Academic Paper

The Cube of Coaching Effectiveness

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Abstract

Scientific studies have established that coaching in organizations is effective, however, little is known about the mechanism of coaching effectiveness. This creates a gap between the current state of science and its capacity to be applied in organizations. This conceptual paper intends to bridge this gap by introducing the 'Cube of Coaching Effectiveness.' The model has three objectives: (1) to define determinants of coaching effectiveness, (2) to indicate coaching competencies or outcomes that allow measuring coaching effectiveness, and (3) to give practical recommendations on how to measure coaching effectiveness. The study has multiple applications for coaches, training programs, organizations, and coachees.

Introduction

In 2019 there were around 71,000 coach practitioners globally, which constitutes a 33% increase compared to the 2015 numbers (ICF, 2020). Over the same period, the estimated global revenue for coaches increased by 21% and made coaching a nearly 3-billion-dollar industry (ICF, 2020). Coaching in organizations has become more and more common and now 65% of all coaches identify as business coaching - which can include leadership coaching, small business coaching, business coaching, organizations coaching, or executive coaching to name a few (ICF, 2020). Organizations include coaching as an approach to facilitate workplace learning, develop leadership and enhance employee performance (Boysen, 2018). Coaching as such an approach has become so popular, that human resource professionals are now expected to assume the role of internal coaches as part of their role (Brown & Grant, 2010).

Evidence-based literature indicates that coaching produces positive results and brings many benefits to coachees across many areas (Boysen, 2018; Jarosz, 2016). Scientific studies have also established that coaching in organizations is effective, however, not much is known about the mechanism of coaching effectiveness (Bozer & Jones, 2018; Jones et al., 2015). So far research has not fully identified specific behaviors of the coach that would lead to effective coaching or factors that would fully determine coaching effectiveness (Grant & Zackon, 2004; Henriques &

Matos, 2010). Some of the questions that remain unanswered ask about the very nature of determinants of coaching effectiveness, for example: what factors impact the coach-coachee relationship or how characteristics of the coach can be linked to coaching effectiveness (Bozer & Jones, 2018; Jones et al., 2015; De Meuse, 2009). There is also little scientific research focused on the direct benefits of coaching for organizations as well as the low specification of what kind of outcomes can coaching bring (Jones et al., 2015).

This conceptual paper recognizes the limitations of current definitions and understanding of the construct of coaching effectiveness. The objective of this paper is to propose a theoretically grounded model of coaching effectiveness that would address the above-outlined shortcomings of current research. Such a model would serve three purposes: (1) to define determinants of coaching effectiveness (its dimensions), (2) to indicate practical coaching competencies, specific behaviors of the coach, specific behaviors of the coachee, or measurable outcomes that allow measuring coaching effectiveness and each of its dimensions and (3) to give practical recommendations on how to measure, track and evaluate coaching effectiveness and its dimensions.

This paper has been divided into 4 sections followed by implications, limitations, and conclusions. The first section reviews the scientific literature on coaching effectiveness, coaching outcomes, and coaching benefits. The methodology of the derivation of the model of Coaching Effectiveness and the model itself is introduced in section two. In section three, we discuss scientifically grounded approaches explaining what determines each of the dimensions of the model introduced in section two. Section three also includes a juxtaposition of the model with current theories of coaching effectiveness to verify the robustness of the proposed theoretical framework. In the fourth section, we discuss practical approaches to how each of the dimensions of coaching effectiveness can be measured.

Coaching Effectiveness: an overview of theory

There is no consensus when it comes to the definition of coaching in the scientific literature (Jarosz, 2020). For the purpose of this study, the definition developed by Wang et al. (2021) has been assumed. Based on previous research on workplace coaching, Wang et al. (2021) have defined coaching taking place in organizations as "a facilitative process for the purpose of coachees' learning and development and a greater working life (e.g. psychological well-being) through interpersonal interactions between the coach and coachee" (p. 78).

Workplace coaching is an investment of an organization in the growth and development of employees. Such social support - whether coming from an organization or a direct supervisor - strengthens the coachee's satisfaction with the coaching process and enforces their motivation to change and achieve results (Baron & Morin, 2010; Bozer & Jones, 2018; Zimmermann & Antoni, 2020). Scientific studies, including several meta-analyses, have indicated that coaching positively impacts individual-level outcomes (Jarosz, 2016; Jones et al., 2015; Theeboom et al., 2014, Wang et al., 2021). The existence of such robust empirical evidence has caused the actual expectations of coaching in organizations to expand. The organizational expectations now include psychological well-being, employee relations, engagement, and motivation to change, which go beyond mere strictly performance-related outcomes (Grant, 2014). However, still little is known about the psychological mechanics behind coaching and what are the factors that make it successful (Bono et al., 2009; Theeboom et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2021).

