

Editorial

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Following the Special Issue tradition of the International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring (IJEBCM), this Special Issue offers a publication platform for post-graduate students who recently completed their MA and Doctorate in Coaching/Mentoring at Oxford Brookes University, and, consequently, presented their research at the annual Coaching and Mentoring Research conference that was held in Oxford Brookes on Thursday 17 January 2019. Additionally, this year's conference benefitted from contributions from graduates from other Universities, who have also been invited to contribute to this special issue. In consequence, and similarly to previous special issues, this Issue provides conference participants with the opportunity to share their research methodologies and findings with IJEBCM readers around the world.

The issue comprises ten papers. The first four papers discuss – in one way or another – coaching issues that are prevalent in organisational settings. The first two of those focus on the development of soft skills in managers, including skills that enable them to deal with conflict in the workplace. The following two papers discuss the value of coaching in developing managerial and leadership capabilities. This latter paper on leadership development, in particular, falls within the second section of this Special Issue that looks at specific types of coaching, namely shadow coaching and coaching for late career reinvention. The third section of the Issue comprises two papers exploring the coaching characteristics of the coaching relationship and the main components that lead to insights in the coaching process. The penultimate section includes two papers looking at coaching from the perspective of the clients, focusing, specifically, on the lived experiences of first time coaching clients, and clients offering formative feedback to their executive coaches. The Special Issue concludes with the sole article on mentoring, specifically discussing the value of mimetic effect in the mentoring process.

Shirley Thompson's paper is the first of a series of articles on the use of coaching in organisational settings. Using Action Research methodology, the paper explores the value of using coaching practice to develop the soft skills of project managers. More specifically, Thompson explores the perceived personal development and growth of project managers who acted as coaches, detailing the learned and applied soft skills they developed in the process. She argues that the coaching practice renders project managers more supportive, collegial, and collaborative with their colleagues.

Also employing an Action Research Methodology, Sarah Hughes proposes a 3-step coaching model specifically designed to tackle conflict in the workplace. Identifying a substantial lacuna in empirically evidenced conflict coaching models, this paper specifically focuses on a topical workplace issue: relationship conflict and its impact on employee wellbeing and organisational productivity. Organisational restructuring and email communication were identified as the primary conflict triggers. Hughes' 3-step coaching model was evaluated by means of being used on three private sector executives and, according to her findings, it helped them develop self-awareness,

other-awareness, conflict communication skills and emotional management skills. All these were, in consequence, found paramount to managing conflict in the workplace effectively. Her findings offer fresh insights on managing conflict to executives and their organisations, executive coaches and their supervisors.

Finally, within organisational contexts, Tanja Dawber's paper explores the usefulness of managerial coaching to facilitate employee development within an Information Technology (IT) Department of a UK-based Higher Education (HE) institution. Employing a Grounded Theory approach on employee lived experience, the paper explores and discusses desired managerial behaviours and characteristics, and proposes a coaching taxonomy for adaptable and individualised support. Importantly, Dawber presents the Higher Education Development of Information Technology Staff (HEDITS) Framework, which promotes supportive and systematic workplace learning and development mentality, undergirded by a 'living' coaching ethos.

Moving on to the second theme of this Special Issue, that is specific types of coaching, the first paper still remains with the broader category of coaching in organisational contexts. More specifically, Bernardus Roelofs's article explores the value of shadow coaching for leadership development. Employing Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, the paper showcases the lived experience of eleven leaders being shadow coached that is, joined by their coaches real-time in their working environment and being coached on the spot. Exploring the benefits of this type of coaching for leadership practice, the paper's findings indicate that shadow coaching not only increases leaders' self-awareness within a very short time frame, it also results in rapid positive change in their attitude and leadership approach.

Laura Walker's popular paper explores a very specific type of coaching, coaching during late career reinvention. More specifically, the paper focuses on the value of coaching for those individuals who wish to pursue a career change during the later years of their working life. Employing a Grounded Theory methodology, the paper offers data deriving from seven coaches and seven individuals who had reinvented their late career and presents three main features of coaching for late career reinvention: discovering, systemic readiness, and dancing with fear and self-confidence. The article concludes by offering potential implications for coaches who wish to engage with this type of coaching.

The following section of this Special Issue moves to explore specific issues in involving the coaching relationship. The first paper in this section sheds light on how coaches foster the coaching relationship. Employing a Q-Methodology and specifically focusing on the coach's perspective, Elizabeth Crosse provides a 'relationship styles framework' that reflects the variety of ways coaches work with complexity, ambiguity and holistic understanding in the management of coach client relations. On a similar note, Iain Lightfoot discusses what exactly happens in a coaching session, particularly focusing on events containing insight. Employing a critical realist underpinning synergised with a relativist empirical methodology, the paper details the lived experiences of coach/client dyads to describe the structure of the significant moment and wider events, before, during and after the manifestation of insight. Overall, the study suggests that there is a coming together of both coach and client in a shared, mirrored and physiological moment.

The penultimate section of this Issue focuses on the other side of the coaching relationship, the coaching client. The first of the two articles investigates the lived experiences of first-time coaching clients. More specifically, utilising Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis, Joyce Birnie presents visual and narrative data from three business coaching clients who offer insights on how they experienced their role as coachees for the first time. A plethora of insightful findings are shared on the learning approaches of clients, the influence they exert on the coaching during the sessions, and the strategies they employ to keep themselves psychologically safe.

The final article of this section and penultimate of this Issue explores the pertinent theme of feedback provision on the part of the coaching client. More specifically, within the sphere of

executive coaching, Hélène Seiler developed and presents a client behavioural feedback instrument for the executive coach, emphasising the significance and suitability of coaching clients as providers of formative feedback. The article summarises the key findings of the mixed-methods approach which informed the instrument, highlighting differences and similarities with scales developed by accrediting bodies and experts.

Finally, this special issue concludes with a thought-provoking paper on mentoring. In his study, Colin Norris explores the issue of how mentor qualities are reproduced in mentees. Premised on a critical realist mixed methods case-study of Baptist ministers, the paper discusses the development of a Resonance Model of Mimetic Effect in Mentoring, which details core conditions and drivers in the mimetic process. Findings show that the mentor-mentee prioritising of God and transcendence values particularly contribute to the generative mechanism in mimetic effect. Accordingly, awareness of this powerful mimetic process can equip mentors to work in ways that can prove beneficial to mentees' development.

I sincerely hope that you enjoy and benefit from the insightful research studies presented in this Special Issue as much as I did.