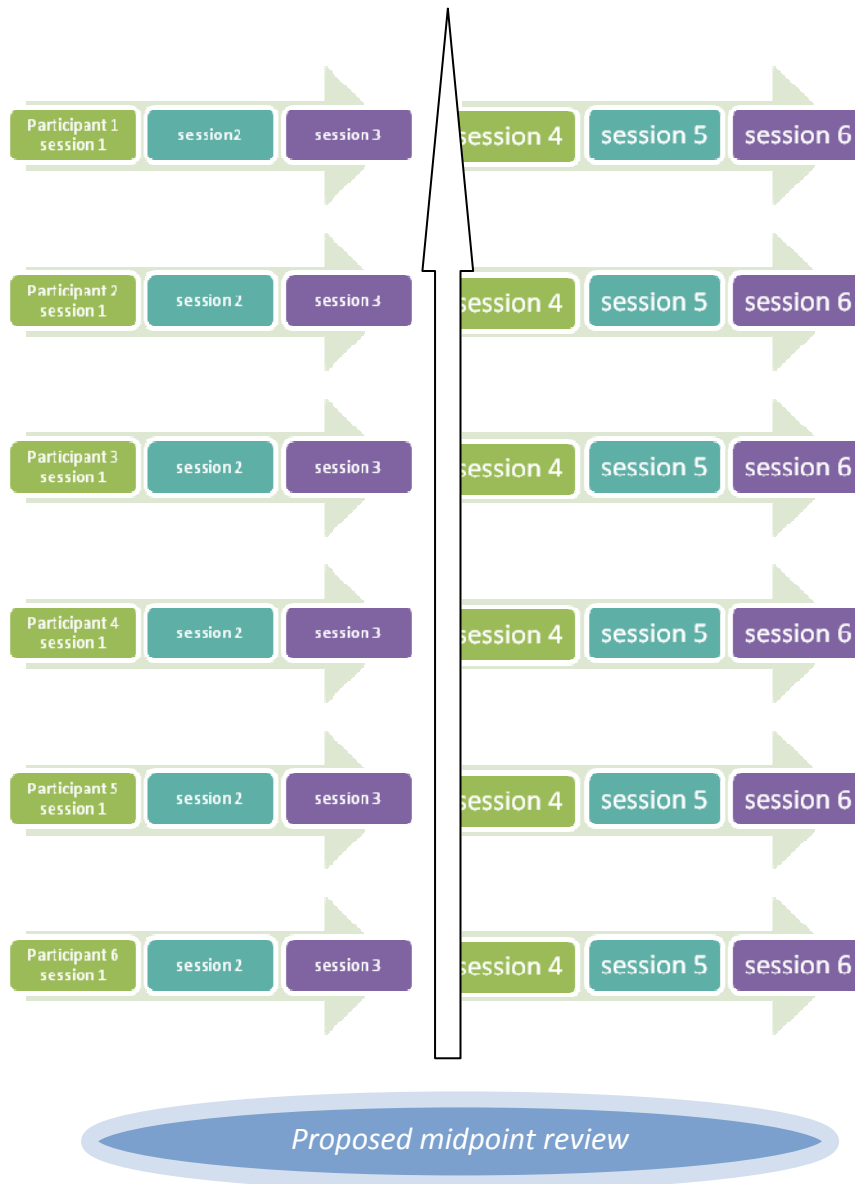
- 1) *Problem identification.* The problem had partly been identified from first-hand experience and a preliminary literature review.
- 2) *Reconnaissance/fact finding about problem.* Fact finding involved carrying out a comprehensive literature review and also speaking to four key informants. These key informants were business leaders whom I knew or was introduced to.
- 3) *Plan the problem solving activity.* Planning involved the design of the coaching model and the format of the coaching sessions.
- 4) *Define the action steps.* This entailed scheduling coaching sessions and consideration of how the coach and co-researcher's reflection and feedback would be collected and acted upon.
- 5) *Implement the action steps.* The implementation involved carrying out the actual coaching sessions. This was envisaged as six sessions plus a reflection session per co-researcher.
- 6) *Reflect upon the problem solving efficacy of the actions.* This was to be achieved by studying the reflections and feedback from the co-researchers.
- 7) *Amend the plan if further change is required and return to Step 4.* The main objective was to adjust the coaching model as required. At the outset I was aware that this may have entailed making minor adjustments which might be different for each co-researcher, or that there may have been a requirement for major adjustments after the mid-point review. The mid-point review was scheduled to take place after the third coaching sessions had taken place.

Due to the requirement for leaders to reflect and feedback their thoughts after each of the coaching sessions, the leaders involved in this study were deemed co-researchers. They were ultimately selected from the private sector, and were from four different organisations in order to provide a range of perspectives.

