Coaching for Gravitas: An Action Research Inquiry into the Development of Gravitas in Leadership

By

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Abstract

This study aims to develop a theoretical and practical model of coaching for gravitas in a business leadership context. Gravitas is described as a psychological phenomenon and concept used frequently, but not well researched and understood. While leadership practitioners frequently refer to gravitas as a desirable quality, there have been no specific empirical studies into gravitas as either a leadership quality or more general phenomenon. A review of the literature specifically associates gravitas with the leadership concepts of authenticity and charisma, which are often discussed together with the concepts of power and authority. The role of followers is described as important in all leaders' qualities, but the context of a leader's organisation is a frequent omission in typical studies.

A collaborative action research approach was adopted with six practising leaders and 12 of their followers from one organisation. An initial model of coaching for gravitas was developed and four cycles of action research were conducted over a 12-month period. The first action research cycle used a conceptual encounter method to create a conceptual model of gravitas that was specific for the six leaders coached during the next three cycles of research. The evolved conceptual model described gravitas through four dimensions of confidence, courage, communication, and control. Under each dimension, potentially coachable elements were identified and explored in action with the participants over subsequent research cycles. Specific coaching methods were used to develop these elements. A wide range of data was collected and analysed using thematic analysis.

The findings suggested that situational forces on individual gravitas constantly moved and that the model of an individual's gravitas was therefore always changing. The leaders learned how to recognise these forces and use them for focusing their attention. In spite of individual differences, the embodied reactions of leaders to the reported feelings of gravitas showed significant similarities. A weight and stillness of the body and mind was connected to the ability to see clearly in changing situations involving complex forces in action. Recognition of these feelings enabled an active use of them in practice. Participants described reflective processes within the action research as the most informative part of the coaching process.

The journey of the participants and researcher was translated into a mapped process allowing development of a model of gravitas useful for recognition in themselves and others. The study concludes with a number of implications for leadership theory and practice, suggesting that coaching can contribute to the development of leadership gravitas.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The research focus

'At first sight the tall, stooped figure with the hawk-like features and bloodless cheeks, the look of extreme gravitas, seems forbidding and austere, the abbot of an ascetic order, scion of an imperial family who has forsworn the world.'

John Lehmann, 'T.S. Eliot talks about himself and the drive to create', *New York Times*, 9 November 1953

This chapter sets out the context for the study into gravitas. It describes how the rationale for the research was borne out of leadership practice across many diverse environments, from the military, medicine, law, and finally business. The introductory sections will draw initially from professional business practice, executive coaching, journalistic publications, and the arts, setting out the historical journey of references of individual gravitas in society. The social context of gravitas will conclude with a problem, explaining that gravitas has been presented as a virtue, in many cases a highly desirable one, but that it is not wholly understood. It has differing definitions and contextual meanings, but it is still sometimes used to propel a person's career forward, or to arrest progress if it is described as lacking. This chapter will explain my personal and professional involvement, starting with my initial career in the UK military and leadership roles in business through to my work as an executive coach and educator with universities and business clients. Some of these client relationships have led to opportunities to work and learn from professionals in legal and medical fields, as well as actors in film, television, theatre, and business. I will outline my research aims and objectives and present initial definitions for the concept of gravitas and other terms that will be used throughout the study. On the basis of the definition of the research problem, I will show how the research design was conceived along with the range of methods used to gather data for analysis. Finally, with a summary of the overall chapter I will explain how the thesis is organised.

1.2 The research context

In 2007 the *Harvard Business Review* published an article entitled 'In search of gravitas', authored by Gill Corkindale, the then management editor of the *Financial Times*. The article described a situation where an executive sought help to acquire gravitas after having been told they lacked it and that this would potentially derail their career. Gravitas had not been defined or explained by the executive's bosses. Corkindale (2007) posed questions rather than giving answers, asking whether we search for gravitas inside ourselves or externally, whether it is something observed or experienced, and whether it is associated equally with men and women. However, while there are many journalists, coaches, teachers, and others with opinions on these questions, there is no empirical evidence to support their views.

The issue of individual leadership gravitas has been described with suggestions of how one might acquire it, often via websites of coaching practitioners, such as Anrah (2013), Gautry (2013), Peck (2013), and Von Bayer (2013). Goyder (2014) published a book suggesting key communication skills that can be learned in order to convey gravitas. The Center for Talent Innovation (2012) and Forbes (2012) posited that gravitas is vital if one is to be promoted in business, and they associated gravitas with a quality that contributes towards executive presence. Numerous practitioner books on 'presence' have suggested a similar relationship. Lubar and Halpern (2003), Rodenburg (2007), Monarth (2010), and McKnight (2013) are just a few who have published self-help books for people in business and beyond. Numerous articles in newspapers and magazines describe the gravitas of individuals seeking political or other leadership positions. For example, in 1991 *Newsweek* wrote 'there's nothing like the spectacle of journalists rallying around a smart-sounding new word. This month's entry is "gravitas"' (Zenman and Howard, 1991); it cited itself in addition to the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and *Time Magazine* as following the trend of using the 'G' word, as it was referred to. Lance Morrow (1988) had published an essay in *Time Magazine* entitled 'The gravitas factor', positioning his essay in the sphere of political life and going on to suggest that gravitas was a mystery or secret character. He suggested that in Japanese culture, a 'man's gravitas emanated from the densities of the unspoken', in sharp contrast to the

widespread opinion that gravitas is experienced, observed, or learned through communication. Morrow (1988) wrote that gravitas is a phenomenon of power, of authenticity and respect, and may arise out of suffering. Corkindale (2007) similarly posited that crisis may lead to gravitas revealing itself, or a lack of it being exposed.

Peer-reviewed academic journals have also referred to individual gravitas, particularly in relation to gravitas as a quality in the field of leadership (Duignan, 2002; Eagly, 2005; Gardiner, 2011; Macaux, 2013; Apuzzo, 2006; Dagley and Gaskin, 2014). However, none of these studies has specifically and independently explored gravitas as a phenomenon. Duignan (2002), Eagly (2005), and Gardiner (2011) conducted research into different forms of authentic leadership, and they described gravitas as a factor related to authenticity.

There have been no specific empirical studies considering gravitas as either a leadership quality, or as a more generic phenomenon. This thesis is the first to explore gravitas as a leadership quality, and it is borne out of professional practitioner interest and reflected equally in the wide variety of journalistic publications, which cite gravitas so frequently.

The academic, professional, and journalistic sources mentioned above have one thing in common: gravitas is described as a desirable quality. They also suggest that if leaders do not have gravitas, it may damage their career in some way, or cause them to have a negative impact on others.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines gravitas as 'dignity, seriousness or solemnity of manner'. Where definitions are proposed in the literature (which is not frequently) they are different, albeit often shared, perspectives that the Latin root of the word 'gravitas' appears to be important and relates to gravity. These definitions proposed by practitioners are lengthy and unclear; however, in academic peer-reviewed journals, gravitas is not defined at all.

1.3 Associated concepts with gravitas

The concept of gravitas as a desirable leadership quality, together with its relational reference to authenticity, character, and power, provides an

important starting point for this study. I describe these relationships as associated concepts because explanatory and empirical research has followed the initial interest in these concepts as desirable in a business leadership context. Leadership theories have followed fads and fashions that started with a practitioner and professional journalistic interest set in an economic context. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s a leader's charisma was fashionable, and academic studies consequently began to define charisma. The next step was to explore the effects of charisma on a leader's followers and business performance before focusing on the development of charisma through training. As the UK entered the late 1980s and early 1990s, the economy dipped into a recession, and interest centred on how leaders either transform businesses or survive. This fostered an interest in transformational leadership. However, the championing of transformational leadership was critiqued as further economic challenges saw businesses fail, and increasing pressure was put on leaders not just to transform people or organisations, but also to behave honestly. A succession of public inquiries and corporate failures resulted in an interest in the concept of authentic leaders, leaders who were honest and knew themselves, and who could share their vulnerabilities. A vast number of studies were then conducted into defining authenticity, identifying its effect, and discovering how to be authentic. While transformational leadership centred on the organisation and the people in it, studies on charismatic and authentic leadership presented an interest in the leaders themselves.

As the most recent economic crisis began in 2008, Rees-Mogg (2009) and Cunningham (2008) criticised political and business leaders for lacking gravitas. This study is contextually positioned towards the end of this recent economic recession, and seeks to understand and explain gravitas and how it may be developed in leaders. It learns from previous research into associated concepts at similar historic points. This study does not suggest that gravitas is the next fashionable area of research into leadership, nor does it posit that it is the most effective, but it does aim to fill a gap; it will define gravitas in context and analyse the executive coaching process that aims to improve a leader's ability to lead others.

1.4 Executive coaching

The growth in the executive coaching industry has mirrored economic crisis points and an interest in leaders becoming more self-aware as a basis for exploring how to improve. There has been a substantial increase in research into coaching in all of its forms, but there is still a lack of theoretical basis and empirical evidence (Cox, Bachkirova and Clutterbuck, 2010; Western, 2012; Peltier, 2009). Where theory is being gradually developed it is still dominated by its roots in psychotherapy (Western, 2012), and social contextual factors are often ignored. Despite the dominance of psychological grounded approaches to coaching theory, there is an emerging gap in coaching that seeks to develop and understand theories connecting the mind and the body (Seiler, 2010; Matthews, 2013). Seiler (2010) describes this as an ontological approach to coaching, grounded in philosophy as a way of being. Executive coaching as a profession has grown considerably but similarly remains atheoretical (Western, 2012). I intend to contribute to the theoretical foundation and practice of executive coaching, particularly reflecting the need for coaches to be grounded in cognitive and somatic awareness of themselves and those they coach.

1.5 Personal and professional context of this study

My interest in undertaking a professional doctorate in coaching and mentoring reflects my profession as an executive coach and educator within the university and business sectors. Since qualifying as a teacher in post-compulsory education in the early 1990s, my interest has been in teaching potential and practising leaders in business, including a period as a director in automotive manufacturing and retailing. However, I have also taught in sports and education faculties, and for the past nine years I have coached and educated senior leaders using experiential learning and psychodynamic techniques. Working with experiential learning approaches, I have developed an interest in helping others to theorise, practise, and conceptualise ways of behaving in contexts often different from the business environment, to enable clients to practise and reflect safely.

The approach I have used as a coach and educator is rooted in theories around action learning. In addition, I have maintained a perspective that in

order to develop or improve, individuals must know and understand their starting point. This has resulted in an interest in psychodynamic approaches, where my interest is to help clients understand their motives and the drivers that underpin their behaviour.

The precise start of my interest into gravitas began in 2005 when I was asked by the managing partner of an international consulting firm to design a programme of learning that would enable all partners to develop gravitas, as he believed they lacked it. The process of starting to find out what was meant by gravitas, what context it had, and how it could be developed began at that point. Later in my training as an actor in Australia I was introduced to new methods that seemed to be contributing to the development of presence and gravitas on the stage. In late 2006 I was again asked as a coach to help develop gravitas for partners in a law firm. In 2008 I began working with an American-based university specialising in executive education and coaching, where I started to develop an interest in wanting to research the meaning and coaching of gravitas at doctoral level. It was interesting to learn that businesses from many countries had an interest in developing leadership gravitas, and that it translated across cultures so readily.

Prior to the start of my professional doctorate I had informally interviewed legal professionals, including some court judges, surgeons, teachers, and alumni from public schools and universities that specifically referred to their institutions as having gravitas. Those early interviews helped me to form a mental picture of some of the ways of describing gravitas. All interviewees stressed the importance of gravitas in their work. However, none of them could give a precise definition of it, or had been taught how to develop it. My profession as a coach and educator, however, led to a belief that gravitas, or some aspects of gravitas, could be learned and had probably been learned at some point in a person's history. As a coach, I found the practice of small group-based coaching especially interesting, while recognising the value and privacy of one-to-one coaching in some subject areas. I was interested professionally in helping to advance the work of coaches through the development of new theories that were not rooted in a previous profession's body of work. I believed there was an opportunity to develop new theory, collaboratively, using an action-based research approach so that the leader context was included to help define gravitas as

a phenomenon – and action learning and reflection could help to develop this in practice.

During this time the concept of gravitas continued to be written about, spoken about, and sometimes associated with the derailment or improvement of some people's careers. Therefore, I began to create a clearer articulation of my research interest and problem. My personal curiosity continued to grow and I was fascinated by how often individuals expressed a desire to learn about the subject of gravitas, or to improve their own. In many cases, it appeared that clients preferred to share their need for gravitas with me in a confidential context, as if it were not wise to openly admit a desire to be coached for gravitas. In other circumstances I was surprised by how many of those in positions of power, or those who had other personal achievements, would openly describe themselves as having high degrees of gravitas, with little need for the endorsement of others.

1.6 Aims and definitions

The aim of this study is to explore the phenomenon of gravitas in order to create a model of coaching for it in collaboration with the participants of the research. It is considered to be a 'phenomenon' because this term is defined in psychology as a psychological or behavioural experience where the cause is in question. A phenomenon is regarded as real if it has a name that is commonly used, which is evidently the case for gravitas. A 'concept' is here defined as an idea that emerges from the phenomenon as a result of the research process. This idea will include key construct markers that help to define the concept, and each of these is explored independently throughout the research. The disciplinary fields that have been primarily drawn on for the conceptualisation of gravitas are psychology, leadership, social psychology, embodiment, and coaching.

The key objectives of the study are:

1. To critically evaluate the literature on gravitas and its associated phenomena, and on the role of coaching as an approach to influence the development of gravitas.
2. To conduct primary research with six managers using a conceptual encounter approach, to understand how gravitas is experienced by

leaders, and to create a conceptual framework that describes this phenomenon.

3. To develop an initial model of coaching for gravitas and explore it in practice.

4. To refine a model of coaching for gravitas using an action research approach with six managers and their team members that will contribute to the theory of coaching and the practice of professional coaches.

It is important to explain the scope of the study, as some of the key terms and definitions may be interpreted differently depending on the field of research.

The first objective is concerned with the evaluation of the literature on gravitas and its associated phenomena. Earlier in the introduction, gravitas was described as being associated with authenticity, character/charisma, presence, power, and respect. Although all five areas are discussed in the literature review, the primary evaluation is on the literature on authenticity, as this is the most recent field of leadership context research and also has the most frequently cited references to gravitas. I also elected to review the literature on charismatic leadership because this is the second most recent research field focusing on the qualities of a leader, and it suggests that there are traits and learned factors that influence charisma. Both authentic and charismatic leadership also introduce the importance of followers and their perspective on a leader's authenticity or charisma, which, I believe, is important in order to explore gravitas. The definition of a follower is taken from Jayakody's (2008, p.840) quantitative study into the effects of charisma, namely 'one who directly reports or works for the leader and attributes charisma to their leader'. It is reasonable to adapt this definition to gravitas with the interpretation that 'works for' means someone who may not always directly report, but does indirectly report to a manager. This is referred to in organisational studies as a 'dotted-line' relationship. Although there is no peer-reviewed empirical research on presence in leadership, there is a plethora of professional literature on presence, which I consider useful to explore, as it is important to differentiate presence from gravitas during this action research. My discussion on power, respect, and presence also notes the role of the follower, and how the leader needs to influence others. However, there has not been any peer-reviewed empirical research

into developing these as leader qualities through coaching or training, unlike authenticity and charisma. My study on gravitas appears to be somewhat similar to the challenge of understanding respect, particularly as there is only one study that has thus far attempted to define it (Clarke, 2011).

The second objective is to involve six participants in the study, a decision based on previous doctoral theses in coaching and mentoring using action research (McLaughlin, 2013; Cox and Cook, 2010; Harding, 2006). I elected to undertake research with practising leaders because the most recent research into charismatic leadership (Antonakis, Fenley and Liechti, 2011) recommended that research be undertaken with leaders in situ over longer periods of time and in collaboration with them. They had studied leaders away from their usual place of work, and recognised this aspect as a potential limitation of their research.

Objectives 3 and 4 begin with my proposal of an initial model to describe and coach for gravitas. The model is then refined during the cycles of action research with the six participants and their followers over 10 months. As there are different genres of coaching (Cox, Bachkirova, and Clutterbuck, 2010), I chose to focus on executive coaching, which also has numerous definitions. Kilburg (2000, p.47) describes it as 'developing managerial wisdom in a world of chaos'. Western (2012, p.121) refers to executive coaching as offering a 'privatised retreat space' where 'patterns in behaviours and big insights into their relationship to others' are explored. This broad description is particularly focused on exploring authority, leadership, and followership, which makes it appropriate as a starting point to define coaching in this study. However, I later expand the scope of coaching to include other ontological (Seiler, 2010) and psychodynamic approaches, with the intention of contributing to a blended coaching model.

1.7 Research design and methods

My interest in the subject of gravitas is as a researcher and a professional coach, and my research design is guided by my ontological position, which is critical realist. This is based on the research of Fleetwood (2005), Bashkar (1978), Delorme (1999), and McEvoy and Richards (2006), and my intention is to create a concept of gravitas explored through three

domains of data: real, actual, and empirical. I will expand on these in more detail together with Fleetwood's (2009) four modes of reality as types of looking lenses. The first domain (real data) proposes a structure of gravitas based on my review of the literature and my own professional experience working with gravitas as a coach. The second domain (actual data) refines the phenomenon as a concept of gravitas contextually for the six participants, proposing deeper underlying structures, referred to as construct markers. The third domain (empirical data) employs an action learning approach, where the participants experience gravitas as a result of coaching and reflect on the experience.

My ontological stance led me to undertake an action research approach using a conceptual encounter (De Rivera, 1981) method as the first step to build a concept to work with. McNiff and Whitehead (2011) describe two divisions of perspectives on action research. The first proposes that the best approach is for the researcher to maintain an external perspective of watching, observing, and reporting on participants, known as 'interpretive action research'. I do not believe that this approach is appropriate for a professional doctorate because my experience as a coach is part of the learning process. Therefore, the second approach developed by Whitehead (1976, 2003) is used as the starting perspective in this study; this is known as 'first-person action research', where researchers are able to offer their own explanations for what they are doing. In addition, I used Reason and Bradbury's (2008) concept of 'second-person inquiry', working with other participants who have a shared interest in gravitas.

Action research is ideally suited to this study, as there is no existing data, and learning is part of the coaching process (Reason and Torbert, 2001). The purpose, therefore, is to create actions that improve the practice and theory of coaching for gravitas by conducting research that helps to understand the phenomenon of gravitas, and by building a model of how leaders can learn to increase gravitas through coaching.

Action research is also concerned with social experience and is driven towards improving some aspect of society. As was described in the introductory section of this chapter, there are social 'costs' for individuals who are told that their careers may be derailed because they lack gravitas, and it appears to be unfair if there are no definitions of gravitas and

approaches for working with it. Some believe that action research is not a methodology, but an approach (Reason and Bradbury, 2008). However, I have taken McNiff and Whitehead's (2011) stance that it is a methodology that creates 'living theories'. It is suited to workplace research (Williams and Dick, 2004) and I therefore chose to work with six participants from one organisation.

The conceptual encounter method (De Rivera, 1981) was employed first, which involved collaborative interviews with the six leaders and two of their leaders to help refine the concept of gravitas on the basis of their experience. This was defined as the first round of action research. Three subsequent cycles, totalling four action research cycles, were conducted. I based my cycles of research on the work of Coghlan and Brannick (2010), and adapted the eight steps of educational action research proposed by Bassey (1998).

I selected an organisation that I had worked with for six years as an external coach and educator: Rolls-Royce Plc. The organisation was open to me conducting research into gravitas with volunteers. I knew the volunteers, as I had taught them on leadership programmes before. They volunteered to take part in the research, and research-associated activities were not part of my paid work.

The participants volunteered to take part in the research for up to one year, and committed to undertake the following work:

- Eight one-hour conceptual encounter interviews.
- Access to their line manager and two followers, who would also participate in one-hour interviews. This totalled 18 hours of interviews.
- Participate in three two-hour coaching sessions over 10 months.
- Complete reflection reports on key gravitas experiences and feedback on tasks set after each coaching session throughout each of the three cycles following the conceptual encounter interview.
- Final individual reflection interview with each of the six participants.
- Final one-hour interviews with participant line manager and follower interviews.

- In total, 70 hours of data was collected and recorded using journals, audio or audiovisual equipment, or general notes.

The relationship I had with the participants lasted for one year, including the initial invitation and participant information forms being distributed and consent forms being gathered. The participants chose to remain anonymous.

There is no single analysis method connected with action research, and I considered either a grounded theory approach to coding the data or thematic analysis. I decided to use a thematic analysis approach adapted from Braun and Clarke (2006), who were the first to create a clear set of guidelines to be used by researchers. The reason for this was that I wanted to use a breadth of data collection methods that would capture not only discourse, but also observable reactions to methods and embodied responses – such as non-spoken emotions and feelings, as reflected in my literature review.

1.8 Summary

I embarked on a professional doctorate in coaching and mentoring to help both improve the practice of coaching and to contribute to the development of theory in a profession that is largely atheoretical. Specifically, I wanted to learn how to understand the experience of a particular phenomenon that could be influenced through coaching.

I had experienced the desire for my clients to gain or improve their gravitas. The reasons for this desire fell into three categories. First, clients had been told by their boss directly that they were lacking in gravitas and needed to improve it or they would find it difficult to progress. Second, a top-level leader in an organisation wanted a group of next-level leaders to acquire gravitas to improve overall organisational performance. Third, some leaders wanted help with gravitas themselves because their self-awareness led them to believe that they needed it. For this study, I decided to take a first- and second-person-based researcher approach, which reflects the third category and my own interest in coaching and gravitas.

There is a lack of academic literature on gravitas, but practitioners and journalists have written a great deal about it. My study is the first to undertake an empirical piece of research on this subject, and can be the starting point for future inquiries; it uses a methodology and methods that are most appropriate to achieve my aims and objectives.

1.9 Organisation of the thesis

In Chapter 1 I have described the background for my interest in the study and the context in which the study takes place. In Chapter 2 I evaluate the literature on gravitas and key associated subject areas in order to present a conceptual framework in which to undertake the primary research. The literature review has three key strands: literature on gravitas, literature on three associated concepts, and literature related to coaching and learning. Each of these combine to explain how and why I have taken the approach introduced in this chapter.

In Chapter 3 I describe the methodology deployed in detail and the methods for gathering data. In addition, I explain how my stance as a critical realist is important in terms of the selection of methods, and also in how I analyse the themes that emerge.

Chapters 4 and 5 explain the first collaborative research cycle with the conceptual encounter interviews and how thematic analysis was used to generate the themes in the conceptualised model of gravitas. Chapter 5 describes the initial coaching model I have created; it is positioned after the first round of action research because it forms part of the reflection stage from the first round. The chapter also includes the perception of followers for each of the participants, and shows where key differences emerge between the leaders and their followers.

The second action research cycle is described in Chapter 6, which also covers the first round of coaching for gravitas. Each participant is described separately, reflecting the individual coaching approach I began with, and the chapter ends with my critical thinking of the coaching intervention.

In Chapter 7 I describe why I switched to a group coaching approach, with a discussion on group coaching theory. This chapter marks a significant

change in my approach, and describes the benefits of working in groups. It also incorporates the first round of the use of reflective diaries to capture integrated learning in the workplace.

The last action research round is described in Chapter 8, which begins with an analysis of post-reflective thinking from the previous group round and a discussion of why I continued with group coaching. A final conceptual framework of gravitas is discussed alongside a summary of the main findings at this stage in the research.

Finally, in Chapter 9 I return to my overall research goals and reflect on my experience as a researcher. The themes that emerged from the study, rather than from participant discussion, define how I used critical realism as a set of looking rules to make sense of the data. I add what I consider to be the main contributions to theory and practice from two areas – methodology and coaching theory – before concluding with the limitations of my research and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The primary focus of this study is to explore the psychological phenomenon of gravitas in a business leadership context, and to develop a model of coaching for gravitas using an action research approach. The purpose of the literature review is to situate the theme of gravitas within the theories of leadership, coaching, and social psychology.

My approach towards the search for literature began with the use of Oxford Brookes University's library databases, especially concentrating on those targeted around coaching and mentoring. These were Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, Emerald Insight, and Psych Info. My initial search term was 'gravitas', which did not yield a high volume of returns. Where gravitas had been cited in peer-reviewed journals, I spent time evaluating each article and discovering where else they were cited. I then widened the search resources to Google Scholar and the Mendeley website literature search function, and I also used my membership of the Academy of Management publications, especially the *Learning and Education Journal*. Examples of the journals that contained articles relating to gravitas are: *The Leadership Quarterly*, *Leadership*, *The International Journal of Business and Social Science*, the *Journal of Medical Humanities*, the *Journal of Management Development*, and *Neurosurgery*. These journals prompted me to extend my search to associated concepts and to the coaching and adult learning domains, which were important parts of the study. I created a simple database reflecting my core search terms, with columns to record the author, date of publication, key research question, argument, evidence, and method, and any other articles that were cited.

In order to explore the concept of gravitas, Section 2.2 starts the literature review with a historical understanding of its origins, and traces its ancient meaning through to a contemporary meaning as an attribute that may be perceived as desirable in business and other roles in society. This section will also seek to learn more about current perceptions of gravitas from scholars who have referenced gravitas with associated concepts. These associations will be demonstrated through direct references to gravitas and through studies that have attempted to define leadership phenomena that

have previously been debatable. This will be important for the review because there has been very little specific research into gravitas as a leadership attribute. Section 2.2 will also look at the concepts of authenticity and charisma.

Sections 2.3 and 2.4 will explore two relevant emergent themes from both fields of study: the concept of followership and the concept of embodiment through the identification of somatic markers. Section 2.5 will then examine theories of adult learning and how these have been used in practice to develop authentic and charismatic leadership. Section 2.6 will focus on potential ways of influencing gravitas, and will review the development of a meta-theory of coaching. Various models of coaching that have been proposed over the last 10 years will be reviewed, including the more recent increased attention on executive coaching. This final section will also propose a conceptual model based on the literature that will be used to drive the methodology undertaken in the primary action research phases. The overall approach taken to explore the literature is demonstrated in Figure 2.1.
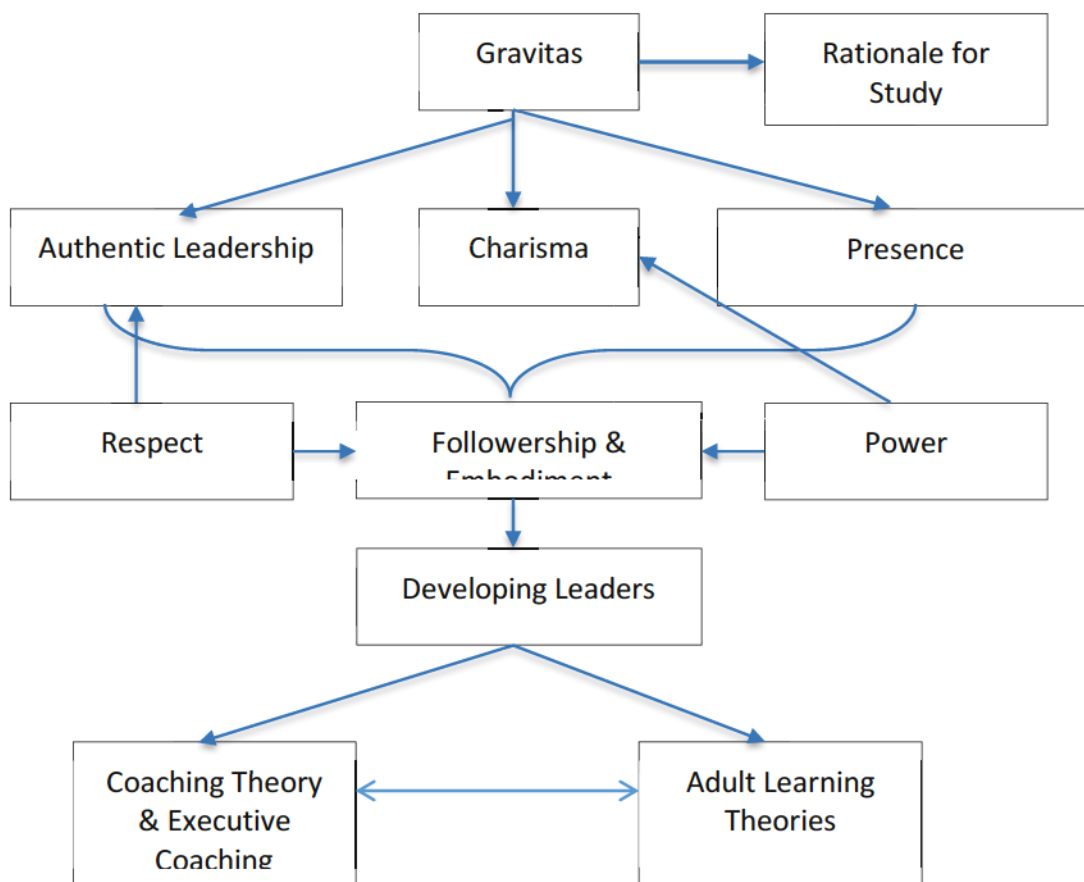
Figure 2.1: The key search themes in the literature review.

2.2 Gravitas and associated concepts

2.2.1 Ancient meaning of gravitas

The word 'gravitas' first appears in ancient Latin text during the time of the Roman Empire. It is prominent between the first and third century AD and is often described as meaning a quiet dignity, seriousness, and duty (Aguilera-Barchet, 2015; Ware, 2014). It is cited as one of the virtues of man that signaled status in society, and was a mix of inner character and outer conduct that emerged through life as a result of observing others and receiving guidance (Macaux, 2013). The Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius stated that 'gravitas was within one's own power through the development of dignity, sincerity, temperance and carrying yourself with authority' (Kamtekar, 2010). In their research on the foundation of modern physics, Grant (1996) and Pederson (1993) show how early science described an 'inner gravitas or heaviness' that connected planets, so that when in 1687 Isaac Newton introduced the term 'gravity', it was borrowed from this sense of force, which perhaps is why contemporary perspectives of gravitas believe a sense of 'weight' is also important. Some of the ancient Roman terms to describe gravitas as a virtue may not be used literally so much today, but the association with values, ethics, character, and morality has received significant academic interest, especially in the fields of authentic and charismatic leadership reviewed later. Today the Oxford English Dictionary defines gravitas as 'seriousness, dignity and solemnity of manner', with an explanation that it is derived from the Latin 'gravis', meaning 'serious'. It appears from the above ancient translations that gravitas is the alignment of one's inner thoughts and outer expression in a social context that values seriousness, dignity, and a duty to others or society.

2.2.2 Contemporary gravitas

The concept of gravitas is recognised as an important leadership attribute (Duignan, 2002; Eagly, 2005; Gardiner, 2011; Macaux, 2013; Apuzzo 2006; Dagley and Gaskin, 2014; Kets de Vries, 2015). However, in none of these texts has any specific research been undertaken to define the term or how it is developed. Duignan (2002), Eagly (2005), and Gardiner (2011) write that gravitas is an important concept, but they connect it to the idea of

authentic leadership, which is the focus of their studies. They do not attempt to explain what gravitas means to them or to specifically differentiate it from authentic leadership. Dagley and Gaskin (2014, p.210) describe gravitas as one of five key components of executive presence, and hypothesise that presence has a 'substantial influence on successful leadership' based on a qualitative study of 34 business leaders and followers.

The ancient texts described earlier noted gravitas as a virtue in males, and both Fairhurst (2005) and Broussine and Fox (2002, p.28) suggest that gender is a differentiating factor, with the latter stating that 'women lack gravitas as they tend to defer to their male colleagues'. Broussine and Fox (2002) conducted a qualitative study of leader attributes in local politics and found that women were told more often than their male counterparts that they lacked gravitas and charisma, following interviews for leadership positions in local government. Conte and Novello (2008) also suggest that leaders must develop confidence and project gravitas to gain respect in order to be considered for senior leadership positions in a local government context.

Gravitas is also suggested as an important leadership quality in the health care sector and theology (Apuzzo, 2006; Duignan, 2002), without actually defining the term. In earlier research exploring patient–physician relationships, Rodning (1992, p.37) similarly writes 'there is an element of gravitas associated with authority and leadership'. He explains that medical doctors are expected to demonstrate gravitas in their relationship with patients to promote confidence throughout their career. In each of these articles there appears to be an implicit assumption that both the researcher and reader know what gravitas means.

The most recent reference to gravitas as a critical leadership concept is expressed as an opinion by Kets de Vries (2015), rather than based on primary research. His article, published after the research was conducted for this thesis, suggests that gravitas is a mix of internal self-awareness and self-possession balanced with external knowledge.

It is noticeable in most of the reviewed literature that writers and researchers associate gravitas with other virtues or associated concepts.

This is probably why in most cases it is described as desirable. Academic literature specifically associates gravitas with the leadership concepts of charisma and authenticity, which are often discussed together with concepts of power and authority. This appears to be important, as it may be difficult to isolate gravitas as a phenomenon from other discussed phenomena. At the same time, it may be possible to learn about an approach for studying gravitas through research conducted on the more established concepts of authenticity and charisma.

2.2.3 Associated concepts: Authenticity

The concept of authenticity is often linked to a concept of gravitas (Duignan, 2002; Apuzzo, 2006; Gardiner, 2011). In contrast with gravitas, however, the concept of authenticity has been widely researched in peer-reviewed journals (Avolio, 2005; Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008); therefore, this review focuses on authenticity in relation to leadership and virtues that have been described as being associated with gravitas. Apuzzo (2006) suggested that surgeons leading a medical team should have the integrated qualities of gravitas, serveritas, veritas, and virtus. These terms – translated as being serious, morally guided, sincere, and truthful – are themes that have all been linked to the concept of being authentic.

The association between gravitas and authenticity can be traced from both ancient Roman and ancient Greek civilisation. Avolio and Gardner (2005) cite Harter's (2002) research, and also that of Erickson (1995), in which authenticity is noted to have originally been defined as 'To thine own's self be true'. Harter (2002, p.97) states that 'authenticity as a construct dates back to at least the ancient Greeks'. However, as Walumbwa *et al.* (2008) debate, authenticity is considerably more complex than being true to oneself. They propose a multidimensional 'construct' of authenticity in their quantitative study that mirrors the research in charisma (Jayakody, 2008 Antonakis *et al.*, 2011).

Trilling (1972) is one of the most influential scholars in this field. He suggests that authenticity owes its definition to the idea of being sincere, one of the three components defining the Roman meaning of gravitas cited earlier. However, Avolio and Gardner (2005) and Erickson (1995) argue that this association is commonly misunderstood. Avolio and Gardner

(2005) suggest that authenticity is the outward expression of 'one's true self' and that it should not be confused with sincerity, as there needs to be an alignment between how we use words, our values, emotions, beliefs, and inner thoughts. One might express sincerity without having inner thoughts that we believe in what we say. This subtle explanation of the confusion centres on the difference between what we feel inside and how others may perceive us (Erickson, 1995). Avolio and Gardner (2005) explain that the contrast is between authenticity as an inner thought process, and sincerity, which requires the judgement of others.

Baron and Parent (2014) provide a useful dichotomy, which may be helpful in understanding gravitas by separating the philosophical and psychological explanations of authenticity. They cite Novicevic *et al.* (2006), suggesting that the alignment between self, outward expression, and how others receive and interpret authenticity is a philosophical stance. They define authenticity through a combination of individual virtues and ethical choices that manifests as integrity. Lindholm (2008) also suggests that authenticity is connected to the demand for honesty and integrity from others. This appears to suggest that it is the interaction with others that is most significant, and this supports later studies into authentic leadership and followership (Goffee and Jones, 2006). The last two points are important. First, the role of followers as interpreters of one's expression of honesty, sincerity, and integrity is perhaps the most important factor. Second, being true to one's self and ensuring outward expression is the most important factor of being an authentic leader (Goffee and Jones, 2006). These two concepts of follower interpretation and the alignment of thoughts and feelings with the expressed self are useful to help to understand the experience of gravitas.

The recent interest in positive psychology (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) has helped to increase the interest in authenticity, especially within the study of leadership, which also poses a challenge for research and practice into the development of authentic leaders. Western (2012) believes that the notion of the 'celebrated self', espoused through the work of Rogers and Maslow (1967, 1943) has created more self-reflection but also insecurity. In summary, he asserts that leaders all believe that they can maximise their potential, but when this is not realised there is a personal emotional cost. As a result, this has attracted the interest of those who wish

to coach or develop leaders to become authentic leaders and help them realise their true potential. However, Western (2012) also argues that the domain of coaching the soul, which encourages the idea of being the best you can be, must not be confused with coaching for performance. His argument appears to be in slight contrast to the literature (Goffee and Jones, 2006), which correlates authentic behaviour with high performance, although the authors do not claim this is in relation to financial performance, but rather to the effect on followers' perceptions of performance.

Erickson (1995) states that one is 'never entirely authentic or inauthentic', suggesting that the focus should be more towards 'achieving levels of authenticity'. This is partly explained by the differing perceptions of followers, but might also reflect differing definitions of authenticity. This is an interesting insight and echoes the review of literature on gravitas, where perhaps the phenomenon contains similar constructs, and implies that it is not a question of having or not having gravitas, but rather of levels of gravitas and levels of authenticity.

Authenticity within a leadership and organisational context has gained significant momentum both in research and practice primarily for two reasons. First, some of this interest can perhaps be attributed to the positive psychology movement (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Seligman, 2002) in terms of individuals wanting to be the best version of themselves and creating a belief that everyone can attain a more improved version of themselves. Second, and perhaps more significantly, Avolio and Gardner (2005), Kets de Vries (2009), and Avolio and Luthans (2006) suggest that when facing challenging and turbulent times, tough decisions require more authentic leadership. The viewpoint they share is that people hope to see leaders demonstrate even greater integrity in their decision-making and be honest with others when the pressure is high. To do this, leaders need a high degree of self-awareness, empathy, and courage to express themselves authentically. Guignon (2004) states that both courage and integrity are needed to lead authentically, and to do so requires a degree of leadership autonomy and personal dignity. Earlier in this review, gravitas was defined by ancient Roman society as a quality of dignity, but one critique of authentic leadership (Gardiner, 2011) is that dignity and the perception of autonomy are constrained or promoted by historical and social circumstances.

Avolio *et al.* (2004) and Luthans and Avolio (2003) not only consider the primacy of self-awareness and other aspects of leaders as important, but also add that an organisation's context provides a further element of understanding into how leaders operate authentically. Cooper, Scandura and Shreisheim (2005) states that authentic leadership is multi-dimensional, ranging from 'traits, states, behaviours, contexts and attributions'. It is also interesting to note that in recognising the complexity of these constructs, defined more clearly by Walumbwa *et al.* (2008), Avolio and Gardner (2005) no longer consider authenticity as a concept, but as a phenomenon, where a phenomenon is regarded as something that is experienced but its cause is not known. It may therefore be suggested that if authenticity is defined by complexity, gravitas might also be described as a psychological phenomenon and should be researched through its 'constructs'.

The critique of authentic leadership similarly begins with its apparent complexity. Gardiner (2011) is critical of the narrow frame in which authenticity has been researched. Her concern is that social and historical contexts are at worst ignored completely and at best given little attention. Eagly and Carli (2007) in particular dismiss much of the research on authenticity because it ignores the barriers one may encounter in becoming a leader, particularly referencing gender and power. Gardiner (2011) and Eagly and Carli (2007) suggest that authentic leadership is deeply problematic. Their views can be summarised as a concern for those people in society who are perhaps hidden from history because there is no documented reference to their lives. In addition, they frequently highlight Hannah Arendt's concept of uniqueness (1993) and put forward the argument that knowledge of the self as a basis for authentic awareness and development is flawed and is often 'a case of mistaken identity', providing a poor indication of 'a person's ability to enact authentic leadership'.

Within the context of specific organisations, Gardiner (2011) implies that there are many hidden political struggles, unwritten structures, and professional preferences that have far greater impact on leadership than the generalised benefits that authentic leadership scholars advocate. The value of integrity is also raised by scholars as a laudable aim within authentic leadership, but this ignores the fundamental goal of businesses in

the commercial sector to be profitable and the most successful in their given industry. Leaders are recruited to fulfil their organisation's goals, not for the good of society as a whole. The critiques presented by Gardiner (2011) and Eagly and Carli (2007) offer a valuable note of caution about making claims about the value of authenticity from a broad societal perspective, and can undoubtedly be applied to any discussion on the value of gravitas as a social and business benefit for leaders, and also on how it may be developed. Gravitas was presented in the introduction and earlier in the literature review as being viewed as a positive leadership quality. Similarly, most of the authentic leadership research that was evaluated adopted this view. Therefore, it could be important to evaluate any potential benefits of gravitas in the context of social constraints and opportunities.

2.2.4 Associated concepts: Charisma

In the opening section reviewing recent research, where gravitas is associated with leadership, Broussine and Fox's (2002) study into political leaders linked the concept of gravitas with a leader's charisma. The association of charisma and gravitas appears less frequently in academic journals than authenticity. However, it is the only other leadership theory that introduces the concept of followership and appears to have prompted research between both psychological awareness and the expression of self, and the social environment where a leader operates. Therefore, it is important to discuss where similarities and differences are shown and how recent research into defining and developing it may provide guidance for the research into gravitas.

Max Weber, the German sociologist and philosopher, described charisma as the ideal form of authority. He referred to charisma as a gift 'of the body and spirit not accessible to everybody' (Antonakis *et al.*, 2011). House (1977) linked the concept of Weber's 'gift' to a psychological theory exploring the link between personal leadership abilities and the effect of these abilities on others. House's contribution to theory was the first to offer a scientific and systematic study of charisma, laying the foundation for research from the 1980s onwards.

Academic interest in charisma as a leadership concept grew quickly after House's (1977) initial research. Research on the link between authenticity and charisma shows that both have followed a similar path; it first explores multi-dimensional constructs to help define what a phenomenon is, and second, integrates the followership concept. The purpose of this section of the review is not to present a complete review of all literature relating to charismatic leadership, but to demonstrate where there are links to authentic leadership, which may inform research into gravitas.

Conger and Kanungo (1987, 1998), House and Aditya (1997), Klein and House (1995), and Shamir *et al.* (1998) all explored the relationship between leader and follower. They emphasised that follower perception is the dominant factor when seeking to understand the effect of charisma. Shamir *et al.* (1998) sought to understand how followers perceived 'displays of extraordinary emotional expressiveness, self confidence, self sacrifice, determination, risk taking and optimism'. Fanelli and Misangyi (2006) identified traits, values, beliefs, and behaviours that were 'desirable and legitimate to develop'. Once developed, they hypothesised that they led to higher levels of self-confidence and motivation in followers, and admiration for their leaders. Since the initial research interest in charisma began in the 1980s, it is only since Frese, Beimel, and Schoenborn (2003) and Towler (2003) that studies have focused on the effects of training to develop charisma.

Definitions of charisma appear to differ depending on the research stance. Sociological approaches associate charisma with the context of leadership challenges in the political domain. Weber (1947) exemplifies this view, but his idea that charisma is a rare gift has since been challenged by contemporary scholars. The 'neocharismatic' post-Weber researchers were interested in balancing a psychological approach with a situational context, undertaking research where possible in the situations in which leaders work, and regarding charisma as not unusual, but present in everyone, although experienced differently by leaders and followers.

Jayakody (2008) however, believes there are two limitations with the neocharismatic approach. First, he believes there has been insufficient research to conceptualise charisma at a psychological level, and second, he believes charisma has only been conceptualised on a unidimensional

construct of leader 'extraordinariness'. As a result, Jayakody (2008) conceptualises charisma as a multidimensional cognitive affective phenomenon, and recognises the importance of the 'follower' to create a scale that can measure charisma or describe levels of charisma similar to the levels of authenticity described by Erickson (1995), and the multidimensional construct of authenticity studies by Walumbwa *et al.* (2008).

Agle *et al.* (2006) explored whether perceptions of charisma were associated with an organisation's performance. They concluded that when an organisation performed well, followers perceived their leaders as charismatic. Where an organisation did not perform well, followers did not attribute charisma to their CEO. Both Agle *et al.* (2006) and Jayakody (2008) emphasise that the social-psychological forces operating on followers in combination with the qualities of their leaders are most significant. Tourigny *et al.* (2003) describe charisma as something that is socially and institutionally constructed, echoing the neocharismatic scholars' stance on the integration of social and organisational context. Fanelli and Misangyi (2006), Antonakis *et al.* (2011), Paul et al, (2002), and Bennis and O'Toole (2000) have found that that there are some aspects of charisma that can be learned. Their studies have only been quantitative, however, and in each case they describe the limitations of their research in not having conducted their studies in the organisations where they lead.

It could be argued that gravitas is a quality that is unique to each individual, just as studies on charisma have concluded. Along with the research into authenticity, the pattern of scholarly interest has suggested that they are phenomena that can be described conceptually through those factors that contribute to a person being charismatic or authentic. These have been described as constructs or construct markers. Antonakis *et al.* (2011) used these as aspects that can be 'manipulated and measured'. Gravitas shares this label as a phenomenon, and the generalisation of its perceived benefit to a person in leadership. It has also been shown to be associated with both charisma and authenticity in some peer-reviewed studies. Charisma and authenticity research has, over the last 10 years, focused more on the effects of training or developing their constructs on followers. Gravitas research should follow this same path, but with leaders operating in their organisation and recognising their social context and personal history.

2.2.5 Power and respect

The subject of power and authority has received considerable research interest since French and Raven (1959) first presented their five bases of power and authority. A sixth was added in 1965. Notable authors of power in leadership such as Yukl (1981, 2001, 2002), Bass and Bass (2008) and Mittal and Elias (2013) suggest that power and authority are necessary parts of leadership, which they collectively define as influencing others. Tost, Gino and Larrick (2012) explored the darker side of the overuse of power in leadership, but unlike authenticity and charisma, there has not been any empirical research into coaching and the development of power from a leadership development perspective; therefore, I have not discussed this widely in the literature review.

Respect in leadership is also discussed in a leadership context; however, there have been very few academic papers about respect (Clarke, 2011), despite the conceptual similarity of respect and power as being part of leading to influence others (Yukl, 2001; Bass and Bass, 2008). Clarke (2011) provided the first attempt to define the concept of respect, in the hope that this would inspire and inform future research. There are parallels with the values-based leadership espoused by authentic leadership advocates and the concept of respect (Bass, 1985; Conger and Kanungo, 1987; House and Howell, 1992). Clarke (2011) suggested that rather like the literature on gravitas, respect had not been defined and he wished to create a construct of it for others to use. He identified three types of respect: appraisal (how followers perceive the leader and the confidence they have in the leader), identification (how aligned the values between the leader and followers are), and recognition (how the followers perceive the leader to behave in terms of the leader's ethics, morals, and sense of fairness). A criticism of Clarke's (2011) conceptual model of respect is that it was conceived through an analysis of other leadership research, and no primary research was conducted with leaders at any time. There has also been no research conducted into the development of respect through coaching or other leadership development methods, and therefore while it is interesting to relate the concept to authenticity, there is no need to discuss respect in any depth.

2.2.6 Presence

Presence as a topic related to a leadership quality shares a similar set of characteristics as gravitas. It is a term widely used by practitioners and journalists but there is a paucity of research into presence as a part of leadership. Cox (2013) provides a meta-analysis of research surrounding presence, but none of the studies are situated within the field of leadership. Felgen's (2011) study into presence was within the field of nursing, and Geller and Greenberg (2002) and Pemberton (1976) conducted studies into the presence of therapists, but they are not described within a leadership or coaching context. Where presence is discussed in relation to coaching, Cox (2013) notes that presence is often confused with mindfulness, and describes the difference between being present with a client and presence as an influencing leadership quality (Patterson, 2011). One study does emerge in the context of leadership presence (Fairhurst and Cooren, 2009), where the authors attempt to describe the meaning and impact of presence and its mirror form of absence. However, they resort to descriptions of charisma rather than presence and do not ultimately define the concept of presence or the impact of having or not having it. Ultimately they recognise it as being of interest to leadership scholars and suggest it as an opportunity for future research.

