

The Coach in Asian Society: Impact of social hierarchy on the coaching relationship

Lina Nangalia, Global Coach Trust, Kalyanagar, Bangalore, India
Ajay Nangalia, Global Coach Trust, Kalyanagar, Bangalore, India
Email: ajaynangalia@globalcoachtrust.com

Abstract

This exploratory case study explores how executive coaches across Asia adapt coaching, from the conventional (essentially Western) understanding, to make it culturally congruent for their clients. It presents how coaching is personalized to an Eastern ethos; thus, constructively challenging coaching concepts and practices that are believed to be universally applicable. The findings bring out how the deeply embedded concept of social hierarchy influences the role and status of the coach in Asian culture. Whether the social hierarchy draws its strength from Confucianism or the Hindu tradition, it shapes the expectations that clients have from the coach and coaching. International coaches working with Asian clients will appreciate that they need to flex their coaching style to suit the social context of their clients. A proposed framework can be used by international coaches working with Asian clients to understand what is required for cultural adaptation.

Key Words: Cross-cultural coaching, Asian culture, Social Hierarchy, Confucianism, Indian culture

Introduction

In the early part of the 20th century, it was assumed that leadership theories and practices that had been developed in the West were universally applicable (Northouse, 2004). It was only in the beginning of the 1980s that researchers, led by Hofstede's seminal work, questioned this assumption and exposed the truth - management ideas and practices were not universally applicable because national culture played a significant part in the way people thought and behaved (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). From that time, significant research in cross-cultural leadership has established the need for adapting leadership practices to local contexts, if they are to have any significant success (Bird, 2006; Claude, 2007; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004; Zhu, Bhat, & Nel, 2005). One reason for this can be found in the work of Nisbett (2003) which demonstrates clearly how people from Eastern and Western cultures thought differently, and had different values and beliefs because of the differences in the societies they had lived in across centuries. The quest for understanding culture and its impact in the workplace continues, as Hill (2008) recently asserted:

As we look at leadership potential in emerging economies, we risk assuming that leadership models developed in the United States or Western Europe will work elsewhere. Leadership is about making strong emotional connections to motivate and inspire people, and our effectiveness at doing this has strong cultural overtones” (2008, p. 108).

Coaching is an emerging leadership development intervention globally (Bresser, 2009; ICF, 2009). According to the International Coach Federation (ICF, 2009), coaching is defined as partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential. This definition is the foundation for the coaching relationships and processes followed by the majority of writers and coach training schools (Passmore, 2007; Skiffington & Zeus, 2003; Sparrow, 2008; Stober & Grant, 2006, Whitworth, Kimsey-House, & Sandahl, 1998; Wilson, 2008).

One of the limitations of this conventional understanding of coaching, as expounded by leading writers and coach training schools, is that they are written from a Western cultural ethos. Integral to this conventional understanding are tenets such as (i) coaching is a relationship of equals; (ii) the coach must not give advice or tell the client what to do; (iii) a coaching conversation can focus on the client’s agenda without the necessity for a deep coach-client relationship being established first; (iv) a client is an independent agent responsible for his or her own destiny and actions. However, aligned with literature on cross-cultural leadership, contemporary research also highlights the need for cultural sensitivity in the field of coaching (Abbott & Rosinski, 2007, David, Christopher, & Matthew, 2007; Noer, Leupold, & Valle, 2007, St Claire-Ostwald, 2007). In addition, since evidence based coaching practice seeks to integrate best current knowledge and practitioner expertise (Stober & Grant, 2006), it is essential to explore how practice is adapted to cultural contexts.

Any discussion of culture and cultural differences is always a simplification, the objective of which is to help the understanding of the complexity of reality. Furthermore, there is the risk of sophisticated stereotyping in which the complexity of culture is explained in bipolar dimensions (Osland, Bird, Delano, & Jacob, 2000). In any culture, there will be multiple sub-cultures and exceptions; we acknowledge that even using the terms Western and Eastern culture to club together the culture of countries that are geographically in these hemispheres is inaccurate, just as it is to assume that all countries in Asia have the same culture. However, for the purpose of simplicity of discussion the terms are used with this caveat in mind. In addition, the focus in this paper is essentially on the executive coaching work done by Asian coaches working in the Asia Pacific region.