The Action Research cycle took place over a period of six months. During this time over thirty coaching sessions took place, one per month with each of the six leaders (although one co-researcher eventually had to drop out of the research). After each coaching session I updated a reflective log book and each co-researcher was encouraged to do the same. The co-researchers were encouraged to send me their observations and thoughts on the coaching sessions and their observations of the use of the model two weeks after each session. Session 1, for all co-researchers, involved an element of familiarisation and orientation. From Session 2, the coaching sessions were envisaged as being split into three parts; one third of the session was to be devoted to reviewing the co-researcher's log book to record any adjustments to the model which this might necessitate; one third of the session was to be devoted to the discussion of the model as a concept (in essence, capturing anything which had occurred in the intervening fortnight which was not captured in the log book) with the final third of the session being devoted to coaching, using the model as a framework. The idea behind the use of a log book or journal was that it has the benefit of capturing immediate experiences as recorded by the co-researcher and 'does not pass through a researcher' (Hatch 2002 p.141). In reality, the sessions were never as neatly choreographed as this, and due to the time constraints of the co-researchers, the use of a journal was sporadic at best.

A larger mid-point review was planned to take place approximately three months into the field work to assess trends and patterns across co-researchers, which may have necessitated a much larger adjustment to the model, or highlight where it was simply not fit for purpose. This did indeed take place, and revealed nothing which indicated that the research needed to be radically adjusted. This process is shown diagrammatically below in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – Sessions 1 to 6 for the six co-researchers



Co-researchers

The particular Action Research route I intended to follow (Participative Action Research) necessitated that I gained the assistance of co-researchers. It was important to me to understand the lived experience of co-researchers who were being exposed to the model and also have them involved in the iterative process of evolving the model. There were no deliberate exclusion criteria for the selection of the co-researchers. My initial action was to get in touch with those individuals whom I knew within organisations. This created a type of ‘snowball’ effect as those individuals put me in touch with others within their organisations, and in some cases, within other organisations.

Figure 3 – The co-researchers

Pseudonym	Sector	Leadership experience	Age	Geographic role
Martha	FMCG	Less than 10 years. An HR professional.	30-40	Worldwide
Russell	Health retail	Less than 10 years. Marketing and Accountancy background.	30-40	UK and Europe
Amy	Engineering/ Electronic	10 years approx. HR and Learning & Development specialist	35-45	UK and Ireland
Mickey	Engineering	10 years approx. General Management experience	35-45	Europe not UK
Jack	Electronics	Greater than 10 years Military, Sales and General Management experience	45-55	Worldwide
Rory	FMCG	Less than 10 years Retail experience	25-35	UK

Data collection and analysis

There were six sessions for each of the co-researchers (apart from the leader who could not continue) plus a reflection session (not shown in Figure 2 above). Each co-researcher session lasted approximately one hour, although the timings did vary. The broad outline of each of the sessions from session 2 onwards was that one third was spent on dealing with any aspects from the last session e.g. questions and feedback, another third was devoted to the model development e.g. adding in pulling factors (Figures 5 and 6) and the final third was devoted to coaching using the model where appropriate. During some of the sessions the weighting was more towards discussing the model than coaching, and vice versa. The sessions took place at various locations throughout the UK.

Analysis

One of my main concerns during the design of this study was how to analyse the data. I initially considered using a thematic approach throughout, and indeed, this was used to produce a thematic analysis of the reflection sessions. However, as Action Research has the advantage of often producing distinct end-points and outcomes, I concluded that these outcomes can be used as a ‘lens’ through which to analyse the data. Mingers (2003) proposes that retrodution involves moving from the level

of observations and lived experience to postulate about the underlying structures and mechanisms that account for the phenomena involved. To this end it seemed that using a retroductive approach would be particularly useful. Retroduction has the advantage of being able to utilise a fixed point in time and space. This known end-point or outcome can then act as a way to filter or regard the data.

The coaching/model evolution sessions were audio recorded. These recordings were then transcribed. The printed transcripts were read and re-read, and audio files listened to again and again. However, they were not specifically listened to or read to generate themes; they were accessed with a view towards understanding what, if any, steps were taking place which ultimately led to the known outcomes. This process is what I have called viewing through the 'lens' - the lens of knowledge of a fixed outcome, and then the interpretation of the events in time which led up to that outcome.

This approach gains further credibility when one considers that in this research, and probably in many other examples of action research, there are distinctly tangible outcomes. For example, one co-researcher left his job and another decided to remain in the current role, having previously decided to leave. These are distinct and unequivocal outcomes as testified by the respective co-researchers.

The co-researcher sessions and the evolution of the model.