A meta-analysis by Grassmann et al. (2020) highlights the importance of the coaching relationship in achieving desired coaching outcomes. Many studies indicate coaching as an antecedent to behavior and personality changes that occur in coaching clients. Positive changes following coaching have been observed in hardiness, self-efficacy, hope, self-esteem, self-acceptance, courage, self-determination, emotional regulation, self-reflection, and time management, (Jarosz,

2016, 2020; Worgan, 2013). Studies on the impact of coaching on well-being, emotional intelligence, and performance of employees indicate that coaching may positively impact all these variables regardless of the gender and age of the coachees (Jarosz, 2020, 2021). A meta-analysis by Wang et al. (2021) also suggests that coaching positively impacts individual performance, learning at work, and well-being. A synthesis conducted by Theeboom et al. (2014) supports the findings that coaching can enhance performance and skills, work attitudes, goal-directed self-regulation, employee resilience, psychological states, and well-being. Theeboom et al. (2014) further imply that personal values, life purpose, and meaning of life and work can therefore also determine desired coaching outcomes.

The results of the meta-analysis by Wang et al. (2021) demonstrated that coaching had an impact on individuals' objective work performance, cognitive and affective learning outcomes (goal attainment and self-efficacy), as well as psychological well-being (better mental health, enhanced resilience, more frequent positive moods, and reduced stress). The coaching process has also resulted in higher self-regulation, self-awareness, work satisfaction, more desirable work attitudes, higher organizational commitment, and lower intention to leave. The coaching approach generated a greater impact on objectively evaluated work performance (as rated by others for example through 360 feedback) than on employee self-reported performance (Wang et al., 2021).

Grant (2007) suggests that the well-being and performance components are inherent focal elements of the coaching process itself, which is focused "both on facilitating goal attainment and enhancing well-being" (p. 250). The empirical literature focused on coaching outcomes and the benefit of coaching provides scientifically sound evidence that coaching is an effective approach to enhancing well-being and performance in the workplace (Gabriel et al., 2014; Jarosz, 2020, 2021; Neale et al., 2009; Newnham-Kanas et al., 2010).

Coaching may result in various desired outcomes and depending on the framework, these outcomes can be modeled in various ways which would impact the choice of the factors that determine coaching effectiveness. Kirkpatrick (1977) introduced a methodology that allows the evaluation of training programs. He categorized evidence of success into four types: changes in results, changes in behavior, participant reactions, and learning. Based on Kirkpatrick's model, The Clocktower Model introduced by Lawrence and Whyte (2013) indicates the following 4 factors that determine coaching effectiveness: (1) the coachee's ongoing motivation to be coached, (2) the coachee's supervisor's commitment to coaching going forward, (3) the quality of the coaching relationship, and (4) progress to reach desired outcomes.

Albizu et al. (2019) also designed a coaching effectiveness model based on Kirkpatrick's (1977) evaluation of the training programs. In their proposition, the coaching experience is evaluated by four main variables: (1) the performance of the coach: the "coach" variable, (2) the readiness of the coachee: the "coachee" variable, (3) the coaching relationship: the "relationship" variable, and (4) the coaching process and the characteristics of the organizational context: the "process" variable. These variables, as proposed in the model, influence coachee satisfaction with the coaching process, which then leads to learning and consequently to behavior change, which should be reflected in results obtained by the coachee within the organization.

Following Kraiger et al. (1993), Jones et al. (2015) propose 3 evaluation criteria: (1) cognitive, (2) skill-based, and (3) affective outcomes. Cognitive coaching outcomes may be represented by knowledge acquired in the process of goal setting or problem-solving. Examples of skill-based coaching outcomes could include work-related skill enhancement. Affective outcomes include self-efficacy, confidence, higher motivation, higher work satisfaction, or reduction of stress. In line with Jones et al. (2015), Bozer and Jones (2018) identify seven factors that determine workplace coaching effectiveness: self-efficacy, goal orientation, coaching motivation, trust, feedback intervention, interpersonal attraction, and supervisory support.

In the most recent meta-analysis, Wang et al. (2021) list the following 4 evaluation criteria that determine coaching effectiveness: (1) affective outcomes, (2) cognitive outcomes, (3) behavioral outcomes (skills/performance), and (4) psychological well-being. Affective outcomes include outcomes around work attitude, commitment within the organization, and employee motivation. Cognitive outcomes may include self-awareness, knowledge acquisition, or specific learning outcomes. Behavioral outcomes in this setting may include perceived improvements in work-related results, and evaluation of work performance by others (for example, through a 360° feedback questionnaire). And lastly, well-being outcomes may include enhancement of self-acceptance, increased autonomy, or more clarity around purpose in life.

This paper recognizes the limitations of current definitions and understanding of the concept of coaching effectiveness. Current theories describing Coaching Effectiveness fail to fully identify a specific list of coaching competencies, coach's and coachee's specific behaviors, and coaching outcomes that would indicate effective coaching. What is lacking is a robust framework that could easily be applied in a practical setting. This creates a gap between the current state of science and its capacity to serve as a practical application in organizations. The next section of this paper proposes a framework that helps bridge this gap - a methodology that defines determinants of coaching effectiveness and gives practical recommendations on how to measure, track and evaluate coaching effectiveness within organizations.