2.3 Important themes: The concept of followership

The huge breadth of constructs used to explore authenticity has been cited earlier as a criticism, which is echoed by Shamir and Eilam (2005), but they also introduce a widened frame of research, which they argue is more important than any other aspect of authentic leadership: the concept of authentic followership.

Goffee and Jones (2006), Shamir and Eilam (2005), Cooper et al (2005), Ilies, Morgeson and Nahrgang (2005), and Avolio and Gardner (2005) suggest the value of authentic followership is that it 'mirrors the developmental processes of authentic leadership'. One therefore cannot study authentic leadership without followership. Both Baron and Parent (2014) and Avolio and Gardner (2005) draw heavily on a social psychological model of authenticity created by Kernis (2003) to explore authenticity and the nature of followership. However, both stress that while

authenticity may be studied from a purely psychological entity stance, there is considerable value to adopting an integrated approach between the philosophical angle where leaders and followers are both important in shaping authenticity and the self-approach where the social and psychological stances are integrated.

Kets de Vries (2015) suggests that the external qualities of gravitas relate to how others perceive how a leader acts, and how the leader is perceived while speaking and in appearance.

The significance of the follower's role in the development and perception of gravitas, authenticity, and charisma emphasises the importance of integrating the followers as participants into the primary research into coaching for gravitas in this study.

2.4 Important themes: Embodiment

Landau, Meier and Keefer (2010), Ladkin and Taylor (2010), and Meier *et al.* (2012) suggest that research into thoughts, feelings, and behaviour ought to be grounded in bodily interaction. They recommend that future research into the effect of leadership and the training of leadership should use explanatory embodied research approaches to enrich traditional theories. Antonakis *et al.*'s (2008) study 'Can charisma be taught?' for example includes a laboratory setting of training non-verbal behaviour alongside how to use metaphor and stories to communicate. Their study does not, however, include how a person's feelings are embodied.

For most of the past century, the functional paradigm of separating the mind and the body was prevalent (Fodor, 1987). However, modern cognitive approaches argue for continuity between the mind and the body where cognition is rooted in the actions of the physical self (Pfeifer and Bongard, 2006). Dinh, Lord and Hoffman (2014) suggest that the reaction to the interaction with the environment in which leaders lead and operate is bound within the body. Pfiefer and Bongard (2006) argue that the 'body-environmental analyses are computed through the physiology and morphology of the body rather than the brain'. The embodied architecture offers an alternative insight perhaps into how to use self-stabilising physical techniques rather than cognitive conscious processing where self-

regulation is needed (Landau *et al.*, 2010). In turn, this may have an effect on how leaders and followers influence and perceive each other and their environments.

Dewey's (1938) reference to the continuation between the mind and the body may help to explain why actions are as important as words when leading and perceiving others. The metaphors that others create in their minds around types of leader authority can create an embodied sense. Dinh *et al.* (2014) provide an example of how holding a heavy object can convey a feeling of weight and can make the perception of people and situations seem more important. This perspective may be useful when reviewing coaching development approaches with gravitas, especially given the definitional discussion about seriousness and gravity. Naidoo and Lord (2008) suggest that embodiment architecture is an important factor in the perception of whether a leader has charisma. Similarly, Dinh *et al.* (2014) cite Frank and Eckman (1997), suggesting that when discrepancies or unfamiliarity between expression and actions occur between a leader and a follower, one might be able to process a feeling of a leader's inauthenticity or insincerity.

It has been argued that the body takes in far more information than can be consciously perceived (Nørretranders, 1998). Every second a human mind and body takes in 11 million pieces of information, but only 40 pieces of information are perceived consciously (Nørretranders, 1998). The body and mind filter information selectively (Wilson, 2002), but much of the unconscious information is observable in our bodies. The responses in the body are known as somatic markers (Damasio, 1994). The embodied somatic markers provide guideposts to our emotional regulation (Ratener, 2014). Matthews (2013) recognises this challenge from a coaching perspective, suggesting that while most coaching is conducted in a seated environment with a focus on cognition, it seems at odds with action-based experiential learning.

Much of the work supporting the concept of the celebrated self (Western, 2012) and the concept of authentic leadership implies that being the best we can be is not just a philosophical choice, but is hardwired into our central nervous system (Keltner, 2009). It has also been shown that authentic leadership is partly concerned with the alignment of one's feelings

with one's expression. However, this expression may not be vocal. There are factors that explain gravitas that are similarly not vocal and may be embodied. These may relate to how one embodies confidence and belief, or perhaps how one embodies a sense of seriousness or dignity as defined in Chapter 1. Embodied research practice offers an additional way to explore how gravitas is experienced and how it may be developed.

2.5 Adult learning

The aim of this study is to create a model for coaching for gravitas. Coaching is in part concerned with learning, and therefore this literature review must consider studies into adult learning. The question of how best to coach cannot ignore models of adult learning and will be important in the design of the research.

There is a myriad of concepts, ideas, experiences, and descriptions that have been presented either through robust academic research and/or by those actively working in the education of adults. Merriam's (2001) meta-analysis of the psychological theories from the 1920s onwards assesses those theories that have 'staying power' from those that have lost popularity. Jarvis, Holford and Griffin (1998) cite the primarily scientific work of Watson and Rayner (1920), Pavlov (1927), and Skinner (1976) as early theorists who provide a view that behavioural change is based on experience. Dewey's (1938) model of experiential learning in Merriam (2001) describes how adults translate current experiences into new skills, behaviours, and attitudes, and it continues to be a model of learning employed by many leadership education providers. The most influential interpretation of experiential learning and reflective processes (Argyris, 1960; Argyris and Schon, 1996) was introduced by Kolb (1984). His position that learners develop through new ideas grounded in experience though a continuous cycle (Figure 2.2) of experience, reflection, conceptualisation, and testing of new ideas has been the most significant theory to date. Allied to his model, he also proposed, along with Mumford and Honey (1982), that learners have distinctive learning preferences, and that facilitators of learning should be cognisant when providing experiences and knowledge to enable learning to be targeted and ultimately effective.

Kolb's Model for the Learning Cycle

What impact does this newly achieved Learning Outcome now have on your future learning? **(4)**

(1) An experience you have made regarding your learning?

Active Experimentation

Concrete Experience

(3) How would you conceptualise your thoughts ?

Abstract Conceptualization

Or: How do you identify a Learning Outcome and what do you call it?

Reflective Observation

(2) What have you thought about this experience and its relation to your learning?

Source: based on Kolb 1984

Figure 2.2: Kolb's Learning Cycle (1984).

In addition to Kolb's theory, Knowles (1968, 1980) had a profound impact on adult learning and the language of learning. He created a new label, 'andragogy', to describe self-motivated learning, separating this 'adult' form of learning from 'pedagogy', which he related to the art, and science, of teaching children. Perhaps the most important contribution in the context of coaching adults is the intrinsic and self-direction of the learner (Caley *et al.*, 2002; Deci and Ryan, 2002).

Malcolm Knowles' main assumptions were that the learner:

1. is an independent self-concept who can direct his or her own learning,
2. has a reservoir of life experiences providing a rich source of learning,
3. has learning needs closely related to changing social roles,
4. is problem-centred and interested in immediate application of knowledge, and
5. is self-motivated to learn.

The combination of self-achievement, motivation, and experiential learning appear to be central tenets of the development of coaching theories. Allied to these are the processes of experiencing and reflecting, most importantly recognised by Argyris (1960) and again by Kolb and Fry (1975), Kolb (1984), and Argyris and Schon (1996). Argyris' work on reflective learning

is rooted in his studies of action learning, which are regarded as fundamental to the process of developing a coaching model in this study. Mezirow (1985) is critical of both Kolb's lack of context for learning and Knowles' assumptions that maturity and independence increase together. Pratt (1993) in Merriam (2001) describes Knowles' ideas as more of a concept than a theory of adult learning because there is little to help us understand the process of learning.

In summary, there have been some seminal publications surrounding adult learning, which are highlighted in this review, but there are also some that have been left out, as they are not relevant to the purpose of this study. This study aims to build a model of coaching for gravitas, and this section on adult learning aims to evaluate theories that could be most relevant for the research design. The evaluation demonstrates the continued interest and effect of learning cycles, experimentation, reflection, and re-practice, but also in a situational action context where there is an impact desired not just at an individual level, but also at the group level. The design of this study will need to demonstrate how learning theory has been applied and how the process of learning is experienced.

2.6 The role of coaching

This study aims to contribute to the practice and theory of professional coaching. The studies evaluated earlier in the development of authenticity and charisma all used techniques that were described as training. This study uses coaching as an approach to test and refine a model of coaching for gravitas. It is important, therefore, to situate the coaching approach that will be used in the study with research that has informed coaching practice.

Coaching as a distinct form of development has been widely written about over the past 10 years and has gained momentum, especially from Whitmore's (2002) text around the role of coaching as being one of unlocking the maximum potential of an individual. However, coaching as a profession existed many years before this. Garvey, Megginson and Stokes (2009) describe Socrates' form of questioning as one of the foundations of coaching approaches, but it is unlikely that anyone described it in that way until coaching was regarded as a profession. Socratic questioning has been linked to the processes of logic, reason, and law for many years, and

indeed Greek philosophers were often described as the original teachers in society. However, it is in the world of sport that coaching was initially recognised professionally, and the seminal publication of Gallwey's *Inner world of tennis* (1975) is often presented as the backbone for appreciating coaching today. However, despite the increased interest and studies conducted on coaching and the impact of coaching, research remains atheoretical and lacking empirical evidence (Peltier, 2009; Cox, Bachkirova and Clutterbuck, 2010. Western (2012) not only posits that coaching lacks a theoretical base, but also states that 'here we have a crisis emerging' (Western, 2012, p.11). His criticism of coaching approaches continues to raise concerns about the mimicking of theories rooted in psychotherapy as surrogates for coaching theory, which appears to be echoed in Cox, Bachkirova and Clutterbuck (2010) description of 13 theory-based approaches, most of which originated in psychotherapy. Western (2012) recognises that while value is not minimised within the origin of any coaching theory ideas, there are three resistances using the lens of critical theory:

1. Coaching is generally focused on being positive, rather than the psychotherapy approach, which is about dysfunction.
2. Individuals are assumed to be free agents (Knowles, 1980), but this stance ignores the social and organisational structures that may inhibit this.
3. There remains a lack of coherent theory, but empirical research is gradually beginning to address this concern.

He ultimately proposes a meta-theory of coaching (Figure 2.3) from a critical theorist perspective that both describes and explains coaching, leaving an opening at the end of his analysis, suggesting that from this point there is an opportunity to develop theory from one of the four discourses, and to develop the connection between coaching relationships and the macro social environment. This study intends to build a body of work that contributes to the centre of his meta-theory where the 'soul guide, managerial, psy expert and network coach' may converge, and will include a design to acknowledge the macro social factors that were critiqued in authentic and charisma development studies.

MACRO SOCIAL CONTEXT

COLLECTIVE COACHING INFLUENCES
Coaching acts collectively through informal networks as:
-       A communication technology
-       A social movement
-       A cultural power

COACHING BODY POLITIC
-       Coaching companies
-       Coaching bodies
-       Universities
-       Psychology

COACH

COACHEE

EXTERNAL SOCIAL INFLUENCES
-       Social change
-       Work change
-       Legislation
-       Globalisation

NETWORK COACH
'Emergent strategist'

Focus:
-Networked – self and connectivity

SOUL GUIDE
'Mirror to the soul'
Focus:
Inner self
Human experience

PSY EXPERT
' Technician of the Psyche'
Focus:
-       Outward self
-       Performance

MANAGERIAL
'Role-coach'
Focus:
Role self
Productivity

MICRO PRACTICES

Figure 2.3: Western's Meta Theory of Coaching (2012).

Despite Western's (2012) view that most coaching theory originates in
psychotherapy, alternative approaches are emerging with links to the
earlier review of embodied themes of research. Seiler (2010) and Matthews
(2013) propose a holistic approach to coaching incorporating the mind and
the body, which Seiler (2010) describes as 'ontological coaching'.

*'The essential goal of the coach is to be a catalyst for change by
respectfully and constructively triggering a shift in the coachee's way of
being to enable him or her to develop perceptions and behaviours that were
previously unavailable.'*

It appears difficult to map Seiler's (2014) approach to Western's (2012)
meta-theory because it is dependent on the coachee's overall goal for the
coaching. Although the approach includes the use of an analysis of

language to understand the coachee, the coach is also listening for what is hidden, in moods, emotions, and the body. This somatic reaction is reflected as embodied connections between the mind and body. Seiler presents his arguments for an ontological coaching approach through examples of working with executives, and is inspired by Heidegger's (1962, 1971) phenomenological analysis of being, Merleau-Ponty's (1962) somatic phenomenon analysis, and the experiential approaches of Dewey (1929) in Seiler (2014). However, in order to work with a coachee to help explore embodied reactions, a coach needs to develop a kinaesthetic awareness of his or her own body responses (Ratener, 2014) before being sufficiently skilled to work with others.

Western's (2012) meta-theory model of coaching does not include a role for executive coaching. However, executive coaching is part of leadership development (Yukl, 2002; McCall, 2010), but comparatively appears to have been subject to the least amount of empirical studies (McCall, 2010). It has an organisational context at the macro social level but is focused on the individual. Therefore, it is different to developmental coaching (Cox and Jackson, 2010, as there is some type of alignment necessary for consideration by the coach in terms of the coachee's position in his or her organisation. One of the challenges of executive coaching is for coaches to understand if they are working 'with a problem executive or an executive with a problem' (Berglas 2002). Kilburg (2002) suggests that executive coaches are focused on helping executives to make sense of control challenges, both their own and those of others, and to gain wisdom in a chaotic macro world. Despite not including executive coaching in his meta-theory of coaching, Western (2012) does describe it as a form of coaching that straddles the discourses of the 'psy expert and network coach'. However, this seems at odds with his description of it being a place for executives to retreat, hoping to create 'light bulb' moments that can help them to grow. It may be more appropriate therefore to situate executive coaching at the centre of where all four of his discourses meet, under the umbrella term of 'micro coaching practices'. Figure 2.4 shows this centre point as the 'point de capiton', since the difficulty with executive coaching research is that it can be argued that any coaching with an 'executive' is a form of executive coaching, and this does not sit within any current theories of coaching.
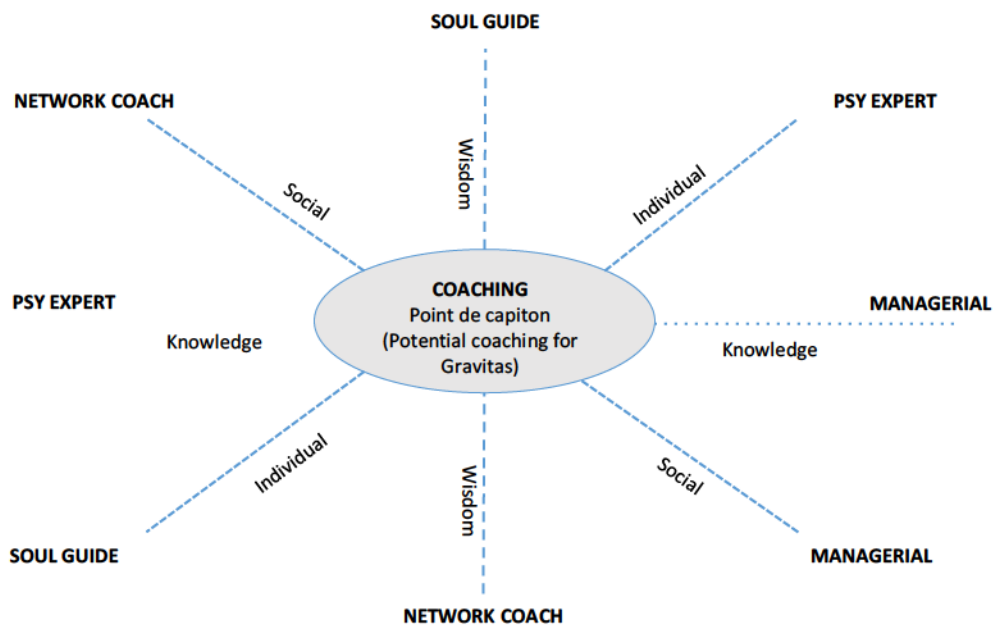
Figure 2.4: Coaching as born at the 'point de capiton'.

There is little theoretical or empirical work exploring executive coaching with positive psychology, although they share a link with soul-based discourse and the concept of the celebrated self (Western, 2012), as well as the view that people generally want to be the best they can be and grow in a supportive, development-focused environment that allows them to flourish (Linley and Harrington, 2005).

Group-based executive coaching has been the subject of very limited empirical research (Ward, van de Loo and ten Have, 2014). A study of 14 cohorts over a four-year period of small coaching groups utilising a psychodynamic approach reported that group-based coaching was preferable to one-to-one coaching, especially when linked with individual coaching and support. Group-based learning is especially suited to action learning approaches (O'Neil and Marsick, 2014), particularly when applied to experiential and critical reflection practices. The double and triple loop reflection practices can be applied to 'real' management problems, and quickly be adapted for practice. The group approach is suitable for both team based coaching and for the personal development of leaders working as peers (O'Neil and Marsick, 2014), and is particularly useful when trying to cross the boundary between the macro social and individual meta theory

(Kets de Vries, 2005). Brown and Grant (2010) and Kets de Vries (2014) discuss the virtues of group-based coaching, especially the use of psychodynamic techniques to build trust and openness in groups. Kets de Vries (2015) also suggests that it can be a tool for the development of some aspects of gravitas, in terms of building both an inner awareness and an outward perception of gravitas with others.

In summary, all coaching for business executives may be argued as being a form of executive coaching, but the objectives of the coaching might take the process along a differing route. It appears, however, that despite a massive increase in attention to coaching theories, these predominantly focus on the individual and not the group, even where the group cohort fulfils many of the definitions of being a coachee. In addition, although Kets de Vries (2015) provides a contribution that was published after the research in this thesis was completed, his opinion appears to add to the arguments that a form of individual and group executive coaching for gravitas is important, and an appropriate approach for empirical research.

2.7 Summary

This study seeks to understand the meaning of gravitas and to develop a model of coaching for gravitas using an action research approach. The review of the existing literature on gravitas, and on the associated concepts of authenticity and charisma, provides an opportunity to help to explore its meaning. Both aspects of the review have been studied to help to understand what 'constructs' underlie them and which can be developed through learning exercises.

In particular, the review focused on the context of leadership and examined studies of authentic and charismatic leadership. There were critiques of both leadership paradigms from a social and historical perspective, and increasing recognition that the social psychological forces of the followers are important factors. This created two paradigms of study: the leader-centric and follower-centric approaches. However, scholars argued that follower-centric approaches might take place at a theoretical level, but were leader-centric operationally (Jayakody, 2008). The need to review literature on both leadership areas was driven by the advocates describing that either authentic leadership or charismatic leadership is valuable during a period of

increasing economic challenges, more ambiguity, less certainty, and ever more complexity in the organisations in which leaders operate. Similarly, gravitas has been labelled as a quality that leaders need, especially in tougher economic conditions.

Authentic and charismatic leadership both recognise the importance of self-awareness and the alignment of outward expression and inner thoughts, values, and beliefs. However, charismatic leadership research in particular has studied the non-verbal embodied behaviours on followers (Antonakis *et al.*, 2011) in recent research. The concept of somatic markers that help a coach to identify embodied reactions to unconscious stimuli appears to offer an additional approach to explore gravitas, and also suggests that a coach would need a high level of self somatic awareness to explore this with coachees.

Western (2012) states that his meta-theory provides an opportunity for doctoral research to better understand both the interaction between coaches and coachees and how the macro social environment impacts this. His four discourses of coaching provide a conceptual framework to investigate coaching for gravitas as a subject-specific form of executive coaching at the 'point de capiton'. The models of adult learning support the examination of gravitas from an action learning approach balanced between a process of experiential, transformative, and critical reflection paradigms. This allows gravitas to mix the macro social and the individual dimensions that make up what might be a concept that describes levels of gravitas.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This study aims to develop a model of coaching for gravitas in leadership and will begin with a process of defining the concept of gravitas. I will explain my research stance through the ontological and epistemological lenses that guided my choice of methods together with the practical decisions I have needed to make to ensure that ethical considerations have been thoroughly applied and my reflexivity position is clearly explained. This is particularly important as I have a dual role as both professional coach and a researcher working with a single organisation that has been a client of mine.

My research question is inductive and emergent with two distinct intended outcomes; to describe the phenomenon of gravitas in detail and to propose a model of coaching for gravitas. I intend to contribute to coaching theory, executive coaching practice, and potentially make a methodological contribution. The study employs a collaborative methodology whereby my research participants collaborate with me throughout the data collection process.

3.2 Research paradigm: Critical realism

My research stance is critical realist where my realist ontology maintains that multiple realities can be stratified, emergent, transformational, and relational (Fleetwood, 2005) and enables subjective and objective approaches to be integrated (Coghlan and Brannick, 2010). While there has been no research into gravitas so far, the phenomenon of gravitas is experienced by individuals as real. The importance attributed to the view that an entity is real is if it has 'causal efficacy; has an effect on behaviour; makes a difference' (Fleetwood, 2009). Beliefs, religious or otherwise, are examples that may fit into this viewpoint. Critical realists describe the difference between material and non-material entities. The difference is described by Fleetwood (2009) in terms of modes of reality; material, ideal, artefactual, and social shown in figure 3.1. These modes can also be described as ontological domains because, as critical realists assert, to really understand a reality we need to take into account our own interests

and experiences. The concept of gravitas, using Fleetwood's four modes of reality, sits somewhere between the ideal and socially real.

Ideally Real: Conceptual entities such as discourse, language styles, concepts or model.	Materially Real: Oceans, weather, moon, mountains. Exist independently of individuals.
Artefactually Real: Concept mediated entities such as computers or cosmetics.	Socially Real: Cannot physically touch but depend on human existence. Practices or customs.
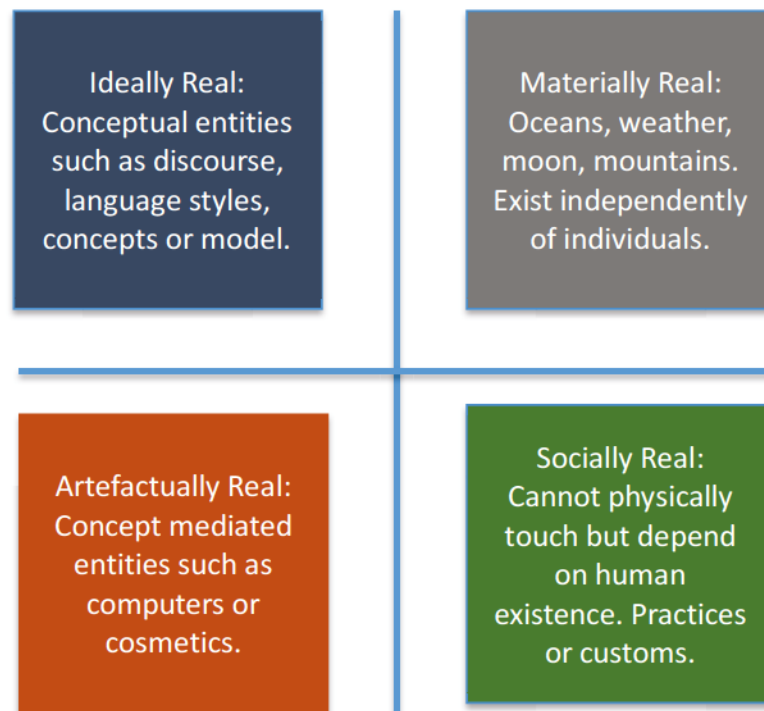
Figure 3.1: Fleetwood's (2009) models of reality.

As described in the literature review, gravitas is in part a word used to describe a style, or a virtue, genres, or an idea, and certainly sits either as a concept or phenomenon. There may not be an artefact that is gravitas, although Newton's gravity may be something that is aligned to material reality as a feature of nature measured by quantitative sciences. However, gravity is not gravitas. The social model suggests that there may be a feature of stratified society, be it education, social classes, systems of power, or access to capital that has an impact on gravitas that cannot be overlooked at the macro-social level. Bashkar (1978) and Delorme (1999) in McEvoy and Richards (2006) present three domains of ontology. The first is empirical where reality can be experienced; the second is actual, where reality may occur but not be experienced and the third is the real 'deep' structures that generate phenomena. They are not observed, but can be investigated empirically or through the creation of theories. The goal therefore is to provide deep explanation and understanding of phenomena, but not general laws or interpreted views based on those researched (McEvoy and Richards, 2006). Figure 3.2 shows the domain at entity level as applied to the phenomena of gravitas. Within the research paradigm of

this study gravitas is described using Bashkar's three ontological domains, but I have also used Fleetwood's four models of reality to identify gravitas reality themes.

Domain Level

Real → **Actual** → **Empirical**

Entity Level

Deep underlying structures and mechanisms that have the potential to create gravitas → **The phenomena of gravitas** → **The experience of gravitas**
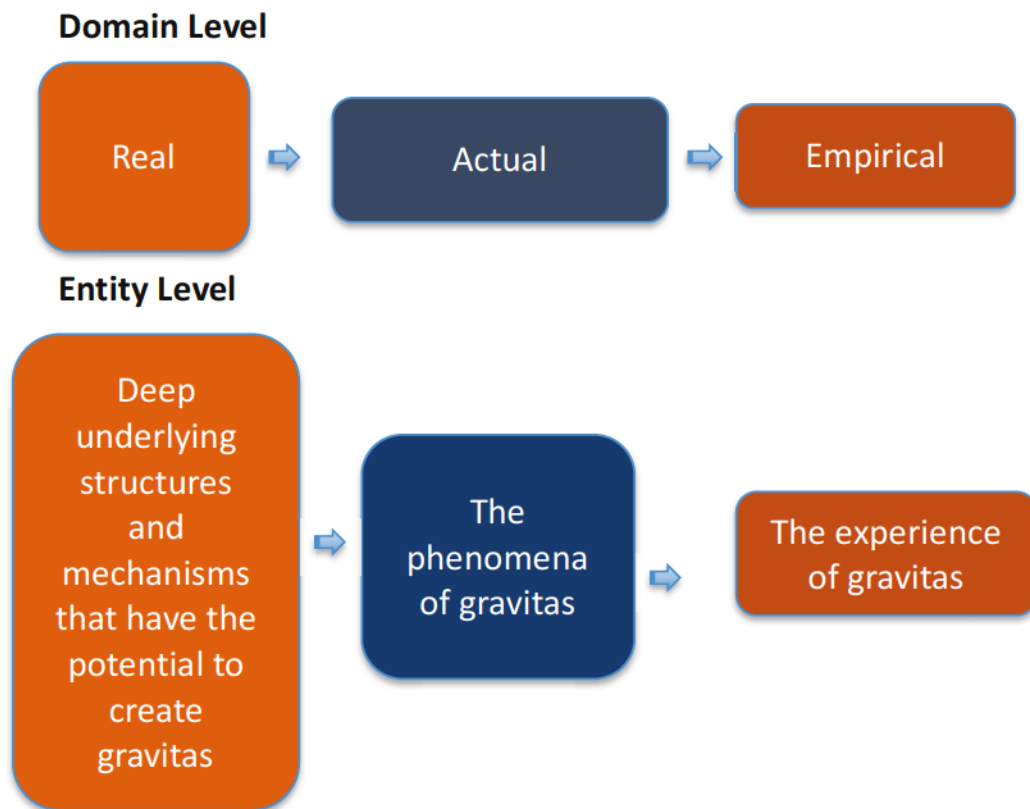
Figure 3.2: Gravitas applied to the three ontologies of critical realism (adapted from Bashkar, 1978).

Ontology is at the centre of the research paradigm for my study and the epistemology is subordinate to this. The search for causality allows me to select methods that seek to explore gravitas with participants and identify consistent patterns to enable a conceptual model to be developed. The methodological approach will be retroductive in building from an initial framework before going back to explore the framework with participants to explore underlying systems or structures that may help explain the formation of gravitas and how best to understand how it is experienced and development. This will help to develop an initial model of coaching for gravitas and enhance it in practice.

3.3 Conceptual encounter method

'Whenever we attend to a person's life, whether it be our own or another's, we find a person who is existing in the world in a certain way. We may catch ourselves, or the other, involved in some project, or in the midst of anger, or falling in love, or simply disinterested' (Kreilkamp, 1981, p. 1).

The academic literature on the phenomenon of gravitas reviewed in the preceding chapter describes where gravitas appears in translated ancient text through to its contemporary link with leadership that would seem to show that it is a quality that is both desirable and important, but has not been defined in this context. The introductory chapter demonstrates the wide reference to gravitas from journalistic and practitioner sources where it appears often a 'catch-all' term to describe a quality that is experienced by humans in many different professions and other social contexts. However, they are opinions at best that do not accommodate the background of the authors' experience with gravitas, where they first heard of the word, what their family, education or professional background is and so their references exist in the few words on a page, a website or spoken with no further deeper understanding. This study recognises that the phenomena of gravitas is therefore real both socially and ideally, as both a concept or phenomenon, and that the best way to research and explain gravitas requires a method that collaborates with the 'actors' who experience gravitas in the context of leadership. This collaborative research process will seek to explain the underlying structures, systems, and process that sit behind gravitas.

The best method to begin this exploration needs an approach that recognises my critical realist view of reality. The conceptual encounter method developed by De Rivera (1981) was a response to both the criticism of 'traditional psychology' that viewed individuals as objects of research and the humanistic type psychologies that in his view had continued to acknowledge researchers or professionals as both subjects and objects in research or other interactions.

Conceptual encounter provides a technique to map the experiences of humans to a specific emotion or concept and to capture the moments in great depth, but allows the researcher to be a part of this by sharing their own experiences, thoughts and feelings throughout. De Rivera's approach recognises that being in love or angry can mean different things to different people but that this research method can show 'precise structures for different ways of being, structures that may be profitably used to map our personal experience and that enables us to share our experience with others' (De Rivera, 1981, p.1). The concept of exploring ways of being is also similar to Seiler's (2010) description of ontological coaching, which also seeks to understand ways of being and therefore both are important for my research. Within the approach there are certain processes that are employed known as 'looking rules' that enable a systematic deep inspection into the experience so that it becomes recognisable not only to the person or persons being explored, but also to others. The cycle of the research process is a collaboration between the researcher and those that are termed 'research partners'. As each conceptual encounter takes place, the researcher shares a continually evolving abstract conceptualisation with the research partner which is taken to each of the next research partners to help them understand the concept and to see if it makes sense to them from their experience. De Rivera (1981) explains that the 'investigator' (researcher) creates a conceptualisation of the research partners' experience and looks for how close the 'fit' is. As the encounters progress the conceptualisation should become more precise.

Conceptual encounter can involve any experience, behavioural patterns, or psychological phenomenon, which has a common name (De Rivera, 1981). Gravitas is such a phenomenon and suited to this approach. Although the encounters are narrative, there is no dependency on the narrative ability of the research partners to express themselves clearly about the experience of gravitas because the researcher is able to use skills and knowledge of gravitas to help the partner recognise it. There is however, an area of caution that is only briefly referenced by De Rivera where the researcher may find themselves looking for responses to fit their own experience of gravitas. The field of self-deception is widely researched from many disciplines. Bachkirova's (2015) review of the interdisciplinary perspectives on self-deception provides suggestions from different perspectives about how to minimise the effect. However, at a practical level the most

appropriate approach is to maintain a high level of awareness and ensure that my researcher hopes and perspectives are shared with the research partners throughout the encounters. The lack of ability to describe gravitas should not restrict this as a domain of research, according to Kreilkamp (1981). This is because the researcher is able to help them become more articulate and then encourage other forms of methods to help someone describe the meaning of an experience such as gravitas by using different languages or forms of art. They go further to suggest that it could be possible to use one image to convey or evoke an experience if all partners are in agreement. Finally, the conceptual abstraction of gravitas must achieve a few important goals (De Rivera, 1981):

1. It must fit the phenomenon of gravitas.
2. It must relate to other conceptualisations, but also exclude similar phenomena.
3. It must be related to explicit experience of the research partners.
4. It must be somewhat 'elegant and parsimonious'.
5. It must fit with the different personalities and different interests of other researchers.

There are parallels between De Rivera's (1981) aim to create simple and elegant explanations and the physicists' or mathematicians' ideas of universal laws. Professor Brian Cox states in his book, 'The Human Universe', that Henry Cavendish's measurement of the force Newton's of gravity was a 'brilliant simplification', stating the quest for elegance and economy guides physicists to this day. This leads me to believe that although De Rivera and Goodman (1981) may not have described themselves as critical realists, they may well be. They were not explicit about their ontological position at the time of their original research, but both tend towards realism; they seek to understand how we experience reality, through choices that are made and the sense that they are discovering structures of experience while acknowledging their role as 'actors' in the research process. This reinforces my belief that the method is the most appropriate for my study.

3.4 Collaborative action research

This study is divided initially into two key areas. First, to explain the meaning of gravitas based on the experience of a group of research partners using a conceptual encounter approach and, second, to take the abstract concept into a model that could be built to develop gravitas through coaching. However, there is another way of viewing the study as a continuous action research process.

I had decided to use an action research process early in my work while defining the research problem. My ontology was relatively clear from the outset and consequently my mind was searching for the most appropriate method to fit my aims and objectives. At that early stage I had not found a suitable approach to describe the meaning of gravitas but had considered grounded theory integrated with action research.

Grounded theory appeared to support my aim to build and test a model of coaching for gravitas. The purpose of grounded theory is to develop a theory, especially where none exists, to explain basic social processes within the context where they take place (Starks and Trinidad, 2007). The nature of grounded theory is embedded in the data. Grounded theory and action research do have similarities, as both the understanding of a theory taking shape and the process of the collection of data emerge iteratively. However, grounded theory tends not to be participative (Dick, 2003). Since Glaser and Strauss created the approach in 1967, it has evolved greatly, leading to a difference in points of view between both in terms what constitutes a grounded theory approach. This appears to have surfaced because of the question of whether it is possible to discover true theory only from data and whether it is impossible to avoid personal reflexivity. Teram, Schachter and Stalker (2005) and Dick (2003) believe the similarities between the more recent evolution of grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss, 1988) and action research make it possible to use grounded theory as a development process within an action research cycle. However, grounded theory is not a single method but more of an approach, as is action research (Charmaz and Henwood, 2008) and therefore I believe there is a danger that the scope of this study would become too large with most of the research process devoted to developing a theory of gravitas rather than a conceptualisation of gravitas. Furthermore, I believe there

would be insufficient research into a practical and theoretical model of coaching to meet my research aims. Finally, the relative lack of participatory involvement between the researcher and research partners would miss important wider macro social contexts and the experience of the researcher to help explain gravitas. As a result, the Conceptual Encounter method rather than approach is more suitable and can be integrated into the action research approach.

Action research aims to explain, understand, or describe some aspect of social experience and to change something within the world we live (Reason and Torbert, 2001). It is also especially useful when there is no existing data and a learning intervention is part of the planned cycle of research (Cox and Patrick, 2012). Coghlan (2003), describes the impact of Kurt Lewin's action research and writes that 'the powerful notions in human systems could only be understood if one involved the members of the system into the inquiry itself'. This includes the role of the researcher who may experience as much as a transformation as the collaborating participants. Brydon-Miller, Greenwood and Maguire (2003) posit that while theory can inform practice, theory can and should evolve through practice. One of the central tenets of action research is its role to combine action and research in a specific social setting (Dickens and Watkins, 1999). An example might be participants with a shared concern or interest, or those working within a single industry or organisation, or all three. This is proposed by Reason and Bradbury as the combination between first-person and second-person inquiry. The choice to work with participants from one organisation, industry, and a shared interest is another reason why action research is the most suitable approach for this study. Refining the overall purpose of action research in relation to this study, it is helpful to consider the different roles that participants may take. Carr and Kemmis (1986) provide three levels of purpose which in turn influences the role of the participants:

1. Where the purpose of the study is to change or improve the researcher's own understanding and practice. Labelled as 'technical'.
2. Where the purpose of the study is to change or improve a group's understanding and practice within an existing system. Labelled as 'practical'.

3. Where the purpose of the study is to change the system itself where perhaps a goal is to improve the society of culture of an organisation. Labelled as emancipatory.

The role of the participant increases in terms of level of involvement. Therefore, using the labels described:

1. A technical participant may be identified as a research partner and engage with the cycles of action research. Their interest may be primarily defined by the researcher.
2. A practical participant may form part of a group of participants with shared interest equally framed by the researcher and participants. Their interest in the cycles of research may be practically- or emotionally-motivated.
3. The third type of participant relates to the emancipatory label. In this role participants may share an interest with the researcher both in the subject of the research and a wider social agenda such as organisational culture change that influences the wider system.

Cox and Cook (2010) offer a fourth application where the purpose is the change or improvement of the researcher's own understanding of the problem. This fourth purpose may sit underneath any of the other three and may be especially appropriate if the researcher is conducting a study from inside a system or organisation. This is labelled as action/learning enquiry. There are parallels again with Carr and Kemmis's (1986) descriptions and Reason and Bradbury's (2008) 3 levels of person inquiry and, therefore, I believe that this study goes beyond the first and second person and includes the third-person approach that may benefit the wider social agenda and could lead to the opportunities to improve personal growth for managers in the chosen organisation. My action research design is based on a methodology of generating 'living theories' (McNiff and Whitehead, 2011). This is in contrast to the role of spectator theories where concepts are created from observing participants. My living theory places my practitioner role at the heart of the design. At the highest level, my design of the research cycles was influenced by Coghlan and Brannick (2010) and Zuber-Skerritt's (1992) four processes that influence action: Plan, act, observe, and reflect. I refined these using a combination of Bassey's eight steps of action research and McNiff's (2002) key questions to reflect on my

role and ability to shape the actions taken. In chapter six I define my rationale for this approach in further detail.

3.5 Recruitment of participants

Participants were selected from a single organisation that agreed to take part in the study. The company, specialised in large scale highly technical operations where the dominant professions were represented from engineering backgrounds. The company employed over 50,000 people worldwide. The company had been a client of mine for over seven years and I had worked as a leadership development executive coach for five years and facilitated large group based leadership education with over 2000 managers and senior managers. All the participants were recruited according to the UREC guidelines, with an approval granted on the 7th January 2014. I wrote to the head of executive development to ask for permission to conduct research in their organisation (Appendix A) before proceeding with the recruitment of participants.

The human resource executive development function initially wrote on my behalf to all managers within a specific grade range who were based in the United Kingdom. The key criteria to be invited to participate was that all managers had to have completed the course entitled 'manager essentials', which was considered as important if managers wished to reach the highest levels within the company. It was preferable for the internal function to send out the invitations on my behalf rather than for me to do it directly as the initial email volume was in excess of 800 managers. All invited managers led a significant part of the operations of the business and led a team either directly or indirectly. Those that expressed an interest were invited to respond to me directly to preserve the anonymity in the organisation.

A total of 25 managers responded within the two-week timeframe, which was kept as a limited frame to encourage those with a motivated interest to respond quickly and facilitate the administration of identifying participants. The 25 were sent a participant information sheet (Appendix B) and those that maintained their interest responded to me again. A random number generator was used separately for male and female respondents. Six participants were selected, with the remainder informed that they may still

be invited if those selected voluntarily withdrew at any stage. Their individual profiles are described in chapter 4. In addition to the core participant recruitment, I also invited the six participants to add three of their team members, their line manager and two of their followers to be a part of the study. A total of 18 team members were sent a participant information sheet (Appendix C) to help explain what the expectations of their involvement would mean.

3.6 Multiple roles of participants

The participants undertake a variety of roles, which added to the complexity of the design and the relationships between each other. Throughout the study I collectively describe those that are part of the study as participants at a very broad level. However, as the action research process unfolds, the participants and I move into different roles, which I refer to in the study. Throughout, my primary role is a researcher, however, my secondary role is as a coach and I will make these distinctions when appropriate. In reality, when I have moved into the role of coach I also maintain a dual role as a researcher. The participants move into the role of research partner in the first action research round, as we collaboratively build the conceptual framework for gravitas. In the subsequent cycles of action research, their primary role becomes coachee, but again this merges with them being research partners during the reflection exercises. The multiple roles that the participants (including followers) and I adopt help to ensure that there is a wide multivocality to add to the quality of the research. In this sense multivocality (Hodder, 2008) allows multiple interpretations to taken into account and therefore improve the overall quality of interpretations of gravitas and its potential development through coaching.

3.7 Research process and design phases

The participants were selected and all consent forms (Appendix D and E) returned by April 2014. The process of conducting research interviews (Appendix F) began in May the same year and started with the conceptual encounter interviews. These were conducted face-to-face with each of the core six participants and two senior leaders separately. Each interview took place in a meeting room at two of their organisation's bases in cities 135 miles apart and each over 120 miles away from my base.

The first interview began with a question that asked the research partner to describe their perception of the meaning of gravitas before focusing on specific examples. In addition, I created an initial concept of gravitas, which I developed, that was guided by the literature, my professional practice, and some pilot interviews I had completed before starting my doctorate study. During the interview I added the ideas of the research partner (participant) to mine and we collaboratively began to shape the idea to build the first abstract conceptualisation of gravitas. De Rivera (1981) explains that there are a range of different ways to begin an interview, and that sometimes the patterns of experiences emerge quickly, but in other cases can take a long time to develop. He also suggested that where the patterns are not easy to identify it may become necessary to make some careful judgements. During the interviews I asked the research partners to express their views on their gravitas using grounded experience, as it is important that they move away from opinions and draw more on real experiences. The conceptual encounter process means that I took an evolved abstract conceptualisation of gravitas to each research partner. The insights continually evolve through the repeated encounters until I was satisfied that the conceptual framework of gravitas meets the five goals described earlier in the chapter. In addition, while the interviews provide important data, De Rivera (1981: pp7) also suggests that the investigator returns to 'the literature, the observations of others and self-reflection' as part of the successive encounters.

While the conceptual encounter interviews were being conducted I also arranged 18 telephone interviews (Appendix F) with the research partners' line managers and their team members. The first round of interviews is described as the first round of action research. The second, third, and fourth action research cycles capture the experience of coaching for gravitas and the reflection and insights that were used to inform the research process.

The second action research round took place one-to-one, face-to-face in the meeting rooms used for the first action research round. At the start of round two I began by sharing the final abstract conceptualisation of gravitas that was created from the conceptual encounter method. During this round I began to explore the construct markers that were used to define realities of

gravitas and how research partners compared their own behaviour to these. I also wanted to explore their personal drivers around these behaviours and used a psychodynamic approach to explore their life background and key influences to help understand these drives. At the end of the round, the partners were asked to undertake specific actions and given a research diary template (Appendix H) to record gravitas events for feedback in the next session.

A minimum of six weeks between each coaching session ensured there was enough time to practice ideas, tools and techniques, record their experiences in diary pages, and reflect on their behaviours before reporting back to me in the next session. This process was replicated until the subsequent cycles were completed.

3.7.1 Dyadic and Group Based Coaching Processes

The research design initially planned for all action research coaching sessions to be conducted one-to-one because I believed that it would allow more personal space in terms of time and privacy for me to explore the development of gravitas with each of the participants. I did not foresee any difficulties coordinating the coaching. In addition most of the empirical research discussed in the review of literature was conducted on dyadic (one to one) coaching processes. I had also explained that there was very limited empirical research into group-based executive coaching as an alternative approach. Kets de Vries (2014) went further than others to describe group based coaching research as either non existent or scarce. Some scholars, notably Ward et al (2008, 2014), Kets de Vries (2005), Brown and Grant (2010) advocated that group based coaching was preferable to one to one coaching especially when the two approaches are combined. Their argument stems from a criticism that dyadic coaching does not promote systemic factor awareness that Western (2012) would describe as micro practices and macro environmental issues. These I interpret as the organisational cultural issues, which the participants experience. Furthermore, there was a recommendation that group-based learning was suitably aligned with action learning and experiential education techniques that encourage critical reflection (Brown and Grant, 2010).

The action research approach was the process that would direct the selection of the most appropriate setting for the coaching rounds and I therefore began with dyadic relationship with each of the participants. I let the interaction and reflection cycles between each coaching round inform the approach for subsequent rounds. Although I was aware that there were potential benefits with group based coaching I also felt there were risks especially with participant trust and openness with each other and me that might potentially be an ethical risk that could lead to a form of emotional harm to the participants. The primary critique of group based coaching is that coachees' may hold back private views or place boundaries on what they wish to explore which ultimately reduces effectiveness (Muhlberger and Traut-Mattausch, 2015). However after the second action research cycle (the first round of coaching) I realised that there was a benefit to action learning in gravitas conducted in small groups of three. The primary reason for this was the benefit of group interaction in the sharing and reflection phases. The discussions on the experiences of integrating gravitas ideas into practice led naturally to reflection on professional and organisational cultural behaviours and because leadership context was important in my research it was appropriate to make the change. In addition, I learned that as we moved beyond cognitive tasks that embodiment practise required partners to observe and coach each other and action learning is fundamentally about taking action and that is both a physical and cognitive process. I discussed the option to work in small groups with each participant on the telephone and they agreed to work together for the final two coaching rounds.

The final phase in the research process was to conduct six one-to-one reflection interview with the research partners and 18 telephone interviews with the followers and leaders. The overall research process is shown in figure 3.3.

Participant Focus

| 6 Coachees | → | 2 Senior Executives | → | 60 minutes between interviews and initial abstractions |

Researcher Focus

| Share abstract ideas on gravitas | → | Identify 'fit' of core gravitas conceptualisation |

1-2 hour conceptual encounter (CE) interview exploring concrete and general experiences of gravitas starting with my initial ideas based on professional experience and review of literature

A → A → A → A → A → A → A → A

After each of the 8 CE interviews (above) the abstract conceptualisation of gravitas evolves until one conceptual 'map' of gravitas is formed

Develop the base conceptual coaching model

Data: Video each session, reflection journals between coaching and general notes

Coaching phase begins as part of the action research study

Initial 2 hour coaching session → 4 weeks → Reflection meeting with coachee → 1 Week → Refine emerging coaching model → 2 subsequent coaching cycles take place

Experience   Enquire   Examine

Follower telephone interview

Final evaluation and writing up

Figure 3.3: The research process

3.7.2 Data collection

During the first six conceptual encounter interviews I audio recorded our interactions and also captured a spider diagram and thought map to help the conceptualisation process in the moment, rather than at the end of the interview. On completion of all of the interviews, I had the six interviews transcribed so that I could check my map and look for other areas we shared that may be important so a second check with my initial abstract conceptualisation could be done.

The second round, which initiated the start of action research into coaching for gravitas, was audio and visually recorded and this was replicated in session three. The final group session of action round four was audio recorded and still photographs were taken of the group participating in key activities to demonstrate how a particular method had been developed to interpret gravitas using a colour coded system. Between each session specific tasks were set for the participants and a gravitas event diary page (Appendix H) completed. These were sent to me before each of the next coaching rounds. The reflective event diary helped the research partners to be more specific with details to share with me. The diary asked them to specifically identify events where they felt their gravitas was important but they lacked it and where they believed they had demonstrated gravitas related to the tasks I had asked them to try. The purpose of the template was to help, test, and refine the coaching model that was evolving though action learning to encourage double and triple loop learning proposed by Argyris and Schon (1996). I used an adapted version of Western's (2012) eight principles of a coaching pedagogy (Table 3.1) to help bake the learning process as part of developing a theory.

Table 3.1: Eight principles of coaching pedagogy (adapted from Western, 2012).

