How coaching adds value in organisations
– The role of individual level outcomes

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Abstract

This paper explores the value of coaching in organisations. Assessing the impact of coaching through typical effectiveness measures may identify measurable outcomes, but risks missing the contribution of intangible and unplanned outcomes. Using grounded theory methodology, this qualitative study amalgamated perspectives on the value of coaching from 29 employees comprising coachees, line managers and organisational decision-makers across public and private sector organisations. The findings suggest that intangible personal outcomes of coaching could be playing a pivotal role in helping organisations achieve their people strategies, in particular leadership development and employee engagement.

Key words: coaching, intangible, value, engagement, leadership

Introduction

The use of coaching in organisations has expanded considerably in the last decade (Grant, Curtayne & Burton, 2009). Previously the preserve of senior executives and leaders, coaching is now offered at various levels. This positive development also incurs costs and, therefore, increases the importance of understanding the contribution of coaching. Accurately capturing this, however, has not been straightforward.

Approaches seeking to measure coaching effectiveness have encountered several challenges, for example accurately establishing causal linkages, controlling for confounding variables, and running randomised control trials (De Meuse, Dai & Lee, 2009; Grant, 2012; De Haan & Duckworth, 2013). Indeed, the very approach of *measuring* outcomes requires these to be quantifiable, yet coaching may also deliver intangible and, therefore, immeasurable outcomes (Fillery-Travis & Lane, 2006). Equally problematic is the likely exclusion of unintended benefits of coaching (Ibid). Evaluating only against achievement of the outcomes sought, often articulated as coaching goals, could restrict the capture of other beneficial outcomes, namely those beyond the specified goal.

As an independent Executive Coach I frequently experience organisational clients benefitting from intangible personal coaching outcomes, or outcomes not specified in the coaching goal. However, as head of coaching in a large organisation assessing the contribution of coaching to the business, I experienced the tension of marrying intangible personal outcomes with tangible business measures. With the majority of coaching effectiveness literature focused on measurement, there was little to guide approaches for capturing the value to the organisation of intangible personal coaching outcomes. This study, therefore, sought to address this gap.

A dictionary definition describes value as "the importance, worth or usefulness of something" (Oxford Dictionaries online, 2016). This can mean different things in different contexts, for example, in customer service as "the satisfaction an individual obtains from the service or activity" (Tzokas & Saren, 1997, p112), or in business management "what buyers are willing to pay for what a firm provides them" (Porter, 1985, p38). These different interpretations suggested that perceptions of value from coaching may also differ. Exploring coaching effectiveness from the perspective of value was consequently the approach adopted for this study, for its potential in capturing intangible and unintended benefits. Effective coaching was defined as coaching that added value, and the research question *How Does Coaching Add Value in Organisations?* was selected, for its scope in eliciting value at individual and organisational level.

The following section reviews some of the literature that informed the study. The research methodology is then described, and the findings presented and discussed in relation to existing research and literature. The paper concludes with implications of the findings for theory and practice, and suggestions for future research.

Literature

Fillery-Travis & Lane (2006) contend that intangible coaching outcomes are difficult to assess with business measures and make the case for identifying the purpose of the coaching before applying measures of effectiveness. Indeed, the rapid growth of coaching has spawned different genres, helpfully captured through a continuum categorising these as coaching for Skills, Performance, Development, and Transformation (Hawkins & Smith, 2014). Whilst all address an individual's development in some way, each has a different focus, which may influence how we should assess coaching effectiveness.

Skills and Performance Coaching

Some authors, such as Bluckert (2006) and Tschannen-Moran (2014), group Skills and Performance Coaching together as one genre, describing it as a form of assistance for enabling a person to meet performance standards defined by others (Bluckert, 2006; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Others, such as Zeus and Skiffington (2006) and Grant, Passmore, Cavanagh and Parker (2010) describe these separately, defining Skills Coaching for developing a specific skill set (Grant et al., 2010), versus Performance Coaching for improving *overall* performance *in the current role* over a particular timeframe (Zeus and Skiffington, 2006; Grant et al., 2010). Interestingly, some descriptions of performance coaching also include the development of an individual's skills and capabilities (Zeus & Skiffington, 2006; Tschannen-Moran, 2014), which may explain why Skills and Performance coaching are sometimes grouped together. What seems to distinguish these genres, however, is that Performance Coaching has a contextual focus on the current role (Zeus & Skiffington, 2006), whereas Skills Coaching does not, and can be applied as a component within different coaching contexts such as executive coaching (Kombarakaran, Yang, Baker & Fernandes, 2008).

Skills and Performance Coaching can contain subjective and objective measures of effectiveness directly related to performance, such as supervisor ratings and sales figures respectively, or measures related to behaviours for organisational effectiveness such as transformational leadership (Theeboom, Beersma & van Vianen, 2014). These examples suggest that Skills and Performance Coaching delivers tangible outcomes if they can be measured in this way.