Methodology

Following the methodology of a conceptual paper, this study offers an integrated framework for coaching effectiveness by bridging existing theories of coaching effectiveness itself as well as the literature focused on coaching outcomes, the benefits of coaching, and theories explaining their potential mechanisms (following Gilson & Goldberg, 2015). Theory synthesis has been applied as a method to integrate an existing set of theories by identifying commonalities across them that would allow building a new, cohesive theoretical framework (Jaakkola, 2020).

Figure 1: Three stages of derivation of the coaching effectiveness framework
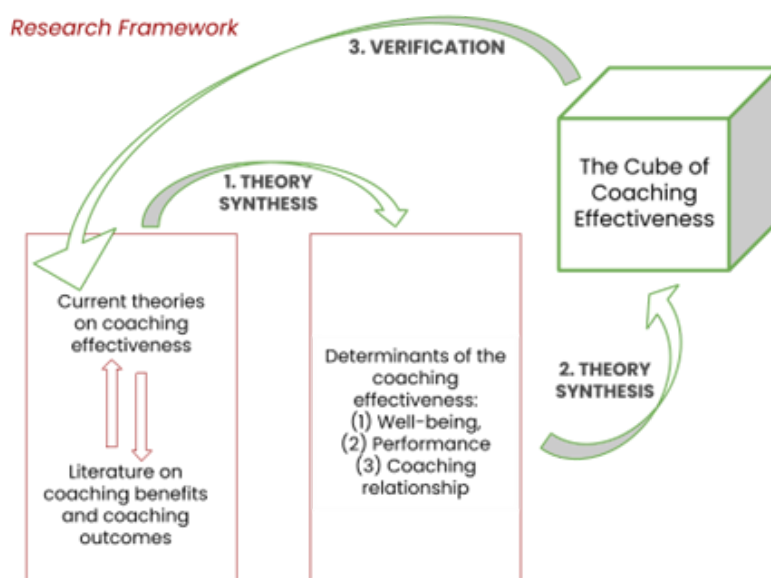
Theory synthesis has been applied in both stages of the two-step process that led to the construction of the Cube of Coaching Effectiveness (see Figure 1). In the first stage, existing theories on coaching effectiveness have been analyzed to identify commonalities. Previous

research on coaching benefits and coaching outcomes has been analyzed and cross-referenced with theories on coaching effectiveness to identify determinants of coaching effectiveness[1]. In the second stage, theory synthesis has been applied again to identify measurable components of each of the determinants of coaching effectiveness to further define the construct.

Once the Cube of Coaching Effectiveness has been defined, it has undergone a verification stage. The proposed framework has been juxtaposed with the existing theories of coaching effectiveness to verify whether the already existing theories have been internalized by the new proposed framework (see Table 1 on page 23 for selected examples of the verification stage).

The Model

The proposed model of Coaching Effectiveness draws from the previous scientific literature on coaching, coaching effectiveness, and coaching outcomes in terms of individual performance or psychosocial variables. It also goes a step further by providing a way to measure each of the components of coaching effectiveness, including the level of coaching effectiveness itself.

Figure 2: Three dimensions of coaching effectiveness
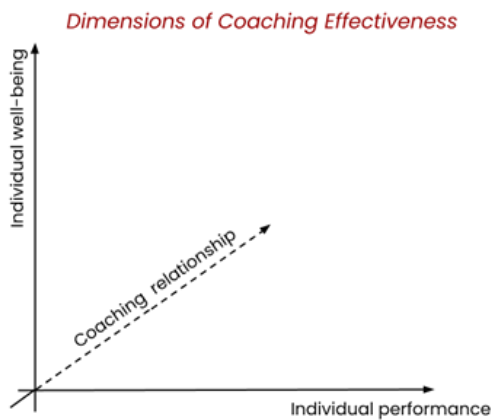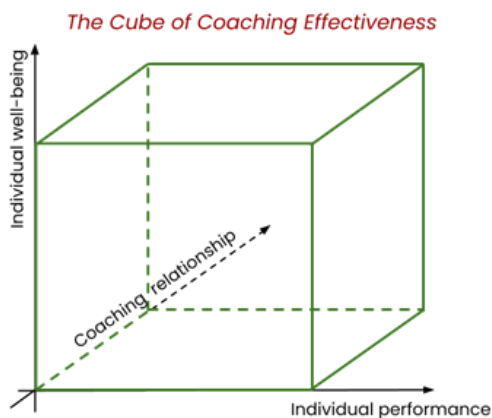