Eight Principles of Coaching Pedagogy	
1.	Human Experience: The coachees' (participants') experience is at the heart of the programme for coaching for gravitas. Therefore, the conceptual encounter accounts of experiences and the diary events have a priority to the coaching models and techniques used.
2.	Self-knowing: The coach must have worked on the development of themselves as well as encourage self-knowing in the coachees as part of the coaching process. Therefore, this is part of the diary reflection exercise and the first coaching round.

3. Ethics and critical thinking: The research process conforms to the ethics of research and also encourages the coachees to question their assumptions about gravitas in the workplace.

4. Learning from experience, observation and practice: The action research coaching rounds encourage learning through action during the interactions between the coach and coachee but also afterwards in the workplace.

5. Learning from each other: The process to participate in group coaching during the third and fourth coaching rounds to improve observation and reflection skills emerged from the action research cycles but was not initially planned.

6. Learning from play: The coach will develop a place where there is trust between the coachee and the coach and encourages experimentation with new ideas.

7. Robust Theory: Western (2012) describes coaching as being weak on theory and research. A contribution to theory is part of the purpose of this study.

8. Portfolio assessment: The final part of the research process asks the coachees to reflect on the process and the tools and techniques used to assess the effectiveness of coaching for gravitas.

I believe that using a pedagogical structure was important as it asks a question that precedes a theory. It asks 'what is the best approach to coaching?' As a result, I had built into the design as many opportunities to focus on each of the eight principles as possible. I also had interpreted learning from each other as learning between each research partner and I. In addition, I used Matthews (2013) three criteria to guide how to build in both body movement and cognitive processing in relation to my analysis of the importance of embodiment in practice. The first criterion was to:

1. Consciously introduce physical activity.
2. Have an equal balance of cognitive and physical activity.
3. Recognise that as the coach and researcher I had experience in physical and cognitive coaching.

In practice I found that theory could emerge from the research partners learning from each other which also helped me not being present or going down a path of self-deception.

3.7.3 Thematic analysis

The complex variety of coaching methods used through the action research cycles, along with the range of data collection methods, meant that I needed a flexible analysis tool. Braun and Clarke (2006) describe 'one of the benefits of thematic analysis is its flexibility'. The approach has been recognised as both a realist and experiential method that is suited to my research paradigm.

The key steps of thematic analysis suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) includes a set of guidelines (Table 3.2) that have been used in this study. These are:

Table 3.2: Guidelines for thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

	Phase	Description of Activity
1.	Familiarise yourself with your data:	Transcribe data where necessary, read and re-read data noting initial ideas.
2.	Generate initial codes:	Code interesting features of the data, systematically and collate codes.
3.	Search for themes:	Collate codes into potential themes.
4.	Review themes:	Generate a thematic map of the analysis.
5.	Define and name themes:	Refine the specifics of each theme, the overall story of the analysis; generate clear definitions and names for each theme.
6.	Produce thesis:	Collect vivid, compelling extracts of the data and analysis to report back coherently in relation to the research aims and objectives.

One of the reasons why I believe this approach is suited to a critical realist stance is that the themes provide a structured set of realities, from all of the four lenses identified by Fleetwood (2009). Braun and Clarke (2006) had been critical of thematic analysis not having a defined process and their six step version provides a clear approach for me to follow. Furthermore, I believe that thematic analysis is especially suited to the conceptual encounter phase because it is at this stage I need to create a set of themes that the participants will understand and recognise where they have contributed. While De Rivera (1981) does not suggest that transcribed interview analysis is a part of analysing and reflecting on the words that are used, I believe that because conceptual encounter only focuses on words, transcription is a valuable

addition to improve the quality of the research. The coaching rounds will be analysed through my notes and reviews of video recordings rather than transcribed data. This helps to widen the approaches to building a coaching pedagogy and to assess how the model of coaching for gravitas is being developed and comparing these back to the dominant themes of the model of gravitas.

3.8 Criteria of quality, reflexivity and ethics

Quality is paramount in qualitative research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed three approaches to address the issue of building trust in qualitative research. Where quantitative methodologies sought to address validity, reliability, and generalisability, qualitative research should aim for credibility, dependability, and conformability and transferability. Credibility is the degree to which the findings make sense. Dependability and conformability relate to how transparent and reflexive the research process is. Transferability asks if there is enough information to judge applicability to other settings. Eliott, Fischer and Rennie (1999) suggest that this can be achieved by ensuring that three areas are sufficiently explained and justified:

1. Contribution: Ensuring that the value and relevance of the research evidence is made to theoretical and practical domains.
2. Credibility: How plausible and defensible my research claims are.
3. Rigour: Ensuring a clear audit trail exists, my reflexivity is transparent, and that the ethics are adhered to ensuring safe conduct and that my decisions are appropriate and clearly explained.

I have ensured that my method meets Eliott *et al.*'s (1999) three areas by:
1. Using professional, practising leaders and followers operating with live issues while I relate their contribution to theoretical coaching approaches and ensuring I relate my findings back to my research goals.
2. Using widely researched action research cycle theory with a clear approach that is used consistently with critical thinking and reflection.
3. Keeping records of all of the interactions and data analysis processes and ensuring those most relevant data trails are recorded in the appendices of the thesis for scrutiny.

My critical realist stance is the central ontology that has guided my choice of research methods, the decisions I have taken during the process, and guided my

analysis lenses using thematic analysis. However, I recognise that the range of criteria to judge quality in qualitative research appears large and differs between some scholars. Therefore, I have selected an approach (Tracy, 2010, p.42) which claims to 'create a parsimonious set of universal criteria for qualitative quality that still attends to the complexity of the qualitative landscape', which is described by Tracy (2010). Tracy's eight criteria appear to be the most appropriate for my study. The criteria are:

1. Choosing a worthy topic that is relevant, timely, significant, and interesting.
2. Conducting my research with rich rigour in terms of my data collection and analysis process.
3. Being self-reflexive about my values, biases, and inclinations with transparency about my methods and challenges.
4. My research is credible with thick descriptions of detail and explanation of tacit knowledge and a clear account of the multi-vocality of my sample.
5. The research is resonant to a variety of audiences.
6. Making a significant contribution to coaching theory and practice.
7. My research ethics are sound.
8. My overall study has meaningful coherence and achieves what it set out to achieve.

I prefer Tracy's (2010) criteria because they include more detail than the others I encountered which I believe is important for perspectives of both qualitative scholars, but also reviews of those with a preference for positivist research approaches.

My central role as a professional researcher and professional coach has been explained throughout the study as has my interest in the subject of gravitas. I have also positioned myself as a second and third-person action researcher to clearly demonstrate my reflexivity. My awareness of my reflexivity was a part of the process of this research and I addressed this using Finlay's (2011) five levels of reflexivity: strategy, contextual-discursive, embodied, relational, and ethical. At the strategic level I was conscious of my own experiences leading action learning processes with groups and recognised the benefits of my preference for this and the challenges of this approach when designing my research methodology. The situational context of using an organisation that was also a client of mine and recognising their culture allowed me to consciously process the contextual-discursive part of reflexivity. My research intentionally incorporated the connection between the body and the mind

and therefore embodied reflexivity was very important to my study. The fourth level is relational and it was important for me to critically reflect on my dual role as a researcher and coach. Lastly, I was working with people who took a personal risk to share their experiences with me as well as others who were evaluating their work and therefore I was careful to follow ethical research guidelines. The permission to conduct research (Appendix A) and the participant information sheets (Appendices B and C) stressed the voluntary nature of participation and the freedom to withdraw at any time. The anonymity and privacy of the data was retained in accordance with university policy on academic integrity.

I was conscious that there may have been a desire for me to find something 'real' about gravitas that was unique and profoundly interesting and that I might therefore search for data rather than stay in the moment and analyse what is really there. However, I believe that being true to my ontology and being rigorous with my methods of data collection and analysis I was able to maintain the quality that Tracy (2010) and other scholars describe.

3.9 Summary

This chapter provides a description of the steps I have taken based upon the overall research aim and objectives as well as the body of literature introduced and reviewed in the opening two chapters. The research design was undertaken with a transparent view of my reflexivity process and with detailed attention to quality. I intended this to show how the gap in coaching theory and roles of gravitas in leadership at a personal and social level has been addressed through a rigorous process. It provides the basis for the subsequent analysis in the next chapters and overall findings of the study. The following chapters are organised to show each of the four action learning rounds separately. The fifth chapter will describe the conceptual encounter interview process and how this led to the creation of the initial conceptualisation of gravitas for the leaders interviewed. The sixth chapter will reflect on how the model of gravitas informed the development of a model of coaching for gravitas to be used during the next three rounds of coaching. Chapters seven and eight discuss the group coaching phase with a summary of key findings, while chapter nine discusses the conclusions of the study and contribution to theory and practice.

Chapter 4: A conceptual encounter with gravitas: The first collaborative action research cycle

4.1 Introduction to the structure of findings

In this chapter I begin with a description and analysis of my action research approach to working with the research partners. Following the opening section, I describe the first collaborative action research round, which begins with the preparation for the conceptual encounter interviews under the heading of introductory concepts of gravitas. The preparation explains how and where my experience as a coach with gravitas has influenced my initial thoughts on a model of gravitas. It describes how this shapes the strategic and contextual-discursive reflexivity of my approach in terms of my prior knowledge about the organisation where the participants work and how my expectations have influenced the language I have used. During the section I present two initial concepts that I had developed in the previous one, particularly influencing the approach to the conceptual encounter interviews. I next explain how my interpretation of the data during all of the four action research rounds is processed in four different sub cycles that I define and explain because they become part of the conceptual encounter process. Finally, I refer to the two types of looking lenses that guide what I see and hear from the methodology chapter, referencing Fleetwood (2009) and Bashkar's (1978) stratified realities and domains of realities. Individual experiences of gravitas vary between participants but remain real to them. Therefore, I needed to understand what structures support these experiences and identify common patterns to help define the phenomenon of gravitas.

4.2 Action research approach

Participation in action research differs from most other approaches to research because it is based on reflection, data collection, and actions that aim to improve the social environment where people live. In this case the social environment is the business where the participants work. Rather than an external researcher evaluating others, action research supports the idea that real experience can be the basis of knowledge and that experiential learning can result in high quality changes in professional coaching practice. The collaborative nature of action research is the equal status that the participant (coachees) and coach take so that joint self-

reflective inquiry can improve practice by relating the experiences to real situations in which they both will work. McNiff and Whitehead (2011, p.38) state that:

"Each person asks 'how do I improve what I am doing for my own and others benefit'"

Although the reference to 'I' is legitimate in action research, the question of who actually evaluates the data shifts towards the 'I' in relation to others and making judgements about oneself and the participants (McNiff and Whitehead, 2011). The cycle of action and reflection is both purposeful in design, but also a skill set that is actively encouraged so that ultimately in the coaching relationship, the participants feel as though they have control and almost reach a stage of being able to coach themselves.

The participants are required to both assess the evolution of the initial coaching model throughout the face-to-face interventions and actively practise techniques to evaluate the growth of their gravitas. Their purpose is to enable action and the continuous reflection cycles serves as the means by which we decide what actions should take place. The cycles resemble a continuous rollercoaster effect.

The specific action research approach I undertook combined a mixed set of experiential paradigms. Coghlan and Brannick (2010) explain that while all action research is participatory in nature, participatory action research (PAR) is usually focused outside of the context of an organisation and is not therefore the way to describe my approach. The coaching and organisational context I used is more closely aligned to the action learning paradigm (Revans, 1982 and 1988), action science (Argyris 1993, 2004; Friedman and Rogers, 2008) and the co-operative inquiry approach (Reason 1988, 1999; Heron and Reason, 2008).

I use the three processes that Revans (1982) described as central to action learning and cited in Coghlan and Brannick (2010) and have adapted these to:

1. A process of enquiry into the phenomenon of gravitas, its history and the contextual problem posed for developing gravitas in leaders.
2. Action learning as the approach in which the phenomenon of gravitas and problem of defining and developing gravitas is explored and hopefully resolved through cycles of action and reflection.

3. A group based approach through participant engagement that enables each participant and the researcher to critically reflect on the process and themselves to ultimately learn how coaching for gravitas may be possible.

Coghlan and Brannick (2010) refer to this as engaging in real issues for managers learning in action.

The action science paradigm reflects the approach I took to design the initial coaching model paying reference to the theories in use described by McNiff and Whitehead (2011), and the Model I and II cognitive processes that reflect individual approaches to reflect in action (Argyris and Schon, 1996). My intent was to ensure that the coaching model would encourage trust and openness, which is congruent with the Model II theory in use approach to build a deeper quality of reflective learning rather than the more defensive closed processes of model I behaviour.

The last paradigm to influence my research is cooperative inquiry. The reason for this is around Heron and Reason's (2008) description of:

'Action research in which all participants work together in an inquiry group as co-researchers and co-subjects'

In summary, I would describe my approach as a blend of all three and refer to this as collaborative action research (CAR).

At a higher level I had also explained that overall my approach was influenced by Coghlan and Brannick (2010). This is because as the central researcher, while I am engaged with collaborative inquiry with the other participants, I am also required to step back from the action processes to construct the research process and design, to plan the action needed to enable the research to progress, take action in the moment while engaging with the participants and evaluate the action through all of the cycles and the finding of the research overall.

Throughout the cycles of action research, I employ four modes of thinking to improve the quality of the reflection and insight process so that they continually shape subsequent cycles over the 12-month period. The advantage of the full range of looking lenses, as I referred to them as, is that it enabled me and my research partners to be able to:

1. Be emergent (Inductive).
2. Be reflective (Retroductive).
3. Test ideas (Deductive).
4. Step away (Abductive).

They are not a seamless linear set of steps in practice as they are both cyclic and often, even with just one research partner, occurring at the same time at multiple levels. I have referred to these four looking lenses based on my assessment of how cycles of action research take place in practice. The whole research approach is built mostly around emergent thinking as part of qualitative research. However, rethinking what is emerging is a part of action research as is understanding why ideas are emerging, which I describe as retroductive. As a result of asking why and how ideas emerge, I reform my view on both the conceptual framework of gravitas and the model of coaching for gravitas, and reassess these through the diary reflection exercises that participants use during the coaching rounds. Once a complete cycle is complete I am able to step back and ask what else I am missing, or what the participants are missing, and ensure that this is integrated into the next phase of action research. This balance between emergent theory and practice with re-testing those ideas fits with my stance as a critical realist and therefore I believe this is an accurate way to describe the research cycle process.

4.3 Introductory concepts of gravitas

My 'living theories' approach to collaborative action research cycles began with an initial concept of gravitas based on my experience and review of literature. The methodology that I have adopted requires a collaborative approach with my research partners. However, the process begins with a concept based on my previous professional experience as a coach and educator. As a result, from the outset I was able to bring into the conceptual encounter process previous ideas about the language and methods of coaching for gravitas from a practical perspective.

I initially began with a high level visualisation of a two-dimensional concept of key elements that contribute to an individual's gravitas. This, however, had not been built collaboratively with others that I had coached before, but had evolved through nine years of work as a coach and educator around the world with clients who wished to develop gravitas or aspects of gravitas. In addition, I had designed and collected

data from questionnaires with 50 practising leaders in various professions including teaching, business, the arts, and sports worlds prior to the start of my doctorate study to assess whether the labels I used were appropriate. Figure 4.1 shows my perception that gravitas is concerned with an individual's credibility and communication style underpinned by their level of confidence.
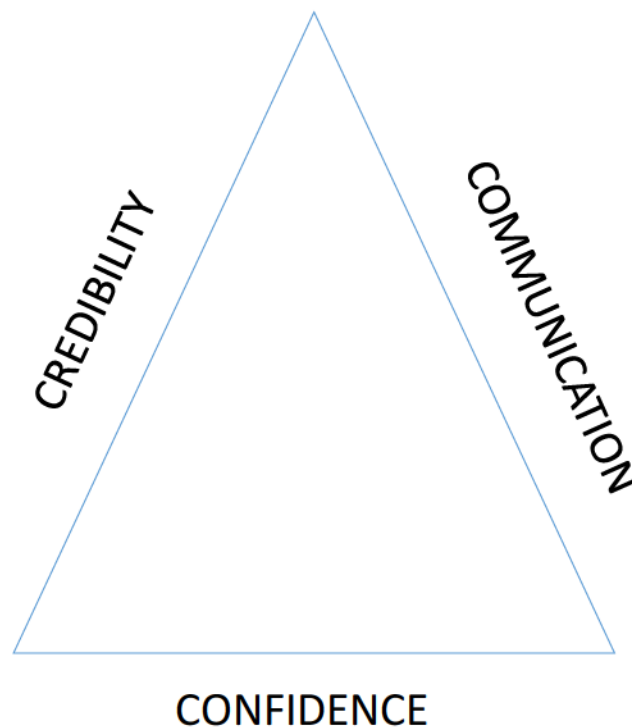
Figure 4.1: Three sides of gravitas.

The advantage of such a simple description from a coaching perspective was that it allowed me to focus on key areas where I felt individuals could learn to improve their skills and perception of gravitas without being overwhelmed by the apparent complexity of gravitas as a whole. I felt there was a potential link between the three elements of rhetoric and my three elements of gravitas, which both had roots in the history of the Roman Empire. Rhetoric has been defined as the art of persuasive discourse (Cockroft and Cockroft, 2005; Wales, 2001) and is widely described through references to Aristotle as a means of persuasion using: Ethos (persuasion through personality and stance); logos (persuasion through reasoning); and pathos (persuasion through the arousal of emotion). What appealed to me about the relationship between rhetoric and gravitas was that rhetoric was perceived as a skill that could be learned and gravitas required a situational awareness. Where gravitas differed to me however was the power of silence and how individuals needed to

control themselves and adapt to situations quickly. Conceptually, gravitas was more than an approach to communication, but I did perceive it as a quality that influenced others just as rhetoric was defined. Similarly, this reflected the literature on gravitas and the associated concepts where leadership is defined as a means of influencing others.

Communication was an important dimension of gravitas, but I believe it needed to be underpinned by a high degree of self-confidence and backed up with credibility in the eyes of the followers. Confidence could be observed, heard, felt, and experienced by others. It was in part derived by a level of self-belief, reinforced by experience and comfort with the situational context. Confidence is a complex psychological state and I recognised it in the literature on charisma (Shamir *et al.*, 1998) where followers perceive confidence as an important quality in leadership. In addition I had described how medical doctors should demonstrate gravitas to promote confidence in patients, therefore it may be important not only to have self-confidence, but to instil confidence in others.

It was difficult in my experience to have gravitas without credibility. Credibility may be earned or apparent. Where it was earned there was experience to draw on and wisdom to share. If it was apparent, others could visually see a perceived credibility and, together with confidence, this could be embodied so that it was visually and emotionally apparent to others. I also felt it linked with one's ethos of personality or character.

The final element of the concept was how one communicates. Communication could be either verbal or non-verbal and included not just stylistic characteristics but the skills of decision-making, clarity of thought, and the tactics to convey ideas. The ability to think logically and create action (logos) or to inspire others through emotion (pathos) appeared to have parallels again with my early thinking. Indeed, Antonakis *et al.* (2008) looked at whether charisma could be taught focused entirely on perceptions of communication and I believe there would be parallels with gravitas.

Although the triangular concept of gravitas might potentially 'fit' De Rivera's (1981) first criteria for a conceptual abstract, or at least be described as parsimonious, it definitely could not exclude other similar phenomenon, especially charisma. It lacked depth and flexibility to situations and individual differences and therefore I moved towards a more practical concept informed by the review of literature.

4.4 The initial concept of gravitas

Once I had started my doctoral study into gravitas, I continued to explore the range of elements that appeared to define gravitas and also allow me to describe each element in more detail. The triangular diagram evolved into a grid shape to help conceptualise gravitas further and allow individuals to plot the movement of their gravitas to differing situational contexts. I added a further dimension of control to the first three in the triangle concept representing the ability to control oneself and others.

The fourth element of control was conceived from the literature review where leadership and the act of leading was summarised as an ability to influence others (Yukl, 2002 Bass and Bass, 2008). Rather than use the word 'influence', I decided to use the word control 'because' I felt it would be easier to remember four labels beginning with the same letter. I also felt that it had the advantage of reflecting the literature discussing the inner control of the alignment of moods and values to outer expression (Avolio and Gardner, 2005; Harter, 2002; Erickson, 1995). The advantage of including the movement of personal gravitas also served to enable individuals' to physically stand in a grid drawn on the floor to demonstrate their understanding of their perspectives in differing situations. In addition, and more importantly, I felt this started to suggest that it was not whether one had or did not have gravitas, but a shift towards a concept of differing amounts of situational gravitas in the same way that Erickson (1995) referred to achieving levels of authenticity as an associated concept. One possible reassuring aspect of my second model is that it shared some of the key qualities that Kets de Vries (2015) had offered as his opinion 16 months after my research as conducted. A possible final advantage of the later model is that it enabled more than one person to plot their gravitas at the same time and could encourage a group-based approach to coaching which might accommodate the role of followers.

Figure 4.2 below shows the grid and a simple scale from low to high across four axes. I had added a fourth dimension of 'control' because I had come to the conclusion that having gravitas required a degree of self-control and had a controlling quality for followers. I had been tempted to try to define each of the four dimensions in great detail but believed that this was a suitable starting point to engage with the research partners. I would be able to test the fit of the grid and bring in my thoughts

on what each term meant more appropriately through the conceptual encounter process.
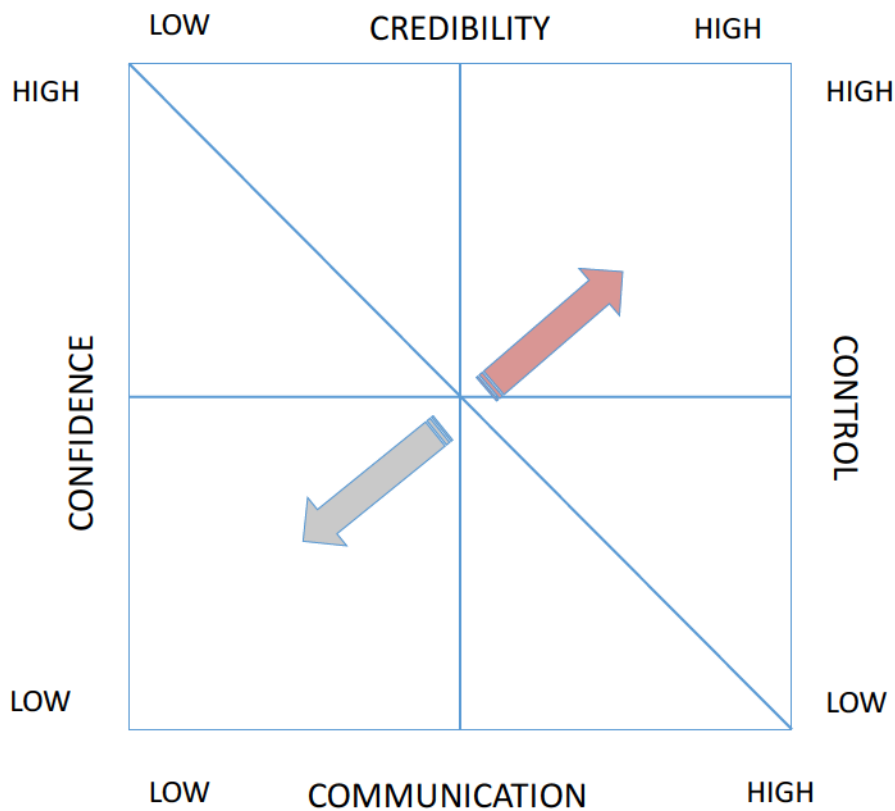
Figure 4.2: The four quadrants of gravitas.

This initial grid-shaped conception of gravitas was introduced into the conceptual encounter interviews to help test the 'fit' with the participants and then allow them to shape a model for themselves with my guidance and interpretation. In the next section I describe the process of interviewing the participants using the conceptual encounter method and introduce the core participant profiles. Finally, the conceptualisation of gravitas is discussed and how this leads towards an integrated model of coaching for gravitas.

4.5 A conceptual encounter with gravitas: Overall process

The methodological approach allowed the research participants to challenge my assumptions and experiences of gravitas to help shape an abstract conceptualisation to be used in the coaching cycles. The development of the model is iterative through

constant refining of the core concepts of gravitas through the interview process until no further changes are required.

The process I used had six key stages:
1. Create an initial model of gravitas based on my prior experiences.
2. Explore the research partners' perceptions and experience of gravitas and introduce my conceptual framework to the first research partner.
3. Refine the framework based on the first research partner's contribution.
4. Continue the cycle with a further seven research partners whereby the framework continues to evolve and share the overall output with all of the partners for agreement or changes.
5. Analyse the framework after thematic analysis of transcripts and make sense of the overall contributions to create a completed abstract conceptualisation of gravitas that fits the five goals of conceptual encounter described in the methodology.
6. Integrate the conceptual framework of gravitas into a model of coaching for gravitas.

The role of the research partners was critical and they were required to have an interest in the phenomenon of gravitas in a leadership context. In addition, they would need to be practising leaders with followers who were able to commit to a 12-month programme of action research. The participants have a level of involvement that appears to translate to the emancipatory label (Kemmis, 1986) whereby they may ultimately be able to contribute to change within the wider organisational culture they represent. However, within the scope of the time frame of the study they are more aligned to the practical label and emotionally-motivated to be involved. The conceptual encounter method also aligns with the first of the eight principles of coaching pedagogy that seeks to understand human experience (Western, 2012). The six core participants were joined by two senior executives from the same organisation to provide a wide-ranging set of experiences and perspectives on gravitas. The two executives were not part of the ongoing coaching cycles, however, they were able to provide a top leader view on the form of gravitas they experience and may seek in others. In addition, their inclusion respects the literature review on the concept of followership in a way that other empirical research on authenticity and charisma had not done, ensuring followers are represented above and below the reporting line of the core group.

I have changed the names of the six core participants to protect their identity. The participant profiles are summarised in Table 4.1 as follows:

Table 4.1: Core Participant Profiles.

	Mike	35-years-old, engineer. 10 years as a programme manager. 5.5 years in current organisation.
	Rick	38-years-old. 10 years as an engineer and engineering management. 17 years in current organisation.
	John	25-years-old, engineer. Joined as a graduate and now a high potential leader.
	Rebecca	34-years-old, 12 years' professional experience, purchasing leader.
	Danielle	32-years-old. Business leader joined as graduate and now a high potential leader.
	Kirsty	29-years-old. 11 years in current organisation, 6 as a programme manager.

The two most senior leader profiles that participated in the conceptual encounter process only are summarised in Table 4.2 below:

Table 4.2: Senior Leader Profiles

	Gloria	55 years-old. 17 years' experience in current organisation, coach and mentor. PhD.
	Roger	48-years-old. 25 years' experience in the organisation. Engineer. PhD.

I purposefully selected an equal number of male and female participants because I wished to gather experiences from both genders as the review of literature had suggested there may be different perspectives on gravitas from men and women (Broussine and Fox, 2002).

The conceptual encounter interviews took place between 4-8th April 2014. De Rivera (1981) suggested that interviews are conducted in close succession with sometimes just an hour or two between each one. They took place in meeting venues at each

participant's place of work in two cities in the UK. Each interview lasted between one-and-a-half to two hours and was audio recorded. I had signed permission from the participants to audio record their responses (Appendix D). During the interviews I captured the participants' responses in a visual spider diagram (Appendix G) to compare with the transcribed audio recordings afterwards (Appendix I). In addition to the spider diagrams I also had a drawing of the initial concept of gravitas and used flip charts to explore their experiences in relation to the drawing to help shape the abstract conceptualisation through each consecutive interview. The final conceptualisation was discussed with the Roger, the last of the eight interviewees, and was then sent to the previous seven research partners for their agreement or amendments. In the next section I describe the conceptual encounter interviews and the themes around gravitas that emerged for them.

4.6 The conceptual encounter interviews: An emergent framework of gravitas

The first interview commenced with Rick and the process began with capturing his perspective on the meaning of gravitas. His reply to the question in the opening minutes of the interview provides an example of what he perceived as the most distinguishing feature of gravitas. He stated:

" For me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but while saying the least … because I always try and think these things down to the simplest thing and it's just you don't have to talk all the time or the loudest but that when you do speak, your voice is the loudest."

Rick characterised his gravitas experiences through the following examples of where he felt he had his own gravitas or where he had observed it with others:

- Not to be a reactionary person or impatient but to exhibit a calmness.
- Being right and correct rather than wrong.
- Linked to getting things done and being action focused.
- Use people's names when working with them and focusing attention.
- Not always needing to be the centre of attention but finding that you are.
- Being able to get your point across.
- Able to build rapport quickly.
- Being comfortable not making assumptions.
- Not worried about making mistakes.

- Being open to feedback.
- Recognition that situations will always influence gravitas so that you can have in one environment but quickly lose it in another.
- Gravitas can be learned.
- Gender would not influence gravitas.

I was careful to ensure that Rick related them to his experiences and for it to not just be an opinion or guesswork and as the interview progressed this became easier for him to relate to. The construct markers that I mapped out against my initial four of confidence, credibility, communication, and control widened to include:

- Comfort.
- Judgement.
- Action.
- Character.
- Passion.
- Self-awareness.
- Authenticity.
- Openness.

These are highlighted in the coding sheet in Appendix J and show in the comments column where there is also a reference to my summary of the words used and the page number in the translated text. For example, I refer to the construct marker 'judgment' noting in the comments column that this relates to 'getting things right, not wrong', indicating that this is in page 2 of the transcript in Appendix I.

The area of authenticity was interesting to me because Rick suggested that sometimes his gravitas was reduced if he were being authentic. He explained that in some cases being authentic meant saying he did not like a particular person or situation, but that it would be unhelpful or damaging or unacceptable in his organisation. This is reflected in the criticism of authenticity (Eagly and Carli, 2007; Gardiner, 2011) in the review of literature. However, in some cases being authentic was helpful when recognising one's own feelings or limitations, therefore it was initially kept in the themes initially.

The process of capturing these themes took place during the interview and directly afterwards before a full transcription was possible to check omissions or mistakes. At this stage I had a set of themes and continued to work with a two-dimensional grid with the themes around it; it was not a detailed framework but I intended to explore with the next participants how these compared with their experiences of gravitas.

Danielle was interviewed following my interview with Rick. Her gravitas experiences (Appendix G) shaped the conceptual framework and enabled me to challenge the concepts that Rick had described. The themes that I captured that were different to Rick's were:

- To be trusted.
- Smartly dressed, clean, and polished.
- To have no barriers and be approachable and warm.
- Have humility.
- To be reflective.
- Not to be arrogant.
- To come across more like a 'swan' appearing calm on the surface but working hard below.
- Compared gravitas with leading rather than presence which she described as 'commanding a room'.
- Be someone others learn from.

There was far more time spent discussing where confidence emerges for her, and how she had to prove to herself she deserved to be where she was, and how she tried to convey gravitas to herself and others. The most significant difference I found was that she related gravitas to warmth and approachability, and not with Rick's view on being right or correct when leading. I also found that Rick had related more of his experiences to him feeling as though he had gravitas, but with Danielle she observed it more often in other people. The themes that had come from the first interview were still relevant, but I added three more to include:

- Image.
- Warmth.
- Approachable.

These themes seemed to reflect the discussion because they were more concerned with how she observed others rather than herself.

Rebecca was the third person I interviewed. She initially struggled to understand the emerging concept of gravitas because although she had been motivated to be involved in the research, she felt she did not have any prior perception of gravitas. She related it strongly to presence and commanding space, but during the interview started to associate it strongly with confidence and communication. Her description of experiences was similar to Danielle's in relation to her need to convey confidence, especially to men, and felt a lot of the perception of confidence would come through the way she communicated. The other aspect of her experiences with her new-found understanding of gravitas was that she also described it in others rather than herself. However, at one point she sat back in her chair and appeared to have an 'a-ha' moment when she added that she had experienced her own gravitas. In her past as a Brownie leader she had led a group of 'rangers' on an expedition in New Zealand. She recalled feeling totally in control and organised with everyone listening and watching her and that she felt calm. I added a new theme of 'preparedness' to the list of concepts around the model, but I wanted to start to explore how the themes connected soon once the list appeared to be exhausted. I was also able to recognise that there was an anxiety around an absence of gravitas and that the type of situations could be categorised more clearly.

John was interviewed at the end of the same day and provided rich examples and experiences to help develop the conceptual framework. His additional thoughts were:

- Gravitas is a felt experience and a felt quality.
- That there was a physicality to gravitas, and while initially suggesting he felt it with other if they were tall, changed his mind when he described many others he had met who weren't, but still conveyed gravitas.
- It was not a set of born traits, but is learned and developed through life. It could also be coached to accelerate it.
- With gravitas you don't let situations control you, you control them and yourself.
- You need to be situationally aware.
- Sometimes a situation or the building you are in has gravitas.

John was relatively new to leading people and had been a high achiever through his earlier work and education. He led a large team and had in the past been an assistant to one of the most senior leaders in the organisation. He therefore had many examples of leading with or without gravitas and his own frustrations building gravitas with others, being relatively youthful compared to his followers.

Mike was the fifth person to be interviewed and this was conducted two days after John so there was some extra time to refine my diagrammatic thoughts on the conceptual framework of gravitas. The conceptualisation at this stage had created some core themes and other elements that would each contribute. In addition, I was beginning to categorise the situational forces in each of them that I felt needed to fit somewhere. Mike's key additions were:

- Gravitas is a magnetism that others feel around you.
- It is a greater depth of someone.
- It is connected to the art of leading others.
- Gravitas was the legacy created after leaving the situation.
- To create the feeling in followers that they are special.
- A very relaxed quality.
- Creates confidence in your followers.
- Described the sea as a metaphor for gravitas.
- Compared gravitas with presence, referencing presence as in the moment and gravitas as deeper, relational and created over a longer period of time.

The elements that contributed to each theme were labelled as construct markers and they started to take a clearer shape.

Kirsty was the last of the six core participants to complete the interview. Her experiences I noticed matched some of those of the other two women I interviewed. She described where she became frustrated at not having sufficient self-belief to lead and wanted gravitas to help build real confidence and her self-belief. In a similar way to Rebecca and Danielle, she also strongly associated gravitas with warmth and approachability and described a key mentor to her that created this effect. The constructs of confidence and credibility seemed to be more important to the women than to the men. However, all participants had agreed they were key to gravitas.

The last two interviews were conducted with two more senior leaders, as I wanted to get a different perspective from the core group who would hierarchically report up to them. They both agreed with the shape of the framework and the key construct markers, but added that the organisational culture of their business and the male dominated workforce was possibly a reason for the need for self-belief and confidence that had been stressed by the women. These were important structural realities for me that I categorised as social realities.

4.7 Conceptual encounter analysis and final conceptual framework

The concept of gravitas was built around eight interviews with the action research participants. In total I collected fifteen hours of audio recordings and the six core participant interviews were transcribed along with the notes I took during each interview. While the interview was taking place, I captured the map of experiences on a spider diagram. At the end of the day I listened to the audio recording to make sure I had not missed anything. I sent the audio recording to a professional transcriber and was able to compare the written version to the audiotape for accuracy.

I used Braun and Clarke's (2006) first five phases of thematic analysis to help refine the shape of the concept and to ensure that I had not missed any significant data while working through each of the eight interviews. The final concept was sent to each participant to ensure there was agreement.

The process I used is described as:
1. Transcribe each audio recording, and review the notes I have taken on the spider diagrams. Relate the initial ideas to the concept of gravitas that I shared during the interview where the participants had been invited to modify or accept an aspect of it.
2. Create a set of codes, using letters and numbers to relate to the most interesting themes and features in the data.
3. Collate the themes and sub themes that resonate most strongly with gravitas.
4. Check back the themes against the initial two steps to create a 'map' of gravitas.
5. On-going analysis of themes and refine key sub-theme labels and the definition of each so that they contribute to the overall story of gravitas as a conceptual abstract for use in the coaching model.

Appendix J shows an example of the theme coding process from the transcripts and the notes that I used to analyse the data. From the beginning I emphasised that I needed concrete examples and experiences. These concrete experiences are, in essence, the participants' realities so that I can start to build a picture of the most essential elements of gravitas and the stratified realities that add towards these. The participants are in effect describing to me the three domains of reality referred to in the methodology (Bashkar, 1978). Their experience provides an empirical perspective of gravitas for them, in turn this contributes towards the actual domain of defining gravitas and ultimately I hope to understand the deeper underlying structures that have the potential to create gravitas. While the examples are important, my role was not to analyse these experiences so that I understood them in depth, but to make sure that the examples of concepts relating to gravitas are clear and that they can see how they also contribute to the shape of the overall conceptualisation.

While I wanted the participants to be aware of my thoughts, I also wanted them to speak freely and without bias during the early interview stages. My contextual-discursive reflexivity is clear as I engage with sharing my views and my cultural influences on my language, but also become relational as I start to encourage them to take personal risks with what they share with me and me with them (Finlay, 2001).

I created coding sheets (Appendix K) to help record what appears to be important answers to my questions and then began to search for recurring themes. Those themes contribute to a story of gravitas for each participant and I can then label and define them before checking through my data again for consistency or areas I have missed.

4.7.1 Analysis of the core themes

Four core themes consistently emerged from the interviews; confidence, credibility, communication, and control. Although these formed part of my initial framework, they were also the themes that dominated the examples of gravitas in leadership shared with me by each of the research partners. From the overall analysis of the conceptual encounter process, it appears that every person's understanding of gravitas is slightly different depending on their core qualities and weaknesses. The challenge therefore was to look for themes that consistently overlapped and mapped again the experiences of gravitas. In the review of literature, Conte and Novello (2008) had

suggested that confidence was important for leaders and that they should project gravitas. The three women interviewed had expressed a difficulty with their own self-belief, but this appeared to relate more to apparent credibility than confidence, based on their stories. All of the participants expressed that this was especially important when building gravitas with more senior leaders than themselves. The two senior leaders, Gloria and Roger, also acknowledged the challenge of a lack of self-belief, but for them it was connected to being more courageous and being prepared to speak their mind. In addition, Gloria had described examples of leaders with gravitas who were able to instil confidence and self-belief in their followers. They also felt that other leaders with gravitas were more positive in attitude and could create 'micro climates' with others that encouraged people to act. However, in general although their experiences with gravitas were different they supported the analysis we had co-developed.

I had started with the two dimensional grid with four sides labelled as confidence, communication, credibility, and control. What surprised me was that the final conceptualisation retained these labels. On reflection I think that is part of the difficulty entering the conceptual encounter interviews with an initial framework on which to base the interviews. I think the participants tended to anchor on these labels, however they were also borne out of experience and the literature review, therefore I believe there is quality to the overall conceptualisation and the suggestions De Rivera (1981) proposed where I would move between the literature, observation, and the interviews between each encounter. The real development was the shift towards being able to describe these elements through different construct markers and relate these to their experiences of gravitas. The concept of gravitas had two other aspects that distinguished it from authentic and charismatic leadership. Gravitas is a quality of the person and a perception of others. This is rather like viewing an inner and outer gravitas. It is a felt quality whereas authenticity and charisma appear to be defined through the perception of others. The importance of distinguishing gravitas from associated phenomena was an important goal for De Rivera (1981), therefore it was an important point to ensure the quality of the conceptual framework.

Two further themes also emerged that seemed to permeate through each of the other four core themes. The first related to how embodiment was an important factor for appearing either confident, credible, communicating effectively, and having control. The second was the importance of the changing situation where leaders

operated. I had heard stories from each participant about their perceptions of others and themselves with gravitas and asked them to describe what gravitas looked, sounded, and felt like to them. I also heard stories where gravitas was lacking when it would be needed. There were also forms of gravitas anxiety where each worried about a lack of one or more of the elements of gravitas. I had described that the fifth stage of the analysis of the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006) was to reengage with an on-going analysis of the themes. It was this constant reanalysis that led me to identify the two new core themes. For example, on Rick's coding sheet in Appendix I, I make no reference to Somatic Embodiment but on the sixth coding sheet for Kirsty I add embodiment for the first time. My reanalysis of Rick's initial coding sheet cites 'comfortable' as a theme and Rick's words, 'he just stood out'. My reengagement with the transcript on p.212 records a wider description citing:

'there was relatively little nervousness about him, skittishness, so he's very stable and settled and he was standing upright and he was making eye contact with people, all the classic things that are all trained to do and we all forget to do when were feeling nervous and skittish'

Later he added, 'he already he was literally heads and shoulders taller than everybody else'. However he also referenced later someone physically quite different that he worked with,

'I think he described himself to me as looking rather like a rat....he was very much a huge character and he never dressed particularly well because these types don't, not tall, not imposing, fairly quiet voice as well and he definitely had gravitas'

At the time I recorded the theme of 'character' to the last description and on the spider diagram in Appendix G I also used the words 'body size', 'ease', 'posture', and 'stability'. In the second interview coding sheet (Appendix I) I add 'demeanour' and in the fourth coding the themes of 'energy' and 'physicality' but as the interviews moved from the first to final ones I noticed the continued theme of the bodily side of gravitas and chose a new core theme somatic embodiment.

The core theme of situational agility also emerged through the reanalysis of data and had not stood out to me initially. In Rick's example I had not identified any initial theme of the situation but the transcript revealed more to me later. Rick states'

'he wasn't in anyway impressive as an individual, which makes you think that times, gravitas, you can exhibit it very heavily in one direction but then completely fail in a different scenario or setting'

By the fourth interview I have recorded the theme of control next to the meaning of situation and situational awareness. I found again that it can take a complete reanalysis of the data before a core theme is clear and again the final example of situational awareness was not clear until later.

The complexity of the conceptual framework meant that I needed a way of graphically representing the concept. I chose to build a three-dimensional image so that there were facets on each side to represent the presence of confidence, communication, credibility, and control and another four sides representing the absence of each facet and the anxiety of not having them. The framework had to be a direct reflection from the conceptual encounter interviews, but it also needed to be practical and memorable, as it would be used to create the initial model of coaching for gravitas. This is why I preferred to use facet labels that began with the same letter. The shape of the model is shown in Figure 4.3.
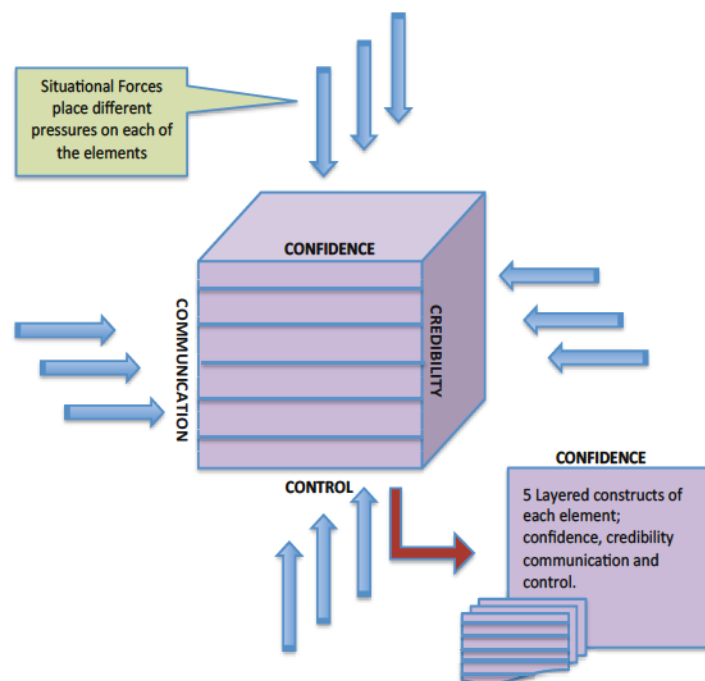
Figure 4.3: The facets of gravitas.

In addition, each situation managers find themselves in where they believe they require gravitas places forces on where a manager may need to concentrate their development. This could be represented as a box that looks somewhat squashed on one of more sides (Figure 4.4) and the pressure may demand attention on one or many of the constructs underpinning an element.
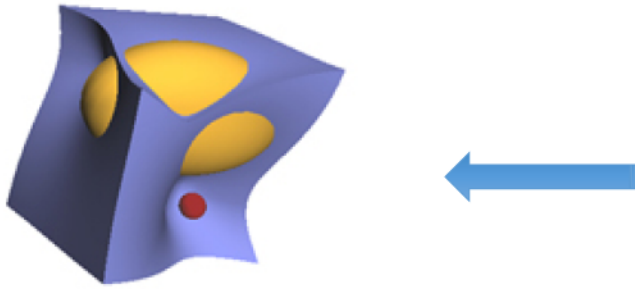
Figure 4.4: The facets of gravitas under pressure

For example, a person with strong confidence, communication and control attributes may struggle with credibility most of all because of a lack of experience either in their profession or in their organisation. In turn it might be that the first impression they create as part of building trust is poor and this is compounded by a lack of humility. Whether there are simply two constructs that need attention or many, the most important starting point is for the participant to be aware of the situation and their gravitas in the moment. In the next section I will describe each facet of gravitas in more detail with examples of how the data informed the choice of the labels used.

4.7.2 Exploring each facet of the gravitas framework

Four core themes emerged consistently through the conceptual encounter interview process. Once the cube shape had emerged from the data, I developed a new descriptive label for themes; facets of gravitas. Initially I describe each of the facet constructs and at the end of the description I present a table of each facet and examples of the data from the thematic analysis that helped shape the final framework.

Under each facet are constructs (constructs are those elements that when combined contribute to a facet of gravitas to another person). My intention was to define these constructs in practice through the coaching rounds that would follow and learn if these were coachable or not. The facets and the layers of constructs are:

Confidence:

- *Unflusteredness*. All of the participants had expressed the nature of being calm, especially under pressure but it John who finally created the label.
- *Inertia*. The construct of inertia was a positive force of moving forward, whether this was actions, conversations, or creating inertia in others. All of the participants had described stories of gravitas being associated with making things happen, but I had also interpreted a drive that was often relentless and resilient to other forces and consequently the label inertia evolved. The label chosen is a reflection of the professional engineering and physics background of some of the participants where inertia is related to the tendency of objects to keep moving in a straight line at a constant velocity. It is in this sense a positive quality.
- *Accepting*. The participants often related their frustration with building gravitas when they did not know more than others. We created the idea of internally accepting that it was not possible to have sufficient knowledge in every situation and that it was a quality that could be developed to help build confidence.
- *Positivity*. Examples frequently expressed the importance of motivating others and attracting others to work with you.
- *Grounded.* The participants often explained that there was a sense of weight and solidity with those they associated had gravitas, but also they referred to this as being grounded.

Credibility:

- *Comfort.* The construct of comfort related to being comfortable with one's own identity and was also related to the literature on the importance of retaining self-authenticity.
- *Purpose.* The participants believed it was important for someone with gravitas to have a passion for what they do and that it was driven by a sense of purpose which followers could feel.

- *Congruence.* This construct is also connected to authenticity, but related to how a person's inner thoughts need to be matched to the way they are perceived outwardly.
- *Reliability.* Each participant believed it was important to have and create trust in others, but that it was most closely related to doing what you say you are going to do.
- *Knowledgeable.* The construct of having knowledge did sit slightly against the construct of accepting under the facet of confidence, however, the interviews frequently cited examples of the benefit of having knowledge and experience in many situations.
- *Dignified.* The construct of being dignified emerged from the data supporting that those with gravitas were respectful, could be warm, curious and open and therefore being dignified was the label that each felt could represent those qualities.
- *Humility.* The last of the constructs of credibility was having humility and was related to some aspect of being approachable, but also prepared to show that you can and will make mistakes.