Developmental Coaching

Where Performance Coaching focuses on the current role, Developmental Coaching has a broader and future orientation, addressing professional and career development, and the development of potential (Cox & Jackson, 2014; Hawkins & Smith, 2014). Whilst some Performance Coaching can also focus on developing potential, this is within the current role rather than for future roles (Stern, 2004). Developmental Coaching also focuses on personal development, coachee defined goals and longer term individual change (Cox & Jackson, 2014). Part of this involves developing greater understanding of the self, as well as of others and the wider system (Grant et al., 2010; Bachkirova, 2011). As such, this coaching genre has been closely associated with leadership and executive coaching (Grant et al., 2010).

Some aims and goals of Developmental Coaching may not deliver outcomes that are easily evaluated through certain effectiveness measures associated with Skills and Performance Coaching due to greater intangibility. For example, the intangible outcome of increased self-esteem (Leonard-Cross, 2010), may be an outcome of the aim of developing greater understanding of the self.

Transformational Coaching

Transformational coaching is described as an approach for enabling change in a coachee's mind-set or worldview by shifting beliefs, attitudes or assumptions to address recurring behaviours, emotional patterns and feelings, in order to enable a significant shift between levels of functioning (Hawkins & Smith, 2014). Jones, Woods & Guillaume (2016) categorise coaching outcomes relating to attitudes and motivation as "affective outcomes" (p254). A dictionary definition of this psychological term is "relating to moods, feelings and attitudes" (Oxford Dictionaries online), all of which are intangible, that is "of a value not precisely measurable" (Ibid). This suggests that Transformational Coaching is likely to deliver primarily intangible outcomes.

Hawkins & Smith (2014) contend that Transformational Coaching is applicable to Skills, Performance or Developmental Coaching implying a less contextual focus than Developmental Coaching. If so, this suggests that any genre of coaching along the continuum could deliver intangible as well as tangible outcomes. This raises the importance of enhancing our understanding of the role that intangible outcomes play in effective coaching, so that appropriate criteria that captur these outcomes can be selected when evaluating coaching effectiveness.

Methodology

To answer the question of how coaching adds value in organisations, two key research objectives were (i) to identify what coachees and stakeholders of coaching in organisations considered as value from coaching, and (ii) to discover how individual coaching delivered this value from the perspectives of these stakeholders and coachees. To guide the research, the following sub-questions were, therefore, also developed:

1. What do coachees perceive as value from their coaching programme?
2. What do organisational representatives consider as value for the organisation from individual coaching?
3. What are the attributes of individual coaching that deliver this value?

The study sought to explore multiple perspectives of value from coaching, from employees' subjective experiences and observations, which signalled a constructivist-interpretivist research paradigm, within the context of organisations (Ponterotto, 2005,

Creswell, 2013). Consistent with this paradigm, a qualitative and inductive strategy was selected. A key part of the study's aim was to seek an explanation of how coaching adds value in organisations, therefore, Grounded Theory methodology was chosen. The updated Corbin & Strauss (2015) approach was selected for the rigour of the Straussian approach, and its recent influences from constructivism (Corbin, 2016).

Participant profile

To amalgamate different organisational perspectives, the study involved 29 participants containing two groups of respondents - coachees (13) and organisational stakeholders (16), the latter formed of line managers (3), organisational commissioners/implementers of coaching (5), and senior leaders with decision-making influence over coaching in the organisation (8). Coachee respondents were mostly female middle managers and junior leaders with an equal spread across the public and private sectors, whereas organisational stakeholders were mostly senior managers and leaders, and a broadly equal mix of male and female, with two thirds from the private sector. Geographically, participants were based in the UK and in Germany.

Sampling

A key feature of Grounded Theory is theoretical sampling, which involves data collection being led by the emerging theory (Bryman, 2012). This assisted the study in the following way. Data analysis commenced after the first interview (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). As concepts arose, these generated questions regarding emerging theoretical inferences. Further data was, therefore, collected from sources deemed most likely to answer these questions (Ibid).

My professional network proved most effective for accessing participants, followed by snowballing (Bryman, 2012). Personalised invitations contained information regarding the study, participation and a consent form covering confidentiality, anonymity, post interview transcripts and intended use of the data, to enable informed consent.

Data collection

Data collection was through interviews due to their facility for collecting detailed information, and participants were offered the choice of face to face, telephone or video link. Most interviews were face to face held in the field at the respondent's place of work in confidential surroundings, and audio recorded with respondents' informed consent. Due to interview scheduling practicalities, data collection and analysis were carried out in batches of interviews rather than after each interview.

Interview Questions

To balance the need to gain specific information to support theoretical sampling (Corbin & Strauss, 2015), yet facilitate a natural participant-led account, core question areas were identified. For coachees, these were:
> (1) What was useful from your coaching programme?
> (2) What did you and your coach do that you found helpful?
> (3) What indicated for you that the coaching was having a benefit?

For organisational stakeholders, question areas covered were:
> (1) When would you select/endorse coaching over another intervention?
> (2) How you gauged if the coaching you had commissioned/endorsed was delivering value?
> (3) What leads you to continue endorsing the use of coaching in your team/ organisation?