The first sessions were mainly concerned with rapport building and getting 'orientation' around bravery. The first research session consisted of discussing what the coachees considered bravery to be, where they had seen examples of bravery, and also who they considered to be brave. I had thought long and hard about what bravery was, and how it might be displayed. The initial conversations with business leaders had highlighted that it can mean many things and that it was also likely to have a contextual element to it.

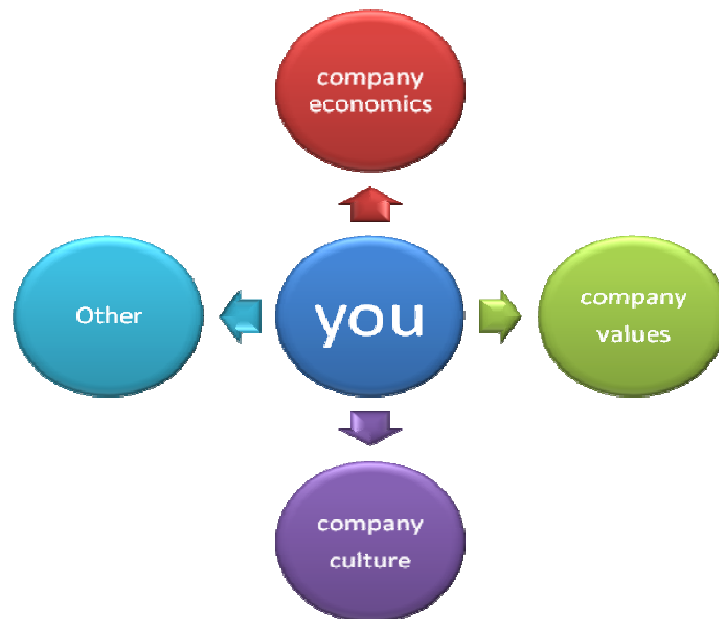
I concluded that as this was a coaching model and not a training model, the idea of bravery would have to come from the co-researcher. There was simply no way that bravery could be effectively 'taught' in this situation, nor should it be. This was a coaching model, and as such the coachee was likely to have the answer within them, and was therefore more likely to take ownership and responsibility.

Asking the co-researchers to consider what bravery might look like, and by implication, 'how might they be when they were brave?' may have generated at least two potential influences on their journey. One influence was, I believe, similar to what Boyatzis and Akrivou (2006) refer to as the 'ideal self'. In essence this gives an individual something to measure themselves against. In my interpretation, this means that it can begin to generate a 'gap' between the current situation or behaviours and the ideal. There are also aspects here, I believe, of psychological priming (Levy 2003). Psychological priming or non-conscious activation has been shown to influence perception, motivation, evaluation and behaviour (Bargh, Gollwitzer, Lee-Chai, Barndollar and Troetschel 2001). Exposing the co-researchers to the concept of bravery, partly in relation to a potentially idealised braver version of themselves, and also partly by the simple addition of this word in a business context, may have begun the process of them 'looking within'.

This approach would, I believed, be most likely to allow coachees to move into a space of thinking about bravery and begin to make their own connections and distinctions. The idea of not appearing with a fully formed coaching model was firmly in my mind, as I believed that it would have been very difficult for the coachee/co-researcher to mentally 'reverse engineer' such a model to allow them to actively and critically participate in the research.

The sessions with the co-researchers involved, at times, incorporating their ideas into the model which helped it evolve, and also sharing ideas with them to understand if they were viable or not. One of the things which we considered was what might get in the way of bravery. One main component of the model was that of the Pulling Factors. I had considered that when I had to consider my environment I often felt pulled in different directions; indeed, I had heard people utter this precise phrase. I wondered, therefore, whether this idea would resonate with the co-researchers. And so a simple Pulling Factor model was devised which can be seen below (Figure 4).