Significance and Benefits of this Study

Using a qualitative research methodology, this small-scale exploratory study using semi-structured interviews in an interpretive approach, explores how executive coaches across Asia adapt coaching - from the conventional (essentially Western)

understanding discussed above - to make it culturally congruent for their clients. It presents how coaching is personalized to an Eastern ethos; thus, constructively challenging concepts and practices that are believed to be universally applicable. International coaches working with Asian clients will appreciate that they need to flex their coaching style, and if need be, their understanding of what coaching is, to suit the social context of their clients. A proposed framework can be used by international coaches working with Asians to understand what is required for cultural adaptation.

Literature Review

As discussed in the Introduction, culture influences many aspects of leadership, management practice, and even coaching. This should not be surprising because culture influences the way we communicate; and communication is not just an exchange of information but it is a social process soaked in cultural nuances of inclusion, exclusion, social hierarchy, and gender dynamics (Gefen, Geri, & Paravastu, 2007). Workplaces across the world, and especially in Asia, are seeing the rise of multinationalism as international and local staff are recruited in both headquarters and foreign subsidiary operations (Choy, Lee, & Ramburuth, 2009). A multinational workforce encompasses diverse cultural backgrounds that influence supervisor-subordinate relationships, communication processes, team dynamics, interpersonal relationships and so on (Nangalia, 2009). These cultural differences can lead to difficulties in workplace relationships because they determine how individuals think and behave with respect to others (Ng, Lee, & Soutar, 2007). Therefore, it is not hard to appreciate that culture influences the practice of coaching as well (St Claire-Ostwald, 2007).

A conventional understanding of coaching holds that the client is the expert in her or his life and is resourceful enough to find the answers to the challenges they may be going through (Whitworth, Kimsey-House, & Sandahl, 1998). Furthermore, the coach is expected to create self-awareness through asking thought provoking questions, and refrain from giving advice or telling the client what she or he must do. In effect, the coach must not provide the answers but encourage the client to generate their own solution and strategies (Whitworth *et al.*). The issue that has not been fully explored is that this perspective and practice is completely developed on a Western cultural ethos where the individual is the center of attention and is in control of her or his life. These principles are alien to an Asian cultural ethos (Nisbett, 2003).

For example, governing values that are part of Indian culture and tradition include deference towards those in positions of power and authority; preference for personalized relationships; special loyalty and obligations towards those in the in-group; and respect and deference for hierarchy (Kumar & Sankaran, 2007). However, within Asia, there are many similarities between cultures. Indian and Japanese cultures both have strong dependence on hierarchical relationships in which the senior and junior member are bound by a dependency similar to that of a parent-child; relationships are personalized; a good leader is like a good father who accepts responsibility for the well being of employees, and in turn, these leaders expect

obedience and personal loyalty. Another aspect of Indian culture grounded in ancient scriptures, is the strong *guru-shishya* (teacher-student) tradition in which knowledge and wisdom is passed on from the teacher to the student in a bond which is almost life-long (Kumar & Sankaran).

There are similarities between Chinese and Indian cultures too. Both have a strong social hierarchy that governs relationships, role, and status in society. The social hierarchy in Indian culture has its genesis in the ancient caste system, which over centuries received religious sanction; in contrast, the social hierarchy in Chinese culture has its roots in Confucianism (Bhasin, 2007). Values such as collectivism, respect for age, importance of trust, hospitality towards guests, and the importance of personal relationships flowing down from the hierarchy are common to both cultures (Bhasin). To understand the cultural ethos of much of South East Asia, it is essential to understand Confucianism.

China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and many other countries across South East Asia are strongly influenced by Confucianism. This philosophy is deeply rooted in their cultural ethos and governs all aspects of life, especially family and business relationships. Some of the governing principles include the importance of collective values and interests over individual values and interests; focus on maintaining harmony in social relationships; the role of the social hierarchy in defining one's identity; and the role of obligations towards others that one has to fulfill (Po Keung Ip, 2009). The 'five cardinal relationships' in Confucianism (emperor-officials, father-son, older brother-younger brother, husband-wife, and between friends) are both hierarchical and familial in nature, with trust being confined to those within the closest family circle. Within this hierarchal structure of relationships, those on the top of the hierarchy possess more worth than those at the bottom. Confucian social relationships demand that a superior is obliged to lead, advise, and guide whereas the subordinate is obliged to obey and be loyal. Members of a family are obliged to subordinate their goals and interests to those of the family; that is, there are no individual interests separate from the family interests. Both need to be aligned to maintain harmony (Po Keung Ip).