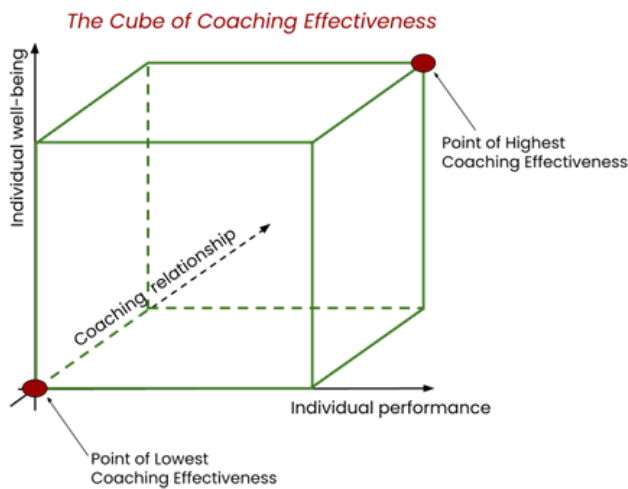**Figure 3: The Cube of Coaching Effectiveness**

We propose the following model describing Coaching Effectiveness. What constitutes Coaching Effectiveness are 3 factors: (1) individual performance, (2) individual well-being, and (3) the

coaching relationship. The space with three dimensions of coaching effectiveness is depicted in Figure 2.

Coaching Effectiveness is measured across these three dimensions. We assume that for each dimension there is a maximum value - a maximum performance level, maximum well-being level, and a maximum evaluation for the quality of the coaching relationship. At each time, coaching effectiveness - when evaluated - will be one of the points inside the following cube, where the dimensions of the cube are bounded by the limitation set for each dimension (Figure 3).

The level of Coaching Effectiveness can be anywhere between its lowest level and the highest, as depicted in Figure 4.

**Figure 4: The minimum and maximum levels of Coaching Effectiveness**

The Cube of Coaching Effectiveness: Theoretical Framework

In this section of the paper, we propose scientifically grounded approaches explaining what determines each of the dimensions of coaching effectiveness. We also provide relevant scientific commentary for each of the proposed approaches.

Figure 5: Determinants of Performance
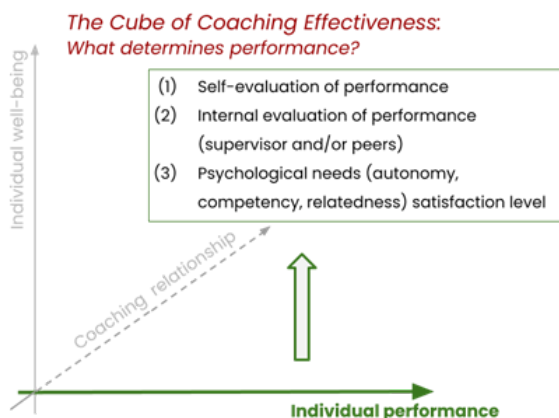
Performance

We propose 3 approaches to evaluate changes in performance (Figure 5):

1. Self-evaluation of performance.
2. Internal evaluations (by peers and/or supervisors).
3. Evaluating satisfaction level of coachee's psychological needs (autonomy, competency, relatedness).

Self-evaluation of performance approach

As Warr and Nielsen (2018, p. 2) state:

> performance ratings by other people can be problematic because observers may lack adequate knowledge or because target behaviors depend on mental processes which are unobservable; furthermore, self-descriptions might err towards positive assessment.

There are many scientific studies where the use of self-evaluation is a reliable and valid approach to measuring employee performance (Jarosz, 2021; Judge, 1995).

Internal performance evaluations approach

According to Warr & Nielsen (2018), individual objective performance measures - like sales level, for example - are rarely available and are specific for certain teams (for example sales teams tend to have different performance goals than marketing teams). Therefore peer evaluations or supervisor ratings have all been suggested as a reliable and valid approach to measuring employee performance and used in many scientific studies (Jarosz, 2021; Judge, 1995).

Psychological needs approach

According to Self Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), individuals have three psychological needs: (1) need for autonomy, (2) need for relatedness, and (3) need for competence. Autonomy relates to the ability to initiate behavior and experience freedom of choice. Relatedness refers to the positive experience of having relationships with others. Competence relates to being able to finalize challenging tasks. According to the STD theory, fulfillment of these needs enhances intrinsic motivation which then directly affects an individual's performance. Higher performance is achieved by individuals whose intrinsic motivation for their job is higher (Baard et al., 2004).

Fulfillment of psychological needs (autonomy, competency, relatedness) has a positive effect on time spent at work (less absenteeism) and performance (Baard et al., 2004; Gagné, 2003). Coaches - in their work with the clients - can engage in three types of behaviors that facilitate psychological need satisfaction for their coachees: autonomy-supportive, competence-supportive, and relatedness-supportive. Autonomy-, relatedness- and competence-supportive behaviors can "help the coachee better understand both the goal and their relationship to it", which consequently leads to better performance (Spence & Oades, 2011, p. 47).

