


# Editorial

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## Article history

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Exactly twenty years ago, in the first issue of IJEBM (August 2003), we set out two aims for this journal. The first aim was to offer an accessible yet powerful discussion platform for coaches and mentors seeking to validate their practice; the second was to provide evidence-based research for students, academics, mentors and coaches and their clients and others who need to be at the forefront of developments in this field.

Since then, we believe we have achieved that aim and met our commitment to provide resources to support the development of coaching and mentoring as an applied field. Lately, recognition of that commitment has come through the confidence of a number of abstracting and indexing bodies, and the journal is now being abstracted/indexed by EBSCO ([PsycINFO](#) and [Business Source Complete](#)), [Scopus](#), [Web of Science](#), and [the Directory of Open Access Journals](#). It is also listed in the Chartered Association of Business Schools [Academic Journal Guide 2021](#) (CABS AJG).

We begin the August 2023 issue with four mentoring papers and then present a collection of 14 coaching related papers. The first mentoring paper is from Nuria Gisbert-Trejo and colleagues researching in northern Spain. Here the authors present a comprehensive model for implementing an inter-organizational mentoring program based on a literature review of mentoring best practices and a focus group with 20 experts. The study highlights differences to be considered in implementing inter-organizational mentoring compared to traditional mentoring programs.

Our next paper focuses on the matching process for mentors and recent immigrants.

Peter De Cuyper from the University of Leuven (Belgium) and Michelle Crijns, a former migration and integration researcher at HIVA, University of Leuven, researched how to improve the social participation of newcomer immigrants via social mentoring programs. The paper focuses the important process of matching. Through insights from practice, the study gives an overview of the most common matching criteria including skills, expectations, interests, language, age and gender. Findings provide insights for both policy and practice

In our next paper, 'Does mentoring for women entrepreneurs lead to success?' Alison Theaker from University of Bath (UK) explores female entrepreneurs' experiences of mentoring and how it contributes to success. Using an interpretivist approach and in-depth interviews with 24 women entrepreneurs, Theaker found that although mentoring was seen by vital by most, the most significant form was found to be peer mentoring. The paper contributes to our understanding by adding peer and online mentoring to the menu of mentoring techniques.

The last of our mentoring papers is from Lawrence Meda and colleagues researching in Dubai (UAE). In the context of teacher professional development, the paper examines mentors' and

mentees' reflections about their experiences of participating in an inclusive education professional development program. For the study the authors used a qualitative case study approach of one professional development program in the United Arab Emirates. structured interviews and complete a questionnaire. Findings suggest the program empowered both mentors and mentees to be able to implement inclusive pedagogical practices.

The initial four of our 14 coaching papers help us understand a variety of aspects of coaching. The first tackles the contribution of critical realism to coaching. Sarah Corrie, from the University of Suffolk in the UK and Louise Kovacs from Sydney, Australia, present a conceptual discussion aimed at stimulating reflection and debate. They suggest critical realism as a valuable foundation for developing the knowledge base of coaching increasingly complex world. The authors give examples of how critical realism has already been applied within coaching and highlight the potential benefits for coaching of embracing a critical realist perspective.

The second by Alistair Bradley is an exploration of relational flow as an optimal experience in dyadic coaching conversations. Following a conceptual encounter methodology, Bradley's findings indicate the creation of an important connection between coach and client during relational flow that is not otherwise recognised in normal life. A new conceptual understanding of flow in coaching and the coaching relationship is presented, differentiating it from individual flow. Relational flow is described and mapped for the first time.

The third coaching paper in this set, explains a practice framework for maintaining trusting relationships in organisational coaching. Amy Stabler and Joanne James, from Newcastle University in the UK, use a co-produced autoethnographical methodology to illustrate how coaches experience challenges to relational trust and issues of system trust over time. They show how reflexivity allows coaches to consider how the context affects their relationships and offer a practice model for organisational coaches to support cycles of reflexivity and reciprocity for maintaining trust.

In the fourth paper, Jake Weiss and colleagues from Chicago, USA, examine trait, motivational, and behaviourally based individual differences underlying employees' coachability. The authors argue that to expand our understanding of coachability and maximize its application within organisations, we require a greater understanding of its antecedents. Findings from their investigation demonstrate feedback orientation, expressed humility, and the instrumental feedback motive all significantly influence employees' coachability. Their work contributes to the growing body of coachability literature and provides a strong foundation for enhancing its identification and development in organisational settings.

A second group of four papers focuses on executive and leadership coaching. In the first of these, Robin Hindle Fisher and Bob Garvey, both working in the UK, and Lloyd Chapman from South Africa, examine executive coaches' backgrounds to see if they make a difference. The paper presents research exploring how coaches' prior career experiences affect their relationships with clients. Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, findings indicate that coaches' backgrounds can make a difference since coaches feel more confident and better able to question, probe and challenge and clients feel better understood and have greater confidence in their coaches.