Given the fact that most Asian civilizations (especially Chinese and Indian) have traditions ranging back to a few thousand years, it is difficult to accept that management practices, including the conventional understanding of coaching, could be applied in an Asian ethos without adaptation. The brief literature review on Asian values has helped set the context for the research questions and later, for the findings from this study.

Research Questions

The preceding discussion establishes that the Asian ethos is significantly different from the Western one. Therefore, the tenets of the conventional understanding of coaching (discussed above) need to be explored for their relevance

and applicability in an Asian context. Hence, the following research questions were framed:

- (i) How does the social hierarchy prevalent in Asian culture influence the role and status of the coach?
- (ii) What are client expectations from the coach and from the process of coaching?
- (iii) How do Asian coaches adapt coaching to suit their client expectations?

Before presenting the findings that answer these questions, the methodology that was adopted for this study is discussed.

Methodology

A qualitative approach was deemed best to answer the research questions set for this study. Within the qualitative tradition, the case study approach enabled a deep exploration of the experience of those who understood the complexities of the topic under study (Stake, 2005). The goal was to get an insider's depiction of how executive coaches in Asia used and adapted the principles espoused by the conventional understanding of coaching (Charmaz, 2006). Each coach interviewed was considered as a case and it is claimed that studying several cases, and creating a collective case study, led to a better understanding of the phenomenon and could lead to the development of a framework or even a theory. According to Stake, it is necessary to use disciplined analysis, and some form of triangulation to separate experiential knowledge from what could be the coaches' opinions. Since the objective was to access coaches across Asia who had experience in coaching, an intensity sampling strategy and a snowball sampling system were used (Creswell, 2005).

We interviewed coaches, who were based in different Asian countries such as Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, and India. Based in these locations, these coaches worked with clients from Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, Japan, USA, and Australia. As part of the invitation to participate in this study, permission was sought to record the interviews, respondents were assured of confidentiality, and ethical guidelines adhered to (APA Ethics Code, 2002). According to Perakyla (2005), by using interviews, researchers could reach areas in people's experiences of reality that would otherwise remain inaccessible. Intensive interviewing allowed us an in-depth exploration of the practice of coaching (Charmaz, 2006). Semi-structured interviews were used to obtain a rich, in-depth account of the respondent's experience because they did not impose any a priori categorization that could limit the inquiry (Fontana & Frey, 2005). The recorded conversations were transcribed and analyzed using an iterative coding process. As the framework emerged, it started reflecting an insider's view of coaching practice (Charmaz). The findings were triangulated by checking with literature, and interviewing respondents from various countries to confirm if the findings were consistent with experiences across Asian cultures (Atkinson & Delamont, 2005). We trust that our findings will provide the opportunity for readers to share their cultural

experiences vicariously, thereby collectively extending their insights of working with different cultures (Stake, 2005).

Limitations of the study. We interviewed ten coaches across Asia – this small sample size is one limitation of the study, hence it is still exploratory in nature. Other limitations included difficulties in communication; even though English was the common language, it was difficult to understand certain accents over the telephone line. Some respondents found it difficult to understand the questions, and we had to reframe them a couple of times until the correct meaning was conveyed. Due to time constraints, we were not able to spend enough time building rapport, and to conduct follow up interviews; our findings show that the quality of information would have been better as the relationship with the respondent developed. Triangulation using data sources such as documents or observation would enhance the quality of the findings and discussion.

Findings and Discussion

As stated in the introduction, the conventional understanding of coaching is based on the following tenets: it is a partnership between equals; the coach must not advise or tell the client what to do; the coach uses a process of creating awareness and self-reflection using powerful questions; and, the client has all the answers within. In addition, other commonly accepted practice beliefs include that a coach's background in terms of work experience and qualifications, gender, and the age of the coach are not as important as the coaching process. In line with the understanding of Asian ethos discussed in the literature review, the findings of our study bring out that the conventional tenets of coaching do not hold true in the Asian context; some of the key differences prevalent in Asia are presented below under thematic headings. All names used are pseudonyms.