Communication:

- *Timely.* The interviews suggested that the construct of timely communication was important. However, it also included the feature of knowing when to say less or nothing and the sense of when to speak and when not too was very important.
- *Clarity of thought.* Frequently the participants shared that being able to think clearly and under pressure was a valuable quality.
- *Translatability.* In addition to being able to think clearly, the ability to then convey thinking to others in a way that made sense to a variety of audiences was an important gravitas skill. In addition, the data suggested that to be translatable there needed to be efficiency with the communication.
- *Courage.* The construct of courage could have emerged under other facets, but the examples that were shared with me related to having the courage to speak out and to be different if one was to be heard and remembered. In addition, there were examples of situations when gravitas could and should be slightly intimidatory and while this was not encouraged, followers perceived that they may be situation where there is courage in being unpopular. Finally, the construct of courage was related to the need to

communicate directly with others and not through digital forms of communicating.

- **Accessible.** The final construct of communication had a link to the warmth of dignity and humility, but also the skill of building rapport quickly with others, being open to feedback and being approachable.

Control:

- **Mood alterer.** This construct related to the ability of being able to change your own mood. Frequent references to needing to manage emotions to regain balance were raised.
- **Climate creator.** The facet of control related to both the control of oneself and those of others. A leader with gravitas could change the climate and energy of a room or an individual through their own actions.
- **Decisiveness.** Making decisions was regarded as a quality of gravitas. Although good decisions were most desirable, learning from poor decisions was also recognised as important.
- **Preparedness.** The construct of preparedness emerged from examples of the benefits of being prepared and being comfortable if one cannot be prepared.
- **Self-deserving.** The final construct is connected to the recognition that as leaders in their situation that they understand that they deserve to be in the roles they are in and do not allow themselves to consistently question their positions.

Two common themes for all of the four facets were:

- **Somatic embodiedness.** The role of the body was discussed in the literature review. Every participant expressed aspects of how important embodiment was in connection with gravitas and it most often connected to the first perception they would be aware of in others.
- **Situational awareness and agility.** The changing situations significantly eroded or improved a person's gravitas and while I was not able to explore the full range of situation the participants experienced, I felt it was important that in the later coaching rounds we collectively defined the situational themes and pressures that we faced.

The overall conceptualisation of gravitas following the thematic analysis added the fifth and sixth sides of the cube of gravitas to include somatic embodiment and situational awareness and agility and is shown in Figure 4.5.

Confidence	Credibility	Communication	Control
• Unflusteredness • Intertia • Accepting • Postivity • Grounded	• Comfort • Purpose • Congruence • Reliability • Knowledgable • Dignified • Humilty	• Timely • Clarity of thought • Translatability • Courage • Accessible	• Mood Alterer • Climate Creator • Decisiveness • Preparedness • Self Deserving

Somatic Embodiment

Situational Awareness and Agility

Figure 4.5: The facets and elements of gravitas.

4.8 Summary

The conceptual encounter interviews and resulting conceptual framework of gravitas for the participants represents the first action research cycle. There were two key steps towards building the framework. The first step was the evolution of the abstract conceptualisation of gravitas throughout each of the eight interviews. This developed over a few days, but was followed by a second step where the data was reanalysed through thematic analysis of audio transcripts to help refine the concept further. Once I felt I had met De Rivera's (1981) criteria for a conceptual framework, I checked again with the participants if it was an accurate representation to them at that point. The move from being an abstract conceptualisation to a conceptual framework is contained within those two steps where the concept evolves in an emergent inductive way and then is refined through retroductive reflection, checking with the participants again and

taking time away to be abductive through a re-evaluation of the data. At that point of agreement I believed I had a conceptual framework of gravitas.

The four facets of gravitas dominate the cube shape while the 22 elements that help to define each facet would continue to be explored in the coaching rounds to assess the development possibility of these in a coaching context. Two additional facets of somatic embodiment and situational agility emerged as additions to the ideas that I had initially taken into the conceptual encounter process. After my research was completed, Kets de Vries (2015) published a definition of gravitas for leaders. He proposed 3Cs of gravitas as courage, communication, and composure and suggested that many qualities could be developed through coaching. While his ideas were not based on any primary research, it seemed reassuring to me that his initial ideas had some alignment to the data that emerged earlier in my research.

The differences in the perception of some elements of gravitas, especially between males and females, were unexpected. They became apparent to me when I was able step away from the interviews and use abductive reflection, especially reviewing the transcripts. Although these differences seemed very much to reflect the context of the type of organisation they worked for their profession, I felt they were important and would need exploring further in the coaching rounds.

In the next chapter I describe an initial model of coaching for gravitas that emerges from the literature review and the conceptual encounter process.

Chapter 5: Developing an initial model of coaching for gravitas

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss and demonstrate how coaching theories, adult learning theories, and the conceptual encounter interviews contributed to the development of an initial coaching model for gravitas. In the first section I explore how the review of the literature on executive coaching in particular suggests that there is a gap in empirical research on how to develop a coaching model. Following this I intend to show how the combination of my professional experience, values, and beliefs together with the conceptual encounter process provide the building blocks to create an approach to coaching which is both generically understood by each of the research participants and has enough agility to be tailored to the needs of each person. Having presented an outline of my coaching approach, in the next section I suggest the range of possible intervention tools and context settings that may be used in practice and how action learning as a methodological approach provides an integrated coaching structure that moves the ideas behind my coaching approach towards the development of a model for coaching.

5.2 Executive and leadership coaching

The development of a coaching model appears to be hindered by limited discussion on the processes that would need to be explored and a lack of clarity about the theoretical foundations supporting a model (Shoukry, 2014). There are many scholarly articles claiming to offer a new model of coaching, but it is often not clear how the model emerged combined with the experiences of practising the model with leaders operating in their business roles. In many cases a model is suggested for use with no further analysis of how effective the model was. This appears to be the greatest challenge of developing a model for executive coaching, in particular where both theory and practice should inform each other (Passmore, 2007; Western, 2012). Passmore (2007) describes his model of executive coaching based on a meta review of coaching literature as not unique and more of an approach to coaching than a true model, and there are many more examples of supposed models and approaches proposed in this way with no further analysis in practice. In this early part of the chapter however I adopt a similar stance because I believe it is important to first

establish a set of guidelines for looking at theory and practice based on my own values, beliefs and those of other scholars.

The biggest challenge I faced in creating an overall model was the breadth of definitions of executive coaching, whereby any coaching with an executive is described as a form of executive coaching (Stokes and Jolly, 2010). It appeared therefore more appropriate to ground the approach to building a model more around the literature and practice of leadership coaching, being a smaller sub-set of executive coaching (Yukl, 2002; McCall, 2010). In some ways the subject of executive coaching is not helpful and is more appropriately described as managerial coaching (Western, 2012). I adopted the perspective of Stokes and Jolly (2010) whereby my leadership coaching approach is focused more on the emotions, people and relationships set within a shared organisational context and the concept of gravitas, rather than the tasks of management. Despite being a subset of executive coaching, there remains a lack of clarity that distinguishes models of leadership coaching from executive coaching. Ely *et al.* (2010) described four features that establish the uniqueness of leadership coaching, citing the focus on the needs of the client, the unique skills of coach, the importance of the client-coach relationship, and the flexibility of the coach. However, these do not appear to be unique to managerial or executive coaching. For me, the subject of what leadership represents for each client in the context of the organisation is what makes leadership coaching more focused. In addition, I believe it is the focus on the goals of the leader rather than the organisation, which again distinguish this area of coaching. Finally, I believe that the role of the follower to the leader is the last of the features that distinguish this area of coaching from executive coaching.

5.3 My approach to coaching

In this section I describe how the literature on adult learning blends with the literature on coaching and, as a result, how I developed a set of guidelines on which I would later be able to evolve into an initial model of coaching for gravitas.

In the review of literature, I discussed the debate between Knowles' (1980) dichotomy of pedagogy and andragogy. The distinctions between the two concepts are not simple and have been described as a false dichotomy (Holmes and Abington-Cooper, 2000). I adopted a blended approach that I think reflects the scope of my research and the recognition that in some cases I was adopting a teacher stance,

sometimes a facilitator stance, and at all times a learning stance. In the methodology, I proposed the use of Western's (2012) approach to coaching which he refers to as a coaching pedagogy and is integrated into my action research process and the coaching tools, however I still found that this lacked a sufficient focus on the skills and role of the coach and would therefore add my own ideas into the approach.

I used an overall learning approach that reflects Kolb's (1984) learning cycle where the abstract conceptualisation phase begins with the conceptual encounter interviews and would continue into the first coaching round as part of building self-knowing for each participant. In addition, my integration of follower interviews sought to add more perspectives into the self-knowing phases and provide a base learning point for the participants and me. After the first coaching round there would be a period where the participants actively experiment with ideas developed in the coaching session in their place of work and capture a reflection diary where they have tested approaches on situations. The reflection diaries provide the basis on which we will be able to critically reflect on their practice through observation and feedback. After each cycle of learning we would co-design the development of the next coaching round and continue until all three coaching rounds are complete. Reflection diaries provide raw data first-hand accounts (McNiff and Whitehead, 2011) that complement the raw data from the audio, video recordings, and photographs that are used to analyse the data during the reflection cycles and serve as a starting point for critical reflection by the participants at the start of each coaching intervention.

Based upon my review of the literature, my guidelines for building an approach were:

1. Integrate follower perceptions from the start of the coaching and return to them at the end of the process.
2. Begin with a process of building a clearer picture of self-knowing and experience. This was based on the first two steps of Western's (2012) coaching pedagogy and Stokes and Jolly (2010).
3. Ensure I adopt a three-stage process of experiential, transformative and critical reflection phases (McNiff and Whitehead, 2011).
4. Remain open to a group-based coaching element at some point as a part of learning from each other. This was based upon analysis of Brown and Grant (2010), Kets de Vries (2005, 2014) and Ward (2008) and Ward et al (2014).

5. Integrate the context of the organisation work setting each leader faces as part of the critical reflection work.

6. Adopt a whole body and mind (holistic) approach to the coaching phases with 50% of the coaching focused on the embodiment aspect of gravitas. This was based on the discussion of Seiler (2010) and Matthews (2013).

In the next section I discuss how the six-step guidelines for my coaching approach help to guide me towards building an initial model of coaching for gravitas.

5.4 A holistic approach to coaching

In the review of literature of coaching and adult learning I examined the potential over reliance of psychotherapy as a root of the development of coaching models. I also discussed the importance of embodiment as well as cognition as a means of developing and understanding behaviours and skills within the activity of leadership.

During the first round of action research that aimed to build a model of gravitas for leaders, there appeared to be an alignment between the participants' definitions of gravitas and the common problems of leadership described by Stokes and Jolly (2010). These related to the themes of:

- The need for control either of themselves or others.
- The need to either be right or accurate.
- The need to know or have sufficient subject specific knowledge.

Although these were sometimes expressed differently by each participant, they represented three anxieties that leaders face in transition as they seek to progress in their organisation. However, they all included the importance of how they somatically embodied the qualities of gravitas and how to adapt to changing circumstances.

The model of the coaching on which I based my initial thoughts was Cox's (2013) three-spoke coaching cycle, but I was also inspired by the writing of Seiler (2010) and his ontological perspective on the whole body and mind integration of coaching practice. The three-spoke model that Cox (2013) proposes fits with my coaching guidelines as she explains that the model 'goes beyond cognitive change, suggesting that the cycle is not complete until there is actual embodied, physical change as well' (Cox, 2013, p.2). The model is built around reflective practices, which appear to align

with my discussion on Argyris and Shon's (1996) double loop learning and Model II cognitive process, which again are situated in my guidelines on critical thinking. Argyris Model II thinking suggests there is a mental frame held by the learner, which views learning processes and cognitive thinking in a positive frame, rather than Model I thinking that has a tendency to focus on defensive emotions and consequences (Anderson, 1997).

The three spokes straddle the spaces between stages of reflection and stages of experiential learning. The first spoke called the 'touching experience' relates to the discovery of a coachee's hidden motives, feelings and emotions which relate to my description of the importance of self-knowing and human experience that in turn are aligned with Stokes and Jolly (2010) and Western's (2012) coaching pedagogy. The second spoke is called 'becoming critical' and relates to coaching adopting a critical stance that re-evaluates what has been learned. Again I see this alignment to Western's (2012) principle of critical thinking and Stokes and Jolly's (2010) steps of owning and being yourself. For me this spoke and these steps are about the idea of taking responsibility authentically and beginning to take into account what is realistic in terms of their coaching goals and where how they understand themselves. The last spoke labelled 'integrating' is concerned with the move from learning towards ideas and practice. What is missing from the model however is the variety of approaches to learning that Western (2012) describes as principles of learning from each other, from play and experience, observation, and practice. I do like the integrated approach to Cox's (2013) model and when blended with the other principles and steps I have discussed feel it provided a powerful basis on which to build my approach. Seiler (2010) described three stages of engagement with a client that resonated with my approach as well; to build a collective understanding of what was important to coachees and their working context, to work with goals and shared intended outcomes, and mostly to understand the coachees' way of behaving together with the motives and drivers embodied and cognitively understood. Rather like Cox, I owed a great deal of my design ideas to Kolb's (1984) experiential cycle of learning. I believe that Kolb (1984), Cox (2013), Seiler (2010), and Western's (2012) models and principles align strongly to my action research approach where learning is conducted in practice and has to be grounded in social or personal change.

5.5 Building my initial coaching model

One aspect of Cox's (2013) pragmatic model of coaching is that while it aimed to be focused on practice, it had not been used as either a model for scholarly research with participants or in practice by professional coaches. I wished to integrate the three-spoke model with Western's (2012) pedagogy of coaching, Stokes and Jolly's (2010) four steps for coaching senior executives and Seiler's (2010) concept of recognising coaching as means to explore a coachee's 'way of being' by ensuring that as a coach I:

1. Focus on humility not arrogance. This suggests that the coach recognises that they are the learner as well and being flexible to benefit the person being coached.
2. Know that as the coach I need to know how and when to stimulate change through embodied techniques.
3. Have the courage to be honest about what I observe or interpret, respectfully.

In addition, one of the skills of the coach is for me to be able to interpret whether the coachee is exhibiting model I or model II (Argyris and Schon, 1996) cognitive thinking or somatic cues. I had already interpreted and observed some type I thinking in two of the female participants, which appeared to me to be a result of the organisation's very male-dominated engineering based culture, which I would need to explore in the coaching rounds. The context setting of where coaching took place did not appear to be a feature of Cox's (2013) model but it appeared from my conceptual encounter interviews to very important. While the literature review had identified the importance of the setting of the participants' place of work as important, the location of coaching seemed important to me to encourage the participants to be open with me.

Kets de Vries (2005) had advocated the role of group coaching, especially when coaching teams. However, recognising Western's (2012) principle of learning from others, I believed that group coaching had a role as part of my methodology if the action learning process showed that it would be beneficial and if I repositioned the participants as part of a learning group where they would learn to coach each other. Kets de Vries (2005) suggested that one-to-one coaching tended not have a lasting impact. The reason appeared to be because on return to the coachee's working environment, the culture of their work practice would wipe clean any learning. The

group process seemed to offer more peer support and opportunity to build trust and courage back in the workplace.

The circular approach to representing the model (Figure 5.1) appealed to me, as I do not feel that the starting point in coaching is consistently the same point and is a reflection of the cycle of action research during the coach-coachee relationship. However, I am also critical of other attempts at coaching models that do not include the experience and reflexive thinking of the coach. One of the appeals of action research to me is how this is fully integrated into the approach. I hoped my initial coaching model would encourage model II learning where the activities would encourage a shared collaborative approach to the coaching process and more positive thinking or deeper reflective time exploring less positive experiences. I envisaged the circular model as therefore 3D in effect where the spokes of Cox's wheel are relevant to the constant spinning of design, but that layers of design reality are expressed through the 3D effect.

The model of coaching should also reference the skills of the coach to help bring it to life. For me these are expressed as how the coach perceives the situation, including the client motives, their starting point, and reasons behind this and the phenomenon itself. The second phase of skills relates to how the coach shapes the perception so that it is translated meaningfully. This translation includes shaping language, setting of goals if necessary, reframes the challenges, or indeed the phenomenon. The fourth phase is related to how the coach finds experiences to share and teach the client to make sense of these translations, but also to practise new ideas and approaches to undertaking the tasks that will drive those skills. The final phase explains how the coach integrates the teaching, coaching, translation, and goals into lasting experience of change for the client. These were created in part by my professional experience as a coach but also, although I had never written these down before, seemed to be useful to help me lift myself out of coaching conversations and simply read the architecture of where I am guiding the participant without overly forcing the flow. The central point in the wheel relating to the coach I summarised as four types of coaching skill:

1. Perceiving.
2. Shaping.
3. Exploring.
4. Integrating.

I hoped that through the coaching cycles I would also learn the types of skills required to develop these four areas to help better inform other coaches how to work with similar phenomenon based coaching. The collaborative learning approach, and the issue of seeing myself as a learner and not a position of arrogance (Seiler, 2010), are a mind-set I wished to adopt throughout the research process and therefore I needed to keep my own research notebook on ideas that emerge through the action research cycles.
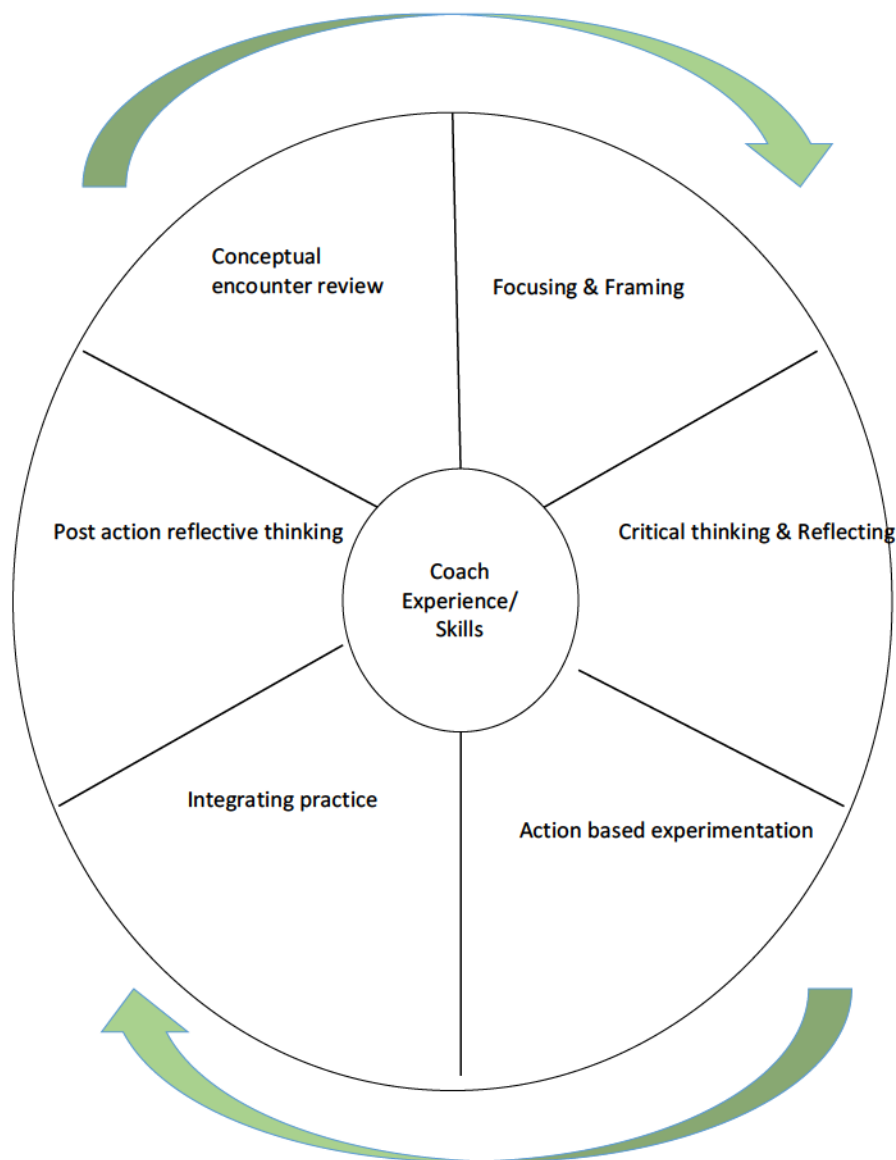
Figure 5.1: The coaching wheel.

I created a six-step coaching approach including the initial conceptual encounter interviews.

1. Conceptual encounter interviews.
2. Establish intentions and motives – Focusing and framing.
3. Develop a clear picture of each participant's self and starting point against the key concepts of confidence, credibility, communication, and control – Critical thinking and reflection.
4. Create practical action based experimentation combining the mind, body, and soul to explore learning ideas in collaboration with the participants.
5. Develop an approach to integrate these in work practice and embed them in the participants' thinking.
6. Set up a process to capture post action reflection in the workplace between coaching sessions using event journal pages.

Each step represents a theme for an intervention that is reflected upon in the gap between each step, which was planned to be six to eight weeks depending on participant availability. There were a total of four action research interventions involving 18 participants; six core collaborative participants and 12 follower participants.

While my adapted wheel of coaching demonstrates the key steps for my engagement with the participants in the coaching process, it is not a complete initial model of coaching for gravitas. What I felt I was able to create as a first step were a series of guidelines, principles, and approaches that would guide my coaching interventions and would help me to suggest a range of tools to use to develop gravitas.

The integration of the coaching wheel and the model of gravitas led me to an initial model of coaching for gravitas as shown in Figure 5.2. My intention with the model was to use it to help guide the high level approach I would use to start the first coaching round especially. During the subsequent coaching rounds the idea I had was for the co-researchers and myself to jointly develop the model while continually refining the gravitas facet elements so that we are able to focus on those that may create the biggest improvements in individual gravitas.
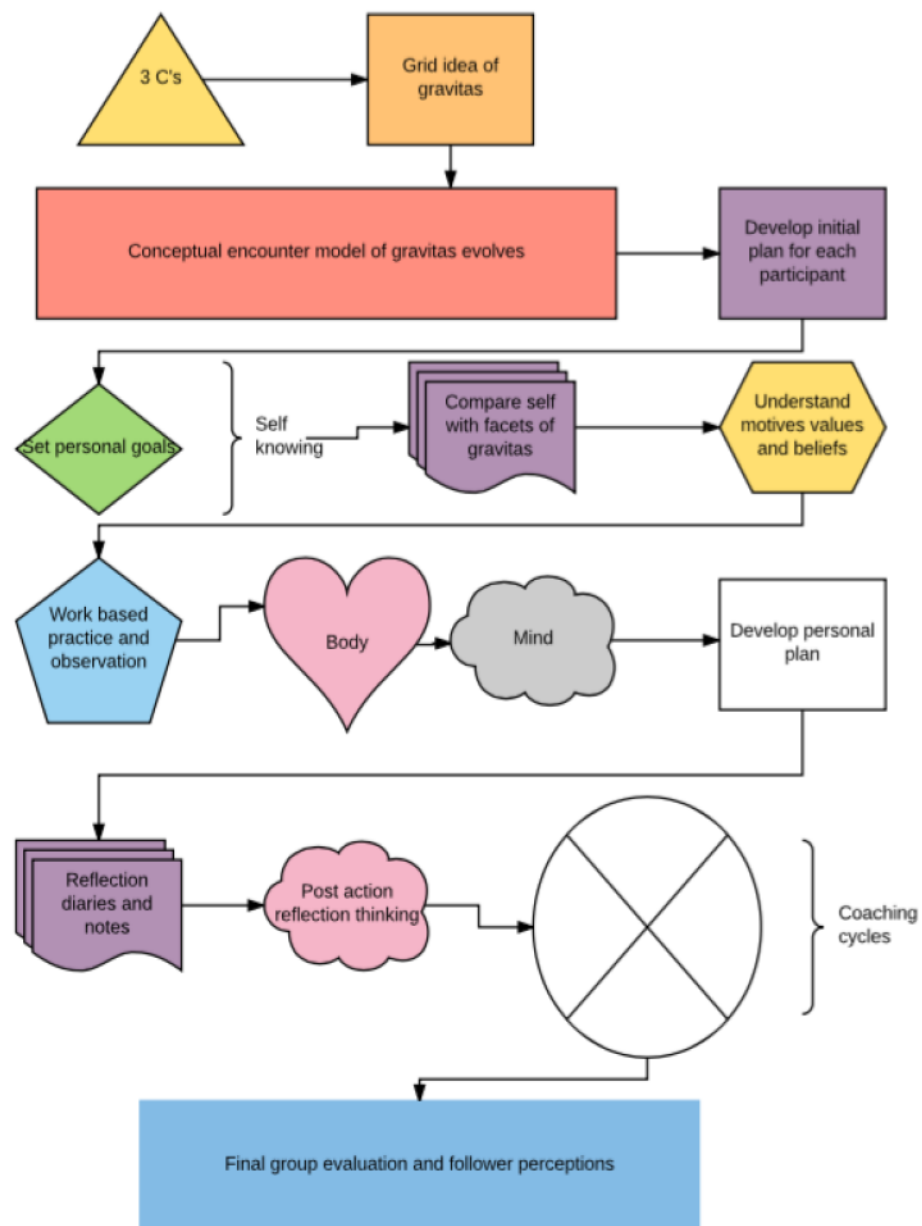
Figure 5.2: Model of coaching for gravitas.

5.6 Follower perceptions: Two examples to build an initial development plan

In this section I describe two examples of follower perception interviews, which helped me to develop the first link between the conceptual encounter interviews and

the perception of their followers about the possible development needs to focus on in the coaching rounds. The other four development needs are contained in appendix L. During April and May 2014 I conducted interviews with two followers for each of the six core research participants in order to gather a follower perspective on the gravitas attributes each may have using the conceptual encounter model to guide the conversation. Each interview was conducted by telephone and I took notes to capture key comments and themes that could subsequently be translated into the initial thoughts for personal gravitas development.

5.6.1 Example A

Rick's followers described him as '*being quite impressive in the first few months*' of working for him, adding that he was '*assertive, got to the point and not phased*' in relation to my outlined model of gravitas. They added that he was '*rounded in response but quick to respond in a thoughtful manner*'. He appeared to be confident leading those below him, but less confident when working with those above him suggesting '*he might find it difficult when others do not wish to listen to him*'. It was felt that he might need to develop greater humility and control of himself during those encounters. They appreciated his open style and had a depth to him professionally. His values and beliefs were described as 'firm' but perhaps too passionate and inflexible at times. It was suggested he might need to '*step back sometimes to balance any frustrations*'. Another follower of Rick's suggested that while self-confident he could appear to be aggressive at times, not physically but more of a feeling, and believed that work on developing confidence with those he was less familiar with would be beneficial in terms of coaching for gravitas.

Overall both followers were appreciative of Rick's confidence, credibility, and communication facets of the gravitas model. However, they felt that he was out of the comfort zone when he worked with those he was less familiar with and those more senior than him. They could sense frustration with him when not in control of the situation or himself and felt a more flexible style would help. He would need to be more aware of his somatic embodied response to challenging situations and be prepared to sit back in those situations where suspending his thoughts might be more helpful in terms of communication.

My early thoughts on the coaching themes for gravitas for Rick were to focus on the following, as shown in Table 5.1:

Table 5.1: Coaching themes for Rick

Confidence	Unflusteredness: Work on maintaining balance when not in his comfort zone.
	Accepting: Learning to be more comfortable not always needing to know more than others, which would be important for gravitas with those more senior.
	Somatic embodiedness: Developing a confident, but not aggressive somatic response.
	Positivity: How to remain positive even when situations may not move in the direction you first intended.
Credibility	Dignified: To develop a curious and consistently open approach with those he found more difficult to engage with.
	Humility: Together with the acceptance construct create a style where his humility was more apparent.
Communication	Timely: Learn to balance when to suspend thoughts and listen with timely communication.
Control	Climate creator: To learn how to inspire and motivate others using all of the faces of gravitas.
	Mood alterer: Develop an approach to read the mood and energy of others and situations and how to change it purposely.

Although these were only the first draft of suggested areas for coaching, they were primarily based on follower views and would need to be informed by Rick's own motivation and self-perception against the model during the first round of coaching, while I worked on my perceiving and shaping skills.

5.6.2 Example B

Danielle's two followers mirrored her perceptions of her own challenges with developing gravitas. She was described as having '*authority and does not gabble*' which encouraged people to '*defer to her*'. However, followers said that sometimes this becomes '*too direct*' and that she may struggle to '*hold an impact*'. One of the areas she would benefit from developing is the '*courage of her convictions*' and both suggested that this can lead her to being '*too quiet*' at times and if she is challenged

she worries about her legitimacy or credibility. She tended to rely too much on her work to create a first impression and her ambition to rise up in the business could lead her to being *'sequential in her learning'* was one follower's concern, meaning that her ambition tended to result in her only focusing on learning new skills if it would serve her career ambition. Her confidence is fuelled by the technical knowledge she already has, but she struggles to maintain confidence when she is working outside of her technical comfort zone.

Overall her followers were positive about her confidence, communication, and credibility facets, but they were dependent on her working with those she is comfortable with and knows well and when she has command of any subject matter. There was a recommendation to learn to win people's hearts rather than minds and she would need to learn how to control herself to develop more gravitas at will.

My early thoughts on the initial coaching themes for Danielle were based on follower perception and the conceptual encounter interview were as follows in Table 5.2:

Table 5.2: Coaching themes for Danielle

Confidence	Inertia: Develop greater resilience and determination when facing those that may challenge her.
	Accepting: Become more comfortable with not needing to have confidence only with knowledge and turn down her inner voice of doubt.
	Somatic embodiness: Create a first impression of confidence that she can hold.
Credibility	Identity comfort and purpose: Build greater self-belief and self with a comfort in the way she appears to others.
	Knowledgeable: While comfortable with her role-specific knowledge she would benefit from being more open and curious about building knowledge more broadly even if this does not contribute directly to her career ambition.
	Humility: Together with the acceptance construct create a style where her humility was more apparent.

Communication	Translatability: While she was praised for her 'lack of gabble' she should find more natural ways to express herself with rhythm and with feelings.
	Courage: To speak early while remaining warm and approachable.
Control	Climate creator: Have a clear goal about the energy climate she wished to build and how to influence it.
	Mood alterer: Learn how to recognise her mood and change it quickly as part of the climate creator construct.
	Self-deserving: Understand her motives and drivers and believe in herself before seeking progression.

One facet that applied equally to all of the research participants was the need to build situational awareness and the agility to adapt to changing situations and people. In many ways this facet and the somatic embodiment of gravitas had an influence on every element of each of the other facets and would require a focus in every round of coaching.

5.7 Critical thinking and reflection: Connecting the conceptual encounter model with the initial model of coaching for gravitas

Once the concept and model of gravitas and coaching approaches were conceived I started to become aware that there were many overlaps between the constructs that had been created. De Rivera (1981) set five goals to meet to ensure the conceptual abstraction was adequate. Firstly, it had to fit the phenomenon of gravitas. Secondly, it must relate to other conceptualisations, which I understood to include early definitions of gravitas. Thirdly, it had to have been created around the experiences of the research partners, which is why I ensured that they always related grounded experiences and realties to the concept. Fourthly, it had to be elegant and parsimonious, although I regarded this as idealistic and therefore was more of an overarching goal. My malleable cube-shaped model with six key facets satisfied the criteria. I also tested the concept with the research partners to ensure it was easy to convey to them. Lastly, it had to fit with the different personalities and different interests of other researchers. My interpretation of the last one was to describe the followers interviewed as additional research partners so I could continually evaluate their response to the model. Therefore, I believed the framework was appropriate.

However, as the initial coaching model took shape, I returned to the framework continuously and started to notice overlapping constructs and some inconsistencies of language. As a result, I decided to keep on testing and shaping the framework through each of the coaching action research rounds that followed. In many ways, this reflects De Rivera's (1981, p.6) assertion that 'an adequate conceptualisation usually takes a long time to develop' and that 'in one sense it can never be finished' (De Rivera, 1981, p.7).

5.8 Summary

The initial model of coaching for gravitas was based on developing a clear set of guidelines inspired by the work of other coaching scholars. Notably these were Western's (2012) coaching pedagogy, Cox's (2013) three-spoke model of coaching, Stokes and Jolly's (2010) four steps to executive coaching, and Seiler's (2010) integrated body and mind approach to coaching. These four helped me to consider the flow and sequence of steps required to coach the participants over a 12-month period using an action research approach. I also had to integrate the conceptual framework of gravitas created from the conceptual encounter interviews. A key feature of the integrated model of coaching for gravitas was including followers to help understand how the participant coachees were perceived by others in relation to the six-facet model we jointly created. The model for coaching focused on delivering the first round of coaching primarily because I intended the participants to co-design each subsequent round depending on the critical reflection thinking we would use between each round and the reflection diaries.

In addition to the action research based cycle of coaching and reflection, I also needed to consider my role as a coach and the skills I would need. I cited the need for me to be an open learner, have ideas and skills that would enable me to coach somatic embodiment of gravitas, and have the courage to be honest with my feedback. A part of the latter point required me to be able to listen and observe for signs of Argyris and Schon's (1996) model I coachee behaviour, which would generate defensive responses and negative emotions. As a result, I would need to be careful to ensure I embodied model II behaviour as a coach and in many ways would need to aim to build my own gravitas as a coach using the six-facet model.

In the next chapter I describe the first round of coaching that was conducted one-to-one and the insights we collective gathered during each session and how the coaching evolved from one participant to the next.

Chapter 6: Coaching for gravitas: The second action research cycle

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I describe the process of coaching and present the findings from the second cycle of action research. I will describe three of the six coaching sessions, demonstrating a link between the two follower-derived development plans in chapter five and the coaching process. I chose to describe three in this chapter, as I wanted to demonstrate the breadth of coaching experiences and still include differences between the males and females that I had identified in chapters four and five. In addition, I will describe the coaching tools and methods that are used and a broader presentation of the findings based on all six coaching sessions.

The planning process for the first coaching round began directly following the conceptual encounter interviews. While the logistics of planning for those interviews had been relatively straightforward, the organisation of the coaching was more difficult. Each coaching session required two-to-three hours to be set aside which meant that I could only meet two participants per day and they were located at least three hours from my home base. I was able to organise the first round of coaching during May and June 2014, therefore the time between the conceptual encounter interviews and coaching rounds was only a few weeks. The coaching sessions were conducted one-to-one (coach and coachee) and took place in a meeting room at each participant's place of work.

6.2 The first round of coaching: Structure and tools

The first model of coaching for gravitas was created around a framework that positioned it as a form of leadership coaching rather than executive coaching. The result of this centred on three of my beliefs:

1. I would need to understand what leadership meant for each participant using the six-facet model of gravitas as template that ensured a common language was used by both of us.

2. I would need to explore the personal gravitas goals for each participant within the boundaries of their role at work and the wider boundaries of the culture of their organisation.
3. A coaching development plan for gravitas would need an integrated approach including follower and participant opinions.

The structure of the sessions also needed to reflect the three criteria (Matthews, 2013) I describe in the methodology chapter, which I summarise into one point for this section as:

- Consciously include physical activity as approximately 50% of the session.

The overall structure for the first round was:

1. Begin with a description of the conceptual framework of gravitas that we had co-created in the first action research round.
2. Explore personal gravitas goals.
3. Understand each participant's, motives, core values, and beliefs. I decided to use a psychodynamic technique of drawing their life on a page inspired by Kets de Vries's (2005) approach to building trust and openness.
4. Develop a gravitas avatar to help understand what the most complete person with gravitas looks like to them. I created an avatar template (Appendix M) to help them describe and evaluate themselves against their perception of ideal gravitas.
5. Explore their own perception of where they see their current state of gravitas using the six-facet model.
6. Compare their self-perception to their follower opinions.
7. Develop an approach to reading situations and people quickly in preparation for working on situational agility.
8. Introduce a somatic component of reading others and adapting themselves to different situations.
9. Create key tasks for action based experimentation and integration.
10. Complete reflection diaries prior to the next coaching round.

In the next section I describe two examples of the coaching session in use.

6.3 Example A

We ran the first coaching session in a small meeting room that was filled with tables and chairs with little room for movement, which would later inhibit some of my work on somatic embodiment of gravitas. Rick's session began with a review of the conceptual framework that he and I had begun to shape the month before. His perspective was that the framework was an accurate reflection of gravitas for him and therefore I was able to move quickly onto the next segment, which was to focus and frame the coaching rounds. The purpose of the focus and framing segment was to understand Rick's personal goals and to explain the overall coaching and reflection processes that would be used during the sessions and between each coaching round.

Rick outlined three key goals and motives for collaborating in the research. These were:

1. He had consistently received feedback that he was shy and quiet, but while he accepted that he could come across to others as quiet he did not regard himself as shy. He wanted to learn how to improve the perception of shyness to one that conveyed a greater sense of quiet confidence.
2. He wanted to be better understood by others and to be able to get his message across at will to those he led and those he reported to. He did acknowledge that sometimes this was easy when he was in 'his role' but sometimes there were times were his business role could limit others perceptions of his messaging.
3. The final goal for Rick was to learn to think more holistically about himself, but also be more aware how to make changes behaviourally through both his body and mind.

Rick explained to me that he had tried to work on the above goals even before collaborating in the research and had voluntarily undertaken acting classes to provide an alternative method of developing himself rather than more business-focused education approaches.

We explored Rick's priority areas of interest around the conceptual encounter framework of gravitas as a continuation of the focusing segment and he prioritised the facets of confidence and communication. He also added that he was especially

interested in the somatic embodiedness facet. He explained that he felt he was very reserved in nature but tended as a result to look closed off to others. However, he added he wished to retain his innate personality. The context where he felt this was most important was in larger meetings where he could disappear among more senior leaders. For me as a coach this process of perceiving and shaping appeared to be important to build a clearer picture of how Rick perceived himself compared to the model of gravitas, but also for him to focus and frame what was important to him.

In contrast to Rick's self-perception, I had his followers' views to help guide where we he may focus this round of coaching before the following two rounds. The follower views are shown in *italic* font. While Rick has felt that confidence and communication were most important, his followers also felt that he should also develop the credibility and control facets. Below I show were the followers' perceptions are different to Rick's at this stage after my interpretation of the interview notes and audio recordings. Rick's followers' opinions are shown in *italics* in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Follower perceptions for Rick

Confidence	Unflusteredness: Work on maintaining balance when not in his comfort zone.
	Accepting: Learning to be more comfortable not always needing to know more than others, which would be important for gravitas with those more senior.
	Somatic embodiedness (as a facet but especially related to confidence): Developing a confident but not aggressive somatic response.
	Positivity: How to remain positive even when situations may not move in the direction you first intended.
Credibility	*Dignified: To develop a curious and consistently open approach with those he found more difficult to engage with.*
	Humility: Together with the acceptance construct create a style where his humility was more apparent.
Communication	Timely: Learn to balance when to suspend thoughts and listen with timely communication.
Control	*Climate creator: To learn how to inspire and motivate others using all of the faces of gravitas.*

	Mood alterer: Develop an approach to read the mood and energy of others and situations and how to change it purposely.

It was interesting to me that the followers' perceptions reflected their need about how they wished to see Rick interact with them whereas Rick tended to focus more on areas that he was interested in developing. His need was more on the ability to have gravitas with those more senior to him rather than with those who directly reported to him.

The next phase of the coaching model was for Rick to critically think and reflect on where and how his current leader behaviour had evolved, which as the coach meant I entered into the phase of exploring. I chose to use an approach that has some reference to psychodynamic techniques to help him talk about his behaviour through retelling of memories, experiences, and emotions through his life. I had previously used similar approaches to this with large groups and individuals in my professional practice. In my practice I had found it useful to help build trust between others, including me, but had also found that as a person spoke about their life they would share critical moments on reflection as they spoke which seemed important. In particular, they would eventually share areas of their life, which they had typically kept quite private and reveal more to me about their motives and development in their working life.

The metaphor for this sharing I decided to use was a tree drawn on a page from the buried roots through to the many branches at the top. I had used a river before as a metaphor, but what appealed to me about the tree was that I could divide it into four parts; the participant's roots, their early child development, their early adulthood, and as a working adult, especially the last two years to help them access clear experiences. Rick described two male figures in his roots that he found most influential. His grandfather was someone practical who could 'design, produce and fix things' and how he 'looked up to his Dad'. He described a large, fun, happy family upbringing where he found play to important. In his early development he said that he 'talked too much' and could remember being in control of others even in play. He also recalled believing that being good at something was important to him and his love of football being an example of how he would assess other children's drive and competence. He had two role models from the footballing world that typified this to

him. In his early adulthood his love of physical activity continued, but he also developed an interest in reading and being private and also the adrenaline and fantasy of war games. He believed his working adult time reflected the same values he developed in his child development, especially valuing people who are good at things, being in control, and working with others. Also he had chosen a career that reflected his grandfather's practical background, but that he had let go of talking too much and be much quieter. He also still liked to work with others and the mix of people that reflected his large family upbringing. What he valued now in both himself and others was potential, talent, performance, and personal development. The aspect I found most interesting during his tree of life exercise was his focus on competence and the need to be 'right'. He described this as being someone who made the 'right decisions' and was also 'correct'. We related this to what he described as his two gravitas archetypes, the football managers Brian Clough and Stuart Pearce. He later added Jose Mourihno after the drawing had been completed. He described them as people who 'get things done' and had an ability to 'command and control' others. The result of this was that it gave you confidence in them, which he believed would be important. I found it interesting how much Rick believed that it also important 'to look smart' if you had gravitas as he also had described people who didn't always look smart having gravitas in some situations if they had credibility and competence. During his life-sharing experience he had consciously made a decision to dress a particular way in work and try to remain quieter and calmer than he once had. His concern about building gravitas from this point was being invisible although he felt this was unlikely given his stature and look. However, I believed he wasn't just talking about physical invisibility and more of not being valued and included.

During the action based experimentation phase of the coaching model I had chosen to start with his goal areas rather than the wider list of his followers. In particular, the facet of confidence and how this is embodied. I had noticed that while he consciously presented a confident image I would catch him in moments slipping into a more slouched look with an inability to connect with the eyes. I explained this to him and he had not been aware of it; I asked him about situations where this may be a problem leading others. He said some people 'push his buttons' and this could put him off balance and out of control. We worked together on his movement and stature and also to introduce the idea of weight into his feet. I worked with Rick to consider him and those he wished to influence through three colours that he could attach to one colour. I initially used his favourite colour of blue to characterise what he viewed

as gravitas. The purpose was to help him visualise and recall him at his best physically with gravitas. I used two other colours to visualise being almost invisible (yellow) and trying too hard but not feeling truly in control of himself (red) and to use these to help reflect on future situations where gravitas was important to him.

I asked Rick to capture reflection pages on these experiences after the first coaching round that reflected both his areas of interest and those of his followers if the situations arose. These final phases of integrating practice and reflection were important processes of my action learning cycles to help inform the direction of the next action research round later in the year.

In summary, I had found a difference between some of Rick's self-perception and his followers, but it had helped to show the difference between Rick's priority of commanding and controlling himself and others and their needs. I built a reasonable understanding of where Rick's behaviour had come from and also why he had prioritised the gravitas facets in the order he had. The coaching session lasted for nearly two hours and, as the coach, I had found that the time elapsed much faster than I had expected with approximately 75% of the time spent on reintroducing the conceptual encounter model, focusing and framing his goals and perspectives, and the critical thinking and refection on his life. This left only around 30 minutes to work with the action based experimentation and integration of the somatic work. However, I was aware that much of the learning would take place between the coaching rounds and in the integrated practice and reflection in workplace situations.

6.4 Example B

I met with Danielle in a meeting room that was close to where she worked with clear windows into her office space and began with the review of the gravitas framework. I describe this because I think the clear windows were often distracting to her and I became conscious of it. Danielle challenged one perspective of the framework of gravitas, arguing that she didn't feel that one needed high control to have gravitas. We explored this and she described that she didn't think one needed to have high control of others, but did reflect that control of herself was important. Therefore, we moved on to focus and framing for her. Danielle spoke of four key goals for her through coaching for gravitas:

1. To be able to speak with confidence and convey to her team her vision and purpose. She added that wanted to lead people to her own vision and purpose as part of her clarification.
2. She wanted to orchestrate leader interaction without being directly in control. I regarded this goal as one of influencing without authority, but there is a sense through the word orchestrate that she regarded this as a leading quality.
3. To be able to use words better. Although this was not especially clear, she had expressed previously that sometimes she found it difficult to select appropriate language and find a rhythm of communication.
4. To 'develop some teeth'.

I asked her to compare herself more directly with the construct markers to provide more detail and it was the facets of confidence and communication that were priorities for her where she could easily lose confidence in certain situations, especially where she did not feel she had enough expert knowledge. She also recognised that how she communicated was a problem for her and therefore I wanted to both explore and work with her in active experimentation. I observed as she was working through her goals and framing how she saw herself and that she appeared nervous, her hands tightly clasped, her head would drop, and she would appear self-conscious. Therefore, I wanted her to see what I could see using the video recording to help her understand my impression. Table 6.2 below shows the consistency and differences between Danielle and her two followers, who both had more experience in the organisation than her.

Table 6.2: Follower perceptions for Danielle

Confidence	*Inertia*: Develop greater resilience and determination when facing those that may challenge her.
	Accepting: Become more comfortable with not needing to have confidence only with knowledge and turn down her inner voice of doubt.
	Somatic embodiness: Create a first impression of confidence that she can hold.
Credibility	*Identity comfort and purpose*: Build greater self-belief and self with a comfort in the way she appears to others.
	Knowledgeable: While comfortable with her role-specific knowledge, she would benefit from being more open and

	curious about building knowledge more broadly, even if this does not contribute directly to her career ambition. *Humility:* Together with the acceptance construct create a style where her humility was more apparent.
Communication	*Translatability:* While she was praised for her 'lack of gabble' to find more natural ways to express herself with rhythm and with feelings. *Courage:* To speak early while remaining warm and approachable.
Control	*Situational awareness and agility (as a separate facet but especially relating to control):* Learn to read others and situations quickly so that she can adapt. *Climate creator:* Have a clear goal about the mood climate she wished to build and how to influence it. *Mood alterer:* Learn how to recognise her mood and change it quickly as part of the climate creator construct. *Self-deserving:* Understand her motives and drivers and believe in herself before always wanting more.

The difference in the follower perception appeared to be that they felt she could generate an initial impression of having gravitas but that it could easily be challenged. In particular, if she did not have sufficient technical knowledge she would struggle to control herself and change the mood quickly of others as well as herself. It was interesting to me that she had perceived control so quickly as something about controlling others, but her followers saw it as a priority together with the facet of communication.

Danielle's tree of life was illuminating for me as a coach to help understand her self-perception and motives. In her roots she described the competing views of her mother and father where one inspired her to achieve whatever she wanted to be and the other presented barriers. She described a sense of not belonging and wanting to move away from home even early as a child. Although she grew up in a caring and playful environment, she always wanted more. She was successful at school and into her early adulthood with achievement emerging clearly as a strong value for her. She was taken into her current organisation as a high potential manager, but with that

was a continuous ambition to move upwards. I introduced the concept of a gravitas avatar to help me understand where she felt she needed to learn and she consistently focused towards the head as cognitive process. However, she relayed to me very high standards of what a gravitas avatar would look like, describing a fit, slim, and feminine body with very precise ideas about what the avatar would wear, even down to the brand of shoes. On reflection it appeared to me like the avatar was a toy or doll-like subject. These very high ideals caused me some worries about Danielle's perception of herself and reminded me of Western's (2012) concept of the celebrated self as a goal for Danielle, but with a worry that she might potential fall into his concept of the wounded self if she did not reach her ideals.