Well-being

Well-being is a complex construct and there are many scientific theories that intend to explain it. The approach chosen to describe well-being is based on the achievements of Csikszentmihalyi (1990), Ryff and Keyes (1995), and Seligman (2009, 2011). We chose to draw from these frameworks because these models have achieved extensive empirical verification, recognition, and support across many setups, both theoretical as well as within the work of practitioners. Based on Ryff's and Keyes's model (1995), well-being interventions have led to documented improvements in well-being and have been indicated as a successful behavioral approach to well-being enhancement (Fava, 2016; Jarosz, 2020). Based on Csikszentmihalyi's and Seligman's concepts of well-being, a large-scale program ENHANCE has brought documented and lasting improvements in well-being to its participants (Heintzelman et al., 2020). Given vast empirical

evidence, we propose measuring well-being across changes in the following areas (summarized in Figure 6 below): autonomy, positive relations with others, environmental mastery, self-acceptance, purpose in life, personal growth, positive emotions, engagement, and achievement.

**Figure 6: Determinants of Well-being**
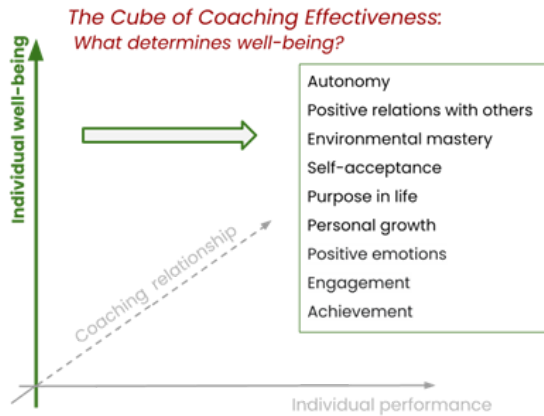
The Coaching Relationship

Many scientific studies have suggested that a coaching relationship is the foundation of effective coaching (Gregory & Levy, 2011; Gyllensten & Palmer, 2007; Smither & Reilly, 2011). Research indicates that the quality of the coach-client relationship defines the essence of coaching effectiveness (Jowett, 2017; Lopez, 2017; Nash et al., 2011). We propose 3 approaches to evaluate the quality of the coaching relationship (depicted in Figure 7):

1. Coach's competency, knowledge, and the right coaching skills.
2. Client's perception of coach's effectiveness.
3. The dynamics of the coaching relationship.

Figure 7: Determinants of the quality of Coaching Relationship
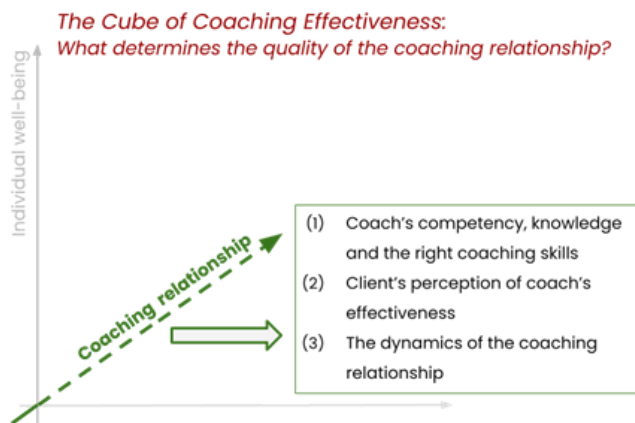
Coach's competency, knowledge, and the right coaching skills

Coaching knowledge and coaching competency are central to achieving coaching effectiveness (Nash et al., 2011; Horn, 2002). Côté and Gilbert (2009) mention the following areas that are

important for coaching knowledge:

- professional knowledge and experience in coaching (coaching competency),
- connecting effectively with others (for example clients),
- self-reflection
- self-awareness that leads to continuous learning

Supportive coaching relationships and a successful coaching process both need the right coaching skills from coaches (Henriques & Matos, 2010). Based on conclusions obtained through an extensive integrative review of evidence-based coaching literature (Jarosz, 2016) and the results of the survey of 157 ICF-certified coaches (Boysen, 2018), the following are the coaching skills required to create a successful coaching relationship.

1. Active listening

Already Rogers and Farson (1957) realized that active listening helps clients create a desired personality shift. According to Albizu et al. (2019), active listening contributes to a successful coaching experience. It helps the coachees create a positive outlook and an open attitude. Active listening requires curiosity, knowing the client's environment, listening to what the client is saying but also what is being left out, or staying in tune with the client's emotions (Irwin & Morrow, 2005; Newnham-Kanas et al., 2010; Rogers & Farson, 1957).

2. Unconditional positive regard

Rogers (1956) noticed that powerful personal connections require unconditional positive regard. Unconditional positive regard and acceptance are a foundation of a non-judgmental environment - such where clients can voice their concerns, verbalize their thoughts, and fully express themselves (Gregory & Levy, 2011; Rogers, 1956). According to Gabriel et al. (2014), unconditional positive regard is critical to creating a successful coaching relationship.

3. Ability to challenge and empower the client

According to Boysen (2018), the ability to challenge and empower the coachees are paramount for creating an effective coaching experience. Coaches challenge their clients to make sure that they choose goals that are challenging enough (Irwin & Morrow, 2005; Pearson et al., 2013). The empowerment that coaches offer helps clients progress and learn (Nixon-Witt, 2008; Schneider et al., 2011).