Theme 1: The Status of the Coach

The coach in Asia is not seen as an equal. He or she is seen as a respected elder or teacher. This status is ascribed from the social hierarchy present in Asian society. As David Chen, a coach from Singapore, states:

*... a hierarchy exists in Chinese society – this is based on Confucianism
- relating to people on a hierarchy.*

Explaining this further, coach Kelly Choi, based in Hong Kong explains:

*They see the coach as someone more senior, more knowledgeable...
like a mentor – there is a teacher-student mindset – they expect a
mature coach – in terms of few grey hairs – this comes from
Confucianism especially for Chinese people.*

Kelly shares that while she has male clients who are from Australia, she does not have male clients who are Asian. According to Kelly, one possible reason is the traditional preference to be coached by a senior male coach who has 'a few grey hairs'. In fact, she mentions that even she would feel uncomfortable with a senior male Asian client because of her cultural upbringing. Charlie Sukrit, a coach from Thailand, concurs with this situation:

In Asian cultures seniority is important, and I would not see a young person coaching a much older person. My Thai clients have all been younger than myself, possessing less life and work experience than me.

Therefore, in Asia, the coaching relationship is not one of equals but the coach is seen as a respected elder or a teacher. By virtue of this status, he or she is placed higher in the social hierarchy and thus commands respect and deference.

Theme 2: The Role of the Coach

Flowing from the status, the role of the coach is understood as that of being a mentor who shares his or her wisdom and insight. As David Chen (Singapore) shares:

...advice giving and mentoring has been practiced in Chinese society for a long time, the father telling the son what to do, the grandfather telling the father what to do. Therefore, my Chinese clients expect me to give answers and advice – they see me as a solution provider.

The status of the coach and the role are interlinked and embedded in tradition, David continues:

In Asia, including China and India, we focus a lot on wisdom, on understanding, on insights, which have been part of our civilization for thousands of years.

Thus, the coach is senior in the social hierarchy and so his or her role is seen as one who gives advice and insight and looks after the client's interests with parental concern and care.

Theme 3: Expectations from the Coach

Since Asian clients see their coach as a respected elder who brings wisdom and insight into the relationship they expect the coach to share this wisdom with them. As Abe Kenji, a coach from Japan, explains:

...my Japanese clients expect me to give advice rather than ask questions. This is typical for Japanese clients; they want my advice, solutions, and suggestions. Because they know my corporate background, my clients want to learn from my experience and insight.

Speaking about her local clients, Cindy Chin, a coach from Malaysia, agrees,

... they expect the coach to give them ideas, advice, suggestions... when I give them some suggestions, they are very happy.

From Thailand, Charlie Sukrit adds,

... my Thai clients have a tendency to have the coach give them an answer to their problems, so I “share” a lot of information and that is appreciated... In Asian culture clients appreciate a coach sharing his knowledge, so that the coach would spend more time doing the talking.

The expectation from the coach for advice and insight is reinforced by Asian tradition, which does not encourage people to think for themselves. As Kelly Choi (Hong Kong) explains:

... in Asian culture the parental influence is very strong while growing up, so we are accustomed to being told versus questioning and thinking for ourselves.

Therefore, the Asian expectation is that the coach provides guidance and insight, and solutions to the problems that the client is facing. Asking questions gets some clients impatient and they insist on quick solutions.

Theme 4: Coach Selection

Since Asians see the status and role of the coach as a respected elder who shares the benefit of his or her wisdom and insight with the client, the selection of the coach is influenced by the education, industry experience, and age. Asian clients prefer coaches who are older and more mature than they are, have greater industry experience, are better qualified, and knowledgeable about socio-cultural issues and traditions. Senior male managers prefer to work with a senior male coach rather than a female coach. As Abe Kenji, (Japan) explains:

Industry experience and background are key points in selecting a coach in Japan because Japanese are very seniority oriented people – there is respect for age and experience.

In addition, David Chen (Singapore) exclaims,

...even my expatriate clients value me for my knowledge of Asian economics, politics, social situation and of course Asian culture and civilization

The concept of social hierarchy and teacher-student relationship is so ingrained in the Asian psyche that clients will look for coaches who conform to their mental image of a senior mentor-teacher, whom they can look up to and depend upon.

Theme 5: Providing Direction

Based on the expectations that Asian clients have from the coach and the process, all coaches adapt their process and style when working with local clients. In practice, there is a strong element of advising, teaching, and giving suggestions. Some coaches use ancient wisdom while others use contemporary management tools and frameworks to teach their clients. As Kelly Choi (Hong Kong) points out:

*Value for money for them is if they receive something from the coach.
So, I do share my thoughts and my views.*

Abe Kenji from Japan agrees,

...my Japanese clients do not expect me to only ask questions – they want my advice and suggestions.