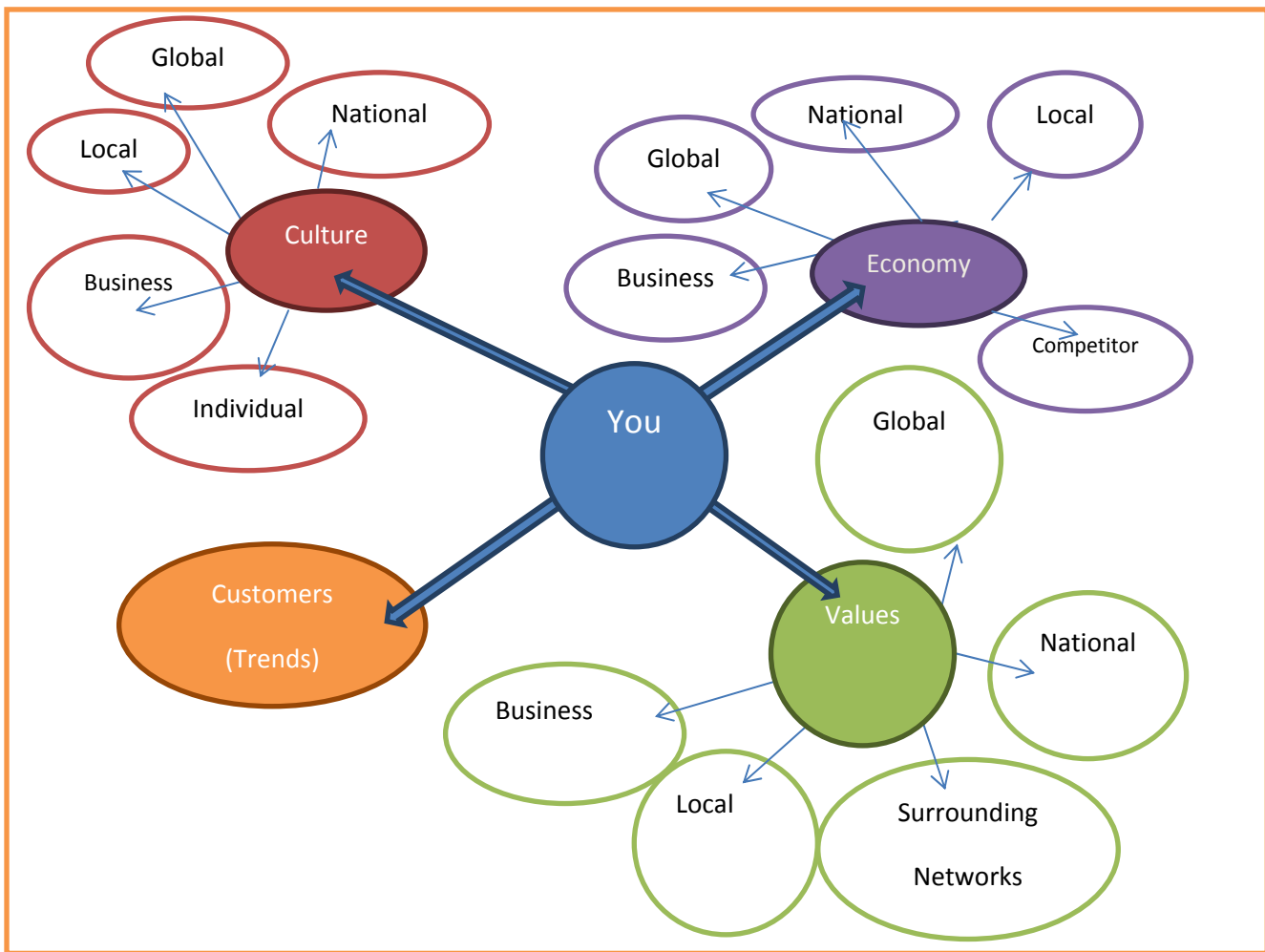
Figure 4 – Pulling factors



When you are making a decision or faced with a dilemma, it may be that several forces feel as if they are pulling you in different directions. Please take time to consider if this is the case, and what these forces may be. I am going to suggest that these pulling forces represent things which are outside of us, or that they are at least perceived as being outside of us. It may of course be the case that there will be other more 'internal' forces at work. This part of the model is, however, dealing with the 'external' forces only.

This idea certainly did seem to resonate with the co-researchers, and an 'evolved' pulling factors model can be seen below (Figure 5).

Figure 5 – An ‘evolved’ Pulling Factors diagram



I had considered the idea of including something about the leader’s emotional state in the model, but concluded that this might make it too complex. However, the impact of emotional state on thinking was specifically mentioned by one of the co-researchers in one of the sessions, and so this was fed forward and included in other sessions. The Human Givens Emotional Needs Audit (Human Givens Institute 2006) was chosen for this purpose.

One of the main concerns of this research has been that there appears to have been a large focus in business towards short term gain and much less about the longer term human cost. Therefore I felt that it was important to include something in the model which was humanistic in nature, something which helped ‘ground’ the leader. This idea of ‘grounding’ elicited the phrase ‘Gravitational Factors’. I was initially at a loss about what to include as Gravitational Factors. I had considered including ethical factors, or even the Emotional Needs Audit. However, this Audit had already been included separately, effectively ruling it out as a ‘gravitational factor’. I did note, however, that Kauffman (2006), in discussing positive psychology, mentioned signature strengths.