We chose together to focus on the action based experimentation of communication for the first session because I wanted her to reflect on her confidence and her control facets with some grounded real examples to relate to in later sessions. In addition, I felt that she was struggling with her rhythm of thinking and communicating with others. The camera briefly stopped recording, but I noted that during the next ten minutes she explained to me that she had purposefully tried to create a communication style that was confident and easy to understand because she came from a country outside of where she worked. I was therefore interested in exploring how she would communicate in her natural accent against her more adapted version and we chose to record her simply reading a weather forecast. The comparison was interesting because, as I had expected, the more she adapted to what she perceived as corporate English language, the more she became tense and lost rhythm and impact. I should add that English was her natural first language so she was not interpreting. At the end of the session I noted that she became stronger in her stance and style once she allowed her body to relax. Despite her interest in the cognitive side, the effect of relaxing herself physically had a much more powerful impact than I suspect thinking it through may have done. The other aspect of communication I had noticed was that she had a tendency not to complete sentences or allow them to almost disappear as if she were unsure of herself, therefore I asked her to simulate a throwing action to complete sentences to encourage full follow-through and help her to visualise this at work.

In summary, I found that Danielle was a very driven, achievement-motivated person, but she was always somehow pushing for the next stage before completing the first. Her followers respected and liked her, but questioned her ability to adapt under pressure. She had also come from a background that in my notes I recorded as an

open and closed environment that constantly caused her to question herself where she did not feel she belonged. I believed that the reflection process in the action research cycles would be especially valuable to her and would allow her time to relate her ambition and the coaching to a practical reality.

6.5 Example C

The opening of the coaching round began with the conceptual encounter review. John was the first of the participants to want to debate the framework again in further detail. He wanted to describe the gravitas cube from the angle of it being turned upside down to discuss what happens when you don't have a particular quality. In the conceptual encounter interviews, I had described the concept of gravitas anxieties where all of the positives of the facets and construct markers work in reverse. I felt during the conversation that this might in part be driven by John's relative youth as the youngest of the participants, but also leading a large experienced team. In a similar way to Danielle, he had been labelled a high potential leader from early on, but rather than be ambitiously focused to keep moving upwards, he appeared very analytical and engaged in the discourse of the framework. He related the gravitas anxieties to experiences he had where he had to enter team and individual conversations from a position of being humble first. He asked me how he could possibly have credibility and confidence with enough experience in the eyes of others he led. Interestingly, he said to me that he didn't gain credibility from knowing more, which he often felt that he technically did. He supported that the perception of gravitas was held in the views of his followers and those more senior to him.

As I moved more away from the conceptual encounter review, I was conscious that the time had moved quickly towards 45 minutes and I was keen to discuss the focusing and framing segment of coaching approach. John described his greatest strength as his communication facet, but all of the other three he felt needed attention. He was concerned about 'being seen to do the wrong thing', but offered an evolution of the conceptual encounter model to include courage to help with addressing his concern. We spent 30 minutes exploring situations where he is challenged with gravitas and introduced the concept of people, situations, and colours as I had with Rick to help guide his thinking. I found it fascinating as we explored his focus and framing that he was able to always come back to the gravitas model as though he had fully integrated critical thinking and reflection into the focus and framing segments. One of the results of this is that I did not discuss his tree of

life and also because he had been so open during the conceptual encounter initial interview I felt I had enough information on his values and motives so I could adapt the session and he could collaboratively shape it with me. As a result, I let him frame the session more than with the previous three participants. John wanted to work on coaching to have a dialogue about the potential to coach each of the elements within the context of his goals.

John shared his goals through the language of high level challenges. He explained:

1. In general, he had an appetite to work, to learn, and know more about everything.
2. His approach to learning is to learn by asking and discussing, therefore he wanted our action research to focus on learning through dialogue as an approach to discovering leadership gravitas.

His followers, by contrast with the others, included his own line leader, but I elected to accept this as I still regarded them as a form of follower and for the youngest and least experienced participant felt this would add quality to my research. The themes that contrasted with John's goals and self-perception were that his followers felt he needed to be more approachable. While John had cited that he tried to show more humility, the sense from his followers was that it was evident. He was described as trying too hard and operating from the red colour that I had shown other participants. I had changed the colours since my coaching session with Rick to represent three consistent colours of gravitas. The colder more inward private colour became blue, the louder more overt colour was a red, while the gravitas I believed each wanted to work towards was a green. I had the sense that John switched from blue to red and back again quickly which may make it hard to be able to demonstrate the humility he was trying to convey.

Table 6.3 below shows this contrast of John and his follower perspectives:

Table 6.3: Follower perceptions for John

Confidence	*Somatic embodiedness (as a facet this appeared to link more to the other facet of confidence):* Learn how to make it clearer to others he has confidence but not arrogance.

Credibility	*Identity comfort and purpose:* While John has apparent clear purpose, building more personal comfort with his own image and style may benefit him. *Inward and outer congruence:* Develop an approach to match his inner thoughts with the outward perception that others have about him. *Humility:* Create a style that is respectful and polite when dealing with others. *Dignity:* Maintain a curious approach with others at a personal level, not only technical and appears open.
Communication	*Translatability:* Encourage the extroverted expression of his own internal thoughts. *Accessible:* Create a warmth and approachable style that encourages others to listen.
Control	*Energy navigator:* Learn to read people and situations quickly to help create the right energy interactions with others. *Climate creator:* Build an approach to change the climate of a conversation, meeting, or room through positive direct interaction.

I felt that John was open to the views of others given his appetite to learn from a wide variety of people and believed his collaboration would be very helpful to the development of a model of coaching for gravitas.

John had continued to shape what was important to him against the construct markers by referring to his role supporting one of the most senior leaders in the business that he described as having total gravitas. In particular, he cited the importance of the unflusteredness construct and the importance of calmness. He explained that this created an *'emotive moment, meaning people will care'*. He also added that while developing the facets of gravitas, perhaps it was helping others to feel confident, credible, communicate well, and be in control that was real gravitas. I think this was a significant contribution to the model of gravitas, but also for the coaching sessions and reflection entries.

We entered the phase of critical reflection and I continued to explore his views on himself. He asked himself:

"Am I too flustered and am I too grumpy…. why does that happen"

He particularly referenced a senior leader he used to work for because of his calm, unflustered, and friendly approach. I asked him to reflect on those questions during the next action learning cycle. John also wanted to know how he builds energy in the team as part of the control facet. He wanted the energy to draw others to him. Together with the previous CAR participants, I outlined the three colour approach to help him read others, situations, and himself, and we agreed to return to the physical side of the three colours during the next session because two hours had passed already.

In summary, John's coaching round was the most different so far. We spent far longer reviewing the conceptual framework of gravitas and he continued to suggest ideas for another facet or construct of courage. Although we shaped his goals and questions through the focus and framing segment, we did not think and reflect on a tree of life. I felt I had sufficient information from his CE interview and he naturally shared his life history as part of the process of questioning his own behaviour. The most significant contribution was that perhaps as much as the gravitas framework provides the means to reflect and develop areas for the participants it might also be the goal to create the same in followers. I also had an idea that I needed to be more explicit with the participants that they are collaborating to build and evaluate a model of coaching for gravitas as much as to receive one.

6.6 Post-reflections and summary

The timing of each of the sessions did not conform to the plan I had set out. I noticed that the participants continued to want to explore the conceptual framework for gravitas in more detail that I had thought despite most of them agreeing with what had been created fitting De Rivera's (1981) five guidance points. During the first four sessions I used my tree of life metaphor to explore the motives and influences of each participant, but it took a lot of time to explore and I was concerned it would take too long to move towards action based experimentation. Therefore, I changed it for the next two participants. However, I did not recover as much time as I had thought. On reflection, I would have perhaps benefited from running the first session as a

group session. As Kets de Vries (2005) had advocated, the psychodynamic technique is especially suited to small group coaching and development as it helps to create trust and openness within the group. Conducting the approach one-to-one was possibly not helpful as I did not share my tree of life to build trust and openness and there would not have been time to do so. The process of goal-setting and comparing opinions with their followers was very productive and helped to provide a building platform on which to tailor differing conversations around the constructs and how to develop them in practice. The process of raising conscious awareness of the model of gravitas provided a powerful means of participants reflecting on their behaviour.

The most useful technique that resonated with all participants was to move towards reading gravitas situations. I collaborated with each to build a colour-based approach to quickly read those situations and outlined how I wanted them to reflect on them between this round and the next. I believe that the coaching work on reading situations and relating them very specifically to the work place context helps to answer the criticism of the authentic leadership research (Antonakis *et al.*, 2011; Paul, 2002; Bennis and O'Toole, 2000). Having explained the diary approach and outlined clear goals to each, I reflected that while I could have used the time better each participant was ready to engage with reflective learning to integrate into practice.

It became noticeable that there was also a divide between those that prefer the 'quick fix' approach to development and those that prefer a wider discourse. The temptation of jumping into the 'show me what to do' style was great, but there was more learning from the researcher's perspective through the discourse. A final reflection piece for me was the choice of coaching venues. In all cases the rooms chosen were meeting rooms with little room for physical movement and either lacked complete daylight or were completely open. As a result, I decided that I would run subsequent coaching rounds at a venue of my choice away from their workplace.

The experience of the first coaching round prompted me to pose questions to reflect on:

1. How to identify suitable coaching venues for small groups that would allow me to ensure I could work more somatically with the participants?

2. How to work in a small group while respecting the differing needs of gravitas coaching for each participant?

3. How to maintain my coach-coachee relationship that focused on co-research design and development rather than instruction and training approaches?

In the next chapter I describe the second of the three coaching rounds and the move from one-to-one coaching to a small group environment and the benefits and challenges from this new approach.

Chapter 7: Coaching for gravitas: The third action research cycle

7.1 Introduction

The seventh chapter presents the process and coaching discussion from the third action research cycle and the second coaching round. In the first part of the chapter I discuss the decision to move from the one-to-one coaching to small group coaching and the supporting literature behind my decision. I followed De Rivera's (1981) guidance that as the conceptualisation of my model of gravitas evolved I should also return to literature for further reference. This led me to revisit the literature on group based coaching. I decided to widen the quality of the coaching conversations in this round so that the participants would be split into two groups based on geography. The practical benefit of working with a group rather than one-to-one was to enable others to reflect on each other's opinions, include the perception of 'followers', and to consider if the process of group-based coaching could be implemented as part of the coaching model. Following the group coaching discussion, I reflect on the cycles between round one and two and how the tools of coaching for gravitas developed. In the second coaching round section I review the reflection diaries from the participants and the key insights before discussing how the participant group began to challenge the model of gravitas having reflected about the practicality of the model in the workplace. Each facet of the gravitas framework was constantly refined through open conversation with the intention to explore each facet and how every element might be coached. This shift from raising awareness of each of the elements in the first coaching round towards how they may be developed through coaching became the primary shift in the second coaching round. Finally, I present a summary of the second round and introduce the final round of coaching for gravitas.

7.2 The switch to group coaching

The use of group-based coaching is becoming increasingly of interest to researchers and practitioners (Hawkins, 2014; Clutterback, 2014; Hackman and Wageman, 2005; Brown and Grant, 2010; Kets de Vries, 2005). However, there is still a relatively small amount of empirical research into the dynamics of group coaching rather than the dominant one-to-one approach (Ward, 2008). Brown and Grant (2010) similarly recognised that most organisational coaching was one to one (dyadic) and that there

were very few group coaching models. They advocated a blended approach to coaching, combining the one-to-one approach with group systems. Whilst they suggest that both dyadic and group coaching are goal focused in nature and targeted towards behavioural change, the skills base for the group coach are different. They also differentiate the idea of team-based coaching with an intact team working on shared interests and performance goals that impact one part of the organisation with the benefits of a group that may only share an interest in a specific topic, which in this case is leadership gravitas. Leadership coaching in a group environment offers the most suitable setting to create durable behavioural change (Kets de Vries, 2005). I believe that his hypothesis is grounded in the belief that durable leader behaviour change cannot occur without paying attention to the practices in a leader's profession and the cultural boundaries in a place of work. A criticism of group based coaching is whether the coach has appropriate skills to manage group dynamics rather than the skills of dyadic approaches. Brown and Grant's (2010) study into the skills of the coach are important as they reinforce that it is essential for the coach to be skilled with group coaching dynamics and group-based dialogue techniques. My decision to move from the one-to-one approach therefore was not just a structural convenience, but also a reflection of my professional qualifications as a teacher and experience as an educator with groups for more than 20 years. In addition the group approach helps to provide a mechanism to allow leaders to incorporate working environmental contexts, which had been cited as a weakness of dyadic coaching. One of the insights with Kets de Vries' (2005) work with groups is that he encourages coaching skills within members of the group to facilitate and accelerate learning. In some respects, I feel this resonates with the principles of my collaborative research approach, but rather than only develop the participants as coaches of each other, I wanted them to be able to coach themselves to sustain learning in the workplace. This is also in contrast to Hackman and Wageman's (2005) preferred approach to find coaches from within a team, and owes more to the studies of developing athletes who need to perform without external coaching while competing. Collaborative action research is ideally suited to the group coaching dynamics because the cycles of induction, reduction, deduction, and abduction can be experienced without my interpretation of data and repetition to explain my thinking six times over.

One of the challenges about contributing to coaching theory and practice is whether group coaching is just a new label for group facilitation (Brown and Grant, 2010). I had led both types of group dynamic and I believed that group coaching requires a deeper understanding of participant motives, values, and a more precise goal

specific outcome. Clutterback (2007) and Brown and Grant (2010) also suggest that facilitation is more process-centred, and I would agree with their view and add that it is a more distant relationship from the wider group rather than the closer relationship between the group coach and the participants.

7.3 Post-action reflective thinking

During the period between the first and second coaching rounds, I reviewed the video recordings of the six two-hour coaching sessions to help me reflect on the coaching model I had developed and the data from the coaching conversations.

Two hours felt insufficient for each coaching session however, with more than an hour spent reviewing and embedding the gravitas model. Furthermore, using the model to focus and frame the goals and current situations for each of the participants used considerable time that I had not anticipated. Some participants were more comfortable with the critical thinking and reflective practice, while others wanted to receive guidance on action-based experimentation. As I became more comfortable with the coaching model, I was able to prompt the participants to collaborate more with me and I was aware that I started to do less of the talking. It was evident through the follower interviews and the goals for the participants that each had differing strengths relative to the gravitas model. Furthermore, each had differing amount of consistency between followers' views of them and their own views of themselves. Given that each of the participants had selected their followers, I felt that they would each have chosen people who they believed would know them well.

The four coaching skills of perceiving, shaping, exploring, and integrating were useful for me to think about what I needed to be good at during the conversations. The perceiving skills required me to open all of my senses and encourage the participants to do the same. A part of this was helping them and me to relax and take in information around me of the environment, the time, the mood, and help the participants make sense of the gravitas model that we had shaped. The shaping skills were used to help understand the participants' motives and goals and how they compared themselves to the ideal model. It also was used to shape expectations and I felt I should have used this more to reinforce the research goals and the limitations given the time we had. The exploring skills should have been used for most of the time, but it hadn't been in the first sessions. For me the exploration phase required the technical skills of probing and listening and reflecting but also trying to generate

new ideas for coaching. I therefore wanted the next two rounds to focus more on exploring and the last skill of integrating. The integration skills are an essential part of action research because they are about making a difference in practice. The reflective diary entries and how we review those is where I hope I would see integration into their working approach.

7.4 Situational awareness and agility tool

One consistent area of action based experimentation that I developed and shared with the participants was an approach to quickly assess how they were behaving and the environments they were in. Situational reading appears to be the first step in the process of developing gravitas. We discussed breaking down situations into three levels and used three colours to signify the 'temperature' of the situation represented in figure 7.1. The ideal situation to enter into was a 'green' one where the environment is open, curious, engaged, hidden from political agenda, and highly aware of self and others. The most common situation that managers feared was a 'red' situation where there is too much energy; individuals push for their own seniority and the need to be right. Slightly less common but still dangerous is a 'blue' situation where energy appears to be sucked from the situation by individuals who are passively resistant, cynical and mistake this for a form of intelligence. The blue and the red situations promoted behaviour that echoed Argyris and Schon's (1996) model I defensive behaviour and we collectively were able to describe how both colours were embodied by others or themselves.

Figure 7.1: Situational reading tool.

The metaphor of the glass being either half full or half empty we felt helped to visualise how to read a situation. Situations that are 'blue' are generally regarded as 'the glass is half empty'. Situations that are red are too full with the danger of overflowing. In the middle is the green, which is considered an ideal environment.

The approach to meet any of the situations is to read the colour, but to keep yourself in 'green'. However, the next step is more complicated as it requires the participant to take an internal gravitas bearing through their internal compass. This bearing considers the following type of questions:

- How is this colour affecting my gravitas?
- Where is my gravitas most under pressure?
- How do I regain balance?
- What do I do to increase my levels of gravitas?

During the second coaching round, I expanded the three-colour approach to include how to work with the body and the mind to ensure that the participants can stay in the green colour and use this to influence others.

7.5 Gravitas reflection diaries

There were two versions of the gravitas diary pages that I created. The first one (Appendix H) was limited by only asking the participant to record entries when they felt they had gravitas in a particular situation. I changed them later to include when they thought they needed it, asking them to reflect on why they did or didn't have it in their opinion and also to include the colour of each event (Appendix N). I noticed that some participants were good at completing them and others less so. Mike was not keen at completing them, but made his own notes to tell me about in the coaching session. Although I felt the discipline of writing things down was helpful for reflection, and to capture their model I or II thoughts, I think another option could have been to audio or audio visually recall one-to-three minutes on a smartphone and send them to me. However, one participant worked in a high security environment and was not allowed to use a mobile phone, therefore both options would be preferable.

Rick had identified events that related to each of the four gravitas facets. Most of the situations he was in were related to presenting information to his team and other stakeholders where he had to get 'buy-in' from them and where he expected individuals to challenge him. One of his entries related to a conference call with a number of parties where he had aimed to '*cut short pointless debate and developing a set of actions*'. He tried to remain calm an unflustered with a focus on listening, but also on learned positivity. The emphasis was to remain in control of himself and the call and to be confident. However, I also felt after reflecting on his diary that he was working on timely interventions as part of the communication facet. He described being '*focused on his mind and knew what he wanted to achieve*'. Another diary entry reflects on a situation where he needed to be credible in a situation where he knew conflict could emerge and that he was nervous. He describes again trying to remain calm and unflustered, but also to work on the construct of dignity, to be open and curious rather than push his message. He placed all of his focus on the others in the room rather than him and found it was effective. Further entries consistently echoed his approach to focus and remain calm, however, I think this was a reflection of his natural style based on our earlier sessions. Where he made progress was to put a greater focus on his followers, which they had identified as a need and we

collectively agreed to put more effort into. The technique we developed was for him to be less concerned about the content of his communication and more on the need of his team and other stakeholders that helped him in turn remain unflustered.

Rebecca used the updated version of the diary entry form I had created that included the question on reading the colour of a situation and more space to record what she was trying to work on to build gravitas and what she learned. She described a 'red' situation where she was trying to influence someone more senior than her to engage with her ideas. The facets she chose to work on were communication and control. Rebecca recorded that she was concerned the conversation would go 'off track' and she worked on ensuring she expressed her mind and displayed the courage to speak early. Although unflusteredness had not opened up as a learning need, she recorded that, 'no matter how flustered I feel about a situation or issue, being in control and clearly communicating' did create the result she was looking for. I also noted in the diary that she had improved her decisiveness as part of our coaching conversation. In another entry, Rebecca reflected on how she tried to convey somatic confidence, describing how she held a strong upright posture and deep breathing. For Rebecca this appeared to be very important as she described herself as petite and easily distracted. The situation was 'green' to her so more calming than others but she felt she had to work hard on confidence and communicating to a much more senior leader.

Danielle and Kirsty described very similar diary entries to Rebecca that reinforced my sense that each of them had a frustration with their inner confidence. This appeared to have an impact on their credibility and that they needed to prioritise the facets of control and communication to be effective. Danielle had recorded that she 'wanted to succeed in a male-dominated environment'. Rebecca, Danielle, and Kirsty all noted that they worked on trying to speak earlier and develop courage to speak with inward and outward congruence. Danielle, for example, wrote that she learned to, 'have confidence to speak up with senior leaders and that it helped to gain respect and to trust her personal judgement'. Kirsty reflected on a 'red' situation where she typically felt she would go unnoticed and she would become self-conscious as the meeting was in progress. She recorded that she was consciously trying to work on the facets of confidence and communication. The meeting was taking place with more senior leaders who were all men. In her reflection diary page she noted:

'I was sitting in the review and allowing more senior people to talk and shout across the table. I was sat listening and unsure how to gain control due to the strong characters in the room. I decided to use it as an opportunity to grow my confidence and communication skills. The session got very heated so I braved it and recommended a 5-minute break to allow everyone to get back to a better state of mind (curious). One senior rejected the idea and said it was good for things to get a little heated. My boss agreed with me. After the break people came back into the room calmer. I was then asked to lead the rest of the session. I leaned that remaining unflustered will help rule the people in the room and also that I have more courage than I thought'.

During our second coaching round it was evident that Kirsty had developed a real sense of self-belief and pride in her gravitas and given how she described controlling her emotions and being frustrated as a real challenge, and that this was a breakthrough for her.

John had enthusiastically debated all of the facet elements in the first coaching round and appeared to be deeply reflective in nature. He had an air of confidence mentally, but it didn't always come across somatically. Where he struggled was engaging with teams and a style of communication that drew others towards him. His diary entries picked up on this and I think reflected a high degree of self-awareness. He led and worked with large teams of up to 100 people, but often described the interactions he had with them as 'red' with a personal desire to behave in the 'green'. In order to increase his gravitas he worked primarily on three areas; his timing, credibility, and acceptance, stating that he *'accepted I couldn't do everything and be in control of every element so I broke up the problem and asked pairs of individuals to come back to the next session with a plan'*. He eventually described that he had:

'Learned to not try to control and be involved in every element and become a bottleneck in decision-making and needed to work out how to capture the feeling of confidence and control based on experience and deliver it in a situation where I don't have the prior experience and would need to extract this from others through coaching'.

I felt that John had picked up on his challenge of training to engage others with more experience by being careful not to come across as too confident intellectually and had managed to read situations and people well, However, his reflection diaries had

not yet addressed how to have greater humility, approachability, and to somatically embody confidence to an appropriate level.

Mike had a good sense of self-awareness, but had not found it so easy to read others. He described in a diary entry that:

'I felt more confident following the gravitas session; consequently easily elevated myself from day-to-day noise onto concentrate on gaining direction'

Mike's main area of focus was to be comfortable with others listening and to set the tone for meeting other, but let others talk so he could steer. This approach had worked for Rick as well, but required courage. He noted in the entry that the meeting finished 20 minutes early and he felt in control. In another 'green' situation he focused on cultivating his style and look. He hoped to keep adding to his credibility. He had already focused on this before but wanted it to go further and wanted to try to instil confidence in others as much as himself. One more challenging diary event related to being in control of potentially a very heated meeting about a stalled project. He described how he became *'conscious of manipulating the situation by passing energy and emotion at specific times in proceedings to cause a change in thinking'*.

What was especially interesting is that Mike said:

'I felt awkward in the situation and…I wasn't that pleased how I came over. However, others felt I was being successful and managed the situation effectively'.

He described this as perceiving himself as behaving in a 'red' way but being perceived as 'green' and that his own *'discomfort does not necessarily permeate'*.

I found Mike's reflections to be a breakthrough for him as I had already identified that there were differing perceptions of him from his followers compared to his. As a result, I believe he widened his comfort zone significantly through the first round and reflection cycle.

In summary, I felt the reflection diary entries were useful to help keep the gravitas model conscious and that the participants were able to develop approaches themselves as a result of the coaching model to begin to coach themselves. Their heightened self-awareness is what I had wanted to create and I had been pleasantly

surprised by the usefulness of the diary approach. However, there were not huge numbers of entries and I appreciated that this was because of the time required to do these while working full-time.

7.6 The second coaching round

At the start of the second coaching round, my perceiving skill was put to use as I passed my feedback onto each of them what I felt I had learned from the diaries and allowed them to qualify and reassess their viewpoint. What it allowed me to do is to move quickly from focus and framing and critical thinking onto action based experimentation.

The second coaching round was split into two equal one hour sections. The first section began with a discussion and feedback from the reflection diaries and moved directly into the coachability of the facets and elements. I had intended to use the hour to review each of the six facets, but in practice I found we were only able to explore confidence and credibility in depth and more briefly communication and control. All of these were explored together with the context of situational awareness. The second hour would focus entirely on the somatic embodiment facet and how to ensure that each participant could move their body from either 'red' or 'blue' states to the 'green' and to utilise the group format to help others observe and provide feedback. A further change from the first coaching round was to take the participants away from the workplace meeting rooms to somewhere I perceived as neutral, but conducive for learning. I noticed in the review of literature that while there was a lot of focus on the process of coaching and the skills of coaching, there was considerably less discussion about the value of the coaching venue. I believe that this is an important area both in practice and the development of coaching theories. I chose to use executive 'boxes' at two football club stadiums. They both had a lot of light, looking over the football pitches, and I was able to specify the space I needed to enable somatic coaching to take place.

7.6.1 The first hour: Four facets of gravitas

We began by reviewing the first two facets of the gravitas framework to assess the coachability of each and how this may inform the coaching model. As we discussed the element of each facet, we started to make slight changes to the labels to help them be more easily understood. We also raised the last two facets as areas to

prepare for in the last session but did not review them from a coaching perspective in detail.

The 'facet' of confidence

The facet of confidence attracted the bulk of the coaching conversation time in terms of using the model of gravitas, perhaps because it is first in the list, but it was also the most frequently cited part of the first round of interviews. It was widely acknowledged that confidence is a state of mind, with both an inner voice and outward expression. If both are engaged positively, followers experience gravitas confidence.

The term 'unflustered' appeared the most with the managers. It was strongly associated with a state of mind and calmness; although this may sometimes be connected with those who had a lot of experience in business, there were many times when managers shared views about people with very little experience yet remained unflustered. Those that appeared to be flustered immediately gave others the impression that they lacked gravitas.

The ideas developed in the second coaching round to develop unflusteredness were:

- Find a role model or archetype of someone why displays this construct and hold them in the mind, especially when under pressure. This was based on the first idea of a gravitas avatar in round one, but we had not tried to work with the idea of holding a visualisation on them at key points.
- Explore what unflusteredness looks like in action and the opposite of appearing and feeling flustered.
- Monitor and adjust the embodied reaction to the situation (e.g., move more slowly in a red situation, increase in blue, adjust breathing, stabilise head movement, feeling of weight in feet, make movement deliberate, control hands and eyes).
- Accept that one does have to know everything.
- Turn down the inner voice of doubt (Model I type cognitive process, Argyris and Schon, 1996).
- Ensure the work environment looks uncluttered and controlled and represent the way one wishes to be perceived.

The sense that there is movement, going forwards with purpose begins to define 'inertia'; Together with determination and resilience, the term has strength to it. Despite not needing to know everything or have answers for everyone's questions, inertia has a self-belief quality.

Ideas that emerged for developing inertia were:

- Contribute early then step back to observe and listen.
- Discover positive language that emphasises movement and progress.
- Create your own gravitas dictionary.
- Learn to read for gaps in the flow of conversation where direction is needed.
- Say less, but more, during the situation.

The element of accepting was highlighting that it was not possible to always know all that might be desired about a subject matter. Accepting this was a challenge for all of the participants and this appeared to be, in part, a reflection on the culture of their organisation, which values knowledge so highly. A way that we decided to coach this element was for the participants to view themselves as facilitators of others' knowledge and to practice the skill of a facilitator in practice.

Remaining positive and being careful not to display model I behaviour we placed at the heart of this element. There was recognition that being surrounded by positive people was attractive and drew others towards themselves. There were two tools we used to build positivity. The first was to become aware of the language they use, either vocally or written, and to encourage the use of positive words. The second was to consider a gravitas archetype that they could observe or visualise when they felt they might be drawn towards feeling negative. The process had begun in the first coaching round and continued to be useful in practice.

The last element within confidence related to the quality of how to contribute to an interaction with others. It appeared to be an important part of gravitas, which sits in many facets, especially communication and credibility. The importance of gravitas in words and phrases has been highlighted, but the depth and groundedness connects to the quality of contribution when speaking. Each participant felt that being grounded was also about being realistic. In addition, there was a sense of weight to being grounded and we believed we could work on this somatically to help create the sense of weight and carry this into thoughts.

In terms of how this can be coached we discussed the following ideas:

- Learn from great speeches what made them great from a content perspective.
- See every situation as a gravitas opportunity to add oratory depth.
- Look for stories in one's own profession and organisation to use as a way to contribute and keep a record of them.
- Develop a technique to make the feet feel heavy using actual heavy objects to teach the mind to remember weight.

The facet of credibility

The second facet reviewed was credibility. There was a sense that there was a type of order of facets ranging for most important (confidence) through to the least important (control), however that order may change.

The elements that were discussed in depth were:

- Identity comfort and purpose.
- Congruence.
- Dignity.
- Reliability.
- Humility.
- Knowledgeable.

However, these began to change into new elements that the participants could relate to and they felt could be developed through coaching.

The nature of being comfortable with a personal identity was interesting for all of the participants. However, this was not easy to coach in the participants' opinion at first. I felt this was connected to the research on authentic leadership and could be developed using the psychodynamic technique in the first coaching round but also through the use of video analysis and feedback from others about how they are perceived physically and mentally. In addition, creating a sense of purpose could be improved using the same techniques to help build a clearer picture of each participant's values and motives.

The element of congruence ensured that participants expressed their inner thoughts with honesty. Again this appeared to be related to the authentic leadership literature and one concept that the participants had been introduced to in their work prior to my research was the 'leadership shadow' (De Haan and Kasozi, 2014). The process of improving congruence involves a thinking through one's own 'neurotic patterns' of behaviour and building a personal strategy to rethink those patterns positively.

The nature of reliability was aligned to building trust with others. At the heart of reliability was a simple statement expressed by most participants, 'doing what you say you are going to do'. We expanded the coaching conversation to building trust. This is one of the most widely researched qualities, however, while there is a great deal of literature on the subject, we focused this entirely around the perception of gravitas. Interestingly the language around trust was much more intuitive than I had expected. Such as 'you get a feeling', or 'I had an impression', or 'something didn't' feel right about them'.

We broke down the construct into three sub-constructs:

1. Initial impression, which seemed more like their 'presence'.
2. Identity, which included, comfortability and dignity, which was sometimes referred to as sense of pride.
3. Reputation, which was linked both with doing what you say you are going to do and appropriate knowledge and experience.

Coaching trust around these three components emerged into suggestions encompassing:

- Seek feedback from others on how they perceive you initially.
- Look at pictures of yourself and identify three words to describe you.
- Create an identity that you are comfortable with; give it a label and an archetype.
- Be clear about what motivates you in life perhaps through a value exercise.
- Don't over commit to tasks but do deliver those you do commit to.
- Be honest with yourself.

The element of being knowledgeable was important to all of the participants, and during the conceptual encounter interviews it was apparent that many felt knowledge was an important feature of personal gravitas. However, it did not appear to be something that could be coached but was developed with experience. At first I agreed, but then considered how one builds knowledge and whether this can be accelerated with coaching. Being open and curious was discussed, but we narrowed this down to one area that was most important. Curiousness is a state that reflects an interest in others and things outside of our working domain. This was also noted as being more like a sponge or an absorber of information.

The development of curiousness we felt was accessed through the following approaches:

- Wherever possible, if the option to talk with someone directly is there, take it. Don't hide behind an email or text if the other option is there. Talking directly could be face-to-face or on the telephone.
- Develop an interest outside of work and family if this has not happened already.
- Be a coach of others.
- Engage others in meetings or other group environments.
- Become an ethnographer when observing situations so you step back, perceive, make sense and choreograph yourself.

The quality of dignity was appealing to everyone, including me. In some ways we perceived this as having an awareness of cultural etiquette, but it was also concerned with being generous with time with others. A further appealing feature was that it was easy to memorise and practice, and we concentrated on this in the somatic embodiment facet in the following hour of coaching.

All participants cited the importance of being approachable, especially the three females. This is different from some I have worked with, but is an important part of gravitas with the participant groups. Although an interesting area of development, by the time we reached this subject in this round the participants were more tired, therefore we had more to consider for the next round. However, one suggested area of developing humility was to share a story where you have been able to demonstrate it or the opposite where it would have been needed. In addition, we felt that being honest about our personal weaknesses and being prepared to be open

about these with others was another possible technique. However, some were worried that this would not be acceptable in the context of their roles and the culture of their organisation.

It was interesting that as we discussed the coachability of a facet, the participants appeared to tire quickly, physically and mentally. I had not anticipated this; it was not because of a lack of enthusiasm, but seemed more related to the mental stretch of raising the facets and elements to a very conscious level.

The last two discreet facets were to be the focus of the discussion and activity in the last round of coaching. Communication is one of the primary connectors between others and ourselves, and therefore has great gravitas weight. It is heard, seen and felt. We structured the session around the ability to express oneself clearly.

The refined construct for this face were drilled down to:
- Clarity of mind.
- Timing.
- Translating (including reading of others).
- Questioning skill.
- Letting conversations flow.
- Courage.
- Accessibility.

At this stage it seems as though the list was still too long, therefore the challenge was isolating those aspects that are powerful gravitas constructs rather than those that might sit in another area of research.

This was the last of the four that we had time to discuss in the first hour and relates to the ability to control the environment and oneself. It is not directly about controlling others in a 'managerial' sense.

The constructs ready for discussion in the last action round were agreed as:

- Climate creating (group).
- Mood changing (own and others).
- Decisiveness.

The list was much smaller than in previous rounds, but reflects the action research experience. The one area that all the participants wanted to collaborate the most on during the coaching session was the three colour approach and to focus it on the embodiment of gravitas. As a result, I developed a concept of working with different parts of the body to demonstrate and practice the body in a blue state, the body in red state, and the body in the ideal green state. We practised in our small groups, observing each other and giving feedback. I also brought in video clips of public figures in action to help them to read people as well as the situations and reflect this back on themselves. The process of learning together and giving feedback to each other absorbed half of the full coaching time, but appeared to be valuable. I was pleased by how the participants worked together in the smaller groups on this area and we felt that the colour approach could be used to work with all of the facets and construct markers to quickly show whether there was too much, too little, or about the right amount for each quality.

7.6.2 The second hour: Somatic embodiment of gravitas

In the early section of this chapter I introduced a tool that had started to develop in the first coaching round that helped to read situations using three colours. In the second hour of coaching, I worked with the small groups entirely on the physicality of gravitas to recognise 'red' and 'blue' embodiment and the effect of changing parts of body movement on mental state.

In order to run this type of coaching, I had recorded video footage of people to play to the group and ask them to read their 'colour'. They would next explain what they observed in each person on the video. I then asked the group to stand and work together to give each other feedback on what they observed with each other and I also offered feedback to each person. We started with looking for tension in the body and working with the tailbone to move the body to a more relaxed state. I asked them to visualise the tail of dog to indicate their mental state and for them to visualise having a tail like an animal. The process of moving their tailbone and noticing muscle tension and relaxation was a powerful method that appealed to the groups. We moved from the tailbone movement to observe head positioning and shoulder tension. The process continued with observation throughout the body with feedback and adjustments to create a body shape that appeared relaxed and comfortable. What was interesting for me was that as they moved their bodies to these 'green' states they also began to relax mentally. After the standing work on the body, I

concentrated on walking. We noticed in the video analysis that those with gravitas moved with ease. It was fascinating to me how challenging the participants found the exercises in walking, but with collaboration we developed observational feedback and adjustments to improve everyone's movement. I wanted the participants to feel gravitas as weight when they were standing or walking and therefore brought into the room heavy weights for them to carry. What they noticed was that if they walked or stood with a weight for one minute, when the weight was removed they continued to feel it. If a weight was not available, they could simply push against a static object repeatedly and it would create a similar effect once they stopped. The sense of weight slowed their movement and also seemed to clear their minds from what some described as interference.

7.7 Summary

The facets of situational awareness and somatic embodiment were the most interesting for the participants. In the literature review I had advocated the benefits of coaching embodiment citing Dewey's (1938) recognition that it is not possible to separate the mind and the body and using Dinh et al.'s (2014) technique of carrying weights to create a mental sense of heaviness. In this round I had been able to meet my aim of dedicating 50 per cent of the session to somatic body work by being more disciplined. During the coaching discussion on the other four facets I became aware that the facet of credibility was related to some of the concepts of authentic leadership. Guignon (2004) had posited that leaders would need courage and integrity to lead authentically and this was supported in the coaching groups.

The group coaching approach was not only appealing for the participants, but also reflected in the potential benefits described by Brown and Grant (2010), Vaartjes (2005), and Kets de Vries (2005). I also found that this allowed me to be abductive during the coaching session itself because the group interaction enabled me to step away sometimes and reflect on the process and content of the session.

I decided to use the group approach again for the final coaching round and continued to use the same venues. I was concerned that some of the time was still being used to re-evaluate the conceptual framework of gravitas rather than the model of coaching for gravitas, but in some ways these seemed to be merging. I wanted to ensure that we returned more towards to the model of coaching in the final round and would need a clearer goal therefore for me as a coach rather than just the

participants' goals. In the next chapter I describe and discuss the final coaching round and begin to analyse the three coaching rounds collectively.

Chapter 8: Coaching for gravitas: The fourth action research cycle and summary of findings

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter I begin with the personal reflection process that connected the previous coaching rounds to the final round. In addition, I reflect on the model of gravitas we had created because this seemed not to be a static model, but one that continually changed based on the practice in the coaching sessions and the participants' work. In this section I show a revised conceptual framework of gravitas that I proposed to the participants and how they rejected this at first. The following section returns to the analysis of the research diaries and how some elements became very powerful for participants and the continued interest in the physical embodiment of gravitas. The section on the coaching session discusses a final revision to the model of gravitas and the group's suggestions around the model of coaching for gravitas.

The final coaching round and group review took place one year after the initial conceptual encounter interviews. I continued with the group coaching model as I found the intra group participant contributions more beneficial than the one-to-one approach.

8.2 Post-action reflections and thinking

Over the four months between the second round and final round, I first found myself thinking about the conceptual encounter framework as I was concerned that there were too many similarities between some of the facet elements and that it wasn't capturing the coachability aspect which was one of my research goals.

One of the things that I had critically reflected on post-action and integration was the evolution of the framework of gravitas. I had heard during the coaching sessions that courage was an important quality of those who displayed leadership gravitas. In addition, I began to think through whether credibility and control could be incorporated into other facets. The reason for suggested change was to capture those parts of the gravitas model that could be learned through coaching. The new framework (Figure 8.1) was unanimously rejected as they did not find it a helpful

change. However, it did include, for the first time, the integration of the three colours of reading situations and people and the types of situations that the participants recognised as themes where their diary entries had been consistent.

The conceptual framework of gravitas was switched from the six facets to a pyramid. I had hoped that this may be simpler to remember and ultimately coach, but the participants expressed that it lacked the quality and depth of the previous version, especially losing somatic embodiment and situational awareness and agility. I sent the framework to the participants in advance of the coaching session to allow them time to think through their feedback and maximise the use of time for coaching when we came together. I present the framework to demonstrate how my thinking was progressing, but I was ultimately much more satisfied with the collective response and return to the six facets.
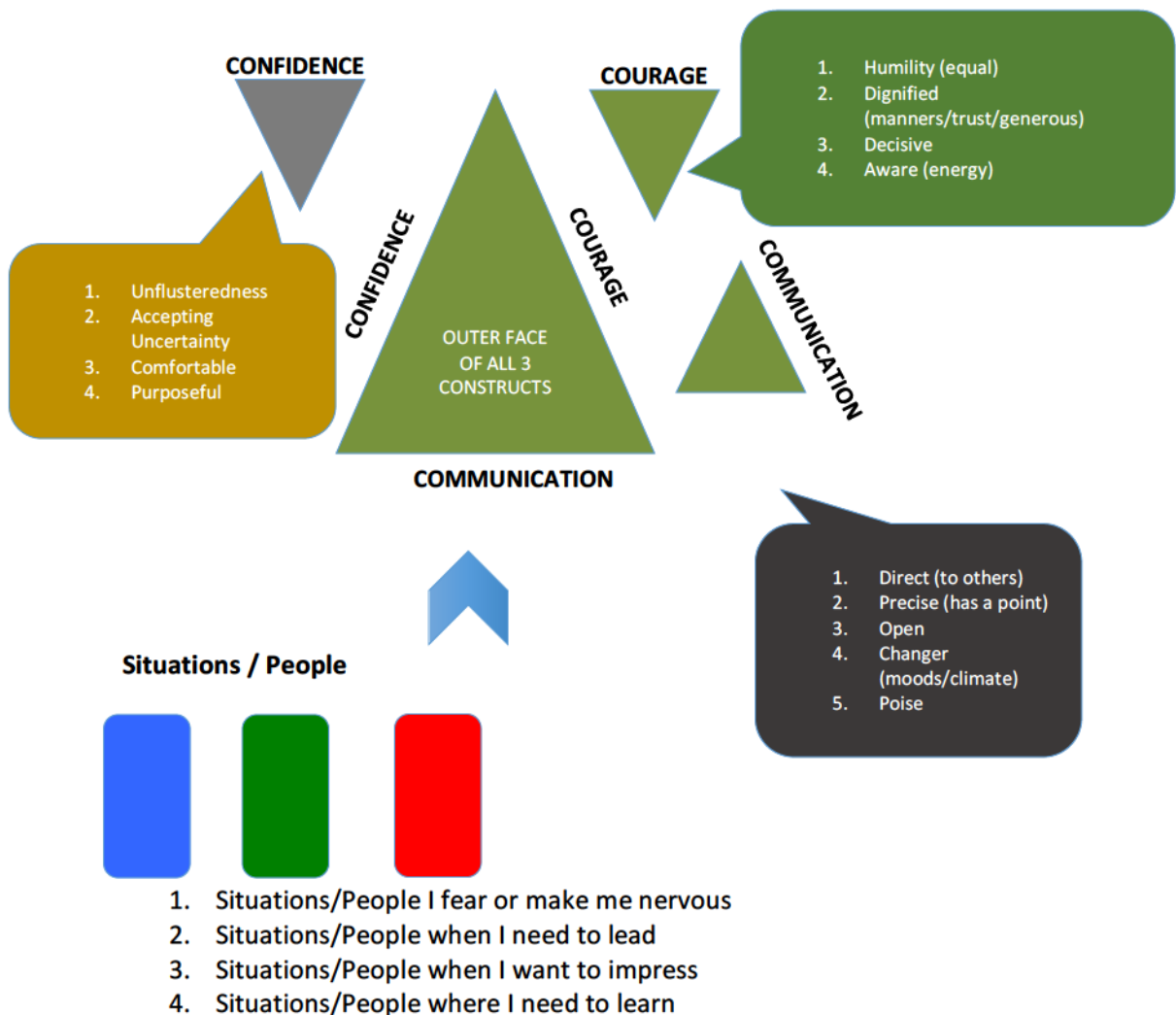
Figure 8.1: Gravitas pyramid

8.3 Gravitas diary review

During the period between the second and third coaching session, the participants completed and submitted diary reflection pages for me to consider. The purpose of these was to continue the participants' focus on collecting experiences and reflecting on their integration of techniques and practices in the workplace. I intended to use them to assess which techniques and which elements are more effective as part of developing gravitas and identify patterns individually and collectively to help design the third coaching round. I begin this section with the analysis of the participant diary reflection pages before discussing the key learning points for me in relation to the model of coaching for gravitas.

Rick submitted six diary entries for review in the session. I noticed a pattern to his events. All of his entries were about the facet of control with sometimes the addition of credibility, confidence, or communication. One of the key learning points for Rick's gravitas was to learn to stop talking on a subject that he has great technical knowledge about. He had wanted to learn how to say more by saying less, and it was clear to me that he was working on this. Not only was he learning to say less, he was also being more careful to avoid complicated information and chose his language carefully. The other part of his gravitas skills he was continuing to develop from the last session was to *feel the room for supporters'*. A part of feeling the room was being learned by being more confident about the way he initially engaged with others. He wanted a formality and pace to introductions. I had noticed every time I reconnected with him that he would rush the polite aspect of shaking hands and building early rapport. His eyes would move everywhere and he would talk while handling bags, books, and other business paraphernalia. I asked all of them to slow down when introducing themselves and take the time to actually connect with others. Rick recorded an entry where he challenged his normal behaviour and did this effectively to engage with customers. He described his mind before one 'red' conversation where he said:

> *'I was flustered before the meeting begun; a colleague is very pro an idea but very poor at planning therefore project delays carry lots of risk'*

His key learning was building in patience to meet the flustered mind and allowing points to be made slowly with timely interventions.

Rebecca worked hard to enter meetings with senior leaders in a 'green' mental state. She described engaging in a potentially 'red' meeting and she wanted to work on demonstrating confidence by being direct and patient. She recorded that:

'I came out with the completely different result than I expected for the issue I went in with'

In the review with me she explained that was a positive to her as she had been so focused on getting her point across that she had an unexpected result because she felt she was more open about other views and opinions. A part of this is recognising the tension in her body and the flustered mind beforehand and working on relaxing herself and slowing herself down. In another event Rebecca led an all day workshop where she knew she didn't have as much knowledge as others in the room. She wrote:

'I had to be comfortable with the limited knowledge on the subject and made that clear to my stakeholders at the outset…I hopefully came across as credible and throughout the day worked on being direct, precise, and open'.

She explained to me that she worked hard on controlling situations by constantly scanning the mood and colours of people and working on altering to a 'green' by embodying the qualities of a 'green' gravitas.

Danielle also worked hard to stay in the 'green' in a potentially 'red' situation with her boss. To increase her gravitas she wrote:

'I tried to develop my confidence to be assertive…' The effect on her boss was that:

'She went a little 'mad'; I kept calm and stuck the plan of removing (the resource). Calmed her down by talking her through the rationale for de-prioritisation'

She explained to me that she was trying to read the emotion of her boss and other attendees and alter the mood, but was ready for an emotional reaction.

John described that he felt he was naturally a 'blue' person but moved to 'green' when he felt in control but recognised that more recently he moved to the 'red'. He didn't like this about himself and the result was that he found he would lack

confidence based upon a lack of technical knowledge and being unsure how to change this. He provided an example of a weekly 'red' situation where he tried a new approach based on the coaching session. He recorded that he worked on his communication skills to be *'clear, measured and well prepared presentation of the options with reference to requirements and potential weaknesses'*. He also worked on timely interventions, *'allowing the explosion to happen and then reiterating clearly the rationale behind the proposed solution',* just as Danielle had done. Finally, he worked on his 'green' body work to be neutral and open not aggressive of closed. Although he tried hard he felt the explosion remained in 'red' and concluded by saying that:

> *'Gravitas in the circumstance is not about the individual but about the team working together/being united to have gravitas in the eyes of the senior manager'.*

I reminded him of what he had said in the first round where he said that he felt that one of the ways of coaching with the model was to develop gravitas in others working with the most relevant facets and constructs, which he had forgotten about. This was useful for future coaching with John and his team.

Mike had described that he liked to view gravitas as sitting or standing in the eye of the storm or cyclone. He viewed the chaos of everyone around him as moving quickly in the 'red' or way out of his vision in the 'blue' while his calmness was in the middle. I found his visualisation powerful and shared this with other in the final session. Mike captured diary entries where this happened and that he tried to remain calm using relaxation and breathing techniques describing:

> *'I tried to remain calm, ignoring behaviours that were not helpful to move forward or intimidatory people trying to light the fuse for more problems'.*

A part of his gravitas strategy was to step back and organise more rather than fix things himself. In another entry he wrote:

> *'Motivated by gravitas session, I felt confident in my ability. Consciously decided to elevate from detail and concentrate on providing direction'.*

He explained that he finally felt how to control his gravitas. However, he had another entry where he was not in control and felt conscious of lacking credibility. This time it

was on a call and individuals did not accept his authority and he found he raised his voice and was not calm. He was constantly interrupted and wrote, *'this is not how I want to deal with people'.*

Kirsty struggled to complete diary pages in the last few months because of a personal reason, but she did talk me through the impact of the gravitas coaching and how she felt she conquered a great frustration and fear. She explained that there was one person more senior than her who *'pushed her buttons'* and always made her feel inferior. I had asked her in a previous session to work on developing a dignity, with clear values and manners, when working with someone who believes they are better in some way. In addition, this forced Kirsty to sometimes avoid situations and communicating directly as had been noted by her followers. Therefore, she worked consistently on speaking directly to others and when she had the chance with this other person she decided not only to be direct, but with dignity. The dignity side of coaching was both a mind and body exercise so that she would carry herself with confidence and dignity, slow down, and be almost overly polite. The result she said was incredible. It totally disarmed the other person and Kirsty took control. She was visibly happy when telling me her story and looked quite relieved.