He explains that since his clients are aware of his experience in industry they seek to learn about his experiences and insights. David Chen from Singapore concurs:

... my Chinese clients expect me to give answers and advice – they see me as a solution provider... they are very impatient with the process – they want the answers!

However, over time, some coaches teach their clients to depend less on their advice. As Angela Jin, a coach from Taiwan, explains:

In Taiwan a lot of people do not distinguish between a consultant and coach – so in the beginning they seek advice and I give it - but after about six months they learn how coaching works.

The need for direction from the coach is culturally ingrained in the Asian ethos and has its roots in ancient tradition; it is also an integral part of their current social structure and relationships.

Theme 6: Building Relationships

While building a rapport is important in coaching across the world, in Asia it is necessary to have a deeper emotional connection with the client before 'real' coaching can begin. Often it takes as many as three to four meetings, and at times, even as long as three months, before trust is established. Patrick Teo, from Malaysia summarizes the sentiment of all the coaches,

...it takes longer time to build the trust for them - to get to know me - and to believe that everything they said is confidential...the depth of coaching takes a while before it goes deep in to themselves, till then we talk more about other things..

One of the reasons that it takes time to build trust is that in the majority of the cases the coaching is paid for by the sponsoring organization, and the client is unsure if the coach will report to the sponsor, despite the assurance of confidentiality by the coach in the first session.

Angela Jin from Taiwan cautions that it is important to “*cement relationships before offering any feedback*” otherwise clients might be offended or hurt with feedback. Abe Kenji from Japan states that demonstrating care and affection for the client is an important aspect of building the relationship; he finds it important to share feedback “*in a soft and indirect way*” to avoid hurting his clients’ feelings.

This preference for building relationships means that a lot of coaching happens face-to-face and only in few cases over the telephone. The Asian coaches we interviewed themselves prefer face-to-face coaching as it offers proximity to build a closer relationship and engage in a deeper conversation. As Angela Jin summarizes,

Clients prefer face-to-face coaching instead of the phone – even I prefer to have meetings face-to-face. Because harmony is very important in our culture, relationship building even before the coaching starts is very important...When face-to-face, you can observe their face and their eyes, and see if they are comfortable with you... you can see when they are still uncomfortable...

Thus, Asian coaches invest time, effort, and patience in building relationships in the initial phase; this process is helped by face-to-face meetings.

Theme 7: Sensitivity to Social Context

Patrick Teo points out that Malaysian managers prefer initially to talk about how their team members can develop, and only later do they feel comfortable addressing self-development. In terms of their individual accountability for results, this coach reflects:

I find that the managers - the Malays and the Chinese- look at their role in the organization as a more of a team rather than an individual driving results.

Furthermore, these managers think about the social consequences of their actions on the team before setting goals. They consider what others around them think and feel, and do not see themselves as “drivers of individual action”.

This sensitizes us to the collectivist orientation in Asian cultures where an individual prefers not to disrupt group harmony, nor do anything dramatic to stand out from his or her peers.

In summary, the findings bring out how the deeply embedded concept of social hierarchy influences the role and status of the coach in Asian culture. Whether the social hierarchy draws its strength from Confucianism or Hindu tradition, it shapes the expectations that clients have from the coach and from the process. All the coaches we interviewed adapt their practice to align with the local culture in order to help their clients move forward.

Implications of Findings for Coaching Practice

Thanks to globalization, the fastest growing economies in the world today are in Asia (Sheth, 2008). One of the findings from this study is that the large majority of clients (expatriates and local) work with multinational corporations, which have set up operations across Asia. This means that there are tremendous opportunities for international coaches in Asia. However, international coaches need to be aware of the local ethos, and adapt their style to be culturally congruent. A process that works for them in their culture may not be as effective in another culture; hence, they may not be able to help their clients in the best way possible.

We propose a framework (Table 1 below) that will help international coaches adapt their coaching style as they start to work with Asian clients. In essence, the framework distills the answers to the research questions: The concept of social hierarchy is deeply ingrained in the Asian ethos; it manifests itself in the coaching relationship in the status ascribed to the coach as a respected elder and teacher. Therefore, Asian clients often prefer to work with coaches who are senior to them in age, experience, and qualification. Asian clients expect coaches to share their wisdom and insight, and tend to seek the coach's advice and direction. The dynamics of the Asian ethos means that investing time in building relationships often precedes the start of the real coaching agenda; and Asian clients would be very sensitive to the impact of their actions on their social circle. The framework below offers a few suggestions on how international coaches could adapt to an Asian ethos.