4. Ability to hold the client accountable

When coaches hold their clients accountable, they support the clients in staying focused on their goals and progress. The objective of the coach is to make sure the clients respect their own commitments (Jarosz, 2020). According to Boysen (2018), holding the client accountable is one of the most commonly reported skills that result in effective coaching.

Client's perception of coach's effectiveness

There is a positive relationship between the perception of a coach's effectiveness and the performance of the coachee - perceiving the coach as more "effective" leads to enhanced performance and positive behavior (Albizu et al., 2019; Mills & Clements, 2021). Perceptions of a coach's effectiveness also represent the evaluation of their coach's ability to positively affect their growth, learning, and performance (Myers et al., 2006).

The dynamics of the coaching relationship

A successful coaching relationship is dynamic and requires the following elements: safe and open environment, a client-centered approach, a focus on the coachee's strengths, a well-defined goal to achieve, and a plan of action (Jarosz, 2016).

1. Safe and open environment

A safe and open environment, one that builds trust, is necessary to create a successful coaching relationship (Boysen, 2018; Kimsey-House et al., 2011; Nash et al., 2011; Newnham-Kanas, 2010). According to Grant et al. (2009), a safe and open environment which is a foundation of a supportive relationship is a very important underlying cognitive and behavioral mechanism for coaching effectiveness. Such a safe and open environment allows the coachee to share personal and professional issues with confidence, it promotes curiosity, authenticity, creativity, internal motivation of coachees, and fosters self-awareness (Boysen, 2018; Newnham-Kanas et al., 2010).

2. Client-centered approach

In a client-centered approach, the focus is on the coachee, the coachee brings their agendas and sets their own goals (Kimsey-House et al., 2011; Schneider et al., 2011). Such an approach strengthens internal motivation and inspires them to reach their goals more efficiently and change their behavior in a more permanent way (Schneider et al., 2011).

3. Focus on strengths

Strengths have been described as behavioral, thought, or feeling patterns that lead to the best performance of the individual (Biswas-Diener, 2010). In a successful coaching relationship, the coach focuses on the coachee's strengths, which facilitates better goal achievement, enhances engagement, motivation, energy, and happiness (Martin et al., 2012; Seligman et al., 2005). According to Passmore et al. (2013), such an approach in coaching is effective because it "focuses on what's right, what's working, what's strong" (p.478).

4. Defining a goal to achieve

Goal setting has been indicated as a performance improvement technique (Jones et al., 2015), and thus can be among the impact factors of coaching effectiveness. Having a goal to achieve implies that individuals make conscious plans and choices regarding their current and future behavior (Bugental, 1964). Having clear and personally meaningful goals, such that are in line with individual values, facilitates growth and development and leads to better outcomes (Jones et al., 2015; Jarosz, 2021; Warr & Nielsen, 2018).

5. Creating a plan of action

In setting a plan of action the coach helps connect the goal set by the coachee with a series of manageable actions that need to happen to achieve that goal (Kauffman, 2006). Grant et al. (2014) indicate that working towards achieving meaningful goals is a very important underlying cognitive and behavioral mechanism for coaching effectiveness as it results in higher self-efficacy of the coachee.

Verifying the theoretical framework with selected theories

Once the Cube of Coaching Effectiveness has been defined, it has been juxtaposed with the existing theories of coaching effectiveness to verify whether the already existing theories have been internalized by the new proposed framework (see Table 1). The objective set by the researcher was to create a framework that is robust enough to be useful in its application by organizations rather than focused on internalizing all theories at 100%.

Table 1: Verification of the Cube of Coaching Effectiveness within theoretical frameworks of coaching effectiveness[2]

Model of Coaching Effectiveness	Determinants of Coaching Effectiveness	Equivalent in the Cube of Coaching Effectiveness
The Clocktower Model	1. The coachee's ongoing motivation to be coached	✔ the *Performance* dimension (STD theory)
	2. The supervisor's commitment to coaching going forward	✘ external to the framework proposed
	3. The quality of the coaching relationship	✔ the *Coaching Relationship* dimension
	4. Progress to reach desired outcomes	✔ the *Coaching Relationship* dimension
Albizu et al.	1. The performance of the coach	✔ the *Coaching Relationship* dimension
	2. The readiness of the coachee	✔ see footnote
	3. The coaching relationship	✔ the *Coaching Relationship* dimension
	4. The coaching process and the characteristics of the organizational context	✔ / ✘ the *Coaching Relationship* dimension / external to the framework
Jones et al.	1. Cognitive outcomes	✔ included in the *Performance* and *Coaching Relationship* dimensions
	2. Skill-based outcomes	✔ the *Performance* dimension
	3. Affective outcomes	✔ included in the *Performance* and *Well-being* dimensions
Bozer and Jones	1. Self-efficacy	✔ the *Performance* dimension
	2. Goal orientation	✔ the *Performance* dimension
	3. Coaching motivation	✔ the *Performance* dimension (STD theory)
	4. Trust	✔ the *Coaching Relationship* dimension
	5. Feedback intervention	✔ the *Coaching Relationship* dimension
	6. Interpersonal attraction	✔ the *Coaching Relationship* dimension
	7. Supervisory support	✘ external to the framework
Wang et al.	1. Affective outcomes	✔ the *Performance* dimension (STD theory)
	2. Cognitive outcomes	✔ included in the *Performance* and *Coaching Relationship* dimensions
	3. Behavioral outcomes (skills/performance)	✔ the *Performance* dimension
	4. Psychological well-being	✔ the *Well-being* dimension