Interview Format

Following outcomes of a pilot with one stakeholder and one coachee, a semi-structured approach to interviews was selected. To facilitate participant control within the interview, the order and phrasing of the questions was unstructured (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Questions were guided instead by the natural flow, and interspersed with tailored supplementary questions to naturally surface perceptions of value.

Methods of analysis

Data analysis was manual using Strauss and Corbin's (2015) Grounded Theory tools. Each interview was transcribed, interpreted and condensed into codes, which were constantly compared with each other to develop tentative concepts. As concepts emerged, these were also compared with each other and with the original interviews, and theoretical sampling was used to verify or revise interpretations. Themes began emerging from this process, and concepts relating to each emerging theme were grouped together into properties.

To manage researcher bias two approaches were applied. Firstly *in vivo* codes were drawn from participants' words. "In vivo codes help us to preserve participants' meanings of their views and actions in the coding itself" (Charmaz, 2014, p134). Secondly, to maintain integrity of the full interview, a table per transcript was created to enable recording of higher and lower level concepts alongside raw interview data.

Analysis then moved to increasing conceptualisation, aided by (a) memos developing conceptual ideas (Creswell, 2013), and (b) axial coding, explained as "making links between the ideas being conceptualised from the data" (Mills, Bonner & Francis, 2006, p5). This process, illustrated in Figure 1, led to the construction of three categories of findings, each containing two sub-categories and underpinning properties (Figures 2, 3 &4).
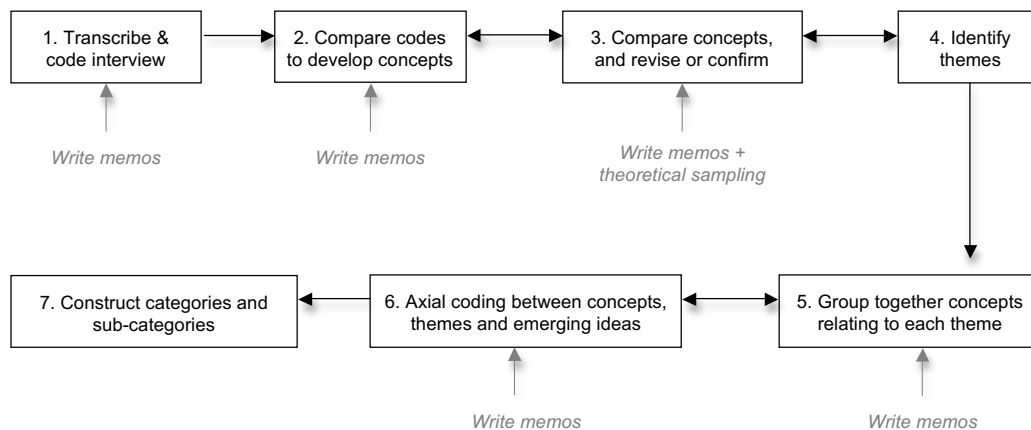

Figure 1. Analytical Process

In developing the categories, interpretation of the data will inevitably have included some subjectivity. Therefore, to minimise researcher bias certain analytical interpretations were checked with participants during interviews or afterwards, and audio recordings revisited to check analytical interpretations against participants' intonation.

Findings and Discussion

Introduction

The analysis identified three categories of perspectives on value from coaching - (1) Opening Hearts and Minds, (2) Equipping with Internal Resources, and (3) Advancing People Strategies, which are presented in this section. Each category presentation commences with a diagram (Figures 2,3 & 4) illustrating outcomes of the analytical process for developing the category. The figures contain the category's properties, the related sub-categories are situated below and the themes of the category in the centre. The findings are described under sub-category headings, illustrated by anonymised quotes from respondents, and discussed in relation to existing research and literature.

Category 1 - Opening hearts and minds

Figure 2 illustrates the process of developing the first category of findings. These are then described and situated within the existing literature.
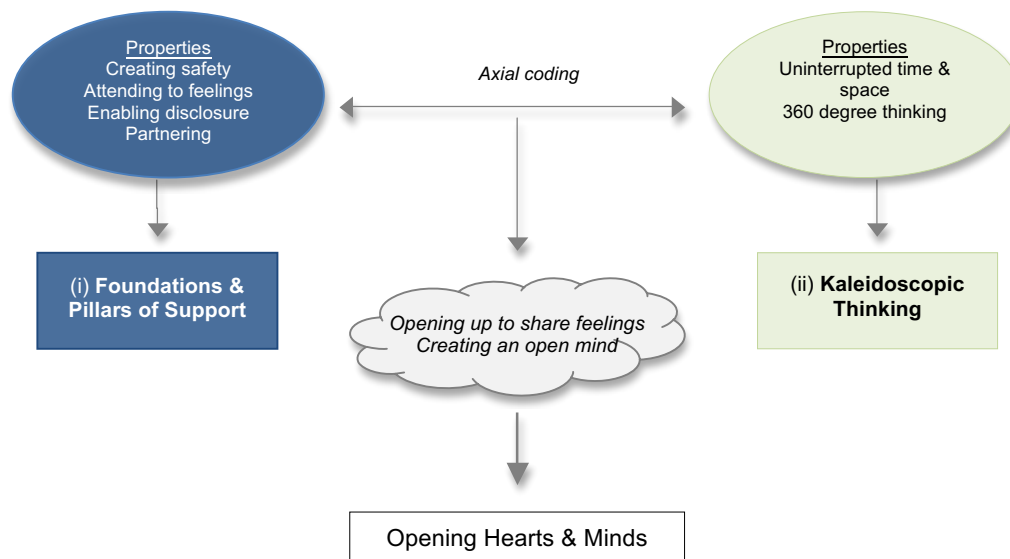