The Gravitational Factors that form a key part of the coaching model which evolved during this research then, are adapted from a particular area of positive psychology where client ‘strengths’, or ‘character strengths’ are explored (Kauffman, 2006). They have evolved from a particular area of positive psychology known as Values in Action (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) and have been described as a classification of character strengths. These strengths include critical thinking, humour, spirituality, and hope. The character strengths can be used in coaching to help the coachee move

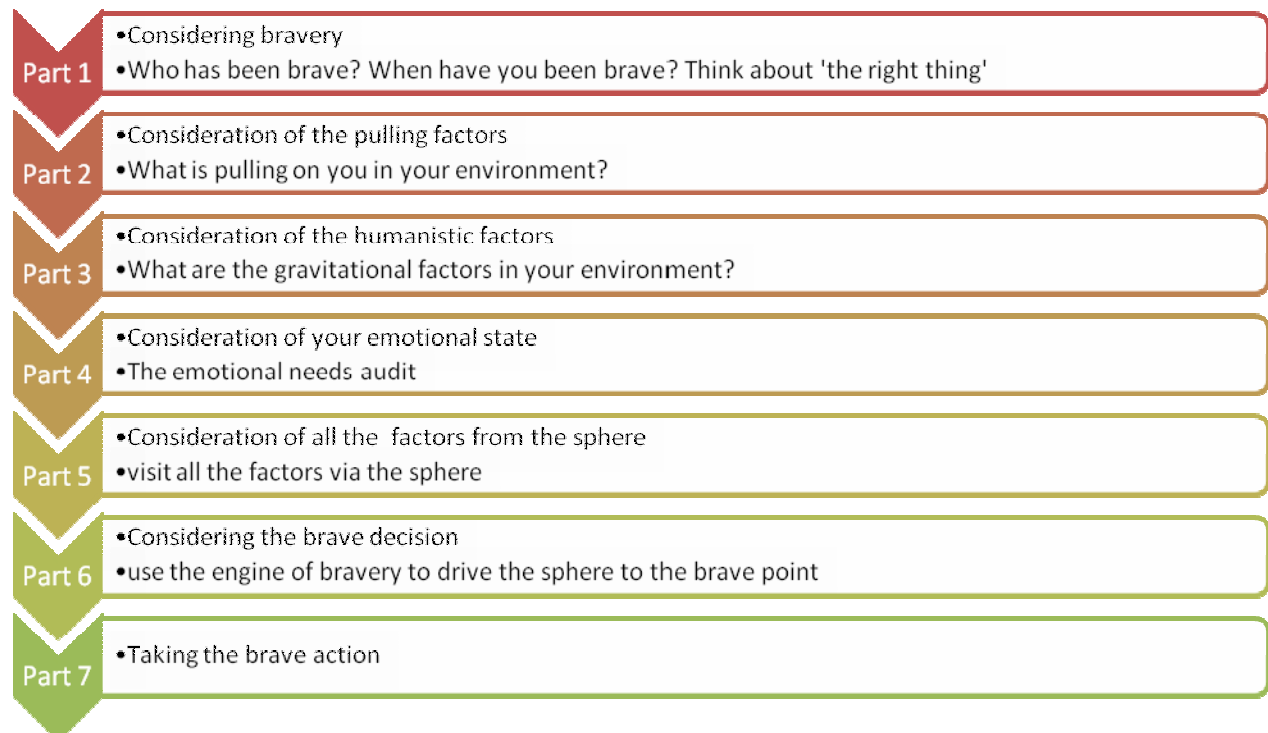
forwards by focussing on and utilising their strengths rather than getting bogged down in their weaknesses.

I believe that it should be emphasised that whilst these ‘strengths’ were originally conceived as a way for individuals to move forward successfully, and were derived from the research of Peterson and Seligman, which suggested that they were valued by various cultures, I have used some of the headings in the brave coaching model to hopefully prompt a discussion by the leader about what might be worth considering (or indeed valuing) in *any given situation*. Thus the strengths were not originally conceived for the purpose to which they have been used in the model. However, my rationale was that if they are human-centric values, or at least values which form a key part of a psychological approach which has been heavily influenced by humanistic psychology, then it is perhaps important for the leader to consider each of these values in relation to any given situation. As a result of these considerations Gravitational Factors element of the model evolved to include: humanity, love, kindness, social intelligence, justice, citizenship, fairness, hope and optimism, humour, and spirituality.

A Brave Space

I had initially thought that amidst the Pulling Factors and the Gravitational Factors there would be a ‘zone of equilibrium’ where leaders might be able to think about their environment and consider their next steps. However, it became apparent as our thoughts evolved (for example, one co-researcher talked about the idea of a sanctuary) that a certain traction was required to ‘hold the brave position’, and whilst it was important to consider the situation calmly and make choices (from a hopefully balanced emotional state) holding the brave position required the ‘engine of bravery’ itself to do so. And so the sphere, or ‘brave space’ performed the dual function of allowing a place of ‘sanctuary’ to consider the options, but also the ability to traverse the entire landscape and ultimately hold the brave position. Figure 6 illustrates what I have called an ‘idealised process’ for the use of the model.