Table 1: A Framework for Cultural Adaptation of Coaching for Asian Clients

Theme	Description of Theme	Adapting to an Asian Ethos
Status of Coach	Coach is seen as a respected elder or teacher	Accept this position with humility and grace Refrain from 'partnering' or 'co-creation' vocabulary at this stage
Role of Coach	To mentor by sharing wisdom and insight	Get comfortable with the idea of being a mentor Accept that sharing wisdom and insight is part of your role
Expectations from Coach	To provide guidance, advice, and solutions based on their experience.	Use a more directive style at least in the initial stages of the relationship Talk about your insights from relevant experience Offer suggestions or possible solutions for the client to consider
Selection of Coach	Clients prefer coaches who are more experienced, older, knowledgeable, or better qualified than they are.	Talk about your experience, qualifications, certifications, and professional successes to establish professional credibility
Providing Direction	Coaches need to provide guidance, advice, and suggest solutions, in many cases training may be needed to plug knowledge and skill gaps.	Share insights from your experience. Offer possible solutions to the client's situation Help the client build knowledge and skills if and as appropriate
Building Relationships	Coaches need to invest time and effort in building a relationship with the client – establishing trust takes time. Clients will discuss real issues only when they are comfortable.	Spend time in building relationship and trust – get to know the client at a personal level Don't be in a hurry to get to the 'real' agenda Give feedback only when the client is really comfortable with you
Sensitivity to Social Context	Clients consider the impact of their decisions and actions on concerned stakeholders before committing to them. They see themselves as part of the collective rather than an individual driving results independently.	Appreciate that the client lives and works in a social context where his or her decisions will impact those closest to him or her Clients will be hesitant to commit to actions that put them dramatically in the forefront

Conclusion and Suggestions for Future Research

The conventional understanding of coaching tenets and practice has its genesis in a Western cultural ethos. Literature on cross-cultural leadership cautions practitioners that management beliefs and practices do not have universal applicability but need to be adapted to the relevant cultural context. The objective of this study was to explore how coaching beliefs and practice in Asia differed from this conventional understanding. The key findings suggest that in Asia, the coach is held in high esteem as a teacher or respected elder. In many cases, the role that the coach is expected to play is one of a mentor, who will share wisdom and insight. Thus, while selecting a coach Asians tend to prefer someone who is older, has more experience, and is more knowledgeable than they are. Furthermore, Asian clients often expect their coaches to provide guidance, advice, and solutions to the various challenges they deal with. They open up with the coach only once a relationship has been established and trust built. Finally, coaches need to realize that their clients often consider the social implications of their actions, and are sensitive to what other stakeholders will think; hence, they will be hesitant to do anything that will dramatically disturb the group harmony. International coaches who plan to work with Asian clients can use these findings to adapt their coaching style to be culturally congruent. This will enable them to relate to their client more effectively, thereby empowering the client to succeed.

We believe that this research only scratches the surface in understanding coaching in Asia. Future studies could explore the differences between coaching in multinational companies versus local companies, understanding how coaching needs to balance local ethos with the demands of the multinational organizational culture, and the effectiveness of current coach training curricula in preparing coaches to work with clients from different cultures.

References

- Abbott, G., & Rosinski, P. (2007). Global coaching and evidence based coaching: Multiple perspectives operating in a process of pragmatic humanism [Electronic Version]. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, 5. Retrieved December 23, 2009 from ProQuest database.
- APA Ethics Code. (2002). American Psychological Association Ethics Code 2002. Retrieved June 25, 2007, from <http://www.apa.org/ethics/code2002.html>
- Atkinson, P., & Delamont, S. (2005). Analytic perspectives In N. K. Denzin & S. L. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). California: Sage Publications.
- Bhagwati, J. (2004). *In defense of globalization* (Indian ed.). New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Bhasin, B. B. (2007). Succeeding in China: Cultural adjustments for Indian businesses [Electronic Version]. *Cross Cultural Management*, 14, 43. Retrieved October 12, 2009 from ProQuest database.