Figure 2. Process of developing category 1: Opening hearts and minds

(i) Sub-category 1: Foundations and pillars of support

Creating safety, attending to feelings, and enabling disclosure. Confidentiality and non-judgemental listening were considered important by coachees and stakeholders in creating safety for the coachee to open up, share their feelings, and disclose their concerns. Trust was also a key component suggesting that the relationship between coach and coachee played a role in effective coaching. Rekalde, Landeta & Albizu (2015) similarly identified trust and confidentiality as significant influencing factors of coaching effectiveness.

Partnering. Also valued by coachees and stakeholders was the support and motivation from the coach as a partner; *"I felt like they were my cheerleader too...like they were celebrating and sharing in my success."* This echoes the finding by Sonesh, Coultas, Marlow, Lacerenza, Reyes and Salas (2015), that working alliance had an influence on coaching effectiveness. It also supports De Haan, Culpin and Curd's (2011) finding that coaching effectiveness was closely linked to common factors such as the relationship.

(ii) Sub-category 2: Kaleidoscopic thinking

Uninterrupted time and space. Approximately half the participants, coachees and stakeholders, cited the busy nature of work as an obstacle to finding time to think to develop ideas or resolve issues. The literature also recognises the need for time and space for thinking in organisational life (Kline, 1999; Paul & Elder, 2006). The external impetus of a pre-arranged coaching session was, therefore, valued for creating this:

> *You just press pause… you never think that you can do it because there's always something going on… The coaching does force you because you have got that appointment in the calendar.*

Reflection. The opportunity to take a step back allowed a mental movement away from the issue for reflection. This proved particularly beneficial for junior leader coachees in situations of role transfer; *"I was stepping up into another level….it was that uninterrupted space for working out how to deal with what you're struggling with, reflection."*

According to Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle, reflection forms one of four elements of effective learning from experiences. Learning from experiences has been linked to leadership potential (Spreitzer, McCall & Mahoney,1997) and incorporated into models of leadership development (McCall & McCauley, 2014). For example, McCall's (Ibid) leadership framework advocates that 70% of learning should come from on-the-job experiential activity, 20% from learning from these experiences, assisted by coaching and mentoring, and 10% from structured learning events such as classroom training. This finding supports the suggestion that coaching assists learning from on-the-job experiences for leadership development.

360 degree thinking. The thinking encouraged through coaching compelled virtually all coachees to view their issue from different angles, captured evocatively as *"making me walk around the lake."* This panoramic thinking proved particularly valuable for those involved in multi-layered situations with several inter-connected aspects, such as implementing an organisational restructure.

Opening one's mind to think differently generated new perspectives and new landscapes of vision, stimulating further enhanced thinking, which enabled key behavioural shifts; *"...it probably got me to think with a different mindset, a bit more outward looking than inward looking."* This outcome reflects the aims of Transformational Coaching (Hawkins & Smith, 2014) and hints at an internal process at play, transforming an intangible individual level coaching outcome (eg: different mindset) into an observable leadership behaviour (eg: more outward looking).

Category 2 - Equipping with internal resources

Figure 3 illustrates the process of developing the second category of findings. These are then described and situated within the existing literature.
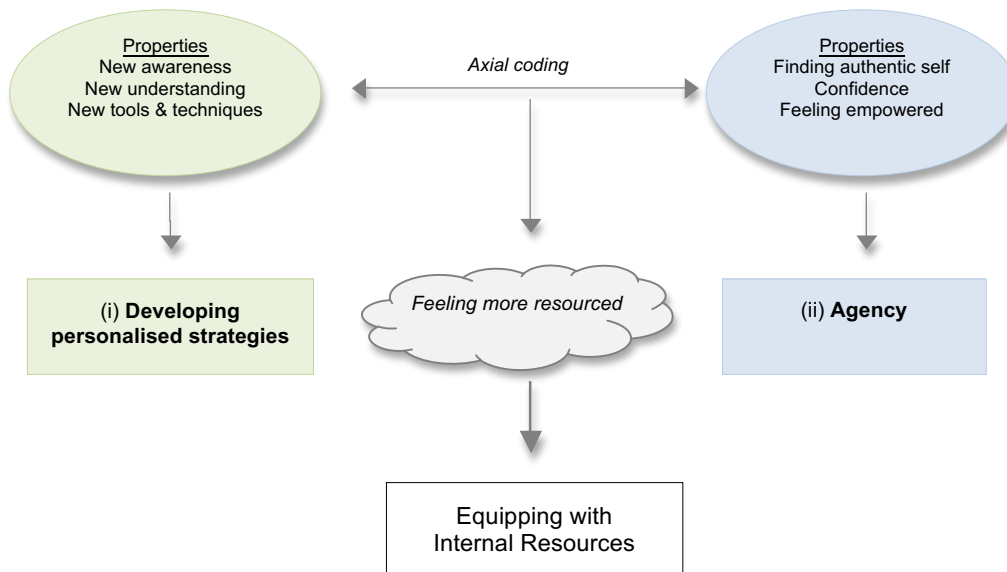
Figure 3. Process of developing category 2: Equipping with internal resources