In summary the reflection diaries demonstrated a pattern to me that suggested that gravitas began to be internally felt when each of them could slow down their mental state. Sometimes this was achieved somatically and sometimes by reframing situations, saying less, and maintaining personal dignity. The somatic slowing down was as simple as moving more slowly and focusing on the sense of weight from the previous session. A feature of slowing down I noticed when I would meet them for a coaching session was when some of them would rush into greetings and discussion, appearing disorganised and flustered. Visualisation, somatic movement, and dignity were the most important areas of focus based on the diary reflection pages and I had wanted to build on these in the last session.

8.4 The coaching session

In this section I describe the last of the three two-hour coaching rounds and what we collectively learned. At the end of the session I asked the participants to return to some key questions (Appendix O) about what they had learned and how to improve the model of coaching.

Having reviewed the dairy entries and the revised possible gravitas conceptual framework, the two groups both explained that they preferred the original model, but with some changes to one of the facets and some of the constructs. The changes reflected the integration of gravitas into their work and the post-action reflection and thinking cycle. Another change was to the word construct, which did not feel right for the group. We created a word for the underlying qualities under each facet, a gravitan. The word was derived from the field of physics and the study of gravity and particles called gravitons.

I continued to work extensively with their somatic embodiment of confidence, communication, and control as these were the most popular facets in the diaries, but we changed from credibility to courage as this facet emerged through the coaching rounds as an important overarching quality.

8.5 The refined model of gravitas

The majority of the coaching session was spent exploring the final conceptual framework of gravitas and the model of coaching. The goal was to identify the elements of gravitas that could be developed through coaching rather than those that were just desirable. We also continued to practice the somatic embodiment techniques from the previous round to help embed these as new skills.

There were differing reactions to our concept on the three-dimension triangular model. The attempt to make it a little more elegant was unanimously accepted in the pyramid form, but the elements that make up overall gravitas became more solidified. We returned to the cube, but with the inclusion of 'courage' as reviewed. Part of the reason for this reflects the coaching reviews of diaries as discussed, but also from the two interviews with the most senior leaders during the conceptual encounter phase. We agreed that we had missed the need for an edge or to show some 'teeth' as some participants' described.

We were also able to refine the gravitans as coachable elements of each facet and created simpler language to help translate this to others, especially followers. The session was again video recorded and required the coaching group and me to assess whether the initial elements we had defined during the conceptual encounter process where also coachable. In some cases we also considered whether the elements were situated under the most appropriate facets. It is also important to

reinforce that the coachable elements were contextually significant for the participants and the organisation they worked in. As an example in the first conceptual framework of gravitas under the facet of control we identified five elements:

- Mood Alterer
- Climate Creator
- Decisiveness
- Preparedness
- Self Deserving

However our in our final coaching session we were less sure how to coach the skills of mood alterer and climate creator and to be self deserving and decided that in an organisational context there would need to be an action focus to them and wrapped then under new labels of vision, strength and poise. In order to create a climate it was necessary to engage with vision and to be self deserving required strength and poise. Action research allowed use to keep making these adjustments as we learned together but the core shape of the gravitas framework was consistent and it became more about making labels understandable that led to these small adjustments.
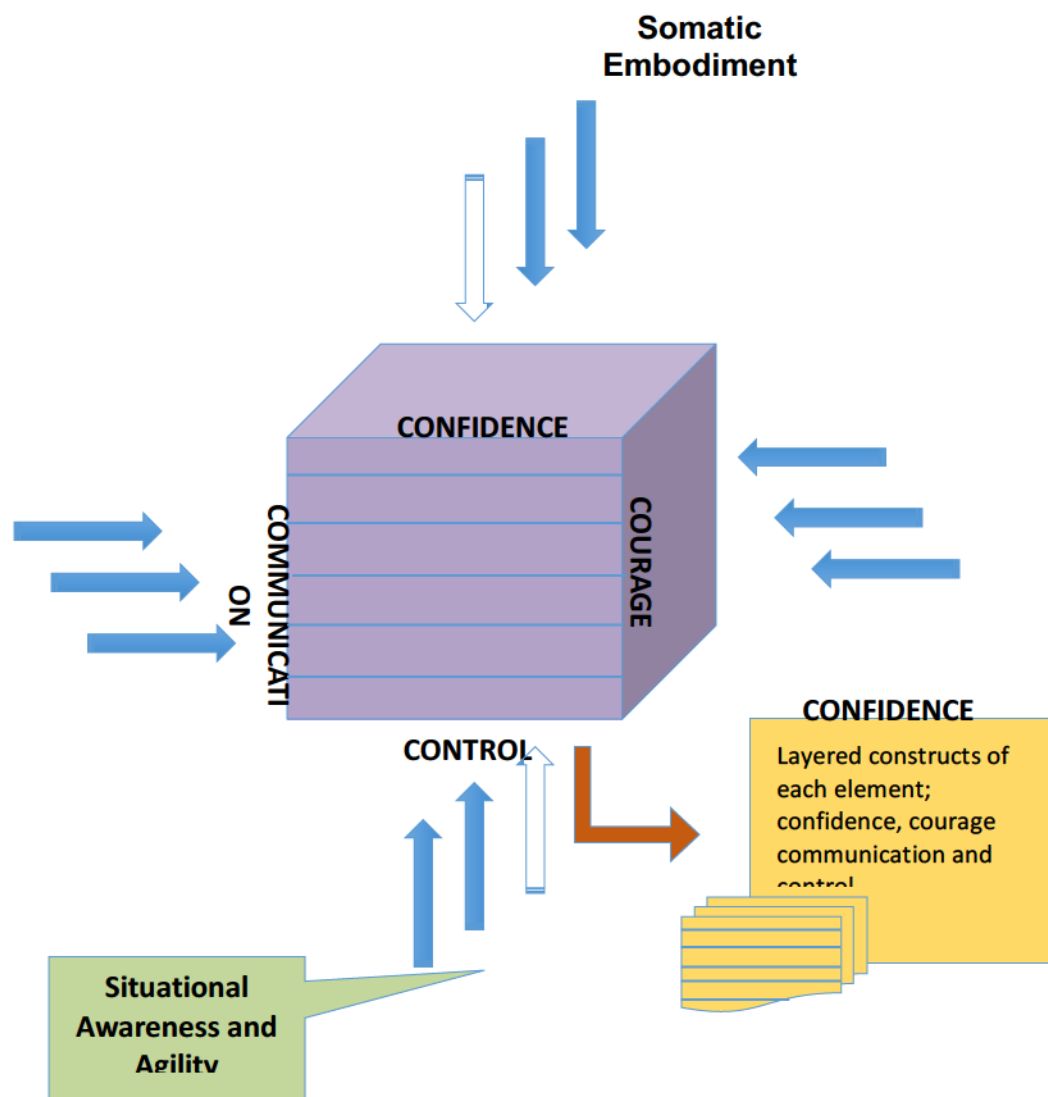
Figure 8.2: The six facets of the conceptual framework of gravitas.

The facets were made up from the following, as shown in Table 8.1:

CONFIDENCE	COURAGE	COMMUNICATION	CONTROL
Unflusteredness	Humility	Direct	Balance
Accepting uncertainty	Dignified	Precise	Strength
Comfortable	Decisive	Open	Vision
Purposeful	Aware	Adaptable	Coach

	Knowledgeable		Poise

Table 8.1: The gravitans of each facet of gravitas

In use or in coaching these look as shown in Table 8.2:

Table 8.2: Coaching gravitan behaviours

GRAVITAS	CONFIDENCE
Unflusteredness	• Maintains calm demeanor. • Organised mentally and with artifacts. • Positive mental outlook.
Accepting Uncertainty	• Looks for opportunities to learn. • Low level of knowledge anxiety. • Uses others to fill gaps willingly.
Comfortable	• Has distinctive style and image that reflects personality (does not try to be someone else). • Open about perceived weaknesses of self. • Moves with embodied comfort.
Purposeful	• Always looks for opportunities to move interactions forward. • Embodies purposeful movement. • Anticipates the next moves of others.

GRAVITAS	COURAGE
Humility	• Treats others as equals, including those who perceive themselves to be better.
Dignified	• Demonstrates manners and courtesy at all times especially under pressure. • Is trusting and can be trusted. • Is generous with their time and knowledge. • Embody dignity at all times.
Decisive	• Always makes a decision when interactions require one. • Uses insight through balance of facts and instinct.

	• Follows up on others where action is agreed.
Aware	• Reads situations through energy colour map. • Reads others through energy colour map.
Knowledgeable	• Has a thirst for knowledge and looks for opportunities to learn from others.

GRAVITAS	COMMUNICATION
Direct	• Ensures where possible they use direct communication means (not web-based) especially when meaning matters. • Ensures all parties are included during interactions. • Does not make excuses or put things off.
Precise	• Always have a point. • Use stories/metaphors/anecdotes regularly. • Explain rationale for decisions and arguments clearly in no more than 3 points. • Learn when speaking to use questions or statements that are less than 10 words.
Open	• Listen and make it clear that you are listening. • Reflect and demonstrate this. • Avoid assumptions. • Be comfortable saying nothing for most of the time.
Adaptable	• Stay in the moment. • Improvise. • Change your style (pace/language/tone) of speaking and writing at points where you want to be heard.

GRAVITAS	CONTROL
Balance	• Be resilient and learn to regain balance quickly when knocked. • Embody balance when standing. • Always listen for more than one argument.
Strength	• Be strong, keep yourself in good physical shape.

	• Look for opportunities to lead.
Vision	• Step back from situations and assess them.
	• Share your vision regularly.
	• Be strategic but action focused.
Coach	• Use coaching questions wherever possible.
	• Be a coach to someone specific.
	• Find a mentor for yourself.
Poise	• Be at the centre of the room at all times.
	• Ensure others revolve around you, not you around them.
	• Embody poise at all times.

Somatic Embodiment
Situational Awareness and Agility

The focus of all of the situations where gravitas mattered had, up to the final session, been centred on work. However, we discussed that as leaders they also have interaction in business outside of the workplace. Therefore, we added a further one, social gravitas. Using Mike's visualisation technique of being in the eye of the storm, I extended the thinking to how our galaxy of starts and planets maintains an orbit and connects to each other with gravity. We explored in the room the idea of increasing gravitas by moving towards the centre. In visual terms, this meant heading towards the sun. From a social perspective this meant being aware of their own orbits with people and how the physicality of moving more centrally could create more social gravitas. As we discussed this concept the participants were able to relate this to practice at work as well as describing how they become 'blue' when they were distant from the most senior powerful people in a room. One participant in particular described how he found social gravitas hard and that his partner appeared more like the sun to him. He recounted how he noticed he orbited at the edge of a room and at best described himself as a moon before he started the gravitas coaching. He decided to go further and try new orbits both socially and at work with his greater confidence. I think that at this stage the participants were beginning to learn to develop their own techniques to develop gravitas, and I was satisfied that there was a transition to self-coaching beginning to emerge.

8.6 Reviewing progress

In this section I analyse the final part of the coaching session where we started to reflect on the coaching process and how to improve the model of coaching for gravitas. I asked them each to consider four questions:

1. Has your perception of what gravitas means to you changed since we started?
2. If yes, can you describe what gravitas means for you now?
3. When you reflect on the model of coaching for gravitas – do you feel the model describes the phenomenon clearly for you?
4. Is there anything missing?

The responses to the first question ranged from yes, completely to not enormously. One person described it as 'amazing that we had created this (conceptual framework)'. They liked that the framework had been solidified and that the terms were translatable to others. An insight that emerged is that although the coaching process aimed to improve the quality of their leadership gravitas, an additional thought was that perhaps leadership gravitas is concerned with developing the quality of gravitans in their followers.

All of them shared with me that the model of coaching for gravitas was effective. The most significant aspect of the coaching cycle was how each of them described how self-aware they had become. The model of gravitas was something they found hard to not think about and every interaction they found themselves consciously processing it and thinking of new approaches. Some developed personal mantras to guide their thinking about the model and to stay in the 'green' colour when under pressure. This feature of raising awareness seems aligned to my model of coaching where I had echoed Western's (2012) and Stokes and Jolly's (2010) principles of improving awareness. In my assessment of the model, not only did the process improve self-awareness, it maintained it and for me this was a key benefit in supporting lasting behavioural change.

An unplanned development was that two of the participants ended up working together on a project and found themselves observing and coaching each other. The group agreed that coaching for gravitas would benefit from a peer coaching or

mentoring system within the cycles of learning. A criticism of the model was that it was difficult for me to observe them in practice, and they would have preferred that to be added if possible. The gravitas diary entries were my only method to capture in the integration into work and that had limitations. Some found that process easier than others to engage with. All of the participants agreed the model of coaching for gravitas worked for them and that the concept of gravitas is, and can be, learned. I had cited the advocates of group coaching (Brown and Grant, 2010; Kets de Vries, 2005) in earlier chapters, however none of their research suggests the role of maintaining group learning in the workplace, but this appeared to be an important insight from my coaching practice.

8.7 Summary of findings

There were four cycles of collaborative action research conducted over 12 months. I had originally planned for the cycles to take place within six to nine months, but the access to participants in terms of their availability and my travel time to each of their cities resulted in a longer timescale. In hindsight, 12 months was a more realistic timeframe because of the time taken to reflect and integrate learning into the workplace.

The data collected included more than 40 hours of audio recordings, 16 hours of video, more than 10 hours of transcriptions, and many pages of notes and diary reflection pages. The gravitas model ended with four core themes and 18 sub-themes that fed into the coaching approach. The coaching model had two core aspects; coaching skills and a coaching cycle representing how the coach interacts with the participants.

When I started the research process, I had originally thought through two key steps in the approach, the conceptual encounter interactions and the three coaching cycles. On reflection, through the process I realised that there was one core process integrating four action research cycles, of which conceptual encounter is the starting point to help explore the phenomenon of gravitas. However, it is too simple to describe an action research cycle as one process. One cycle incorporated up to four months of data capture for the participants and me. The data volume was initially daunting, but became more manageable once the research process became more familiar to me.

The collaborative nature of action research became more valuable once I moved from one-to-one coaching to small group coaching, however I would argue that the

blend of both is when collaboration is most effective. This is especially important in the early stage of the coaching relationship when we are building trust, direction, and understanding the overall scope. Although I had not set out to explore the contribution to group coaching theory, I believe that I was able to add this to my original aims of the research.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

9.1 Overall research goals

The study aimed to explore the phenomenon of gravitas in order to create a model of coaching for gravitas in collaboration with the research participants. Drawing from personal experience I recognised the importance of gravitas as a quality of leadership, and in Chapter 1 I described my rationale and the context for the study. Four objectives were established in pursuit of the overall aim. The first objective involved a review of the literature on gravitas, the associated concepts that related to gravitas, the evolution of leadership theory and its relation to gravitas, and finally coaching and adult learning theories. In Chapter 3 I described the methodology I undertook, explaining my ontology as a critical realist, and describing how I selected the methods that were used. The second objective was to create a conceptual framework of gravitas using the first of these methods, a conceptual encounter approach to understand how leaders experience gravitas. Chapter 4 described and evaluated the conceptual encounter interviews and the conceptual framework of gravitas. The third objective was to create an initial model of coaching for gravitas based around my experience, the literature review, and the conceptual framework, which was discussed in Chapter 5. The final objective refined the model of coaching for gravitas using three cycles of collaborative action research, which were described and evaluated in Chapters 6, 7, and 8. Overall this was a first attempt to understand the experience of gravitas for leaders, and to propose a new definition and conceptual framework. Furthermore, this was a first attempt to build and refine a model of coaching for gravitas from a leadership coaching perspective that placed equal emphasis on cognitive and somatic personal qualities.

This final chapter discusses the theoretical and practical contribution of the study, in particular the model of coaching for gravitas for professional coaches in business and the academic interest in coaching theory. In section 9.2 I discuss the overall experience of the conceptual encounter approach to develop a conceptual framework for gravitas. In section 9.3 I discuss the key overarching themes that emerged in this study. Using the lens of critical realism I explore the structures and mechanisms that shaped the realities of gravitas for the participants, before moving to the evolution of the model of coaching for gravitas. Sections 9.4 to 9.6 evaluate the development of gravitas and the final reflections of the participants and the followers. In section 9.7 and the sub sections I discuss the implications for

researchers, coaching theory and practice including the stakeholders who may benefit from the approach and findings from my research. Finally, in sections 9.8 and 9.9 I consider the limitations to my research and offer suggestions for further research before summarising my final reflections.

9.2 Reflection on research process

The conceptual encounter process was an important stage for beginning the action research process and for building a relationship with the participants. De Rivera's (1981) compilation of other researchers' experiences with the conceptual encounter method provided more than just an account of their experiences. I found that it was like a guide with ideas about how to avoid the problems of using conceptual encounter for the first time. De Rivera (1981) explained the process of exploring the phenomenon of anger, Goodman (1981) explored the experience of anxiety as something different from panic, and Linsay-Hartz (1981) researched elation, gladness, and joy. Although De Rivera (1981) was the pioneer of the approach and provided some of the most useful guidelines for me, it was Goodman's (1981) experience that was most helpful. She recognised a limitation relating to her bias as a clinically trained psychiatrist when she found herself hunting for terms that suited her research goals. As she became more relaxed with the process and stayed closer to the data she discovered that she became more open to learning. In addition, she found that after listening to herself on audio recordings of her interviews that she seemed to do most of the talking. Therefore she adapted her style to stay present with her clients and to be patient with them to allow them to talk about *their* experiences rather than hers. Despite being conscious of needing to let the participants speak more than me, I found the same thing happening to me. I did not realise this during the interviews until I had listened to the audio recordings. One of the challenges of using the conceptual encounter approach was that De Rivera (1981) recommended having small gaps, sometimes just hours between each interview. However, it became evident that this is a key problem with the approach, and it required adapting so that I was able to maintain the dual role of remaining present with the research partner interviews and interpreting the information at the same time. I therefore adapted the approach to collecting and analysing the data so that I could stay present during each interview and also be able to go back and reflect on the data by using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis steps. The key difference between my approach and De Rivera's (1981) is that whilst I co-developed the conceptual framework with the participants during each interview, I

also had each interview transcribed. Returning to the transcripts and identifying key themes and patterns resulted in a second loop of reflection with each participant, whereby we had two touch points in the approach to test the framework until we reached agreement. The addition of the thematic analysis process enabled me to ensure that there was sufficient rigour in the process.

One aspect of building the conceptual framework of gravitas that I found helpful was to think in pictures and use mind mapping and spider diagram techniques to capture my thoughts quickly. Cross-referencing the maps and diagrams with the thematic analysis helped me to ensure the quality of interpretation. In my discussion on methodology in Chapter 3, I suggested that Tracy's (2010) criteria for quality in qualitative research were most helpful to me. The first four criteria were especially important for the conceptual encounter process. Firstly, I explained clearly why the topic of defining gravitas for leaders was relevant, timely, and interesting. Secondly, my data collection was rigorous and I improved the richness of the data by using the analysis of audio transcripts. Thirdly, I recognised I could be transparent about my beliefs and views on how I perceived gravitas, and I had chosen a method that promoted reflexivity. Lastly, the approach created dense descriptions of gravitas and the multivocality (Hodder, 2008) of each participant's views together with my own.

The descriptions of gravitas experiences are themselves an abstraction, which are understood through the language of the participants. However, De Rivera (1981) noted that the use of words only is a limitation to the method, and recommended that other approaches would be helpful. In my review of the literature I suggested that there is also an embodiment of gravitas, which I knew was an important feature of the eventual framework. Therefore I explored the somatic nature of gravitas experiences to address this potential limitation. The emergence of the framework was built on the four steps described in Chapter 3. I began with the first step, an inductive process using both the literature and the early questions to the research partners to get a feel for the meaning of gravitas for them. For the second step, I compared these ideas to my own and reflected on the next set of ideas of gravitas; I describe this as a retroductive step. The third step was to test those ideas with each of the research partners before proposing the initial abstract conceptualisation with all the participants. The final step was to step away and take time to explore the transcribed interviews, and it was at this abductive stage of inquiry that I noticed other patterns. The most important of these was the differing perspectives that the women had to the men regarding the warmth and approachability of gravitas.

One of the challenges with the coaching rounds that followed was my role as both the coach and the main researcher. It was difficult maintaining this dual role: to remain present with the participants and to be able to separate myself from the interaction to reflect and consider the development of the research process (Cox, 2013). I had taught the concept of executive presence to clients for 10 years, and was therefore very aware of this dilemma, as well as the importance of being present with others. Therefore I was able to manage the potential tension by explaining to the participants the dichotomous role I was playing, and to be explicit when I was stepping in and out of the coaching role and the researcher role.

The participants have been described in my work as research partners, participants, and coachees. The role they undertook was to collaborate as research partners, but at some points they felt more like participants and sometimes even described themselves as clients. I used some of the terms interchangeably because I felt their role changed throughout the year that I worked with them. One of their challenges was to remain present with me and with the research process. During the development of the conceptual framework for gravitas we were equal research partners, but in the coaching environment I needed to balance the role of coach, facilitator, teacher, and researcher.

During the one-to-one rounds I found this very difficult to achieve, but because I entered the first round with a model of how to build self-knowing, I had a high degree of control over the process. In the group coaching environment over the next two rounds there appeared to be greater space for me and for the participants to balance all of our roles. I had worked with each of them before the study but in larger groups as a facilitator, and I found the smaller groups much more powerful for effecting change but also for allowing me to be recognised as the expert or teacher (Brown and Grant, 2010). It was interesting to notice that moving to the small group environment increased my personal sense of gravitas using the six facets to relate to, and I believe that to coach gravitas it is also important that coaches develop their own gravitas. I had not thought of this whilst the initial model of coaching was being developed, but it was a significant insight to me as a development area for the model.

The last finding relating to the coach–coachee relationship was the selection of the coaching venue. I had let the coachees choose the first venues, and they chose

these based on convenience rather than the best environments to reflect coaching for gravitas. When I became aware of the limitations of the venues, I chose places that I felt were spatially appropriate to meet my goal of working with the participants' body movement for 50 per cent of a session. As a result, my model of coaching includes the selection of 'gravitas venues', identified by the coach where possible. In the next section I reflect on my interpretation of the experience of gravitas using a critical realist lens.

9.3 Making sense of the data: Critical realist lens

I used a critical realist lens to help understand the experiences that were described to me. I undertook empirical research to define the reality of gravitas for the participant group. In order to do this I took time to understand the history of each participant from his or her earliest recollections through to his or her current working life. They all worked for a high-technology engineering organisation that works on long time scale projects of enormous complexity in a highly competitive, high-cost industry. This created a set of values that had an impact on each of the participants. Where their organisation valued knowledge and technical excellence I found that this influenced their ideas on what gravitas meant. The consequence was that the participants believed that having gravitas meant being knowledgeable, or alternatively, confident even without having sufficient knowledge. The organisation also has a history of long-serving employees, which resulted in more newly promoted leaders in the participant group doubting credibility.

What is important from a critical realist perspective is recognising that these structures and mechanisms shaped what gravitas meant for them. I described these as forms of social reality (Fleetwood, 2009). Other forms of realism also had an impact. Their ideas on what a person with gravitas looked like were a reflection of the dress code and colours worn by of those within the organisation. I regarded these as a form of artefactual reality (Fleetwood, 2009). Each of these types of reality were important, not only for the conceptual framework but also for helping to understand what type of gravitas goals the participants would work with in a model of coaching for gravitas.

Critical realism also uses meta theory as a means of reflection (Fleetwood, 2013). I described Western's (2012) meta theory of coaching to help situate my model of coaching for gravitas at what was referred to as the 'point de capiton' (Figure 3.2).

The centre point between differing dimensions of coaching appeared to reflect the concept of gravitas. There are features of the conceptual framework that reflect the importance of knowledge that is learned from experience, which Western describes as wisdom. Another type of knowledge he refers to is the knowledge one has from the role played in the business arena. The two other axes relate to the awareness and ability to change oneself (the individual) and the relationship with others (social). My conceptual framework demonstrates that gravitas touches each dimension and can be considered to be a phenomenon at the centre point. Therefore, the model of coaching for gravitas sits at the centre, and it is important to identify each participant's social structures and professional mechanisms in order to develop gravitas.

The final area of interest is the difference in perceptions of gravitas for males and females that I noted in Chapters 4 and 5. From the literature it could be argued that gravitas has a masculine quality, and I noticed when the females were able to shape their own meanings that it was described as approachable and warm. In addition, the females showed lower levels of confidence compared to the males. These differences reflect the literature on male and female leadership styles and the pressure that female participants experience in male-dominated organisations. Eagly and Johnson (1990) noted that women tend to lead in an interpersonal style compared to the task-focused style of men.

In addition, women were seen as having a more participative and democratic style rather than the directive style of men. This style appears to also reflect two leadership theories, which contrast the transactional style of men and the transformational style of women (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010). Frustrations around credibility and confidence that I found during all the action research cycles explored by the three women are again identified in the literature, suggesting that although women may have a more effective leadership style than men, it is often more difficult for them to succeed and be recognised in male-dominated organisations (Eagly, 2007). Although the literature is a little over-generalised rather than organisation-specific, I did observe these issues in my study. The facets of confidence and credibility for women were reflected in the conceptual encounter interviews, and it was useful to ensure we focused on these issues during the coaching rounds.

9.4 Reflection on defining gravitas

I felt that integrating the conceptual encounter method into the action research approach was important. I reflected after the coaching rounds had been completed that it was possible to describe the method as a coaching technique, especially when developing a phenomenon or other human quality that has not been clearly defined or is likely to be experienced quite differently by each coachee. The method aligns itself with Western's (2012) coaching pedagogy principles of human experience and self-knowing. I had also thought that based on De Rivera's (1981) criteria of how to build an elegant and parsimonious model that once it was completed it would not change. This proved to be incorrect. In the findings from the subsequent coaching rounds, the participants continued to return to the conceptual framework of gravitas because once they started to integrate tools and techniques into their work, the framework would sometimes change a little. In this sense I felt that De Rivera's (1981) method was useful for capturing a present sense of a phenomenon, but speaking as a coach, it is important to acknowledge that this may change, and to remain open to these changes. I reflected throughout the action research cycles that De Rivera's (1981) goal was more idealistic, but useful as an overarching goal.

My four steps of looking at data (inductive, retroductive, deductive, and abductive) were also new to the process, although I acknowledge that others may have implicitly used these. However, they helped me to understand where I was in the cycle of each encounter. The coding of transcribed interviews is another addition to the method that I propose for those that wish to use the approach for empirical research purposes.

The conceptual framework of gravitas was represented as a soft-edged cube with six sides, which I called facets of gravitas. These were described in detail in Chapter 4 and can be summarised as facets of confidence, credibility, communication, and control, together with somatic embodiness, situational awareness, and agility. The last two facets emerged directly from the thematic analysis of transcripts, which for me demonstrated the advantage of my second reflective loop. Each facet was defined in further detail by facet elements, which I hoped could be coached independently and would be explored in the subsequent coaching rounds. The soft edges of the cube reflected a visual shape of individual strengths and weaknesses and the effect of changing situations. I hoped that the participants would be able to recall a visual image of their personal gravitas cube in any situation.

A key distinguishing feature of my findings on gravitas is that it is a quality of a person as well as a quality perceived by others. This is important, as it identifies that it is different to being authentic, charismatic, or having power to influence. My model of gravitas defined gravitas through constructs (gravitans) but recognised the changeable nature of gravitas according to the situations in which a leader operates. This is in contrast to research conducted on charisma and authenticity, which centres on being perceived as either having charisma and authenticity of not. In addition, my critique of authentic leadership in the literature review suggested that social and historical contexts are ignored or given little attention (Gardiner, 2011); however, my research process paid special attention to both contexts. The research participants' personal history and social and business contexts were placed at the centre of the research process. Furthermore, where Eagly and and Carli (2007) were critical of authentic leadership barriers related to gender and power, I also designed the research process to help understand different gender perceptions of gravitas and organisational power issues through the use of action research reflection diaries. It also differs to the literature on relational leadership theory, which has been defined as 'a social influence process through which emergent coordination and change are constructed and produced' (Uhl-Bien, 2006, p.668), because it is primarily interested in the relationships with others. The consequence of this inner quality and outwardly perceived quality is especially important to the development of a model of coaching for gravitas. As a result, there needed to be an inward development of self-awareness and tools that helped the participants to adapt to different situations, and to appreciate follower perceptions.

The elements of each facet were relabelled as gravitans, and some emerging literature may support my approach to creating the conceptual framework of gravitas and the model of coaching for gravitas. The six facets of the gravitas model were important to help guide the conceptual encounter approach but also served as key memorable guides for the participants and me. When I was nearing the end of my research, a second-edition book was launched, also describing a '4 Cs' approach to developing mental toughness in leadership (Clough and Strycharczyk, 2012), which has similarities with my initial concept of gravitas. The '4 Cs' they suggest are control, commitment, challenge, and confidence. They developed a psychometric instrument to measure a leader's level of each of his or her 'Cs', and suggest that they can all be developed. In the literature review I cited Kets de Vries' (2015) framework for gravitas, which was published after my study was complete, where he

describes '3 Cs' of courage, confidence, and composure. There are three interesting parallels between Kets de Vries (2015) and Clough and Strycharczyk (2012), which are reflected in my findings. Firstly, the comparison raises the question as to whether there is a reason that we like models described using labels with the same letter. I was drawn towards it as it makes labels easier to remember, but I had not encountered anything prior to my action research cycles. Kets de Vries' (2015) qualities of gravitas are reflected in my research, but I was able to define the qualities in greater depth and breadth, and I based it on the rigorous study of practising leaders rather than on an opinion. Secondly, Kets de Vries (2015) concludes similarly to my findings, that most qualities of gravitas can be developed through coaching or other learning approaches. I focused equally on the inner feeling and the outward perception of gravitas. I found that whilst inner feelings of gravitas can take longer to develop compared with outward perceptions, the process of defining a concept of gravitas helped to accelerate inner confidence and courage especially, which is a helpful contribution. However, I recognise that some gravitans of credibility may require more experience to develop.

The 21 gravitans of gravitas enabled me to tailor the focus and framing of topics in the coaching model, and helped to guide the participants' reflection and integration process. The participants suggested that a key reminder card could be developed to help them recall where they would generally need to focus their attention when they wanted to build gravitas. Furthermore, they recommended an extension to my gravitas archetype and avatar exercises to one where each of them built an advisory group of role models who they think capture the best of each gravitan they needed to work with. For example, a participant might have eight gravitans that he or she needed to improve, so the coach would work with him or her to identify up to eight ideal role models who could deliver that gravitan well. On the reverse side of the participant's gravitas card would be an image of each advisory member and his or her gravitan skill.

Earlier definitions of gravitas drew heavily on the ancient meaning of gravitas as a virtue representing qualities of seriousness, quiet dignity, and authority. The Oxford Dictionary definition is 'seriousness, dignity and solemnity of manner'. Whilst some of these qualities emerged during the conceptual encounter approach, there were also many others that help to offer a new definition of gravitas for leaders. Consequently, I define gravitas in the context of leadership as:

"A memorable quality of a leader manifested in feeling inwardly confident, calm, and worthy, and in being able to impressively engage others and build supportive relationships that contribute significantly to the performance of his or her organisation."

My definition differs from others because it identifies the importance of engaging relationships and of feeling confident and worthy, but it is also a quality that others find memorable, and is impressively demonstrated with an inner calmness and outward demeanour. I support the other qualities of dignity and the quiet voice of authority more broadly within my conceptual framework.

9.5 Conceptual framework and model of coaching for gravitas

There seemed to be a lack of clarity about the process of building an initial model of coaching (Shoukry, 2014). The context for my coaching model was that the participants had been recruited as leaders, and I therefore looked for guidance from scholars who had explored leadership coaching, or more broadly, executive coaching. I had been able to evaluate how I differentiated executive coaching from leadership coaching, primarily recognising that executive coaching seemed to ultimately relate back to improving the performance of an organisation (Western (2012) referred to this as managerial coaching), whilst leadership coaching was more aligned to personal goals and the relationship with followers, set within the context of the organisation.

Stokes and Jolly (2010) noted that the anxieties that leaders face tend to be about the need to feel in control, to be right, and to know enough. I recognised these anxieties in most of the conceptual encounter interviews, and this was supported by my view that the focus on leadership coaching was appropriate. Stokes and Jolly (2010) also suggested four steps for coaching leaders: know yourself, own yourself (be accountable), be yourself (be authentic), and help others to do the same. I used these steps and adapted them with Western's (2012) coaching pedagogy. I used an adapted form of Cox's (2013) three-spoke wheel of coaching (Figure 5.2) to create a sequence of steps that represented my model of coaching for gravitas (Figure 5.3).

Coaching for gravitas began with building an awareness of the concept of gravitas. Whilst I had at first viewed the conceptual encounter process as different from the model of coaching, I found that it was actually the first step in building a model. The

process of creating and understanding the conceptual framework led to the second step of exploring self-awareness, and comparing these insights with the framework in detail. Once the insights had become clearer, the third step was to describe potential aspirations and to understand the coachee motives before refining the overall goals collectively. The tools and techniques needed to improve personal gravitas required drawing on a range of experiences, observation, and practice, and then playing with ideas and developing theory.

The development of tools and techniques required the participants and me to move between our coach and researcher and coachee and research partner roles frequently. I had a set of skills in developing somatic awareness and working with the body, and I co-developed a situational awareness tool with the participants during the action research process.

I created a set of templates, as described in Chapter 7, for the participants to use to help build self-knowing (know yourself); I also used a psychodynamic technique (Kets de Vries, 2005) to encourage openness and honesty (be yourself), and used reflective diaries to encourage reflection and accountability (own yourself). As the coaching rounds progressed, the participants recognised that developing the coaching model further meant including the development of follower gravitas (helping others to do the same) and not just focusing on themselves.

During the coaching rounds I concentrated on the development of three tools and techniques that were very important to the participants. The first tool was the method of conceptual encounter. I noticed how the research participants always wished to return to the conceptual framework of gravitas as part of their reflection after returning to the workplace and the many weeks between each coaching round. As a result, I found that the skill of reintroducing the framework and asking the participants to reflect their experience back to it was an important process, and something that the participants were able to learn to use. The second tool was the situational and people-reading approach defined in Chapter 7. Using three colours was memorable and easy to apply both to themselves and others, and the participants always used it in their reflection diaries and in the coaching rounds. In the group coaching it was especially useful, as it provided a common language for us to use. The colour model also applied to the third technique of working with three body colours in the somatic embodiment facet.

However, the most common feedback I received about improving the model of coaching was to include a process that allowed me to observe them in practice. We agreed that this would be challenging because of the time required for a coach to do this, the confidential aspects of the coachee's work, and the danger that coachees would change their behaviour because they were being observed. We did agree that participants in coaching would benefit from recording either aurally or visually their practice of integrating learned techniques at work, for the purpose of their own reflection. Furthermore, the group coaching approach could be extended to develop a partner or buddy relationship with another person so that they could observe and reflect collectively during the coaching cycles.

In summary, my findings demonstrated that the adapted conceptual encounter method to help participants understand the experience of gravitas is a critical first part of building and testing a model of coaching for gravitas. Exploring self-awareness, goal-setting, values, and motives are not exclusive to many theories of coaching; however, they remain essential to coaching for gravitas. The tools and techniques we used were unique to the model developed because they were co-developed in the coaching rounds and were subsequently practised and integrated in the workplace.

9.6 Follower reflections

The follower role was discussed as important in the literature review, and I do believe from the discussion that gravitas is not something one has in isolation; rather, it is some form of relationship with others, with whom you have some form of shared interest or goal. The key benefit of including followers in my model of coaching for gravitas was establishing a starting point to compare the coachees' perception of their own strengths and those of their followers. It was challenging to interview 12 followers due to their work commitments, but it was important, and I continue to believe it is necessary to include them especially at the start of the coaching. However, I do not feel that the term 'follower' is appropriate when coaching for gravitas, which I will explain further. My intention was to return to each of them one year after the action research process began to re-evaluate their perception of each participant's changes. However, I was only able to return to six of them, as the other six had either left the company or were no longer working with the core participants. I had not considered this at the time I started the process, but on refection this is not surprising.

After the last of the four collaborative participant interventions I returned to ask their followers how they felt about each of them after 12 months had passed. In the opening interviews they were asked for more generalist views on each of the participants, based on the six facets from the first model. At the end of the year, whilst still wanting to return to the six facets, I was also able to ask them for their views on the development of gravitans to help add more depth to the post action research reflection. One of the challenges, however, was that they had not been a part of the coaching process and therefore did not see how or why these had evolved. The reflections were gathered during telephone interviews due to access limitations.

The followers were asked to comment on whether they had noticed improvements in the facets of gravitas. I heard that mostly there had been improvement for each of the participants; four of them had especially improved, in their view. The two that had improved only slightly were also the leaders who had the widest differences in self versus follower perception at the original evaluation.

I realised in my reflection that the follower opinion and reflection process could have been the area of greatest improvement. It had been one year since I had last spoken to or had any type of contact with them, and this gap was too large. I had to spend most of the interview explaining the model of gravitas rather than exploring their latest opinions. In addition, the gravitan area was confusing for them to understand and process over a phone call, and some found it difficult to be precise about their opinions. For future research I would prefer to build in a communication pattern with the followers so that they receive information on what we are collaborating on, and would also consider using a questionnaire to precede a phone call so they have greater reflection time.

My final observation concerns the definition of a follower. I had defined followers initially as those who report or work for the participants concerned, based on the literature of authentic and charismatic leadership. However, I also learned from the participants that often one of the greatest challenges was creating gravitas in the eyes of those for whom they work or report to. Therefore, I support the approach that relational theorists advocate where all relationships are important, regardless of the hierarchy in an organisation.

9.7 Implications for researchers

My first methodological contribution is to add clarity about how the conceptual encounter method can to be used in order to build trust with research partners. Conceptual encounter is a good method to help define any phenomenon that has not been defined before, or has not been defined for a specific group of research participants. Whilst it is important to have developed initial ideas of how one perceives an initial conceptual description of a phenomenon from the literature, it is also important to share one's own concrete experiences. The conceptual encounter approach focuses on the experiences of the research partners but I feel this should be shared between the lead researcher and the partners. This allows the lead researcher to set an example of what is meant by a concrete experience and demonstrates the importance of sharing inner thoughts with the research partners.

The second contribution relates to the use of interview transcription analysis in order to help to improve the quality of the interpretation and to ensure that important insights are not missed during the interview process. A problem with conceptual encounter is that the conceptual abstraction of the phenomenon is developed during the interview process, and sometimes there are short gaps between each subsequent interview. This is especially difficult during the initial interviews for any researcher using conceptual encounter for the first time, because it involves learning to question and interpret the responses at the same time. Therefore, I recommend that thematic analyses of transcribed interviews be used to ensure that no responses or other themes have been missed. The abstract conceptualisation should still be developed during and between interviews, but thematic analysis helps to improve the overall quality. Once all the interviews have been completed, analysis of the transcripts should contribute to a final conceptual framework, and all the participants should be sent a copy for amendment or confirmation.

The third contribution to methodology addresses the problem with the conceptual encounter method, as it only acknowledges the past experiences of the research partners. Although a conceptual framework at this point might meet De Rivera's (1981) five criteria for a sufficient abstraction, it can be improved by including present and further experiences. My research process recognises that conceptual encounter is the first cycle of an action research approach. Subsequent cycles, however, can continue to return to the abstraction and help to refine the framework in practice. The research partners adopt the additional role of coaches, and switch between both

roles. The primary researcher uses four stages of looking at the data. During conceptual encounter the first two stages allow the framework to emerge through an inductive process, and the researcher then seeks to reflect on whether the ideas that emerge fit with the experiences through a deductive lens. Once the action research cycles move into coaching, the researcher retroductively tries to understand if the framework fits with practice. As a consequence, the framework continues to evolve but is based around present concrete experiences. Finally, the reflective cycles of action research allow the coach and the coachees to step back from these roles and abductively consider other ideas, and the four-phase cycle begins again. The combination of using past, present, and future experiences helps to build quality into the methodology. The method suggests that there are several phases leading to the sufficient completion of a conceptual framework, not just one.

The tools that enable participants in action research to capture their present experiences are usually reflection diaries. However, sometimes participants find that it is appropriate to only use words. It would be helpful to widen the range of tools to reflect the increased availability of mobile technology. Participants can quickly make an audio or audiovisual recording of their experience, which can also help to ensure that words and the somatic experience are recorded. This is especially helpful if the participants struggle to find words that represent their experiences, or struggle to share these experiences with others.

In summary, there are four contributions to the research methodology that will be useful for other researchers. They accommodate multiple roles for the primary researcher and the participants group, which encourages a continuous collaborative cyclic approach that allows a phenomenon to be defined and ideas to be tested in practice, which is an important goal of action research.

9.7.1 Implications for coaching theory

The findings of this study contribute to existing debates in the literature on leadership by developing a definition of gravitas and elaborating on the components of gravitas as a personal quality of the leader. The findings suggest that this quality could be developed by means of a specifically designed programme of coaching. I describe this programme as a form of leadership coaching; however, I do not situate it in the axis of wisdom, as Western (2012) posits, because he relates leadership coaching to authenticity. Instead, I recommend that leadership coaching for the development of

any holistic characteristic of a leader that has a physical and emotional quality, potentially sits at the point de capiton (Western, 2012), as described in the methodology.

In chapter two I wrote that there had been very little empirical research into executive coaching (McCall, 2010), and even less into group-based executive and leadership coaching (Ward *et al.*, 2014). I emphasised that there was continued interest in individual coaching but also criticism that much practice and theory remained rooted in psychotherapy approaches (Western, 2012). There have been some alternatives (Bachkirova, 2009; Seiler, 2007, 2010, 2014; Strozzi-Heckler, 2014) that have offered a different approach to coaching. The findings of these studies indicate the importance of an approach to coaching that combines cognitive and somatic theories of coaching in the development of gravitas. Furthermore, I believe that there are advantages to cognitive and somatic approaches in the group setting that outweigh the dyadic approach. There is a lack of group-based coaching theory that seeks to understand how the group dynamic can improve knowledge of the individual physicality of the coachees and the coach. My coaching process and findings suggest that coachees increase their level of self-awareness in a group setting, and are encouraged to take greater risks to participate physically.

Theoretically, leadership coaching is about three activities: behaviour change, self-image, and building purpose and meaning (Stokes and Jolly, 2010). I suggest extending these elements to include the importance for the coaching process to have sufficient somatic and cognitive development skills. Furthermore, where Brown and Grant (2010) were critical that coaches would become group facilitators rather than coaches, I believe that coaching theory should embrace facilitation as part of the coaching skill set, as it appears to be a powerful technique to encourage self-reflection and to build trust; but further research is required.

9.7.2 Implication for coaching practice

In terms of practical contribution, this study has developed a programme of coaching for developing gravitas in a leadership context. In addition, a new approach to coaching practice is advocated for a situation where a coachee wishes to develop a personal quality that has not been defined before. A process such as conceptual encounter can be used to help the coachee to create a language that both the coach and coachee can understand. The practice of coaching for qualities such as gravitas

requires the coachee to have a clear awareness of his or her own behaviours in order to work on this type of goal. The consequence is that it allows the coachee to set realistic and focused goals to work towards.

Although one-to-one coaching practice works well with a conceptual encounter method, it would be helpful for coaches to learn how to coach a group of participants. The practice requires coaches to be able to facilitate and coach equally but it encourages coachees to share experiences and learn from each other. This is especially useful when coaching for a characteristic that has a somatic quality. The study also suggests that using followers as part of the coaching process is important for practice but it is more helpful to widen the types of followers to other relations that the coachee has.

There are a range of stakeholders who may benefit from the research process and overall findings. At the macro level the international and national coaching bodies that aim to improve the quality of coaching and the standards of training for coaches could use this research. For example, the International Coaching Federation lists a range of core competencies for coaches but does not include themes that reflect the depth of the gravitas constructs (gravitans). Furthermore, there is no clear distinction between the skills of group coaching compared to dyadic coaching. In addition to the macro level of coaching bodies, large corporations also invest in developing coaching qualities, including the organisation I worked with in this study. However, learning how to coach from inside the organisation reflects a similar challenge I faced as part of the action research process. Therefore, there are potential benefits for human resources and development teams inside organisations to learn how to coach using action research methodology. Universities with a coaching curriculum could also learn from the methodology I used and my balanced mix of dyadic and group coaching learning approaches. Lastly, coaching businesses and individual professionals can also learn from the coaching practices I used and the tools I developed in order to work with any desirable psychological and somatic phenomenon such as gravitas. I developed tools in collaboration with the research participants, as described in section 9.5, and I believe that these tools are powerful for coaches; however, coaches should also be encouraged to co-develop new tools with coachees to build deeper relationships. My action research approach lasted for 12 months but could have been extended. This suggests to me that coaching practice should be encouraged to develop the skills needed to sustain long-term

relationships with coachees, as this may not always reflect the practice for some coaches with more transactional relationships.

9.8 Limitations of research

I recognised in the methodology chapter and throughout the action research cycles that my personal experiences are important as part of the study. I was conscious of my hope to find a successful coaching approach and therefore I tried to focus on the data from action research rounds rather than address my aspiration. However, there were times where I may have been looking for supportive data. The same limitation applies to the participants in the study. Each of them shared an aspiration to improve their individual gravitas, rather than having the sole motive to be a collaborative research partner, which may have shaped their experience as well. Whilst the multivocality and multiple roles provided greater quality, it was difficult for me at times to switch between the roles.

I had worked with the organisation selected to participate in the research since 2008. The organisation was a client of the university with which I had worked as a consultant educator. Therefore I recognised the potential that we may be jointly seeking an outcome that would be perceived as positive. The reflexive processes that I employed through the action research approach ensured that I constantly examined my role as a researcher and my relationship with the participants. The greatest danger to the quality of the research was that the participants' goal to improve their gravitas along with my intention to find an approach to develop gravitas through coaching could be regarded as collusive. However, through every cycle I explained to the participants that we were jointly developing and assessing the practicality of the model of gravitas and the potential to develop personal gravitas through coaching. Therefore, they had to report their reflections through concrete experiences throughout. There were also advantages to my relationship with the organisation because I was able to bring an understanding of culture, power, and relationships into the social context quickly. It also meant that I understood some of the language of the business and the professions represented, which would have taken longer to develop otherwise. Therefore, I ultimately regard my relationship with the organisation and participants as an advantage that outweighed the potential risks.

I collected over 70 hours of data using a wide variety of tools. It was difficult to collate and maintain. There were over 40 hours of video material, and reviewing the content through cycles of reflection, insight, and testing new ideas was massively time-consuming. I am sure that I could have used even more time that I had available, and it is possible that I missed information that may have been useful.

The participants were all chosen from one organisation and were recognised as relatively senior leaders, and their level of experience and role responsibility varied widely. One of the difficulties was organising time to meet, especially during the group action research rounds. The consequence of this was that four action research cycles took over one year to complete. I believe that the gap between the coaching rounds especially became too long, and therefore it was harder for the participants to stay focused on their reflective diary work, and it took more time to re-engage in the coaching sessions. The large time gaps also meant that it was more difficult to remember situations and to evaluate the effectiveness of the gravitas tools and techniques. In addition, a further limitation is marked by the culture, systems, and mechanism of work within the selected organisation. These aspects were described through the lens of critical realism but they did limit the context in which gravitas was explored.