Measuring the dimensions of the Cube: a proposition

In this section of the paper, we propose a practical approach to how each of the dimensions of coaching effectiveness can be measured to obtain a total score in the Cube of Coaching Effectiveness. As assumed intrinsically by the construct of the cube, each of the dimensions would have a maximum level. However, when designing an actual questionnaire, the scoring can always be normalized and calibrated to meet this requirement.

Because changes need to be observable and measurable, we propose tracking:

1. changes in behavior:

- for example, there is a set of behaviors considered healthy for well-being
- there is a set of behaviors the coaches exhibit that lead to higher performance of the coachees
- there is a set of skills and behaviors the coaches exhibit that lead to a better coaching relationship

2. changes in results:

- obtained by the individual (through self-evaluation questionnaires, 360, etc.)
- satisfaction levels of the coachee's psychological needs
- well-being level

Measuring Performance

Measuring performance by changes in behavior is a valid approach. As suggested by Bechini (2017), coaching is mainly measured at the level of individual performance - 360-degree feedback surveys, for example, track changes in behavior that can be linked back to coaching received by the individual. Changes in behavior are also tracked by employee engagement and satisfaction surveys.

Self-evaluation of performance

Self-evaluation of performance may involve:

- subjective evaluation of changes in the behavior of the coachee leading to improved performance outcomes OR
- subjective evaluation of changes in outcomes if these are numerical (for example sales teams).

An example of such self-evaluation has been employed by Jarosz (2021) to evaluate the performance of managers during the pandemic. A questionnaire called Team Barometer - designed by the author - has been utilized in this study.

Internal evaluations (by peers and/or supervisors)

Internal evaluation of performance may involve:

- objective evaluation of changes in the behavior of the coachee leading to improved performance outcomes OR
- objective evaluation of changes in outcomes if these are numerical (for example sales teams).

An example of such an internal evaluation is 360° feedback. This evaluation has been successfully used in a study on Integrated Leadership Development Programmes (Coates, 2013).

Psychological needs satisfaction level

The evaluation of psychological needs satisfaction level may involve:

- client's evaluation of change in the level of their psychological needs (autonomy, competency, relatedness) OR
- client's evaluation of either coach's autonomy-supportive, competency-supportive and relatedness-supportive behaviors (as listed below).

1. Autonomy-supportive behaviors displayed by the coach

As Taylor and Bruner (2012) point out, satisfaction of the individual's autonomy needs can be attained when coaches acknowledge and support their client's beliefs on how to approach their goals and how those goals can be achieved. Black and Deci (2000) list the following behaviors that can be described as autonomy supportive:

- taking client's perspectives into consideration,
- Acknowledging the client's feelings,
- minimizing pressure
- providing choice
- making the client feel that they can make mistakes and be supported by a coach

2. Competency-supportive behaviors displayed by the coach

Competency-supportive behaviors support employees' individual growth and development (Ahmadi et al., 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Competency-based goals emphasize learning, development, personal and professional growth (Baard, 2002). Baard (2002) listed behaviors that are competency-supportive:

- helping train and prepare clients,
- removing barriers that get in the way of efficient performance,
- ensuring that client's goals are challenging enough
- encouraging learning from mistakes
- helping clients develop work-related objectives

3. Relatedness-supportive behaviors displayed by the coach

According to Reis et al. (2000), having social support in the workplace leads to relatedness-supportive behaviors. Social support is described as the experience of being valued and supported by others - peers or supervisors (Pierce et al., 1992). According to Reis et al. (2000), the following behaviors are described as relatedness-supportive:

- talking about something meaningful to the client,
- making the client feel understood and appreciated
- making connections with clients,
- showing compassion and empathy during coaching sessions

Measuring Well-being

Well-being may be measured:

- with a scientifically grounded instrument, like a well-being questionnaire OR
- through tracking behavioral changes of the coachee that would help verify whether the coachee starts displaying more healthy behaviors as a result of the ongoing coaching process.

Well-being questionnaire

An example questionnaire - The Scales of Psychological Well-Being - has 42 questions that span across six subscales: autonomy, positive relationships, environmental mastery, self-acceptance, purpose in life, and personal growth. The scales have been validated through their application in scientific research studies (Ryff & Keyes, 1995).