(i) Sub-category 1: Developing personalised strategies

New awareness & understanding. An outcome considered significant by virtually all respondents was the new awareness and understanding gained from the thinking strategies used during coaching, in particular increased self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses. The knowledge this built created a sense of becoming internally resourced, likened by one coachee to *"play[ing] with a new deck or a fuller deck than you played with before."* Many coachees typically used this outcome to shape the development of personal strategies. For those leading others through change, awareness and understanding came from making sense of feelings and experiences:

> *It enables me to piece things together, piece experiences I've had and feelings I've had, and things I've done…it's given me a space in which to reflect on those things and make sense out of them.*

Du Toit's (2007) exploration of coaching and sense-making identifies similar value from coaching during change. Coaching is described as a catalyst for making sense of a changing organisational environment enabled through the time and space for reflection, which supports this finding.

These findings build on those in Category 1. The supportive thinking space facilitated reflection, enabling participants to make sense of their experiences and associated feelings. This is underpinned by Cox's (2013) Experiential Coaching Cycle, which expands on the principles of Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle, by focusing on the processes that enable transition between states within that cycle. For example, the *Touching Experience* within Cox's Experiential Coaching Cycle (Cox, 2013) is described as "an articulate attempt to grasp feelings or intuitions …" (p7).

New tools and techniques

Applying business models was valued by some coachees and stakeholders, as well as the use of less formal activities; *"I had a journal where I would write things down"*. Outcomes of using these tools were mostly evident at the subjective internal level of the coachee, yet

pivotal in facilitating behavioural change; *"With the breathing technique, it literally changes. The same sentence that I was going to say I actually stop and change it."*

(ii) Sub-category 2: Agency

Developing confidence. The value of increased confidence was frequently mentioned by organisational stakeholders and coachees alike. For some this related to feeling competent and in control of the situation. For others, coaching provided a decision-making framework and confirmation of ideas, plans or instincts; "S*ometimes it's just nice to underpin your gut feeling with a structured approach…there was a process behind it."*

Confidence also included self-belief; *"I knew that I had the knowledge and the skills and the experience and it was just the lack of confidence that was stopping me."* Several studies have also identified confidence as an outcome of coaching, such as Berg & Karlsen (2007), Kombarakaran et al, (2008) and Grant et al, (2009), which substantiates this finding.

Finding authentic self & empowerment. Confidence was also discussed by some coachees in terms of self-concept. The process of discovering how to be one's authentic self in the role led to greater self-confidence. Being one's authentic self was subsequently adopted as a personal strategy and enabled new junior leaders to perform more fully in their role; *"It gave me more confidence in my abilities to be myself more….I found it quite empowering for my decision making as well."* Lee & Roberts (2010) link authenticity to enhanced leadership, highlighting "reflective stance" (p19) as its core tenet, and make the case for coaching as a key tool for developing this. Yet there appears to be limited published research identifying authenticity as a coaching outcome. Susing, Green & Grant (2011) also note this gap and make the case for developing "a validated measure of authenticity" (p17). Worth (2012) also addresses the gap, finding a link between coaching and authenticity in her research with women in academia. This study's finding, therefore, offers valuable support for an emerging link between coaching, operating authentically, and enhanced leadership.