Figure 6 – The idealised process



The Reflection Sessions

Before the reflection sessions began, each co-researcher was given a copy of the first email which they had sent me with their thoughts about bravery. This was partly to remind them about their original thoughts and partly to give them a sense of how things may have developed during the time which had elapsed between their original exposure to the model and this meeting. No reflective session took place longer than four weeks after co-researcher session number six.

From the reflective sessions I wanted to glean a sense of any theme or trend collectively from the experiences of the co-researchers. In the analysis of the data during the evolution of the model, I was much more concerned about understanding their journey and any key developmental points along the way for them as individuals, as they each had distinct and separate 'exit points'. However, exploring the reflective data, I could compare their perspectives, and so rather than finding myself immersed in the multi-faceted dynamic of each unique co-researcher session, this approach allowed me to consider their experiences collectively and so thematically.

It was only after the last reflective session had concluded that I began the process of searching for any themes across the data. The audio recordings were listened to several times and the transcripts read several times also. I sought to find commonality of experiences and observations. I coded potential themes using coloured highlighters. I was interested on this occasion not in the individual's journey *per se*, but more on any shared experiences. Six distinct themes were uncovered: contemplation and awareness of bravery in others and self, bringing things to conscious awareness, decision making, bravery enhancement in self, coaching bravery and emotional pitfalls and the model.

The reflection sessions appeared to confirm that there had been a wide range of engagement and adoption of the model. Co-researchers, Russell, Mickey and Amy appeared to gain a more substantive outcome from their journeys, in that they made big decisions. This was particularly the case with Russell and Amy, whilst Mickey was enjoying quite a different leadership experience. Rory had no real pressing situations and so had to engage with the process using retrospective material, and Martha appeared to be more content. I think that it is fair to say that the model appeared to be at its most effective when there were real and pressing issues. However, a different way to look at this may be to consider what the relative goals were of the co-researchers. Martha's goal was to gain an understanding of the 'mechanics', which she did. Amy's goal was to generate an inspiring way forward in her career. Russell's goal was to understand whether he should move forward in a different direction in his career. Mickey's goal was to become a stronger leader. Rory's goal was less obvious. I suspect that it was to gain some development at an early stage in his career as a leader. This may or may not have been useful development for him. And so there is definitely an element of the circumstances surrounding the co-researcher's immersion (or not) into this model impacting on its effectiveness for that individual. So I believe that it actually boils down to goals. In other words, the power of the model is potentially made far greater by the co-researcher's own desire to move forward in a clearly defined direction. Therefore one other main theme which could potentially be gleaned from this analysis is that effectiveness of the model is partially goal dependent, and particularly when there is an emotive element propelling the coachee to reach that goal. This was also illustrated as a potential obstacle in the use of the model, and I think that it is worth noting that it may be likely that for the coach and coachee to have success with this model, close attention should be paid to the more emotive elements surrounding the situation.

Links with leadership theory

During the literature search which was undertaken as part of this study, I concluded that there were six distinct leadership theories. Having studied the themes from the reflection sessions, it seemed that each theme could be aligned with at least one of the leadership theories as shown in Figure 7 below:

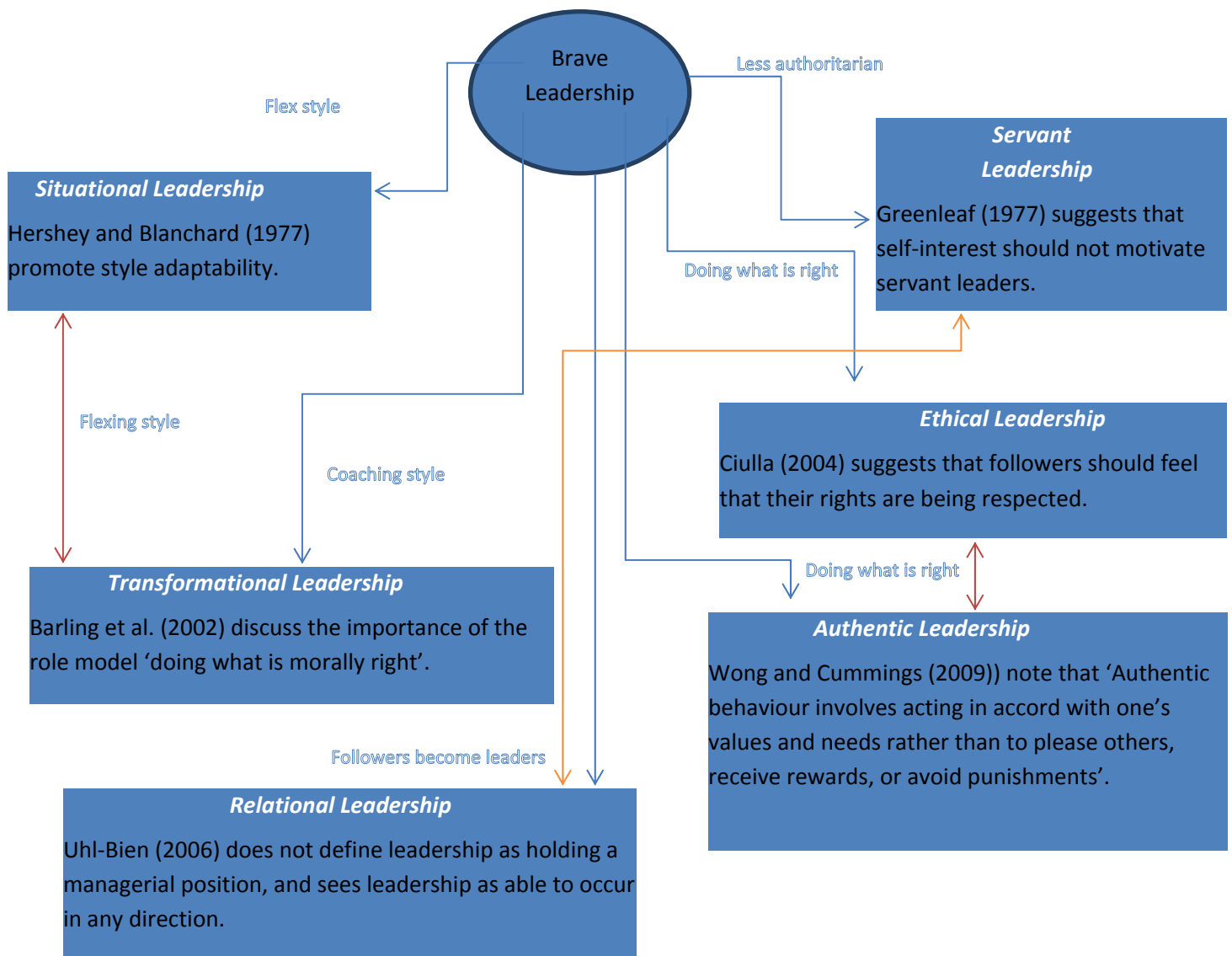
Figure 7 – The relationship between themes and leadership theories

Leadership theory	Themes
Ethical	Theme 1, contemplation and awareness of bravery in others and self. Theme 3, decision making.
Authentic	Theme 1, contemplation and awareness of bravery in others and self. Theme 2, bringing things to conscious awareness. Theme 4, bravery enhancement in self.
Relational	Theme 2, bringing things to conscious awareness. Theme 5, coaching bravery.
Servant	Theme 3, decision making.
Situational	Theme 3, decision making.
Transformational	Theme 5, coaching bravery.

In addition to this, I believe that the six leadership theories can be linked to the idea of brave leadership. It could be argued that bravery must exist from time to time within each of the six approaches to leadership if the leader adopts the suggested approaches. For the situational leader it may be the brave step of moving out of the comfort zone to flex his/her style. Relational leaders may also have a comfort zone challenge as they allow followers to become the leader. Similarly, transformational leaders may have to make the brave move to adopt a coaching style. The ethical and authentic leader may need to be brave in standing up for what she/he believes is right, and the servant leader may have to take the brave step of adopting a less authoritarian approach. Although these are generalised examples, in essence for any of these leadership theories to be realised in an organisation, the leader is highly likely to, at some point, need to do something which requires bravery. It is likely that there would be periods of time within an organisation where there is little change. However, the corporate environment of market forces, the demands of shareholders, economic conditions and politics both organisational and governmental, are unlikely to allow any status quo to exist for long.

To highlight how the idea of brave leadership might link to each of the six leadership theories a map (shown in Figure 8) has been developed in which brave leadership is the common denominator.

Figure 8 – Map: How the concept of bravery is relevant to the six leadership theories



Limitations of the research

The main limitation of this study is that it is impossible to say what problems leaders may bring, and so equally what problems there might ultimately be with the model. By this I mean that this is really just the beginning of what may be possible within the coach/coachee relationship using this approach. It might be interesting, therefore, to explore the model from a case study perspective. However, this research was devised to develop a model with co-researchers. This ultimately meant that the co-researchers and I were each on our own unique journey. As they were also helping to construct the model while at the same time considering how their situation might fit within it, no-one actually experienced the model purely from the perspective of the coach or coachee. Both the co-researchers and myself were immersed in the experience, and I believe that it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to reach a point where we could sit back from the model and experience it afresh;

simply bringing our 'issue' or 'issues' to that particular arena to discuss them without any conscious awareness of having been involved in the construction of the actual arena itself.