Although I had experience of coaching leaders in both group and one-to-one formats, the questioning skills of the conceptual encounter method were new to me. I had to learn as I went from one interview to the next, and I may have missed insights from the earlier interviews as a result. The collaborative action research approach was appropriate for my research; however, the process could have been extended beyond one year to fully work towards the coachee goals. The balancing act of meeting the goals of theory and the work of practice did not necessarily align and I think this is a limitation of my study. Overall the limitations centre around the time frame, choice of participants, accessibility, data capture, and the balance between addressing theoretical research aims with leaders' actual needs in practice.

9.8.1 Suggestions for further research

This empirical study is the first one on developing gravitas and therefore I recommend that others continue to study the phenomenon in different contexts and frames. I worked with a single organisation, so it would be useful to compare leaders from different industries, professions, age ranges, and cultures. I would recommend

using the conceptual encounter method for different contexts to generate comparative data, and also using a thematic coding analysis of transcribed interviews as part of the method. It would be interesting to research the concepts associated to gravitas using the same method, to understand how the differences are experienced. I have found that my conceptualisation of gravitas is both a quality of the person's being and a quality perceived by others. I would suggest that gravitas is also researched from a purely relational theory perspective, and separately as a sense of being. This is because I found that there was both an internal quality of being, where the person knows he or she has qualities of gravitas at some moments, and an external gravitas, which others may perceive.

I purposely selected an equal number of male and females, and would suggest that studies into both genders continue but in a wider diversity of other areas of business leadership contexts. There were a total of six participants within the core group, although a further 20 were at times used in the research process. Increasing the number of core participants over a longer time frame would be interesting. Furthermore, using a variety of coaches would be useful to bring more ideas into the development of tools and techniques, as well as supporting a larger sample.

9.9 Final reflections

When I set out to explore and learn how to develop the phenomenon of leadership gravitas, I had not appreciated the scope of my research. I had set out on my personal journey as a researcher with a practitioner interest in the subject. What I had not appreciated was how hard it would be to define a scope for researching gravitas that was going to be achievable and manageable whilst running my own business. The relative lack of academic literature on gravitas has surprised me, and created a challenge to define the need for the study and to position it within the literature. It also served as an opportunity and reinforced my desire to conduct empirical research.

At times the research process felt overwhelming and I felt that I was drowning in data. I was eventually able to manage the data and work in a structured and focused way, but it was very time-consuming and ultimately I had to almost stop working to ensure I could make progress. My writing style took some time to evolve and no doubt continues to do so, but for many months I could not understand how to write in a style that reflected the goals of my research.

I learned a new method to work with coachees using conceptual encounter. The method remains relatively unknown and I hope my study will encourage others to use it in research as well as in practice. Action research requires patience, and there were times when I wondered if a shorter approach may have worked better for the time frame I had; however, on reflection it was the right approach, as it provides a way of working with coachees that reflects how coaching works for many. I like Herr and Anderson's (2005, p.69) description of action research as 'designing the plane whilst flying it' because that is exactly how it felt. It felt like a process where you cannot switch off or your research plane will crash. However, I now feel better equipped to develop myself both as a researcher and as a coach, and this whole process has been a hugely rewarding experience.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Permission to conduct research

Dr XXX, Head of Executive Development, ████████

Dear XXX,

I am writing to invite ████████ to participate in a doctoral research study that I am undertaking to explore the development of gravitas in leaders.

Research Title
Coaching for gravitas: The development of gravitas in leaders

What is the purpose of the study?
The research aims to build an understanding of how gravitas is experienced by leaders and their team members and to develop a model of coaching for gravitas.

The study adopts an approach whereby participants collaborate to build both an understanding what gravitas is and to build, test and refine a coaching approach that may enhance gravitas with the core participant group.

Why have I been invited to participate?
I am writing to ask if you will consider whether you wish ████████ to take part in the study and I have therefore provided the following information to help guide your decision.

Methodology
The process to achieve the research aims is built on an action research approach that will run over a six-month period from January – July 2014.

Who is invited to take part?
The following participants will be invited to take part:

6 managers in the business who will have completed the Managers Essentials course and manage a team of at least 5 people. The managers will be the core group invited to participate. Ideally three male and three female managers would be involved. Each manager would be a coachee during the research and would need to commit to three 2-hour coaching sessions over a six-month period and a further three hours of reflection (1 hour following each coaching intervention).

2 team members for each of the 6 managers (12 in total) would be invited to complete an interview before and after the action research of coaching interventions. An invitation to all team members to participate would be distributed by the researcher after the selected manager participant has provided the names of their team members to the researcher.

Do managers have to take part?
Each potential participant is invited to take part voluntarily and is free to leave the study at any point during the research without giving a reason. *Those selected you will be asked to sign a consent form*. Only 6 managers and 2 team members will be selected randomly from all who expressed an interest in taking part. If a selected manager's minimum of 2 team members is not able to take part

an alternative manager will be selected. It is a requirement that a manager and 2 of their team members is able to participate.

Detailed participant information
A specific page of participant information will be sent to interested managers and team members to help them make the decision if they wish to participate.

Confidentiality
The process of capturing, maintaining and evaluating information will remain completely confidential (subject to legal limitations). At no time will the information of a participant involved in the research process be shared with other employees ███████████ or external agencies.

Anonymity and privacy will be ensured and data will be retained in accordance with the University policy on academic integrity. Publication of research will refer to participants by either coded name or change of name. Any data generated in hard or soft copy will be kept securely for 10 years after completion of the research.

Both the participants and ███████████ will remain anonymous in the thesis and consequent publications.

Timing and locations
The timing and locations of interviews and coaching will be mutually convenient to participants and will be aim to ensure there is minimal disruption to daily management and operations.

Coaches and coachees will work together to identify the most suitable time and locations for each intervention.

Benefits and risks of take part
There are many potential benefits to taking part but no guarantee of any benefits. Managers will receive coaching for gravitas, which is something that the managers will have expressed an interest in receiving. They will work with a coach who has considerable experience and is developing a model of gravitas that is built around the manager's needs.

The cost of taking part is only in terms of time involved.

What will happen to the results of the research study?
The results of the data analysis will form part of a thesis for the Professional Doctorate in Coaching and Mentoring Practice with Oxford Brookes University. It is hoped that the data will subsequently be used in publication but under no circumstances will your name or any identifying characteristics be included in any written report. Names of all participants will be kept confidential. However it must be recognised that with small samples it is impossible sometimes to guarantee total anonymity. All precautions will be taken to avoid this.

A summary of research findings will be available for all participants. If you wish to receive a copy of this *'Summary of Findings'* please request this on completion of the primary research.

Who is organising and funding the research?
The study is a part of a professional doctorate at Oxford Brookes University in Coaching and Mentoring and is self funded by the researcher.

Who has reviewed the study?
The Oxford Brookes University Research Ethics Committee has approved the research project.

Contact for Further Information

If further information is needed please contact:

- Ian Scott: ian.scott-2012@brookes.ac.uk

In addition if you would like to contact the research programme supervisors please contact:

- Dr Tatiana Bachkirova: tbachkirova@brookes.ac.uk
- Dr Louise Grisoni: lgrisoni@brookes.ac.uk

If you have any questions regarding the ethics of the research please also contact:

- The Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee: ethics@brookes.ac.uk

Thank you for take the time to read and consider this invitation and I will provide more information on request.

Appendix B

Participant Information Sheet – Coachee

Date: December 2013

Study title
Coaching for gravitas: The development of gravitas in leaders

Dear Coachee
You are invited to take part in a research study that aims to explore what is seen or experienced as gravitas in leaders and how coaching may enhance the development of gravitas. This research is being undertaken as part of a professional doctorate in coaching and mentoring at Oxford Brookes University. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

What is the purpose of the study?
The research aims to build an understanding of how gravitas is experienced by leaders and their team members and to develop a model of coaching for gravitas.

The study adopts an approach whereby participants collaborate to build both an understanding what gravitas is and to build, test and refine a coaching approach that may enhance gravitas with the core participant group.

Why have I been invited to participate?
You are invited to take part because you are a manager in the business who has completed the Management Essentials course, leads a team of at least 5 people and is based in the UK.

If you are selected to take part an invitation will also be sent to members of your team inviting them to consider if they wish to participate in an interview before the coaching research commences and afterwards. From those who express an interest in participating, two will be selected to take part at random.

Do I have to take part?
It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. This information sheet is provided to help you make the decision whether to take part and is for you to keep. It is important to stress that participation is voluntary. If you are selected you will be asked to sign a consent form. In addition, if you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. As only 6 managers will be selected randomly from all who expressed an interest in taking part, please be aware that it is possible that you may not be chosen. In addition, if 2 of your team members are not able to participate we will unfortunately be required to select a different manager.

What will happen to me if I take part?
You will be invited to take part in a one-hour semi-structured interview to build an understanding of your perception of gravitas. You will be able to suggest suitable times and locations with the researcher.

The interview will be audio recorded with your permission and analysed for themes together with the interviews of other managers.

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After the initial one hour interview you will be invited to take part in 3 x 2-hour coaching session on gravitas over a 6 month period. On completion of each of the 3 coaching sessions you will be invited to attend a one hour reflection on the experience. Over the next 6 months it is expected that you would commit a total of 10 hours of coaching and reflection. You will be asked for consent for the sessions to be audio-video recorded and to complete a reflective diary.

Data collection would begin in January 2014 and end in July 2014.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?
There are many potential benefits to taking part but these cannot be guaranteed. You will receive coaching in gravitas, which is something that the managers will have expressed an interest in receiving. You will work with a coach who has considerable experience and is developing a model of gravitas that is built around the manager's needs.

Will what I say in this study be kept confidential?
The process of capturing, maintaining and evaluating information will remain completely confidential (subject to legal limitations). At no time will the information of a participant involved in the research process be shared with other employees of ▮▮▮▮▮▮ or external agencies.

Anonymity and privacy will be ensured and data will be retained in accordance with the University policy on academic integrity. Publication of research will refer to participants by either coded name or changed name. Any data generated in hard or soft copy will be kept securely for 10 years after completion of the research.

▮▮▮▮▮▮ will remain anonymous as an organisation in my thesis and potential publications.

What should I do if I want to take part?
If you wish to take part in the study please contact the principal investigator to arrange a mutually convenient time for an interview and to explain the research process in more detail.

What will happen to the results of the research study?
The results of the data analysis will form part of a thesis for the Professional Doctorate in Coaching and Mentoring Practice with Oxford Brookes University. It is hoped that the data will subsequently be used in publication but under no circumstances will your name or any identifying characteristics be included in any written report. Names of all participants will be kept confidential. However it must be recognised that with small samples it is impossible sometimes to guarantee total anonymity. All precautions will be taken to avoid this.

A summary of research findings will be available for all participants. If you wish to receive a copy of this *'Summary of Findings'* please request this on completion of the research..

Who is organising and funding the research?
The study is a part of a professional doctorate at Oxford Brookes University in Coaching and Mentoring and is self funded by the researcher.

Who has reviewed the study?
The Oxford Brookes University Research Ethics Committee has approved the research project.

Contact for Further Information
Further Information
If further information is needed please contact:

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- Dr Tatiana Bachkirova: tbachkirova@brookes.ac.uk
- Dr Louise Grisoni: lgrisoni@brookes.ac.uk

If you have any questions regarding the ethics of the research please also contact:

- The Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee: ethics@brookes.ac.uk

Thank you for take the time to read and consider this invitation and I will provide more information on request.

Appendix C

Participant Information Sheet – Team Members

Date: December 2013

Study title
Coaching for gravitas: The development of gravitas in leaders

Dear Team Member
You are invited to take part in a research study that aims to explore what is seen or experienced as gravitas in leaders and how coaching may enhance the development of gravitas. This research is being undertaken as part of a professional doctorate in coaching and mentoring at Oxford Brookes University. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

What is the purpose of the study?
The research aims to build an understanding of how gravitas is experienced by leaders and their team members and to develop a model of coaching for gravitas.

The study adopts an approach whereby participants collaborate to build both an understanding what gravitas is and to build, test and refine a coaching approach that may enhance gravitas with the core participant group.

Why have I been invited to participate?
You are invited to take part because you are a team member of a manager who has expressed an interest in taking part in the research. Your manager has provided your name as a potential participant in the research.

Do I have to take part?
It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. This information sheet is provided to help you make the decision whether to take part and is for you to keep. It is important to stress that participation is voluntary. If you are selected you will be asked to sign a consent form. In addition, if you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. As only 2 team members will be selected randomly from all who expressed an interest in taking part, please be aware that it is possible that you may not be chosen. Furthermore, if 2 team members are not able to participate an alternative manager and 2 team members will be selected.

It is important to stress that participation is voluntary.

Participation in the study will have no impact on work performance assessment of either yourself or your manager.

What will happen to me if I take part?
You will be invited to take part in a one-hour semi-structured interview to build an understanding of your perception of your manager's gravitas. You will be able to suggest suitable times and locations with the researcher.

The interview will be audio recorded with your permission and analysed for themes together with the interviews of other managers.

You will also be invited to attend a one hour unstructured interview to build an understanding of your manager's gravitas after they have attended six months of coaching.

Data collection would begin in January 2014 and end in July 2014.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?
You may learn about how gravitas is seen or experienced in managers and how a process of coaching may influence this.

Will what I say in this study be kept confidential?
The process of capturing, maintaining and evaluating information will remain completely confidential (subject to legal limitations). At no time will the information of a participant involved in the research process be shared with other employees of ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ or external agencies.

Anonymity, privacy and data will be retained in accordance with the University policy on academic integrity. Publication of research will refer to participants by either coded name or change of name. Any data generated in hard or soft copy will be kept securely for 10 years after completion of the research.

The researcher pledges to maintain confidentiality of all audio and visual data collected and will not identify the names of team members participating, however given the small sample size it is not possible to guarantee that participants will remain anonymous throughout the research process.

If anonymity is breached the manager and team member participating will be informed in writing and the group head of leadership development, Dr Geraldine Harrison will be informed. Data shared in connection with the researcher will be held in accordance with ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ human resource policy and the university ethics Chair will be also be informed. If either the team member of manager feels that the breach will impede the research process they will be asked if they wish to continue with the study.

▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ will remain anonymous in the thesis and consequent publications.

What should I do if I want to take part?
If you wish to take part in the study please contact the principal investigator to arrange a mutually convenient time for an interview and to explain the research process in more detail.

What will happen to the results of the research study?
The results of the data analysis will form part of a thesis for the Professional Doctorate in Coaching and Mentoring Practice with Oxford Brookes University. It is hoped that the data will subsequently be used in publication but under no circumstances will your name or any identifying characteristics be included in any written report. Names of all participants will be kept confidential. However it must be recognised that with small samples it is impossible sometimes to guarantee total anonymity. All precautions will be taken to avoid this.

A summary of research findings will be available for all participants. If you wish to receive a copy of this *'Summary of Findings'* please request this on completion of the research.

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- Dr Louise Grisoni: lgrisoni@brookes.ac.uk

If you have any questions regarding the ethics of the research please also contact:

- The Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee: ethics@brookes.ac.uk

Thank you for take the time to read and consider this invitation and I will provide more information on request.

CONSENT FORM – Coachee/Manager

Full title of Project: Coaching for Gravitas: The Development of Gravitas in Leaders

Name: Ian Scott, Doctor of Coaching and Mentoring, Researcher
Email: ian.scott-2012@brookes.ac.uk
Mobile: 0753 309 3553

Please initial box

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason. ☐

I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

I agree that my data gathered in this study may be stored (after it has been anonymised) in a specialist data centre and may be used for future research. ☐

I agree to the interview / coaching session being audio recorded ☐

I agree to the interview / coaching session being video recorded ☐

I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications ☐

I agree to the use of coaching notes being used by the researcher to capture key insights in order to build further coaching sessions as part of the action research process. ☐

I agree to use a reflective diary after each coaching session and this reviewed by the researcher to build an understanding of how I am able to use my gravitas coaching in the work place and insights for my next coaching session. ☐

_____   _____   _____
Name of Participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____
Name of Researcher   Date   Signature

Appendix E

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CONSENT FORM – Team Member

Full title of Project: Coaching for Gravitas: The Development of Gravitas in Leaders

Name: Ian Scott, Doctor of Coaching and Mentoring, Researcher
Email: ian.scott-2012@brookes.ac.uk
Mobile: 0753 309 3553

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☐

I agree to the two interviews being audio recorded

☐

I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications

☐

_____   _____   _____

Name of Participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____

Name of Researcher   Date   Signature

Appendix F

<u>Interview Schedule</u>

Conceptual encounter

April 3rd 2014:   Rick/Danielle
April 4th 2014:   Rebecca/John
April 7th 2014:   Mike/Kirsty
April 8th 2014:   Roger/Gloria

Follower Interviews

18 Interviews:

April 28th 2014:   Four interviews
April 29th: 2014:   Four interviews
May 1st 2014:   Two interviews
May 7th 2014:   Two interviews
May 8th 2014:   Four interviews
May 23rd 2013:   Two interviews

Appendix G: Gravitas spider diagrams

Remini — Silence — +ve

Stood out — Posture — -ve

(ease) — Body Size — -ve

Steady size — Presence

Status — Being Present — Inertia

Seemed Important.

→ PURPOSE

allows you to use your skills.

Passion

Graduate entrance / exit

Higher levels of Shyness

People — output

Calmness — expect

Say The most

Command + control.

Confidence

~ lack of Confidence

necessary.

Off balance

Patience

Says The least.

Gravitas

Get stuff done

WHAT IS THIS.

Organisational Savvyness

Environmental

A retired — BoS / BoS

retired

accurate

second opinion

Correct

Control

opinion

Judgement

Know What you know.

Feedback

Psychoanalyse

Threatening

explode.

When is Gravitas Important

Football.

NOT male + female

Father

careful

Confidence

not confident important.

① Kids at School. (Cite meaning)

Note Brain

worry of offending him

② Football Manager — Control / buy into it.

buy into what you think

(Context)

③ Confidence in me ..

choice — James Hunt.

Two opposing tunes — coping

FACTOR

Command = a room
respect
management skill

Family
1 3
(2) — 2 sons

authority.

Indiscipline.

Seem to
Investment

Presence   Resin

Different leadership,
know about them

LINA.

appears
to have
gravitas

1st
Impression

Tough English
Truth.

Take care of Thrush

HPC.
Conscious

Reflection

Being
Present

well dressed

Clean.

The
Onion

Walker
Room

FEEDBACK

Priority   Trusted

SWAN (swan lake)

Humility

Gravitas   **WHEN:**

When:
• WORK!
① more
Serious
② Team
coach
③ Influencing
Subordinates

experiences

Respect

Can do the
course. Reflect.

Instill.

Posture

Sunday.

Situation
Biographies.

Role Model   known from when the first joined

Mentor.

aura

authority

Clear

me
Passionate
about

Motivates me
— inspires me

'known, Credibility'.

They are approachable

drop self confidence

Is it

ego.   —ve.

No Service

Can communicate
to all

Buy into

Trust

Want to see
people

Do what you
say you are
going to do

Do it for
reason.

Knowledge   audience

Has a presence

Now.
Then me.

Love people

me:
Consistent
Team work
Successful.
Hard Work.

— Need for achievmt

Its your
passion

Studying for
education is
not easy

(want to
motivate everyday)

ask the directors — and that.

assuredness

Solidity

Presence

Why Thy Stand

Hands in pockets

Self Belief — Minor changes. - Self Doubt

How

Know what they want

different

May end up to servant.

Confidence

You believe in them — need an armour

Communite

I wish I could have some more orientation earlier

Know They walked to room

Clean — Presence

Vocal

Up Above

Strong

change voice .

I tell my positive to both.

Invoke you both .

Own the room

Projecting when young + Preparedness.

GRAVITAS

Believeshe

No accent

authenticity

WORK PERSON

HOME PERSON

Open

Clarity

Hinders — curve ball

disputs/acceptance

emotion

central   at ease .

M/F.   } Head mistery

Status — with caring

Can be role model   Mentor

Honesty.

Humility b.important.

INFLUENCE

Control

approachable

My Immediate boss does not have gravitas

I find to approve.

Sense of responsibility

Prepared   felt Comfortable in Situation

Out of Comfort Zone .

Talk about Them at Their level

~~Jeremy Dykes~~ JOHN

coaching:
NOT — What I say ?
— How I say it } opinion

~~There they~~
Gravitas &

My style gives me authority
Reporting out.

Not — Hair (Confidence)
o — Cuff links

+Confidence

— 5 whys !
HINDERS → Pretend - - - - - - - -
o
o Conscious
o Competence

[R] ——— Context

Typical
Organisation.

Can adapt
style

~~auth...ting~~

The Box.

Nurturing

Control

You know
when you've got it.

How people dress

Doesn't
let me
know
g?

May stand
— better

Felt quality

embodiment

Being Ecclestone

2nd circle

*
Gareth
↓
Voice

Work Gravitas / Should /
Non work gravitas.   behave

Seán O'Brien

levels

Alan —
drag his heels!

Physique

Tall — advantage.
Doesn't read to me
at ease.

GRAVITAS

Have
Gravity.

quality

Situations
I am comfortable

Self Confidence

Humility

approach.
Can be arrogant

Mind

hold the
floor

Experience

knowledge.

Q o'
φ

both

Clarity
of Thought

Lakers — Durham
This → People

It helps.

Does it
help.

Consistency

LIKE DYNAMITE

Jeremy D.

3rd circle fear

Real Gravitas

Hold a room

Not just about
authority

Not
Threatening
(explosion)

Lack of
confidence.

1. Way forward

Is That +ve Thoughts?

Makes me feel ?

Confident horse/and Thought about

TRUST. ————→ Yes.

Wanting to belong
Identity / Private memories

Dress up. — Dress   Distinction
down.   Matters

Feel make   Positive
me confident   Intimidating.

Sit

Solidity.

impressive.

Quarterback.
He was good   Said little.
at what he did.   must be   authentic

People without   Physical laws
saying

Magnetism

Gravity

commodity

Confidence   legacy (footprint)

Depth.   Reluctant   exude confidence   Socially.
structure   in others   (quality).
Rules   Pride   Sea.   noise / calm

Snap shot   memories / identity
Presence — in time
Deeper →   **GRAVITAS**   Networking
ambition.   Shirley avira.
the ability.   Reinvent Myself.   Time   (Paul Pennington)
              Final yes? place.   quiet.
experience.   Credibility.   Situation   Sides on identity.
          leadership   nurturing Context   knows everyone
          as an art.   name

leadership quality is derived.
Ron Sam

Got something from them.

Balance?

Feedback   knows how to
Moment   talk about
                            to everyone

Getting to   See as   Can you be too   Measuring
Gravitas   a friend   close   this is a
           to everyone   moment.

men / women   Potential VP - Charles a Commons   size — Am I able to be
win expense   1   2   3   — Grounded.

③ Question Things.
— Think outside comfort zone

④ environs.
Not talent ones
I'd like to be like that.

Effect n someone
Eon gravitas
① Capable
① understands

VOICE

Physical

Not this Person

Control.

Self Control of emotions

Frustrated in myself

Tension (belly)

Can be negative.

Don't seem to care.

Feedback.

(Would say)

Striking to look at/wear

tactile.

Sense of control is made important

Quite intimidates

Structural.

In the box

Gravitas

I tend to Stand out.
Would always.

outward to team.
(I like plans)

Communicate to team.
(adaptability)

Reflective

Do Better.
I could do better.
I felt I'd done good
I was taken seriously
I felt happy
Situation
It was nerve wracking.

Support
authentic/Real.

People know in here
what I can bring

Presence

GRAVITAS

live *

F — M
FORCE MODELS

Knowledgeable
spines
Credible
Nice. — Driver
approachable
Care for feeling.

Emotional

In a controlled way try.

Secret

Situation

Confidence

Being able to grow confidence

In me

Self Confidence →

Most important

Anxiety.

See it as living

Humility

Feel like a fraud

Purpose.

Doubt my own ability

and others

Credibility.

Bob Stoddard Mentor.

Need to believe in my own ability

Reputation (Start to)

History.

self doubt

Appendix H: Gravitas Diary

Date_____Name_____

Level (0-10) _____ Time began: _____ Time ended: _____

Symptoms _____

What type – confidence/Credibility/Control/Communication?
_____

Where are you? _____

What were you doing when you felt you had gravitas? _____

_____

Are you alone? (If not, list who is present) _____

What were you thinking before? _____

_____

What were you thinking during gravitas_____

_____

What did you notice in terms of mind and body? _____

_____

How did others react? _____

_____

When did the feeling of gravitas end and why? _____

_____

Appendix I: Transcript example from conceptual encounter interview

This is the first conceptual encounter interview with Rick, the date is 3rd April at just approaching 3.45pm. Thank you for taking part.

As I explained to you in the setup before we started this process, this conceptual encounter that we're in allows you to really share anything that comes into your mind, in the context of gravitas. There is one condition though, when I ask for examples of your experience or perception of something to do with gravitas, I'm going to ask you to take your time to be really specific and give me concrete examples. The more concrete you can provide examples, the easier it will be for me to synthesise a model ultimately, that will make sense to other people. So generalisations are fine to start us off but if I sense we've not hit the subject area I'd like to get into the detail, then I'll come back to you and ask for a bit more.

Let me start with the idea of the term itself, gravitas: What's your familiarity and exposure to the word, gravitas?

Thinking about gravitas inevitably drives you towards thinking about people who exhibit the behaviour because obviously dictionary definition goes through things about intelligence, strong-willed, all this kind of thing but for me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but whilst saying the least … because I always try and think these things down to the simplest thing and it's just you don't have to talk all the time or the loudest but that when you do speak, your voice is the loudest.

You said you immediately thought of it in terms of people, just while we're thinking about the term at its broadest level, could something other than a person have gravitas, like a building or a piece of art?

I suppose it could in the sense of its importance, the thing I tend to focus on is the human. I suppose it could in the sense of whether a piece of art has gravitas, its importance and necessary rather than something that's near decoration. I'm not a big studier of art though.

I only brought it up because you only mentioned people and it would not be surprising for some people in different professions to think about building with gravitas in some way, just because of the way they perceive the world.

But you've mentioned it's about people first and foremost for you …

For me personally, yes.

You talked about says the most and says the least. Can you give me some more details of what you think helps to define gravitas?

Things like calmness, not over-reacting to information, level of patience because nobody, any of the people who I might think of as having gravitas, none of them are the panicky, reactionary type, they're always measured and

controlled and in control, I think control is a big part of what forms a thought about gravitas. The other one is obviously how accurate or correct their judgements and opinions and thoughts are.

Can you say a little bit more about what you mean by that? When you say their judgements, how accurate they are?

I'm thinking in an engineering term, the guy who doesn't often hazard an opinion but when he does, their opinion is closest to the number that comes out of the machine at the end, but outside of this is the one who's proven to be correct more often, the course of action that they recommend is seen to be the right one.

Do you know or work with anyone at the moment who you perceive as having gravitas?

The best person I work with in terms of a level of technical gravitas is retired now, a chap called Bob Bellamy who was on our audit team and simply because Bob was very much of the sort who, he knew so much about the topic area that he was working in and he'd seen so many problems, it always felt like he'd seen an issue before, I always found him to be very, very good at coming across with that.

Recently, possibly less so, it sounds like a terrible indictment but I find myself being closer to those people than I was when I encountered Bob as well and I think there's an element of, from a technical point of view, I'm fairly strong myself and so I don't maybe see that. It's now organisationally savvy people that I'd see, where their opinions would be correct and more correct than mine.

It's interesting that you use the language of correct, implying a binary sense to perhaps what someone is able to offer, whether they're correct or incorrect, they're accurate or inaccurate. On the one hand, you were talking about somebody from an engineering point of view, where that number matters and then you moved onto talking about an organisational savviness, so what's organisational savviness?

Just an awareness of how to get things done in an organisation that you work in, even in the smallest of organisations, there are guys who get stuff done and there are guys who don't get stuff done and it's that, there's that sort of awareness of what you need to do to get stuff done.

Let's keep thinking about what we mean by gravitas. At the moment we've captured this sense, the first thing that took you down this path of gravitas was saying the most and saying the least, which is something I think is a common theme that will appear in many people's perceptions of gravitas, as I move forward.

But you then added some other layers, calmness and patience and then moved around, talking a bit more about in control, in control of themselves, in control of the situation or of the environment and then

you moved more into some of the, how that might translate into behaviour, in terms of the things they say, that they might be accurate or inaccurate or correct or incorrect.

What else would you think of in terms of a person with gravitas?

In what sense?

I'm trying not to put too many words into your mind but when you see someone, perhaps they will say nothing, could that person still have gravitas?

Yes, very much so.

Let's just try and expand on why that might be the case.

I think it comes from that feeling of command and control, that just by ... by being present, people knowing what that person expects, then one can feed off that behaviour. My own father was not averse to physical chastisement of children, being a child of the 1970s and 80s but I can't remember, I can only once remember actually being hit by him and I was far more concerned about offending him and upsetting him, a raise of the eyebrow or a slight scowl from my dad was quite often enough to stop me from doing anything, just by being there.

It's very interesting, what might not surprise you but I'll mention it anyway, how many people bring up their fathers in the sense of gravitas. Do you think gravitas is unique to male or females?

Absolutely not. My wife works with a number of sort of artists and creative individuals and some of the best creative artists that she's worked with, doing workshops and things like that, I think because the women involved in those fields have to work so very hard to justify themselves because in engineering, it's an absolute concept and therefore you are able to be either good or bad at your job, so an element of the glass ceiling doesn't exist.

These women, in order to get funding and things like that, they've got a double challenge because it's not absolute what they do, so they're very able to explain what they do and why and how.

If somebody had all the qualities you've just suggested, saying the most, least patient, calm, have some sense of control, maybe being accurate or whatever you've decided is one of the most important elements of gravitas for you, is it possible to have all of those qualities and then not have gravitas?

I think it probably is in the sense that also if you didn't exert all of those sorts of behaviours, it's also possible to have gravitas, even though you're missing one of those particular legs. I'm thinking if you have the tremendous amount of gravitas but you have a terrible speech impediment or something like that, it could significantly reduce one's impact and tragically, as we look around people, it does have an effect on people's perception of how people are

regarded. Similarly, some people who over-react and fly off the handle, they'd still have a sense of gravitas but we might just be terrified of them as well and tip-toe around them.

Have you ever experienced that situation? You mentioned your father and being careful not to offend him or maybe you had concern about that, is there any other sense, perhaps outside of your father, where you've experienced somebody who would have that threat?

There's several senior managers in ████████, less so currently than previously, who would classically and fantastically fly off the handle but would still have an element of … an ability to carry people with them and have that gravitas on the strength of character.

In the past, I've had people refer to examples of people like football managers who might have a wonderful quality on the one hand but are famous for also losing that sense of control, which you mentioned as something very important. In fact, the ability to show that they can step outside of being always in control, is enough to keep them in terms of their level of status.

It makes me think whether status is therefore an important element in gravitas and perhaps a way of thinking about this, have you worked with people, encountered people in any part of your life, who have gravitas, who you might see as not having the same status as you, certainly not having the very senior status that you might automatically think of with gravitas?

I'm sort of taking a moment because the answer's yes but I'm taking a moment to think of a particular occasion or person. I suppose there's doing graduate intake interviews, there have been guys who I've seen at those where clearly, they have a presence about them, probably because they exhibit a lot of the characteristics we've listed but they're not even employees of ████████ yet they're applying to get in and you're interviewing them and you find yourself at the end of the interview, shaking hands and thanking them for their time, you know, "I'm terribly sorry for occupying the rest of your afternoon".

It's pretty impressive when you come across somebody that young who's never been in an organisational environment, where you feel that you have this status as they enter your conversation.

On one particular scenario, I can't remember the boy's name but I interviewed him and got a really strong impression of that, he was very, very good in the interview but then I saw him when he was on the graduate training scheme afterwards, he was working in the office and as I always do, go across and say hello if you've interviewed them and had a little chat and it was immediately clear to me, that in the environment of the interview, he was very comfortable and very controlled, in the environment of an office, he wasn't anywhere near as impressive an individual, which makes you think that at

times, gravitas, you can exhibit it very heavily in one direction but then completely fail in a different scenario or setting.

I think that that is an important component which I'll come back to, this sense of context in where we might perceive or feel gravitas, or have it ourselves because we'll move to you in a moment. But I want to stay with perhaps the idea of age and let's use this graduate entrant as an example, so you can think clearly about it.

Can you take your mind back to when you met him and how quickly you had a sense that this person had this thing, this quality?

It was fairly there was an inkling that he stood out relative to the other kids on the intake interview that day, fairly immediately.

In what way?

In terms of clearly being happy talking to people right from the off, there was relatively little nervousness about him, skittishness, so he's very stable and settled and he was standing upright and he was making eye contact with people, all the classic things that we're all trained to do and we all forget to do when we're feeling nervous and skittish. But then also when he was talking, he was taking time to think about what he said, he was taking a moment to pause and think about the phrasing and also being quite definite with his answers as well, there was no umming and arring and "mmmm" sort of awkward silences as opposed to thoughtful pauses.

So if we were to put you back there again and there are a sea of graduate entrants, would he have stood out before you'd even shook hands with him and made any verbal contact with him, amongst anyone else? Or were you only aware of it when you had made that contact?

He was quite fortunate that he was quite a good looking boy, which you notice, he was 6ft1 tall, rugby player, big shoulders, looks very good in a suit, was towering over all the other lads and girls who were being interviewed at the same time, so already he was literally heads and shoulders taller than everybody else, a little bit taller than myself, far more hair than I've got, so there was that element of jealousy in the lovely haircut that he had!

But apart from that, no, if you'd have had 100 prospective engineers lined up, in the first instance, if they were all marching towards you, I don't know that he would have stood out, it was definitely that thing when you start focusing on a person and engaging with them, have a cup of coffee and students are rushing towards you and you can tell the ones who want to come and have a chat and find out what the day's about and you can tell the ones who want to hold back and are very nervous and he was clearly one who was just, it was a big adventure to him that day.

Remember in the past when we talked about presence and energy, you've just used a very concrete example of how you sense him using energy, that he had an inertia, he wanted to come forward rather than as

you say, that skittish nervousness, holding back , that seems very positive.

But I got a sense from you about this idea of body and look and so on, on the one hand yes, it's a great part of the gravitas bank account but it can work both ways perhaps because it either reinforces or actually, if you're expecting it and you don't have it, it's rather disappointing.

So who else have you perhaps met, who doesn't have that, although it's bodily advantages with gravitas but is still able to carry that effect very well?

One of the theatrical guys who I work with, he's a partner in a community arts group, he's written some plays for the stage and things like that and he's only probably 5ft6 tall, slightly thinning hair, moustache, I think he described himself to me as looking rather like a rat, that in the context of him doing the work that he's doing, running community groups and things like that, I thought he had a tremendous presence and energy about him, to engage with people and he was very much, in his milieu, he was very much a huge character and he never dressed particularly well because these types don't, not tall, not imposing, fairly quiet voice as well and he definitely had gravitas.

That makes me think a lot about the idea of someone finding their passion or understanding if you like what they're here to do or where they think they can add the most. How important is that sense of someone's purpose or passion when it comes to gravitas?

I think it helps you find your window, the space in which you're able to exert your skills set suits and things like that because if you haven't got, it's like anything, if you haven't got the chops to deal with the issues arising of the role that you're in, you might have gravitas but it won't last, you might appear to have presence but it won't last very long, it won't be backed up by anything concrete and I do think the meat and potatoes of your job is still important, whatever you do.

If we look at the flow of how we're moving along, initially capturing the most important things that come into your mind with gravitas and then we're picking up a few questions around context, which we need to explore a bit more and then we're testing if you like, what might be myths of gravitas, this idea that you have to look a certain way or be a certain age which we'll come back to and whether you need to have this sense of something about you, that gives you this purpose or passion.

We might be dispelling a few, even at this very early stage, which I'm finding quite exciting, just initially, to hear this. So this idea of you can use the best of you when you have this purpose or passion around you, so then you're going to see this gravitas, could perhaps have a flip side of when you're in an environment where you're not actually involved in your passion or purpose or you're no longer in the interview where you know you've got this polished approach that works well, that suddenly you can lose it.

Going back to your graduate example, when you saw him off stage if you like from the interview and you saw him interacting in another way, you said something about you didn't quite notice this assuredness or confidence that was there before, they're my words to be fair, what was it you really thought you spotted at that point that was so different from when you'd interacted with him?

There was a much higher level of shyness. Talking about a guy in question who's probably 22 years old or something like that and in the interview, he was very polished in that sort of assessment centre world, he probably was more aware of what was going to happen maybe than he thought, I'm doing it the other way round and wondering why he displayed something that he didn't have.

So when I came up to him and talked to him in the office, I think he was surprised that somebody of my age would come up and talk to him in the office, so he was immediately on the back foot and the fact that I remembered him and he couldn't remember me – because I've got a really good memory for names and things like that – so he was again, even further on the back foot and just the fact that I was interested in what he was doing and I think maybe he wasn't that confident in explaining what it was he was working on and so on, that sort of put him very much on the back foot and therefore he was floundering a little to start off with and once he'd got comfortable with it, it was a perfectly reasonable conversation but it was just … he wasn't expecting what happened, I think.

Just picking up a couple of those pieces there, you said he seemed to regain his composure or sense of balance, that would seem to be something that is rather an important quality I would suspect, within gravitas because if it has an environmental context that we might be suggesting so far, you're going to get thrown off balance from time to time.

I suppose in the conversation with him and talking about these various things, it wasn't familiar territory to him and therefore, he was quite quickly knocked off-balance. My wife has a friend who's a headteacher, I'm thinking about this and she used to share a house with her and I saw her on the telephone dealing with some people from work and she was incredibly direct, incredibly controlled and very, very definite about what she needed and what she wanted but obviously as my wife shared a house with her, we've all seen headmasters, this great beast head of the school or headmistress and I saw her doing housework and buying shopping and things like that and she was the most disorganised, ditzy person you'd ever meet and it was interesting to see that when she was on ground that was familiar and professional, she was able to be that but she was a complete flake the rest of the weekend and would be knocked off-balance for the whole weekend if something didn't quite go right on Saturday morning, that would ruin her whole weekend, whereas at work she could deal with OFSTED arriving and things like that and do phenomenally well. I wouldn't have said she had gravitas but then I saw her with some work people and she was definitely the queen bee with these

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people and they all looked up to her tremendously and worked really hard for her as well.

So context, we've pretty much settled on, is an important part of what constitutes gravitas because it's not something in isolation, that the person chooses necessarily to switch on and off but certainly they can be destabilised or have added confidence because of the context that they're in, which makes me think about this sense of confidence.

So in the sports world, they talk a lot about the important of building up confidence and finding confidence levels, to help you really regain balance for those very things. Do you think confidence is an important part of gravitas?

I wouldn't say confidence in of itself is but the manifestation of what lack of confidence causes, can reduce the sense of gravitas, in the sense of if you appear nervous or uncertain and yet you try and carry on as if you aren't, then people will know fairly quickly and spot that.

Also in a sense then, that confidence comes from also an inner belief that you have, if it's around a subject matter then that will give you a confidence because of the knowledge that's already there, so it's not that confidence is first, it's from something else, it's derived from the fact that I already know about this topic or I already have been here in this situation before, or I have a sense of myself and I know how I come across in these situations, so I'm not going to be shocked if someone finds me unappealing or doesn't like what I have to say.

I had a conversation many years ago with my wife about confidence as well, it's a very intangible thing and by nature, I can be very gregarious if I wish to but I don't have to be very gregarious, when I go into a room, I don't have to be the first guy to open his mouth and sing and dance and shout and I tend to be a little reserved to start off with, to give everybody else a chance to breathe and get to know each other. But my wife was of the opinion when we first started dating, that I was quite shy and I would stand quietly and quietly get to know people and over time, she's come to realise that if nobody's talking, I'll start talking and introducing people and making the conversation but I didn't have to and her coming to realise that what she'd thought was shyness, was actually a level of "I don't mind not being at the centre of attention" and actually in a weird way, it belied more confidence than she thought.

Obviously in a business context, you might go into a room full of people and if you are more reserved by nature then that can appear as if you don't feel like you should be there and therefore, you sometimes act out of type to try and drive oneself forward but …

Let's use that as a means to [Inaudible 00:28:48] , can you use your experience of where you've found yourself in that position, as an example? Or a position that at least is somewhat similar to that, where you find yourself perhaps having to make that conscious judgement

about whether I should be saying something or people might perceive me the wrong way?

I ran, I got given a number of years ago, a responsibility for a module in a European project and I was only given that responsibility about a week before I had to go over and co-host a meeting in Munich, at which all the partners from all the other companies were coming together, so there were two work packages very close together, one led by me and one led by an Italian guy and we had joint meetings because they had overlapping responsibilities.

He'd been working on this project since January, the meeting was in March and I'd started 2nd March for a meeting on the 9th, so I'd speaking to two of the people who were attending my part of it and he'd already had three or four set up meetings, so I'm going over for this meeting and obviously very nervous walking into a room with lots of guys you've never met and you're supposedly the leader and you've got to drive them towards this goal.

Sort of going in there, because I'd not been involved in the writing of the spec or the proposals either and also at the time, I was probably 25 years old, 24 years old, so I must have been about six or seven years younger than everyone else in the room, walked into the midst, fully expecting that I would be able to take a step back, sit back and allow the conversation to happen and that I'd be introduced to people that already knew each other, terrible sort of racial stereotyping going on but obviously a lot of Germans, a lot of Scandinavians in this particular consortium and therefore, there were not a lot of introductions or soft pedalling going on before the thing going and therefore, I was forced to make that decision that I felt very strongly that we needed to know each other before we sat down and started discussing and so I kind of drove us down that path, to make sure that we did, everybody in the room felt like they knew a little bit about everybody in the room.

But my natural tendency would have been to let other people do that naturally if they were prepared to do it but nobody was.

That gives me a sense that you have a pretty high level of self-awareness, to be able to make that judgement and "now I'm going to have to step out of what is my usual comfortable place to be and I'll do this – but I am still comfortable doing it but I'm having to not start the same way as normal".

My wife says I'm a bit strange in that regard but I got some really good feedback as a 13 year old boy from my French teacher, I came up at the end of the class to do a little mini examination thing and passed it all with flying colours because we did continuous assessments because it was course work and he said to me after I'd passed, done a whole thing that would normally have taken us four or five goes at going through and I did it all in one go, straight off the bat, everything right, passed it and he said to me, "Do you know what the most amazing thing is, Fox? If you hadn't have done that and hadn't have come up here and done that and gone away, if anyone had asked me, I'd have sworn blind that you hadn't done anything in this lesson, anything at all and you've come up and you've absolutely smashed it out of

the park", and the realisation that there's who you are and there's what other people see who you are and even from 12 or 13, I've had an awareness that you think about who you are and how you come across and sometimes you do it better than others and trying to deal with that, which is why I'm so interested in a lot of this as well, in terms of thinking about it because it makes you think about the things you do.

Absolutely. Although we're always probably running through a little voice in our head about how we perhaps might be getting on and thinking something through before we do something or looking at the environment, in a very conscious way we don't, it's that unconscious or subconscious that you seem to be doing it most of the time and it's a luxury to go, "Let's just really think this through and talk it through, what have I missed?" and even the conceptual encounter process which is a little bit like some of the coaching work in the sense that it's always trying to look for something that is an aha moment or an insight, whether it's for me or for you to be honest, it's the luxury of doing it in that way and unpicking and unpicking and the layers even already we have in front of us, are now getting into that 3D look that I was looking for at the beginning and I want to stay with this sense of thinking through situations, when we're having to make judgement about how we're going to behave and concentrate on the sense of when gravitas is important because if you go home and your wife and … you decide to sit down together and you ask her if she'd like a cup of tea and piece of cake, it's not that important I wouldn't have thought, quite casually, so when is gravitas important to you?

It's very important when I'm dealing with anybody who relates to the performance of my kids at school or their life because I've already seen that it's quite easy to make sure that your kids get what they need and people take your requests seriously, if they respect you and believe that you are going to see through the actions and I think in a work context, particularly when problems arise or issues arise, that if you try, it makes everything so much harder if people aren't prepared to buy into what you think and go with you quickly.

Sometimes it doesn't matter, the person with the most gravitas in the world, if you're dealing with a person who fundamentally is always pulling in a 90 degrees to everybody else, you're then forced to go back to this is what it's like if people don't buy into what you want to do and it's really hard. So it's about helping people to move together and work together towards an aim.

We've got two at the moment, if we use the example of somebody taking your kids' schooling and therefore futures seriously in the level that you want because it has real meaning, we've got something outside of work that says whether something that has, what level we might think of as meaningful or something very important to your identity like your family, that's one context perhaps and I'd be interested to think of more in a moment, outside of work and then in the work world, when you want someone to buy into something that you want to persuade or influence.

I imagine there are more and so let's go back to the outside of work and think not just about family but all sorts of other things, when is gravitas important outside of work?

You obviously notice from my mug that I'm a big football fan, I suppose highlight that the manager of a football team, my own particular favourite team, Nottingham Forest, have just got rid of their manager recently …

And I think Stuart Pearce is coming along isn't he?

Exactly, who was my hero when I was a young boy. The previous manager, my view of what a football team manager ought to be, is a person who when they're up in front of the press kind of gives this aura that they know what they're doing, that everything is part of some gigantic master plan, that they're in control and that everybody has got something that they can buy into, whereas the previous manager that operated in making, everything was a them and us scenario and a siege mentality and it works for a while but eventually, it's like the current fetish in business to generate a sense of urgency by making everybody feel that the platform they're standing on is burning, I hate that, I hate it, I want everybody to jump from Platform A to Platform B because Platform B is so much nicer than Platform A …

Not because it's on fire, it's a bit dramatic, catastrophic language from McKinsey that set us off in that direction. But that's a nice example, a couple of things I'd be hearing as I'm writing notes, first of all your football team is important to you in your life, [Inaudible 00:38:04] it's part of me, makes me feel good, makes me feel bad on a weekly basis, depending on how thing are going, but also in direct relationship to the person that's managing that team, who you would use as a pivotal part of your relationship with the team is the manager, is the sense of how much confidence you have in them.

So before we talked about whether confidence was important from your perspective with gravitas but maybe there's a suggestion that actually you need to have confidence in them and that could equally have applied with the example with kids at school, from that sense, which is interesting because when we think about coaching in the future, it might give a different angle for where we pursue the importance of what you're trying to create in others, which may or may not appear in anyone else's point of view but I wanted to capture that now and get the tape to hear it.

That's a key point I think for me as well because the previous team that I managed, I'm still managing part thereof, I took over looking after them, not really with any strong technical understanding of what they did, so real challenge in the sense of giving them useful, helpful guidance and some of the guys took to me anyway because they just accepted the position and accepted me as a person and others of them, they needed to be convinced that when I gave a suggestion or was asking to look into what they were doing and talking to them about it, that it wasn't just them educating a baby in how the work was done, actually I could add some value and help drive that forwards, so maybe for some of those guys, they would have said I arrived

and they had confidence in me, that I was there of purpose and others, they would have felt "I've seen enough managers who don't know anything about what we do and all I'm doing is teaching him so he can go off and do another job and get even more money."

I have a feeling that's an important insight, I'll see how we go with that one as others explore it a bit later on.

Just keeping that sense of having confidence in others and I think the football manager is another example, this might seem a very obvious question but I want you to think it through. Is gravitas actually important for those that lead?