The findings in this category revealed the building of internal resources within most coachees, drawn upon in different combinations to create personally tailored strategies. These created an emotional and mental readiness, leading to a sense of agency: *"…helping me make sense of the present and equipping me to move on into the future with self-confidence and optimism."*

Category 3 – Advancing people strategies

Figure 4 illustrates the process of developing the third category of findings. These are then described and situated within the existing literature.
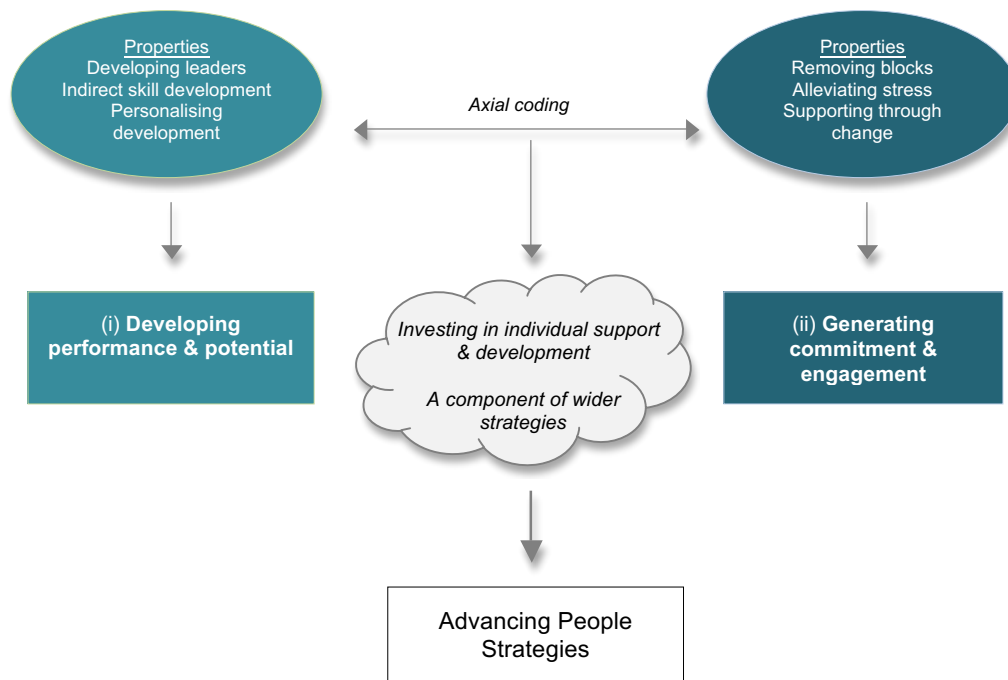
Figure 4. Process of developing category 3 : Advancing people strategies

(i) Developing performance and potential
Developing leaders. Several stakeholders felt coaching added value by developing self-confidence, self awareness and aspects of one's personality. These individual level intangible coaching outcomes were perceived to manifest as improved people development skills in coachees. For example, greater self-awareness stirred some junior leaders to recognise their own behaviours in others, prompting them to offer support. For senior leaders, coaching offered continued growth through developing executive presence and influencing and negotiating skills. For junior leaders new into role, personalising standardised development by incorporating coaching into training programmes was perceived to accelerate the learning curve, and benefit the organisation by reducing the likelihood of derailers common during role transition.

Equally valued by most respondents were the knowledge and understanding that coachees in leadership roles gained regarding their work-style and approach to interacting with others, perceived by stakeholders to have strategic benefits:

… curiosity about how you work… how you get things done….ultimately leading to better decision-making, better performance… and more traction in getting change executed.

This is a further example of the possible existence of a process that converts an intangible outcome (eg: knowledge, understanding) into an observable skill or behaviour (eg: decision-making, better performance). This is also perceptible in Susing's (2016) assertion that leadership coaching involves "the process of changing one's beliefs and assumptions to enable more optimal decision making and behaviour" (p16), which lends support to the proposition from this finding.

Indirect skill development. Another outcome valued by some coachees and stakeholders related to skills developed indirectly from participating in coaching such as people development; *"…the ability to coach others, the ability to replicate the skills that we used";*

and problem solving; *"when that nature of problem manifests itself again, the individual can solve it on [their] own."* This supports Fillery-Travis & Lane's (2006) contention that coaching can deliver unintended benefits, and strengthens the case for their inclusion in assessments of the contribution of coaching in organisations.

Personalising development. Several stakeholders valued the customised approach of coaching for bringing out the best in individuals, and perceived this to contribute to improved organisational performance:

> *"I'm better with my interactions and my emotions, keeping a lid on it so meetings are more constructive."*
> *"More competent and capable managers at every level with motivated teams are more likely to deliver and improve performance."*

Personalising development was found to support a culture of valuing staff, and generating motivation, commitment and engagement. Research by MacLeod & Clarke (2009) also identified treating employees as individuals as a key tenet of employee engagement. The section below discusses engagement further.

(ii) Generating commitment and engagement

Removing blocks. Stakeholders frequently valued coaching for assisting individuals with removing internal blocks, typically lack of self-belief or confidence, fear and self-doubt; and external blocks, mostly interpersonal difficulties or misalignment with organisational culture. Challenging coachees' thinking to see their block from different perspectives enabled individuals to regain motivation and commitment; *"When you can get people to come up with solutions themselves, they are more likely to become engaged, and an engaged workforce means a more productive workforce."*

Alleviating stress & supporting through change. Approximately half the participants across both groups of respondents described well-being related outcomes from coaching, such as regaining the ability to cope, regenerating energy levels, feeling less stressed and returning to emotional well-being. This appeared to lead to increased productivity; *"...a bit more in control, understanding myself, less down, less alone, more able to go back and do more work."* For other respondents, coachees felt unburdened, fulfilled and happier, and for those involved in change, coaching was experienced as a valued source of personalised support for maintaining well-being. Robertson & Cooper (2010) make the case for well-being, rather than commitment alone, for sustaining employee engagement. These findings support this contention and offer reasonable evidence for the role of coaching in generating employee engagement.