It ultimately meant that there was no-one who was purely a coachee in the process. Instead, we were individuals who consistently had to metaphorically build the sets and help with the lighting as well as perform on the stage. Although one co-researcher did attempt to use the model to coach someone through an issue, this was undertaken to further the co-researcher's understanding of the model; and so this means that we remain in a situation where no coach who has become well versed in the use of the model has actually been able to engage with a coachee 'afresh'. This ultimately means that the model was never actually utilised in any final form in what I would consider to be purely a coaching session. Due to the exploratory and iterative nature of the research, we were effectively sewing the parachute together having jumped out of the airplane. Whilst we all managed to achieve a relatively soft landing, it is unclear whether this newly refurbished parachute will function in subsequent use. It may be that it only functioned because it was constructed during 'the descent' and that the dynamics of opening it up directly on exiting the airplane may cause flaws, small or large, to appear.

Further research

Whilst this research has not been positivist in nature, there is, I believe, a requirement to generate much more data, not to generate numerical outputs but to understand what trends and themes may be emerging from the lived experience of the coach and coachee. It will be important to encourage coaches to experiment with the ideas suggested by this approach and to reject or further modify the model. The Gravitational Factors require further exploration, particularly when there might be a real tension between them and the Pulling Factors. The emotional needs audit was also a factor which was never really properly 'centre stage' in any of the sessions with the co-researchers. If, as I have suggested, it is important to be in a relatively calm frame of mind to properly consider all the 'factors' within the 'landscape' from the 'sphere', or 'brave space', then a high level of emotional arousal is likely to be detrimental to that process, and so a consideration of this, at least, is likely to be a fundamental requirement in the use of the model.

It would also appear that there is a significant gap in the research about decision making and coaching. This was a surprising finding, given that it is likely that many coaching sessions, especially in business, would involve some form of decision-based thinking. And so I believe that not only should the brave leadership model be more fully explored in terms of its impact on decision making, but also that coaching and decision making should be researched more extensively.

Implications

As a result of this study I believe that there is an opportunity here to rethink some of the fundamentals about leadership. Although organisations should be lean and fit and innovative and adaptable (Chesbrough and Garman, 2009), this need not be an excuse for a brutalising approach to leadership.

Figure 8 illustrated a synthesis between brave leadership and the other leadership theories cited in this study. This synthesis has, to my knowledge, never been illustrated before, nor has the common element of bravery been added in to the mix. Whilst this does not constitute a new leadership theory, it may well illustrate an until-now unconsidered common catalyst which may help decrease the gap between rhetoric and behaviour.

In terms of this research, the dynamic between the coach, the coachee, and this model is ultimately where the leverage of change has lain. I have suggested that the coachee's psychological starting point in terms of personal drive is probably a fundamental factor in determining the effectiveness of the model in relation to 'definitive outcomes'. Whilst the transferability of this

finding is at present unknown, if the personal drive factor is even partially transferable to some other coaching situations then the implications of this for coaches, coachees and organisations may be significant. There may also be significant benefits for organisations whose leaders embraced the idea of bravery more readily and regularly. And the role of the coach may be central to such cultural shifts.

In summary, I believe that there is still much work to be done in using the model in different coaching situations and in refining it accordingly. It may simply be that the true power of the model lies not in systematically considering things such as pulling factors, but in simply being in the same room as the coachee and reflecting on the word 'bravery'. I suspect that there is even more to it than this. I think that the role of the coach must be considered to be more central to leadership development than it has been to date. Furthermore, whilst unconditional regard (Rogers 1959) has been considered useful by some in the field of therapy, my experience during some executive coaching sessions, and partly during the action research process, leads me to believe that leaders actually need strong coaches, perhaps even *agent provocateurs*, who may from time to time be practising anything but unconditional regard.

My hope is that when leaders get 'braver', individuals within their organisation will get 'braver'. It would be extremely naïve to expect this model to generate braver decision making and behaviours in every leader in every situation. The model was not designed with this outcome in mind. However, it was designed in the hope that its existence and application through good coaching may in some situations cause leaders to stop and think, and perhaps adapt their behaviours towards a more considered form of leadership; one where leaders and others are actively encouraged to weigh up the consequences of their actions from not only a monetary perspective, but also from a humanitarian perspective. And just as the co-researchers were encouraged to consider a brave role model, which might then in turn allow them to reflect and perhaps adapt some of their own behaviours, these new, more considered, leaders may in time themselves become the individuals who are considered brave by others. For the moment, a critical realist's answer to the posed research question, 'can a coaching model be designed which could help to enhance bravery in a leader?' is 'yes'.

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