Another questionnaire is the PERMA-profiler developed by Butler and Kern (2016) based on Seligman's model of well-being (Seligman, 2011). PERMA-profiler is a 23-item measure assessing well-being across five domains (positive emotion, relationships, engagement, meaning, achievement). The creators of this questionnaire managed to keep the brevity of the questionnaire while maintaining its psychometric integrity.

Tracking behaviors that enhance well-being

There is a set of behaviors displayed by the clients that are considered "healthy" from a perspective of enhancing well-being:

- **Connecting** (with people around you). Good relationships offer a buffer against negative life events and provide a sense of belonging.
- **Being active** (physical activity).
- **Taking notice** (mindfulness).

- **Keep learning**. Learning exposes individuals to new ideas and helps them stay curious and engaged.
- **Giving**. Brings happiness to both the giver and the recipient.
- **Compliments**. Noticing what others do well and sharing positive feedback with them.
- **Gratitude**. Noticing how other people do or say things that are beneficial for the individual and expressing the feeling of appreciation.
- **Good news**. Focusing on good news instead of bad, and good events instead of bad. Sharing them with others during everyday interactions.
- **Active listening**. Paying close attention to what others say and reacting in a supportive way.
- **Showing interest**. Making another individual center of attention.
- **Showing kindness**. Kindness can be expressed through simple acts like volunteering or helping a stranger in need.

All the examples above are based on results obtained in empirically grounded scientific research studies (Aknin et al., 2013; Chancellor et al., 2018; Di Fabio, 2017; Diener et al., 2017; Foresight, 2008; Gable & Bromberg, 2018; Heintzelman et al., 2020; Jebb et al., 2020).

Measuring the quality of the Coaching Relationship

Scientific literature providing theoretically grounded questionnaires that measure the quality of the coaching relationship is scarce, and it hardly provides a full solution for workplace coaching setup. One such questionnaire - The Full Perceived Quality of the Employee Coaching Relationship (PQECR) scale - has been designed to evaluate the relationship of employees with their supervisors who use coaching skills as part of their management style (Gregory & Levy, 2010). The questionnaire consists of 12 questions that gather employees' subjective evaluation of their supervisors across domains such as "genuineness of the relationship", "effective communication", "comfort with the relationship", and "facilitating development".

Scientific evidence suggests therefore that the evaluation of the coaching relationship may come from the client - as a subjective perspective of the coach's knowledge, competence, coaching skills, and effectiveness. The coachee can evaluate the level of the coach's competency, knowledge, and whether the right coaching skills are present (active listening, unconditional positive regard, ability to challenge and empower the coachee, and ability to hold the coachee accountable). The coachee can also evaluate the dynamics of the relationship and whether the following elements have been established in the coaching process: a safe and open environment, a client-centered approach, a focus on strengths, a well-defined goal, and a plan of action. The coachee's subjective evaluation of the coach's effectiveness has also been suggested to be a scientifically valid approach (Myers et al., 2006).

Conclusion

This paper intends to help bridge the gap between the theory of coaching effectiveness from the past decades and the coaching practice within organizations. The study provides a review of scientific literature on coaching effectiveness, brings together various theoretical frameworks from more than seven decades, and makes a scientific contribution to research on coaching effectiveness. A theoretically grounded model of coaching effectiveness is introduced - The Cube of Coaching Effectiveness. Scientific theories have been employed to explain what determines each of the dimensions of coaching effectiveness. Lastly, the practical approach to how each of the dimensions of coaching effectiveness can be measured has been discussed in detail.

The Cube of Coaching Effectiveness defines the concept of coaching effectiveness in practical, tangible, and measurable steps by providing specific coaching competencies, specific behaviors of the coach, specific behaviors of the coachee, or measurable outcomes that allow for the evaluation

of the coaching effectiveness and each of its dimensions. The Cube of Coaching Effectiveness is a robust framework that could easily be applied in a practical setting.

The limitation of the study sets a direction for future research. The presented framework requires empirical verification and a design of a valid, tested and reliable questionnaire that could be used to score coaching effectiveness.

The study has a number of practical applications. The framework described in this study can be readily used in organizations for evaluating the coaching effectiveness of external or internal coaches as well as managers using coaching skills. It can serve human resources professionals as a guide on how to understand coaching effectiveness and what coaching can offer their employees. The framework can be applied in coaching practice by setting practical suggestions for the most desired (from the coaching effectiveness point of view) coaching skills, competencies, and client-supportive behaviors. The Cube of Coaching Effectiveness also suggests a direction in future coaching training and education by listing coaching skills that lead to effective coaching or by indicating which elements of the coaching relationship need to be present to make it successful. Lastly, such a framework provides many benefits for coachees as their success is the cornerstone of the Cube of Coaching Effectiveness.

Endnotes

[1] ↵
The author left out the organizational environment as well as supervisory support (perceived as part of the organizational context) from theoretical considerations and assumed they are external factors to the proposed framework.

[2] ↵
One of the implicit assumptions of the Cube of the Coaching Effectiveness is that coaching in organizations is believed to be voluntary, therefore an employee undergoing coaching is assumed to be "ready" for coaching (or close).

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