Senior stakeholders typically considered coaching a worthwhile investment as a component of strategic initiatives such as leadership development, organisational change, well-being and engagement; *"...it's one piece in the armoury..."*. Overall the findings in this category captured links between individual level coaching outcomes described in categories 1 & 2, and their corresponding value at organisational level.

'Internal Enablers' model

A model was developed from the findings to help respond to the research question: *How does coaching add value in organisations?* Each category built on findings in the previous category to reveal an emerging process of how coaching added value in the organisations

studied. The 'Internal Enablers' model in Figure 5 conceptualises the main findings to visually represent this process.

Constructing the' Internal Enablers' model

Reasons for entering coaching were identified from the categories and collated in the top grey box, labelled *Paths into Coaching,* to denote the start of the process. Findings from the sub-category 'Foundations and pillars of support' in Category 1 are positioned in the outer dark blue circle representing the foundational and on-going supportive conditions that framed the coaching. The white inner circle represents the coaching space where 'Kaleidoscopic Thinking', the second sub-category in Category 1, is positioned centrally, signifying it as the core coaching activity that emerged from the data. The central arrows point to initial outcomes of coachees' kaleidoscopic thinking processes, drawn from the sub-category 'Developing Personal Strategies' in Category 2. The circular arrows around the edge of the white inner circle indicate that awareness & understanding, new perspectives, and tools and techniques contributed to the development of personal strategies.

These initial outcomes are transposed into the left-hand light blue box at the base of the circle to explain their position within the process, and are thus labelled as Individual Level Interim Outcomes. The main findings from the second sub-category 'Agency' in Category 2, are presented in the right hand box and similarly labelled. The connecting line between the two boxes indicates an iterative process of outcomes in both boxes building upon each other. The role of both sets of individual level outcomes is highlighted via the label of Internal Enablers.

The rectangle underneath contains findings mostly from Category 3 of the visible behaviour changes observed from coaching, enabled by the development and application of the Internal Enablers. The oval box that completes the diagram represents the main organisational people strategies, also from Category 3, that the visible behaviour changes were perceived to contribute to.

Mobilising internal enablers through personalising support and development

The 'Internal Enablers' model offers the following answer to the research question. The coach's attributes of non-judgement and confidentiality, plus the personalised approach to employee development and well-being, created trust and safety, enabling coachees to express inner thoughts and feelings. This enabled coachees to open their minds to thinking differently to generate new perspectives and new knowledge. These insights, from the time and space for reflection and quality thinking, delivered interim individual level outcomes that contributed to the development of personal strategies. Application of personal strategies led to increased confidence and agency, which created further insights and enhancements to personal strategies. Mobilisation and application of these individual level interim outcomes played a pivotal role in generating a subsequent level of observable change in performance or behaviours. For example, increased confidence led to better decision-making and a stronger leadership stance; a sense of agency led to increased motivation, solution generation and engagement with the task; being one's authentic self led to performing fully in the role. These observable changes from coaching contributed to achievement of organisational people strategies, particularly leadership development and employee engagement.
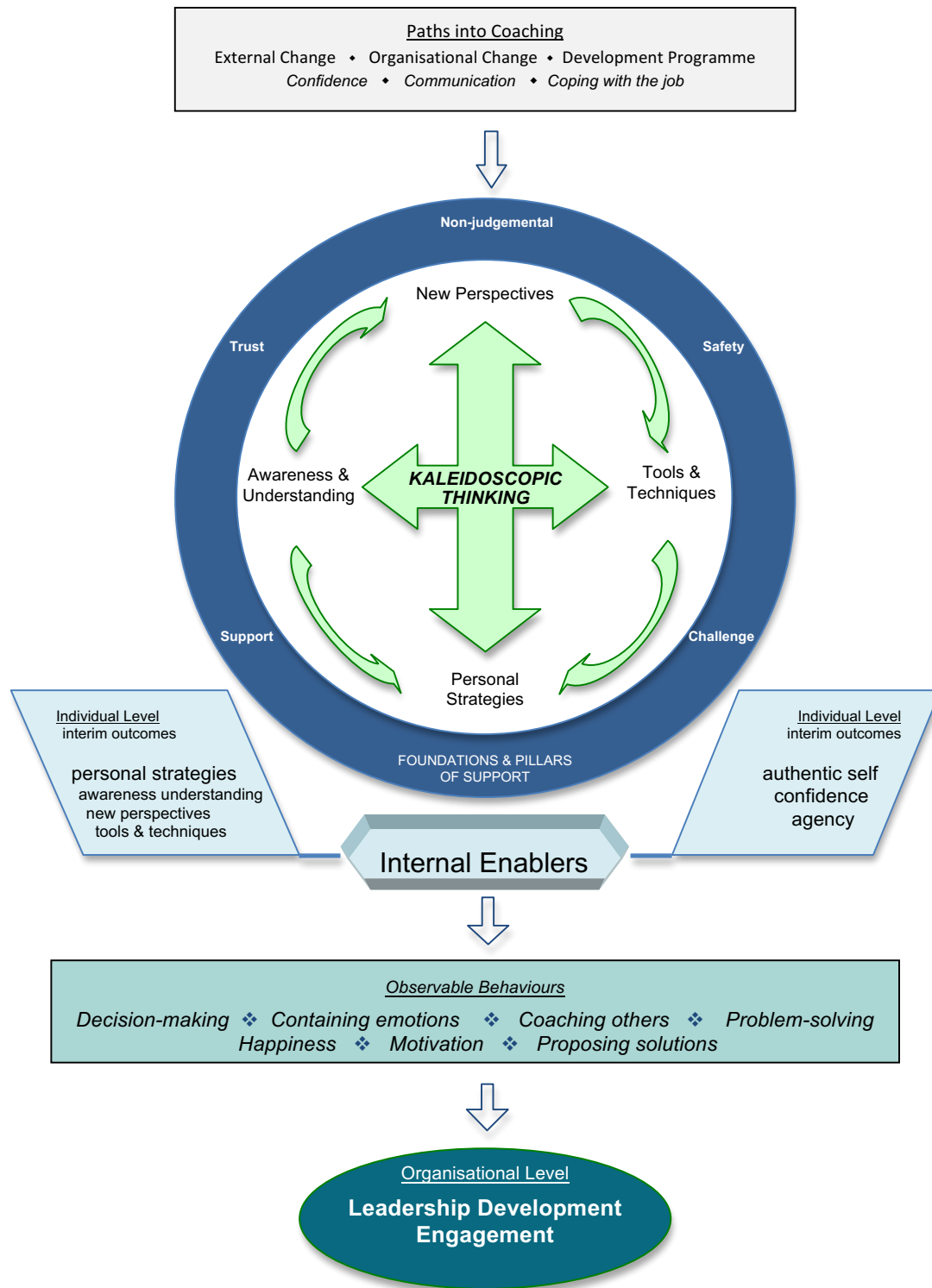
Figure 5. 'Internal Enablers' model