The second executive and leadership coaching paper is an investigation into the effects of leader-member exchange on the transfer of coaching skills training for leaders. Rebecca Jones, Ying Zhou and Holly Andrews, researching in the UK, propose the theory of leader-member exchange (LMX) as a useful lens to understand the influence of social support on the transfer of leader training. Data was collected from followers before the leader attended a two-day leader coaching skills training course one month later ( $n = 95$ ). There was a significant and positive association between LMX as rated by the follower and two of the self-rated follower performance indicators.

The third paper is a randomised controlled trial concerned with maximising leadership coaching training outcomes. Rae Rafferty, Greg Fairbrother, and Andrew Cashin, working in health care research in Australia, explain that nurse leaders manage complex workplace demands. Coaching skills are a core leadership competency which can assist them in their roles. However, training alone may not always effect positive leadership change. This randomised trial sought to compare outcomes of leadership coaching training, with and without follow-up support, against waitlist control. Psychometric and professional achievement outcomes for 86 Australian nurse leaders were tracked for six months. Trial results provide empirical support for the hypothesis that leadership coaching training, paired with coaching follow-up, yields superior outcomes to a training only approach and versus control, in terms of leadership and communication-related outcomes.

Our final paper in this set is from Duminda Rajasinghe from Nottingham Business School, UK, and Bob Garvey from Sheffield Business School, UK. Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, the authors uncover how experiencing executive coaching helps coachees to feel they are independent learners and self-coaches.

Another set of four papers looks specifically at coaching interventions. The first of these is from Monia Kamel researching at the University of East London, UK and Christian van Nieuwerburgh of the Royal College of Surgeons, Dublin, Ireland. These authors explore how Muslims in the UK Experience Coaching using the Ershad Framework. This study also used interpretative phenomenological analysis and the findings highlighted the value of a culturally sensitive approach, grounded in the principles of effective coaching. The research supports the idea that culturally specific coaching approaches may be beneficial for certain groups of people.

The second intervention paper reports on a positive psychology intervention supporting health and wellness coach well-being during COVID-19. Elizabeth Ahmann and colleagues, researching in the USA, carried out a pre-post exploratory feasibility study examining a 6-week, self-guided positive psychology intervention. The majority of participants found the intervention helpful or very helpful. Regressions demonstrated improvements post-intervention in anxiety, depression, and life satisfaction for participants whose initial scores were not optimal. The intervention appears well-received, feasible, and supportive of coach well-being.

A third intervention paper is presented by Antoinette J Braks, who works in Australia. In this paper sub-titled 'The powerful shift from developmental to transformative coaching to realise later stages in Vertical Holistic Leadership Development,' the author explains how 12 participants undertook an average of eight 90-minute coaching sessions over one year. It was found that the majority shifted one stage and some shifted two stages in vertical leadership development. Following a thematic cross-case analysis of over 150 coaching hours, the study identified eight drivers, five active vertical ingredients and three principles of transformative executive coaching, creating an emergent model of Vertical Development.

The final paper in this group is from Katie J. Shillington and colleagues from the University of Western Ontario in Canada. The paper focuses on a motivational coaching intervention for promoting resilience during graduate school and beyond (PRO-GRAD). The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of a motivational coaching course on the resilience, mental health, quality of life, compassion, and social support of graduate students in Ontario, and also to explore students' overall experience of participating in the course and how it influenced their lives. Thirty-two students completed five previously validated scales at four time-points, as well as open-ended questions and end-of-term course reflections. Findings suggest the course had a statistically significant effect on anxiety and giving emotional support over time. Qualitative themes included increased self-reflection, skill development, and relationship building.

Our final two papers in this issue focus on coaching supervision. The first is by Jannik Zimmermann and colleagues from the Universität Kassel, Germany. Their study investigates the supervision of workplace coaches and factors that may influence its use. Drawing on the theory of planned

behaviour and focusing on German-speaking countries, the authors conducted an online survey to gather the experiences and perspectives of 121 coaching practitioners. Most coaches used supervision in different forms but less than what they thought ideal. Perceived time and cost involved, and prior experiences with supervision also appear to influence supervision use, while coaching association membership appeared to have no impact.

The second and final paper is by Jeremy Lewis, a coaching supervisor from Yorkshire in the UK, who explores the work of coaching supervisors. To understand what coaching supervisors actually do, Lewis conducted an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis of practitioners' lived experience using semi-structured interviews with three coach/supervisor dyads. Findings suggest supervisors and their supervisees are clear about the defining features and tasks of coaching supervision. However, Lewis proposes a coaching supervision process heuristic, which involves joint exploration as an antecedent to supervisors choosing interventions to support the supervision. Further research is suggested to develop the heuristic into a conceptual framework for coaching supervision interventions.

Also included in this issue is a book review by Yvette Elcock of Michelle Lucas's new 2023 text: *Creating the reflective habit: A practical guide for coaches, mentors and leaders*, published by Taylor Francis.