I think it helps, I wouldn't say it's an absolute requirement but I think the example I just said about trying to get people to work together and pull together, the guys who I've worked with, who've had gravitas, people work with them and go with them.

An example might be in a meeting where you're trying to explain a particular course of action and if people don't believe what you think, you can generate an enormous amount of extra work just to prove that you were right, whereas if people have that faith in you, going back to the confidence in you, that if you say something, they believe you, you can avoid an enormous amount of unnecessary work, just by the fact that people buy into what you know and what you say.

An example that springs to mind of that sort of things is ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ has for years, I've been working for ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ for 17 years and have a dress down day on Friday, introduced not long after I started so people would come in, in jeans and t-shirts and things like that and I was probably 23 years old, going to a meeting on a Friday in jeans and t-shirt with a lot of significantly older engineers to talk about a test that we were working on.

I'd done a huge amount of work and knew more about this test than everybody else and I went along to the meeting and I'm not the loudest speaker in the world, even less loud back in the day when I was that much younger and this meeting went on and I tried several times to get my point across, as forcefully as I knew how and literally there were 20 actions that came out of this meeting, which I could have answered in the meeting and it was … my personality, my presence there, in my head as well the fact that I was wearing jeans and a t-shirt and therefore could be easily dismissed and also the mentality of the other engineers in the room as well I think, I wasn't able to get that point across. Lived with me forever, I'm now one of the guys who always tries to make sure that if there's any junior person in the room, that their point gets across because you never know, they might have all the answers to the questions you're looking for, I've been that guy, I know what it feels like!

How important is it for people to think about how they're dressed for a situation? Although we've said there are times when people can have gravitas and they maybe are a bit scruffy or whatever because it suits

the environment that they're in, for you, how important is it to think that through and be conscious of it?

It's one of those things that it's about making it easier to have a positive impact. If you go along to a black tie dinner and everybody knows it's a black tie dinner and you're the one person not wearing it, then there are certain people who are going to switch off just because you're not dressing in the appropriate clothing and therefore if you want to have a positive impact, it's going to be that much harder and … talk about the example, picking names for the kids was a real challenge and having this conversation with my wife and the conclusion from friends that I have is that effectively, it's a huge challenge, if you give a kid a really unusual, distinctive name, it's just an amplifier of their natural personality, so if they're a brilliantly confident person, it will just make them even more brilliantly confident and if they're going to be a shy and timid person, it will absolutely destroy them because they stand out and that's the last thing that they want to do.

This appropriateness of dress is one of those things, if you really are supremely in control and the world expert and the best at something, then you go along to whatever and you're not dressed in an appropriate manner, then that's going to cause you issues. There's stories about James Hunt going along to dinners with sandals on and things like that and for a lot of people who were tuned into his behaviour, you hear people say "this is brilliant, this is just the sort of thing James did, we all loved him", but if you actually hear a lot of the older guys who are there, who felt that this was a serious event and carried some weight, they actually have a completely opposite opinion of him from that era.

Yes, and there's a tendency to look back on things perhaps in a rather, maybe now a more enlightened way, to look at things because he's gone and so you miss him …

Jackie Stewart has a tremendous amount of presence and the things he did in safety with Formula 1, he was always much more respectful of the status quo and the people around him and I'm certain that that helped him to achieve so much more in those other areas he was interested in, whereas if James Hunt had made a big push for safety, it would have been very easy to denigrate and force him to the side.

But he was also someone who was very conscious about the way he dressed, so he really thought it through. So whether you think James Hunt did or did not really consciously think about the way he looked, it's hard to say, he could have done or maybe he just was always like that so he just carried on, is an interesting one. But certainly Jackie Stewart is someone who wanted to make a very big impact on safety and also was very conscious of his style because he really loved his style, really put a lot of effort into it.

I've heard stories of making sure his shirts were always designed with slightly shorter sleeves so his watch could be seen, that's a lot of detail and attention to detail that a lot of people wouldn't notice.

But it's one of those funny things that he just appeared so crisp when you saw him to look at but clearly, it's very hard to look like that if you don't think about it but when you hear somebody saying how much effort they put into it, it comes across.

So as we start to move towards, rather than just thinking about aspects that define the concept of gravitas because where I am in the picture now, I'm starting to hear some of the same things starting to creep up, just as I suggested would happen and I want to now push us slightly more towards developing it and focus again on the opposite side, which is the barriers to developing gravitas because this is an important part of establishing whether we can coach in certain key areas.

If something crops into your head and you think "I want to say this about gravitas, I've just thought of this situation or this person", just throw it in there and when I get it transcribed, I'll be able to find out where to fit it in.

So let's talk about the idea of acquiring gravitas. First of all, do you think somebody can learn to have gravitas?

I'd say absolutely.

Why?

Because having been on the training course, I've done lots of things about person impact and things like that, leading and thinking about how you come across anyway, so there's particular things like I never really thought about how defensive one looks, sitting with arms folded in the chair and going on the course, everybody giving you that feedback, I won't say I've stopped doing that because it's hard to get out of bodily habits but I'm much less likely to do that now, much more sort of at ease.

The thing I'm working on myself at the minute is the battle between, I really like language and I really like to try and use precise words but several people have given me the feedback that it makes you look like you're showing off, or that you're a bit … just trying to exclude people by using language that they don't like and therefore I'm kind of internal debate about which of those is the better way to communicate and get the message across.

What's interesting about that is the recognition that you're having to think about the person or people in front of me, just because I am most comfortable using this type of language, has made me think that perhaps I have this alternative way that I might use language and my body, to be able to engage with them or have them have confidence in me, if we were back to that or establish my credibility or whatever it is you're trying to do in this sense.

Yet you recognise that you have this preferred way that you like to engage in language, how do you try to change your language when you really do like a precise or elaborate …?

[Inaudible 00:50:03] language!

Is this where the acting comes in? Where have you discovered this idea of looking at different ways of using language?

It kind of comes from talking with children and having to explain every other word, "What does this mean, Daddy?" or "What does that mean?" and my wife, she's not particularly interested in florid language either, so when I'm sort of using very weird expressions and things, I'm very fortunate in that my wife and my brothers and sisters pull me up on these things but then my sister's an English graduate as well, so she does like to talk about language and things like that.

But it's just one of those things, I'm quite able to acquire habits, both good and bad, I'm an habitual person if I allow myself to be, so I've got into the habit of going to the gym at 7.30 in the morning, three times a week, so it's not really a battle anymore, it's more I get frustrated when I can't do it and it's the same with language, I used to swear a tremendous amount when I was at university and I started working here and swore in front of a manager and swore in front of my then girlfriend's grandmother and realised that perhaps I ought to do something about it and therefore, got a lot more measured and calm about how I expressed myself. I still fail every now and again but not so much.

I love watching people being interviewed who are not used to being interviewed and it might be because they just suddenly made it in some area and they just naturally throw it in there and then they'll go "oh shit, sorry" and it just continues.

It is something that they learn, learning not to use certain words, particularly …

My children never swear, they're 5 and 7 and it's something they're going to pick up at secondary school.

It seems to happen later, in the teenage years are when you suddenly discover the richness of swearing.

The little one does like the word "poo" though!

So acquiring gravitas, you said yes absolutely, then you thought about body and a few things you do and no doubt you catch yourself, I think that's completely usual for people, "I've just caught myself doing what is my comfortable zone" and you'll have learned that some people, their comfortable position isn't necessarily giving across something negative to somebody else, it's just that you're comfortable but when we get too conscious, it's a bit scary because we're never quite sure what to do with ourselves or shift around.

And then we have the language and the idea of being precise and learning how to adapt it to a different type of people. What else do you

think really helps when it comes to acquiring gravitas? Think of the richness of things you've explored already with me.

I think somebody who can grasp stuff very quickly as well, so if they're having something explained to them, they don't have to go back and back and back, they pick up the information quickly.

Can someone be taught to grasp or coached to grasp things quickly?

One of the things is the element of building rapport, it's getting people quickly. From a technical point of view, some of the guys with most gravitas, they'll understand very complicated technical issues, very, very quickly but sometimes it's just getting into the mind of a person, you might not understand the technical detail of what they're trying to tell you but you quickly find out why they're trying to tell you something.

It came up in a conversation the other day, in a ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ setting and exploring the idea of how you might have a quality like gravitas without necessarily having the knowledge of a subject matter, to go with it, which is a natural addition to have when you've got it but if you haven't got it, what else do you have available?

We had a long conversation about the journalist, Louis Theroux, who adapts his behaviour all the time according to whoever he's in front of, whether it's to protect himself because he's in front of serial killers or whether it's something much more fun and playful. He uses this approach which is to say "I just want to uncover why things happen, why things occur, why you did this, why you did that" and then that technique of building rapport, which is what he's effectively doing which you said was important, is the way that you get into discovering the why and I think perhaps when we think about acquiring it, particularly when you have a love of certain things that you like in terms of language and knowledge and so on, it suggests a very interesting place to position yourself , to be the person who wants to discover why more, like the child, so exactly that child position to be in – but it's not easy to do is it because you've got to suspend judgement.

That's very true, that avoidance of jumping to conclusions. I think it comes with that thing of calmness as well, waiting until the time is right to act, patience and calmness, that you don't jump in feet first, at the first sign, you jump in at the right time, you ask the right questions, it comes back to that binary thing of the [Inaudible 00:55:47] but a correct or reasonable thing rather than an off the cuff instant shooting from the hip reaction, sort of may turn out to be a lot more difficult than you thought.

If someone has a natural preferred way to want to talk things through, they're going to look like somebody that speaks first and acts later.

Trying to be the opposite of that is always exceptionally hard but there's still a way of speaking things through, that allows you to perhaps not look like you jump in, so that you're more reasoned in the way you're

using the language at the same time, which I think is something I want to play with a bit later.

So what else do we think of when we think of acquiring gravitas? Things that you can think of that would help people to acquire and I know you'll look at things we've done in the past as well but give yourself a minute quietly to think about this one and the things we've talked about and I won't say anything.

Anything else come to mind?

I keep coming back thinking to acting workshops and things that I've done and the sorts of things that guys who lead those exercises have to do, that preparedness to … they're not worried about making a, or don't appear worried about making a mistake, that willingness to put themselves out there come what may.

Two things, one that you just used the word preparedness but also in two ways, one is preparing and one is prepared to accept whatever people will think of themselves and as you know, with that acting workshop, there's a good proportion of time spent getting people to free themselves up in some way, to lose their inhibitions and one of the ways to do that is to get you to do what looks like quite silly things. They lead from the front and you do the same thing and you find yourself thoroughly enjoying it, like a 5 year old child again and then if you were asked to do the same thing with a group of people at work, it would feel so awkward and yet you would really want it to happen, you would want all of you to suddenly wave like trees, move like fish or whatever it was and you think how much better the conversation would be afterwards if you did it. But something stops it.

I remember a particular warm-up exercise we did, it was one of those things that when you say it coldly and calmly, sounds so absurd and it had everybody in fits of laughter rolling around the floor. We were lying on our backs on the floor, everybody with their heads facing towards the [Inaudible 00:59:35] and you tilt your head back so you're looking in at each other and dangle your arms and legs up into the air and just pretend that you're all lighter than air and you're stuck to the ceiling and you're looking across and because you're looking as if you were stuck to the ceiling, across at everybody else and you see your friends and they're doing it, it looked, your mind switched into seeing that and everybody was obviously aping up, doing it more and it just had hysterics.

I said this to a few friends of mine, I said it was just the most amazing thing and you do it with somebody else at home and because they'd be just, "oh okay, this is rubbish", it doesn't kinda have, it didn't have anywhere near the same impact. You say it coldly and it sounds absurd but why would that be funny? But we were just absolutely falling about laughing doing it.

It's no surprise I think, a lot of the early work for example on presence was always acting related and yet not all actors seem to have it, so it's

not an automatic equation, that you do this, this and this and suddenly you have it.

Robert De Niro is the sort of person who I wouldn't say had gravitas as a person outside of the characters, he can play people …

He can play gravitas can't he?

But when you see him interviewed in of himself, I think it's that sort of shyness that comes across with him or reticence to talk.

It's quite interesting, one of the people I'm working with now within this field in a commercial setting, has focused themselves on looking at role models. Now you've not brought it up but I'll put it in because one of the things with a conceptual encounter, it's not only reliant on your input, it's also allowed to use mine which is helpful because it keeps me adding new things into this.

But the role modelling part is another interesting way to think about acquiring gravitas because it gets you to think about someone else other than you, to put some energy towards and I wondered if you'd ever thought of people that had gravitas, in any area of life, whether you've met them or not, because you're now conscious of the word and you're thinking about it and you know we're doing this research, whether there's anyone that comes to mind?

The interview with Martin Luther King that he did for the BBC, where he's sitting in a big black chair, talking to the BBC guy about the civil rights movement and there was just an utter conviction in what he was saying, there was no shouting or waving his arms about and everything he said was perfectly reasonable and plausible.

It's kind of interesting to see it now, thinking that we take for read, the civil rights movement and it would be interesting to kind of seen it back in the time at which that maybe was more, but all the same it was something that, why wouldn't we want this? It was all so obvious and so smooth and linear and belying a little bit of my politics as well, I always found Tony Blair somebody with a tremendous amount of presence and gravitas as well, when he first was elected in 1997, post-election that I voted in as well, this feeling that he was … making things feel different, even if they were just the same, all the Americans, we all like Bill Clinton and Barrack Obama and most of the Americans as an engineer, who we encounter, tend to be more Right Wing rather than Left Wing Americans and so they just don't see it, these guys.

No they don't and you're right, I work with the American side of the work that we do with ▮▮▮▮▮▮ and I'm always expecting different sets of responses of course, based on this European view versus the US view and it's fascinating ,what they look for and what they think is more important.

Really interesting, thinking of events, Don Revy was the manager of Leeds Utd in the 60s and 70s and he was somebody who had this aura around him, a tremendous amount of gravitas but there were certain events when he let himself go, that belied that kind of lack of control, that tremendously diminished his perception both outside of the business and inside.

There was an event with an offside goal against West Brom or something like that , where he came storming onto the pitch, so a guy who was controlled and The Don and he lost it and then a beautiful example, after he left Leeds and Brian Clough was there as manager and they did a calendar special on ITV, Don Revy was "Why are you doing this to my team, taking them apart?" and Brian Clough was there, absolutely trumping him at every corner saying, "I want to do it better", it's an absolutely beautiful piece of footage, of somebody who's trying to be in control but kind of failing and just falling short of the standard and their aura was broken at that point because somebody was better.

So you've referred to the sense of role models but could they be an important part of learning about it or is it an unnecessary area of interest?

I think it helps because the purpose is asking why you think that person has gravitas because using metaphor, it's like a human metaphor in the sense of, "this is what we're talking about and here is a person who has XYZ."

My father is real to me but he's not real to anybody else and you lose the context as well, I think the danger with using role models is take the American example, I think Barrack Obama is a tremendously charismatic, amazing man, I also have a tremendous amount of sympathy for his political policies as well, therefore it strengthens that. if I have a diametrically opposing view to his political beliefs, it might make me blind to his strong points.

So in a sense, to make it real, it actually has to play to whatever your natural beliefs, background, history, interest, passions …

At least give a nod to them because football might not mean anything to 90% of the people who might be involved in this process …

What tends to feature increasingly in this area of work and developing people is the idea of people becoming more and more authentic and I know already there's been some reference to gravitas and authenticity, the idea that people are not trying to be someone else, that's very important.

So I take from this a couple of things, a role model is useful as a metaphor, it's a means in which to help describe and compare and contrast and identify things we like and don't like. But what it doesn't do is say "there's somebody I want to be like" because fundamentally, that is working in the opposite side of the things that we've said are important elements of gravitas, is that fair?

Yes, absolutely.

I think that is an important dimension and it sounds very straightforward, that there is a danger we get carried away in trying to be something we're not and I want to see if other people come up with the same sort of points.

What about the things that stop us acquiring gravitas? These are some of the things we can do and think about and I suspect there's a lot more but what you've done is made the start and I'll be interested to see what else everybody else brings into it, but what stops us?

It's funny, that kind of closed behaviour, the way you sit or something like that, that might be an unconscious tick, if you've just got something unfortunate about you, I have a friend who lives in London and he can move through, when you're trying to get on an aeroplane, especially Ryan Air, there's an enormous rugby scrum and I literally, I just don't even bother trying to push through because I'm nearly 6ft tall, quite broad shoulders, shaved head, so if I nudge anybody, they take tremendous offence instantly.

My friend, I've seen him move from the back of the queue to be the third person on an aeroplane and nobody has said anything to him, nobody has been offended because he can just move through a crowd and it's that kind of thing about, he clearly has got almost no gravitas and presence because he can move past people as if he's not there.

He's almost invisible.

Yes, and it's that kind of …

That's a nice example.

He doesn't make eye contact with people, he's very skittish and fidgety and things like that.

Is he small?

No, he's very thin but he's 6ft2 tall, he stands out as a piece of work but it's just he's able to move silently through a crowd, at a bar it's a miracle. The corollary is it does take him ages to get served when he, he gets there a lot faster but it takes him a long while, that may well be just him trying to avoid buying a round!

So there's some sort of body and energy piece there, we've referenced before but I think yes, that can be one barrier. What else?

One of the things a guy I did some acting with said about me was that I seem quite a serious person and whereas certain friends would say I'm very juvenile and light-hearted, extremely, my kids think I am anyway and it's that thing about appropriateness of behaviour as well, so clearly swearing in front of a generation older than me, for my mother, if a stand-up comedian swears,

she'll switch the TV off, she's not interested, loses credibility. So those sorts of things really matter.

I saw ███████ do a piece at the IMecE dinner that I got invited to and ███ ███ is a super public speaker, absolutely brilliant but his language to start off with was very poor and he probably talked for about 45 minutes, 40 minutes pitch that he did and for the first 20 minutes, I think half the room were against him and it really took all of his skill to get them all going and it was brilliant by the end, absolutely phenomenal and clearly a very intelligent man but he made life … possibly deliberately, he made life difficult for himself and you have to be, recognising that you have to be as good at him at doing the patter and everything else, to recover from the circumstances that you started yourself off as.

So it's a nice example, I think if I summarise that barrier, one is the ability to adapt, the choices you make, so it's not just the ability but knowing when is the right time to suddenly make that change.

That specific thing, when he came onto the stage, he seemed a bit disorganised, sort of mentally in terms of what he was going to say and he seemed as well, a little bit overawed by the audience.

When you say seemed overawed, what does that look like?

Like he didn't know what he was supposed to be saying or who he was addressing, so you've got the local chairman of the IMECE - Institute of Mechanical Engineers and lots and lots of guys around in black ties but all engineers, so all very stuffy, stiff chaps sitting there and he polls up and starts to talk and it's that thing of "Am I doing the rugby club dinner or am I doing a Royal Commands performance type ..?", there's a difference between the two and he started off at the upper end, thought "I've gone too high maybe" and almost fired it all out, covering all bases to begin with before deciding which way to go.

So it sort of seemed like things didn't quite go, some of the stories that he started telling didn't quite go anywhere and others he developed and carried on with. Maybe that's just his natural style, I've never seen him as an after dinner speaker but it's just I've seen other after dinner speakers who have absolutely come in and the way they start and they just plough on maybe because they know the audience that they're going to get and what they want and they just fly with it.

Are you expecting an after dinner speaker to know what audience they're expecting to encounter?

That was the feeling I got, that it didn't feel like he did.

That's something else for me to add to the barriers. Anything else that you'd like to put in there, right now?

In a strange sort of way, we talk about authenticity and sort of gravitas and as behaviours but maybe one thing that would stop you or make acquiring gravitas difficult is if you have a behaviour that you just can't get away from. There are certain people in certain situations that you know, there are people who I know could press my buttons, no matter what happens and all they have to do is look at me and you react to type and therefore, display, being authentic and myself in those circumstances, you clearly have absolutely no gravitas whatsoever because all you want to do is punch somebody's lights out or tell somebody to shut up and things like that.

It doesn't work then does it?

You've kind of thrown it all away but if those behaviours were certain things like you can't, you have to sit in a chair slumped down or something like that, then it would be very difficult to portray, to give those physical cues that help, wouldn't make it impossible but it would prove challenging. And if you're an inveterate swearer or you have Tourette's or something like that , I would imagine it's incredibly difficult …

I would think so but if we just talk about the type of people that might create that feeling in you, is there a certain type of person that presses your buttons?

There's people who I've worked with. My younger brother works at ██████ ██████ and I have a tremendous ability to wind him up, there's a friend of mine from school who's also friends with my brother, he's got more in common with him in terms of interests so they spend a lot of time together and my friend has said many times, that he's quite happy to see me or my brother but he hates going out with both of us because a kid brother can just wind me up so easily and I can wind him up and we both end up being 13 year old boys, when we're out and my friend is just absolutely, "I don't want to go out for a drink with two teenagers, which is what you become", on the bad, not all the time but sometimes on the bad days.

My lightbulb goes off in my head when I hear this and I've been wondering for a while, about the boy or the girl/person inside us and we have the early part of our conversation when the father figure is brought up, it could be the mother figure I'm sure in some circumstances but paternal figure effectively and then there's the buttons pressing and it always seems to be the sibling, which is quite interesting, how often this pattern is learned and they have this special inside knowledge about us, that there's no escaping from, we don't go through this thinking process when we're 13 or this age that we are, I'm imagining if it occurs over and over again, that this probably would be some part of the coaching and trying to discover what those buttons are, I have a feeling going back in time a little bit is important but knowing where to go back to is the interesting thing and you may have just stumbled across where you have to go back, to discover this. Not certain and I'll have to experiment a bit with it but it will be very interesting if it reveals something about ourselves we didn't quite really know. But certainly the buttons we don't like getting pressed which is quite worrying.

I feel like I'm not going to get much more on the barriers side. I have quite an arsenal of words and notes but they're only to help jog my memory as I walk through the transcript because this will be transcribed and I'll do the themes and then I'll match to see why did I write that here and put it there and where does it fit, it takes quite a time but it is sufficient for me at this particular point.

Is there anything else? In a shoot the breeze kind of way, just general things about gravitas that you'd like to just get out there, it could be things that you want to be able to explore when you get into your coaching, or things that you're looking and reading about, that interested you.

I'm really interested in the feedback side of it because I had a conversation with my dad, who is the chairman of the Nottinghamshire Football Association, so very responsible position and my younger brother and I have both come to realise that outside of the family world, my old man is tremendously well respected and well regarded and looked up to by a huge number of people in his field, whereas in the house, he has been many times, this figure of utter incompetence and fun because of things that he does and the way he behaves with his family and actually seeing the exact same circumstance that he's in, dealing with somebody who isn't related to him, he deals with it in a very, very different way to how he does with people who are related to him as well, so circumstances of people pranging cars or getting drunk and falling down and things like that, if you're his son, that's the worst thing in the world, if you're not his son, "what a terrible mishap, what can we do to sort it out?" kind of behaviour.

It's recognising that, I reckon everybody in certain areas has got, exhibits a level of control and gravitas but spotting those things that you're doing, getting some feedback and those sorts of things I think is tremendously important.

It certainly is a part of history, the definition or the history of how the word has come to being pays a lot of attention to the idea of mentors, which is why I like to bring out the role model side because potentially there is also that aspect of role models that you do know rather than people on TV.

One of the key mentor pieces is the feedback process that you get and of course, a mentor can be a father figure is another way of looking at it, or a mother figure and so I'd be very interested to hear what everyone else says about feedback as well but I suspect it's important because how else do you learn? Feedback can come in so many different ways …

I think internal feedback helps though as well. I go a bundle on psycho-analysis stuff anyway and I was at a meeting just before I came in here, where I'm not happy with how I acted in that meeting had I know why I acted that way, because I was feeling very frustrated about a particular topic but I know that it massively reduced my usefulness in the meeting and it wasn't helpful, but in the two hours since I've done it, I kind of feel like I know why I

did it and I know what I need to do, not to do it again and I think that's important but it's sometimes helpful, when you get feedback from outside, you spot the things that you haven't spotted yourself.

There are a lot of people that don't like feedback directly from others, they don't mind feedback in some other capacity but one of the ones that is very powerful is self-feedback and self-talk and it's used a great deal on the sports psychology rather than business psychology side, as a means to rescue you because there's no-one else to help you in that given situation.

I'd be interested to see if it features in the coaching, it might do, if we do then we'll use it, if we think it's an important part of gravitas but there are some techniques already out there, that are brilliant to restore the inner belief, when things are not going well, which would be fun to play with anyway regardless.

Given when we get to the coaching sessions, they're again 90 minutes long, so they go quite fast when you think about it, it's so important we pull the right levers for you, for all of you, so that you can see the maximum effect and that's part of the learning process and also what is the most appropriate coaching method or approach because there are so many different ways to approach this, that I'll need to think about and work on for the next couple of weeks because the coaching process from the start, I would anticipate being less than three weeks, so I'll be straight onto you about diaries and dates next week, when I finish my final interview because Geraldine is my final interviewee and I've already got another executive as well, so we've got a combination of different levels throughout the business, exploring this topic in this sense.

So I think that's probably sufficient for now, thank you so much.

That's all right.

[CLOSE]

Appendix J: Coding Sheet Examples

Coding Sheet — ~~████~~ Rick

Letter	Meaning	Number	Meaning	Comment
C	Communication	1	Simplicity	*for me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but whilst saying the least ... because I always try and think these things down to the simplest thing and it's just you don't have to talk all the time or the loudest but that when you do speak, your voice is the loudest P1*
C	Calm Control of Self	1	Calm	Not being reactionary or impatient P2
C	Comfortable	1	Self style	Can change G in different situation quickly P5.
J	Judgment	1	Accurate	Getting Things Right not wrong P2
C	Communicate		silence	Comfort with silence P5
A	Action	1	Make Things happen	P2 — people who get things done.
C	Comfortable	& 1	style	He just stood out P5
C	Command or Control.	2	Be present	My father used to let me P3.
C	Communicate	2	Style	Referred to not being speak important Pop
C	Character	1	Big characters	Small man with G P6.
P	Passion	1	work role	for what you do P6.
☞ C	Control	3	Balance	Regain it if shy — use names P7
C	Confidence	1	Harry	Reducing it — lack of. quote use P8
C	Confidence	2	Centre of attention	I do not need to be the centre of attention
★ C	Credibility	1	Meet people	Important quote — is making sure people know each other before starting P9.
S	Self aware	1	Wanting to be self aware	Good example on a boy's — French P10.

Coding Sheet ~~█████~~ RICK

Letter	Meaning	Number	Meaning	Comment
C	Communication	1	Simplicity	*for me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but whilst saying the least … because I always try and think these things down to the simplest thing and it's just you don't have to talk all the time or the loudest but that when you do speak, your voice is the loudest*
C	Control	4	Persuasion	⎫ Not being platform – but
C	Communicate	3	Influence	⎬ because you want to move. P13/14
C	Credibility	2	Dress	Getting your point accross. appropriateness + comfort
G	Gravitas	1	Learning	Can it be learned – yes – P14.
C	Communicate	4	Grasp ideas	Need to do so quickly P16. Starts with building <u>rapport</u>.
C	Confidence	2	assumption	Being comfortable at making assumptions P16
C	Credibility	2	Mistakes	Not worried making mistakes P17
✶ A	Authenticity	1	Traits	Being inauthentic something destroys gravitas P22
O	Openness	1	Feedback	Need to be open to feedback P23

Letter	Meaning	Number	Meaning	Comment
C	Communication	1	Simplicity	*for me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but whilst saying the least … because I always try and think these things down to the simplest thing and it's just you don't have to talk all the time or the loudest but that when you do speak, your voice is the loudest*
A	authorative	1	Confident	To be trusted, also about silence See ROS. P1.
I	Image	1	Style	Smartly dressed, clean, professional P1.
D	Demeanor	1	Approachable	Posture, smiling, approachable. No barriers P1. + P11 P2 Has more humanity, open, honest (like authentic)
C	Communication	1	Clarity	A ability to convey message P4 Not bamboozle.
C	Content	1	Command	of yourself P4.
C	Control	2	Motivate	— Passionate about. To be able to motivate others P5
S	Self awareness	1	Reflective	To be reflective about oneself. P6
C	Credibility	1	Learning	People with Ⓒ are people +
C	Credibility	2	Depth	learn from P11. — onions P14 example about lena in P13 - quote
A	Action	1	Practice	Not just theory but put it into action P14.
C	Confidence	2	loosing it Not knowing	Start off more arrogant but as get older start loosing it P15 - quote (Be confident in not knowing") P15
C	Credibility	3	Learning	Prove to yourself and others you've made mistakes.
C	Confidence	3	Outcome	Comfortable things not going to your expected outcome P16
R	Reflective	1	Bissler	HEC really made me realise what I'm doing — mirror up.
C	Credibility	4	Swan	I want to be The Swan P18

Letter	Meaning	Number	Meaning	Comment
C	Communication	1	Simplicity	*for me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but whilst saying the least ... because I always try and think these things down to the simplest thing and it's just you don't have to talk all the time or the loudest but that when you do speak, your voice is the loudest*
M	Metastory	1	Mentor	Not found someone to check with P 18/19/20
C	Credibility	5	Hard work P21 - Ds talks a lot about hard work is a distinguishing feature 2 Ⓖ.
C	Credibility ↑↓	6	leading	'I lead a team of 22 HR Professional - coach - teach P22 I influence up but not down well' Is this more about Them.
G	Grandeur	1	leading	Grandeur + leading, P is about commanding a room.

Coding Sheet – Name _~~[redacted]~~_ REBECCA

Letter	Meaning	Number	Meaning	Comment
C	Communication	1	Simplicity	_for me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but whilst saying the least ..._
C	Credibility	1	Status	expect it from those above - Not expect from someone below P2
C	Communicate	1	Style	Its in the way they communicate P3
C	Communicate	2	Precise	very clear, very precise, they know what they want P3.
C	Communicate Confidence	3	Body Strength	Probably strong Structure P3.
C	Credible	2	Believe able	Hes got to be able to believe or pretend to believe the message P4.
C	Character	1	Opinion	versus the airy fairy, over creative being ... P4.
D	Definition	1	Gender	I was just thinking it feels quite masculine P5
D	Definition	1	Gender	Problem with RR - not enough females P5.
C	Communicate	1	Accent	No accent - 3 entries P4 + 5.
E	Emotional Control.	1	Balanced	Not expect to burst into tears P5
A	Approachable	1	Illusion of qualities	Boss thinks he has but hasnt because 2 no' warmth P6.
C	Control	2	Influence	To try to persuade + influence people P10.
H	Honesty + Confidence	1	Knowledge	Comfort in knowing what you don't know P11.
C	Confidence	4	Humility	is important for me.
C	Credibility	3	Age	Experience vs Age.
C	Confidence	5	Belief	Confident not arrogant P12

Coding Sheet – Name : REBECCA

Letter	Meaning	Number	Meaning	Comment
C	Communication	1	Simplicity	*for me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but whilst saying the least ...*
C	Confidence	6	Self Talk	Concrete example a how to use self talk P12
C	Confidence	7	options + clarity	I knew options and was able to think quickly on my feet P13
C	Confidence	8	Comfort Zone	weird, I was out of my comfort zone P13.
C	Control	3	In or out of.	He has a lot a reliance on others P14
C	Comfort	1	Zone	Comfort + hierarchy P16/15
R	Reflection	1	Reflect in action	Using time to reflect honestly P16.
A	Acceptance or Comfort	1	Not knowing	It's acceptance isn't it P17

Coding Sheet ~~████████~~. JOHN

Letter	Meaning	Number	Meaning	Comment
C	Communication	1	Simplicity	*for me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but whilst saying the least ... because I always try and think these things down to the simplest thing and it's just you don't have to talk all the time or the loudest but that when you do speak, your voice is the loudest*
C	Communication	1	Clarity	Thought + mind — P1
F	To Feel	1	Felt	Gravitas in a felt quality
E	Energy	1	Circling E	— Green – second.
P	Physicality	1	Stature	Helps to be tall. – Impersonal but P3 not used. But Bernie Ecclestone's small. P3
G	Gravitas	1	learn	It can be learned P4. — It's not a born skill.
✱ C	Creditability	1	Positive	Creates action with positivity P5.
✦ C	Confident	1	Comfort	Being comfortable in your own skin – Good quote. P6
R	Reflective / Creditably	1	Reflective	Situational reflective. P9.
NOTE P11/12 — Reference to The ⊞				
I	Influence	1	Influence	Is critical to gravitas 'to move things along'. P13
C	Control	1	Situation	You have to control the situation P14 P15
C	Confidence	2	Embody	It shows when you don't have it.
C	Confidence	3	Style	Balance of style ↓ P16
C	Control	1	Situation	You need situational awareness
A	Alternative Stuff	1	Buildings	Buildings with gravitas P18
C	Creditability	1	Style	– Cufflinks + hair ! P20
✱ C	Confidence	4	Need it	Stuff that hinders Gravitas P20

See P21/22
Multiple quotes

Coding Sheet – Name ████ ████ JOHN

Letter	Meaning	Number	Meaning	Comment
C	Communication	1	Simplicity	*for me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but whilst saying the least …*
C	Communico	1	Simplify	Remeber 3 Thys 122

Letter	Meaning	Number	Meaning	Comment
C	Communication	1	Simplicity	*for me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but whilst saying the least …*

Coding Sheet – Name ██████ ████████ MIKE

Letter	Meaning	Number	Meaning	Comment
C	Communication	1	Simplicity	*for me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but whilst saying the least ...*
M	Magnetism	1	Gravitas attraction	Magnetism, so its that natural draw without saying anything P1
D	Depth credible	1	Depth	It's the depth of somebody, as well P1
E	Environment	1	Where G occurs	G - is more of a social thing (includes networking) P1
L	Leadership	1	Act of leading	(wrote paragraph on in why (G) matters in leadership + leaving it) P2
C	Characteristics	1	of Gravitas	(Good example of a person with Gravitas - lots of useful info (credibly) P2
C	Characteristics	2	Size	I never thought of stature or size P3
C	Characteristics	3	Gravitate	Everyone seemed to gravitate around him. P4
C	Characteristics	4	legacy	Its that feel proud you leave, where you leave that legacy P5
C	Characteristics	5	Embodiement	The aura of presence. P6/7
C	Confidence Control	1	being liked	Know what they are doing know where they are going Solid reliability P7
F	Followers	1	Perception	Its that perception that maybe differ from mine P7
F	Followers	2	Being Special	everyone wants fresh - How I take time to make people I want to feel special P8
F	Followers	3	engage	I give people time, more aware, aware I've got to engage people P8
C	Communication	1	feedback	Got that +ve feedback P9
C	Confidence	2	Comfort	I've just shown my confidence. You can throw confidence out too something you can learn P11
C	Confidence + Control	3	influence	note whole paragraph P11

Coding Sheet – Name _____ MIKE

	Letter	Meaning	Number	Meaning	Comment
	C	Communication	1	Simplicity	*for me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but whilst saying the least …*
	C	Communication	5	Relaxed	I'm just relaxed P11/P12
X	C	Credibility	1	experience	Point about experience and always helping – Remember Ethnography P12
✗	C	Confidence/ Followers	4	Instilling	I guess its instilling confidence in others P12
	C	Credibility	2	Perception	It's easy to create the perception P13
	G	Gender	1	No diff	Never thought of it – but work in a male orientated environment P13
	R	Role models	1	Always same gender	Maybe guys, usually gravitate toward guys – have never thought about it P13
	C	Credibility	3	Differentiate Rule	Because lots able to differentiate yourselves P14
✗	M	Metaphor	1	The Sea	〰 is a metaphor for gravitas P15
	C	Credibility + comfort	4	authenticity	Behaving differently doesn't make you more gravitas – be more P17
	L	Learning (G)	1	Learning Gravitas	You plant a seed – majority you can grow P17
	C	Confidence	5	learning	If you lack the seed of confidence you can't impose it P17
✗	P	Presence	1	P vs G	Deeper, more complex – P18
	P	Presence	2	P vs G	P is in the moment, but gravitas is — Relationship — longer period of time Can't fake it
	G	Definition	1	Define	People talk about you when you are gone P19
	C	Confidence	6	Self Belief	Others might tell you but they are really believing them P20

Letter	Meaning	Number	Meaning	Comment
C	Communication	1	Simplicity	*for me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but whilst saying the least ...*
D	Definition	1	Presence	for me presence is one, confidence, control, support, structured. P2
C	Confidence	1	Growth	I associate it with being able to grow confidence.
C	Confidence	2	Others	I link it with working with others. It's my main barrier. P2
C	Confidence	3	Self confidence	The constantly doubtful my own ability ... other days when I'm a wreck. I can be different P3.
C	Confidence	4	Self Belief	Self belief – believing in oneself. I feel like a fraud P3.
C	Control	1	emotion	Again, it's about controlling my emotions, not other people P4.
C	Control	2	Frustration	I think people can see my emotions. .... I'd have better control over the way I come across P4.
C	Confidence	5	Mentor	My mentor says I don't lack confidence ...but inside I'm a mess P4
C	Control	3	Structure	I don't know why associate it with gravitas but I could be better P4.
P	Presence	1	Noticed	I don't like that. That I got unnoticed P4.
G	Gravitas	1	–ve example	They have lots of + but would be better if they calmed down a bit. P7
G	Gravitas	1	too much	I've seen people with too much, I would want to be like that P8
C	Confidence	6	Situational	It depends on who ... P8
R	Role Model	1	Credible control	They are emotional, controlled, knowledgeable and credible male + female P8
D	Definition	2	Nice	Approachable, they care, driven, values I can connect to P9.
I	Image	1	Style	dress differently to stand out, I don't agree that you have to be smart.

(Comfort)

Coding Sheet – Name ██████ KIRSTY.

Letter	Meaning	Number	Meaning	Comment
C	Communication	1	Simplicity	*for me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but whilst saying the least …*
C	Characteristics	1	Size	More like a sward, not need to be large – just balanced P10/11
C	Characteristics	2	Want to listen to	I want to keep listening and hearing their views P11
C	Credible	1	Believ able	Can't be fake, push own boundaries to grow – on naturally P12.
✳ C	Concrete COURAGE	1	Example	Good concrete example of confidence, control, courage, communication calm P13/14.
✳ E	Embodiment (	1	lack of Confidence concentration	Good example of how KE embodies lack of confidence + concentration.
✳ H	Humility	1	Deficiency + .	Funny example on P17 – Related to self doubt.
C	Characteristics Role Model	3	Understand ing	More understanding – possibly make me question this difficulty rather than … . P18
C	Comfort Zone	1	How often Help	Help me think wider than my comfort zone P18.
C	Credibility	2	As a Brand	Credibility – the biggest one and reputation. P20.
R	Reflective	1	Summary of ④	I clarified views on ④ also added learning by reflection not transmit P21.
G	Gender	1	Women	Yes – They can! P22

Appendix K: Blank Coding Sheet

Letter	Meaning	Number	Meaning	Comment
C	Communication	1	Simplicity	*for me, it boils right down to the person who says the most but whilst saying the least … because I always try and think these things down to the simplest thing and it's just you don't have to talk all the time or the loudest but that when you do speak, your voice is the loudest*

Appendix L: Development Needs

Rebecca

Confidence	Inertia: To be more action focused and visible. Somatic embodiedness: To convey confidence and self belief through her physical side. Learned positivity: Understand her own motivations and values and ensure others understand them. To remove self doubt when working with more senior leaders.
Credibility	Identify comfort and purpose: Connect her positivity to being comfortable with how she appears to others and keep her inertia high. Inward and outer congruence: Develop an inner voice that supports her outward credibility. Reliability: Develop greater trust in her and in others.
Communication	Courage: Develop the approach to speak early rather than sit back and ensure others listen and to differ from others views. Expression of mind: Ensure that what is inside her mind is communicated effectively.
Control	Decisiveness: Build a technique to make clear decisions and share them with others with being 'too friendly'. Self deserving: Learn to recognise the inner voice of self doubt and how to turn it down and replace it with a greater sense of self worth.

John

Confidence	Somatic embodiedness: Learn how to make it clearer to others he has confidence but not arrogance.
Credibility	Identity comfort and purpose: Whilst John has apparent clear purpose, building more personal comfort with his own image and style may benefit him. Inward and outer congruence: Develop an approach to

	match his inner thoughts with the outward perception that others have about him. Dignity: Create a style that is respectful and polite when dealing with others. Absorption: Maintain a curious approach with others at a personal level, not only technical and appears open. Humility: Develop an approach that demonstrates a more human nature with others at all levels.
Communication	Expression of mind: Encourage the extroverted expression of his own internal thoughts. Accessible: Create a warmth and approachable style that encourages others to listen.
Control	Energy navigator: Learn to read people and situations quickly to help create the right energy interactions with others. Climate creator: Build an approach to change the climate of a conversation, meeting or room through positive direct interaction.

Mike

| Credibility	Inward and outward congruence: Develop integrity to Mike's inner thoughts and how he comes across to others. Dignity: To be respectful and polite to all those he comes into contact with and uses it as a display of pride without ego. Reliability: Ensure his approach creates a sense of trust with his followers. Interaction integrity: Create focus and time with others Absorption: Demonstrate real interest in others opinions and their work.
Communication	Courage: To develop a style that balances his relaxed temperament with a thorough prepared and professional approach. Accessible: Along with the credibility face to ensure he creates a sense of being accessible to others.

| Control | Energy navigator: Create a technique to read the energy of himself and others to help learn how to somatically change the climate of other below. |
| | Climate creator: Develop an approach to build differing climates with individuals and teams. |

Kirsty

Confidence	Unflusteredness: To learn techniques to be personally calm and for this to be evident to others.
	Acceptance: Learn to appreciate her knowledge and skills and use other to fill gaps in knowledge, generously.
	Somatic embodiedness: To work on the physical side of her confidence to inform the mind and create the sense of confidence to others.
	Learned positivity: Explore her values and beliefs about herself to generate more positive thinking about herself and positive intent in others.
Credibility	Dignity: Build an approach where a dignified air would surround her and a style of a dignified leader with people she found difficult to work with.
	Reliability: Build on an approach to create trust quickly by following up on actions quickly and personally.
	Interaction integrity: Ensure that she speaks to people directly rather than using other form of communication wherever possible.
Communication	Courage: Build a personal style of communication that embraces emotion and feels distinct to her.
	Accessible: Create time for others and work on reducing assumptions and judgements about other people.
Control	Energy navigator: Build a technique to read her own energy and others.
	Decisiveness: Work on an approach to make decision and share them with others more timely.
	Self deserving: Work with her to build self belief but also a generous nature to others success rather than envy.

Appendix M: Gravitas Avatar

Name_____ Date_____
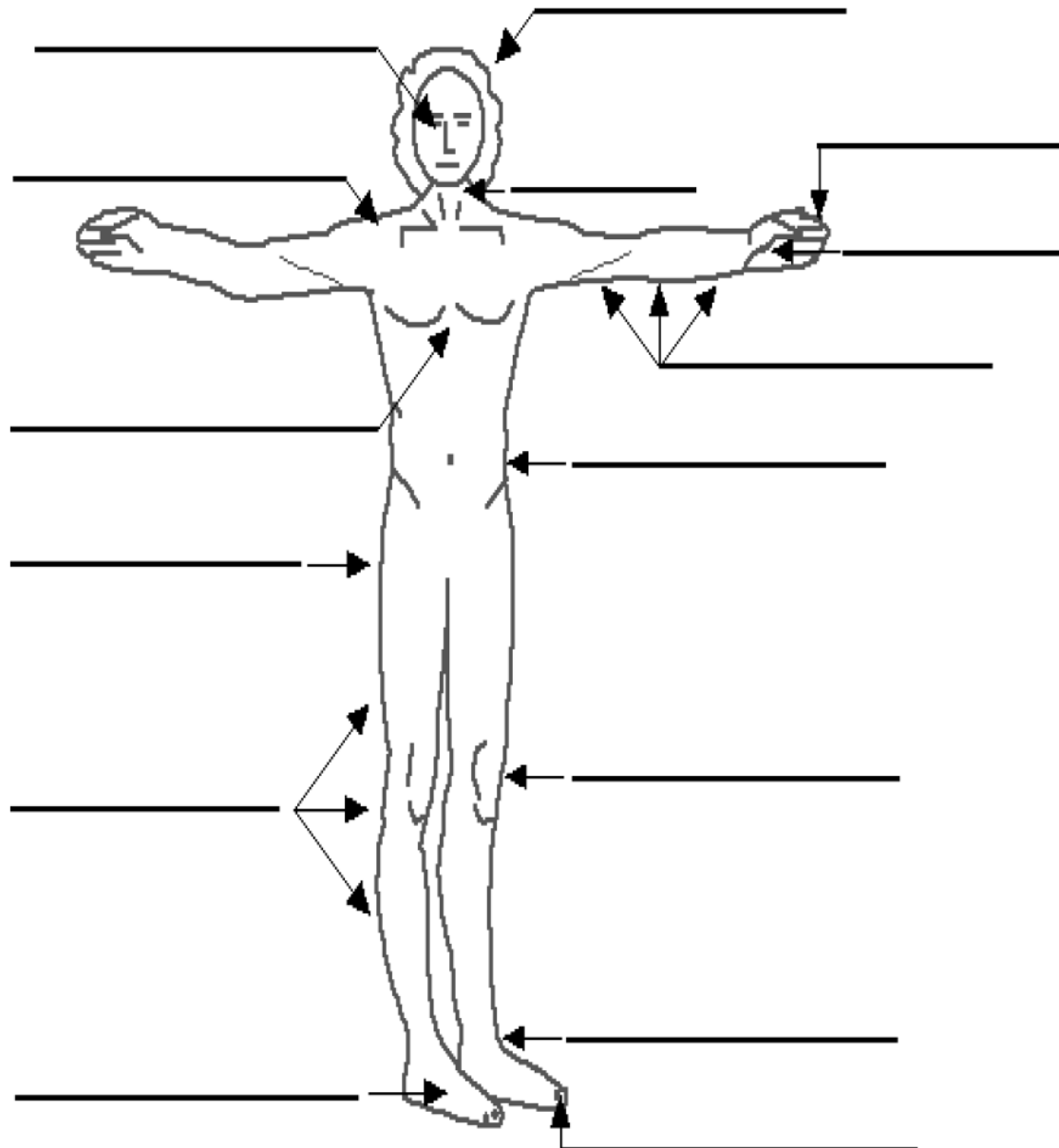
Notes for completion:
1. Think about your body and mind from a gravitas perspective
2. Write on each line a few words to describe how you see yourself now
3. For example – how do you stand, walk or sit? Where do you hold yourself when anxious? How do you feel about your height or weight?

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APPENDIX N: GRAVITAS DIARY

Name: _____*Date & Time:* _____

Situation Colour (Please circle): BLUE / GREEN / RED

Situation (Describe briefly)

Where did you need to increase your gravitas? (Please circle as many as needed)

CONFIDENCE / CREDIBILITY / COMMUNICATION / CONTROL

What were you doing at the time when it was needed?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

If you tried to increase gravitas what did you try?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

What was the effect?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

What did you learn?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix O: Final reflections

Gravitas

1. Has your perception of what gravitas means to you changed since we started?

2. If yes – can you describe what gravitas means for you now.

3. When you reflect on the model of coaching for gravitas – do you feel the model describes the phenomenon clearly for you?

4. Is there anything missing?

5. On reflection when do you feel you need gravitas in business – describe specific situations

6. Complete the gravitans – exercise

7. Describe the 3 diary situations if you have completed them

8. My view on coaching for gravitas is that it flows like this:

    i.   Building or sharing a personal concept of gravitas
   ii.   Explore awareness of self
  iii.   Explore self and needs
  iv.   Compare self with concept gravitans
   v.   Discover situational forces when gravitas is needed
  vi.   Record and reflect in practice – emotion, cognition and physicality
 vii.   Coach specific gravitans – experientially
viii.   Practice
  ix.   Reflect
   x.   Recycle