Conclusion

The study reported in this paper sought to develop a proposition of how coaching adds value in organisations, and increase our understanding of the role of individual level intangible outcomes within this process. To achieve this, grounded theory methodology was used to amalgamate the perspectives of coachees and organisational stakeholders regarding perceptions of value from coaching. The findings were structured into three categories of value; (1) Opening Hearts and Minds, (2) Equipping with Internal Resources, and (3) Advancing People Strategies. These were further conceptualised into the 'Internal Enablers' model depicting an emerging process of how coaching added value in organisations, and the role of intangible individual level outcomes within this process.

The study found that coaching added value by contributing to achievement of organisational people strategies, in particular leadership development and employee engagement. This process was mediated by the development and mobilisation of internal enablers, so named for the role played by intangible coaching outcomes at the individual level of the coachee. The existence and application of these outcomes were found to play a pivotal role in creating changed behaviours and actions visible to others, that were perceived to indicate leadership development and employee engagement. The one to one nature of coaching personalised support and development, which fostered feelings of being valued. The role of individual level intangible coaching outcomes was, therefore, found to be in mobilising internal enablers through the personalisation of support and development.

Implications for theory
The findings offer some insight into how individual coaching adds value at organisational level. The significance of the Internal Enablers model is in its illumination of the potential role of intangible personal coaching outcomes within this process, and the potential contribution of this to the field of evaluating coaching effectiveness. For example, the model proposes that coaching may deliver different types of outcomes at different stages of the coaching journey, that is, intangible personal outcomes at earlier stages, which facilitate more tangible outcomes later. This mediating role of intangible personal outcomes indicates that there is equal value from intangible as well as tangible coaching outcomes. This suggests that evaluation of coaching effectiveness would benefit from equal emphasis on collecting intangible and unintended outcome data as well as tangible outcomes, and that more than one criterion of coaching effectiveness may, therefore, be required for capturing the full contribution of coaching in organisations.

Implications for practice
The combined impact of the findings suggest that coaching is filling a gap within the workplace by providing a unique space, not available through other interactions or interventions. Through creating a safe environment where individuals can address issues such as personal attributes, cognitions and emotions, the findings have shown that the coaching space can contribute to enhanced well-being and improved performance, at organisational as well as individual level.

Limitations and future research
Practical issues regarding access to participants resulted in a disproportionate number of participants from a single organisation. Organisational culture, not addressed in this study, may consequently have influenced some of the findings, such as the reasons why coaching was accessed. Further similar research in this area would benefit from including exploration of the impact of organisational culture on how coaching adds value in organisations.

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