- Bird, A., & Osland, J. S. (2006). Making sense of intercultural collaboration. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, 35(4), 115-132.
- Bresser, F. (2009). The state of coaching across the globe: The results of the Global Coaching Survey 2008/2009 [Electronic Version]. Retrieved July 1, 2009 from www.frank-bresser-consulting.com.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. London: Sage Publications.
- Choy, W. K. W., Lee, A. B. E., & Ramburuth, P. (2009). Multinationalism in the workplace: A myriad of values in a Singaporean firm [Electronic Version]. *Singapore Management Review*, 31, 1. Retrieved October 25, 2009 from ProQuest database.
- Claude, L.-L. (2007). CQ: Developing Cultural Intelligence at Work. *Personnel Psychology*, 60(1), 242.
- Creswell, J. W. (2005). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- David, M. N., Christopher, R. L., & Matthew, V. (2007). An Analysis of Saudi Arabian and U.S. Managerial Coaching Behaviors. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 19(2), 271.
- Fontana, A., & Frey, J. H. (2005). The interview: From neutral stance to political involvement. In N. K. Denzin & S. L. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). London: Sage Publications.
- Gefen, D., Geri, N., & Paravastu, N. (2007). Vive la différence: The cross-culture differences within us [Electronic Version]. *International Journal of E-Collaboration*, 3, 1. Retrieved October 16, 2009 from ProQuest database.
- Gronona, M. (2000). A cultural typology of economic development. In L. E. Harrison & S. P. Huntington (Eds.), *Culture matters: How values shape human progress*. New York: Basic Books.
- Hill, L. A. (2008). Where will we find tomorrow's leaders? *Harvard Business Review South Asia*, 3(1), 107-113.
- Hofstede, G., & Hofstede, G. J. (2005). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind* (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.
- House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W., & Gupta, V. (Eds.). (2004). *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies*. London: Sage Publications.
- International Coach Federation. (2009). What is coaching? Retrieved August 20, 2009 from <http://www.coachfederation.org/>
- Javidan, M., & Carl, D. E. (2005). Leadership across cultures: A study of Canadian and Taiwanese executives [Electronic Version]. *Management International Review*, 45, 23-45. Retrieved February 27, 2007 from ProQuest database.
- Kumar, M. R., & Sankaran, S. (2007). Indian culture and the culture for TQM: A comparison [Electronic Version]. *The TQM Magazine*, 19, 176. Retrieved October 5, 2009 from ProQuest database.
- McAleese, D., & Hargie, O. (2004). Five guiding principles of culture management: A synthesis of best practice [Electronic Version]. *Journal of Communication Management*, 9. Retrieved September 11, 2009 from ProQuest database.

- Nangalia, A. (2009). *Work ethos dimensions: A framework to understand cross-cultural differences at the organizational level*. Saarbrucken, Germany: VDM Verlag Dr. Muller.
- Ng, S. I., Lee, J. A., & Soutar, G. N. (2007). Are Hofstede's and Schwartz's value frameworks congruent? [Electronic Version]. *International Marketing Review*, 24, 164. Retrieved October 15, 2009 from ProQuest database.
- Nisbett, R. E. (2003). *The geography of thought: How Asians and Westerners think differently...and why*. New York: Free Press.
- Noer, D. M., Leupold, C. R., & Valle, M. (2007). Analysis of Saudi Arabian and U.S. Managerial Coaching Behaviors [Electronic Version]. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 19. Retrieved July 16, 2009 from ProQuest database.
- Northouse, P. G. (2004). *Leadership: theory and practice* (3rd ed.). California: Sage Publications.
- Osland, J. S., Bird, A., Delano, J., & Jacob, M. (2000). Beyond sophisticated stereotyping: Cultural sensemaking in context / executive commentaries [Electronic Version]. *The Academy of Management Executive*, 14. Retrieved December 26, 2009 from ProQuest database.
- Passmore, J. (Ed.). (2007). *Excellence in coaching: The industry guide* (First South Asian ed.). New Delhi: Kogan Page.
- Passmore, J. (Ed.). (2009). *Diversity in coaching: Working with gender, culture, race and age* (First South Asian ed.). New Delhi: Kogan Page.
- Perakyla, A. (2005). Analyzing talk and text. In N. K. Denzin & S. L. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). London: Sage Publications.
- Perkins, D. H. (2000). Law, family ties, and the East Asian way of business. In L. E. Harrison & S. P. Huntington (Eds.), *Culture matters: How values shape human progress*. New York: Basic Books.
- Po Keung Ip. (2009). Is Confucianism Good for Business Ethics in China? [Electronic Version]. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 88, 463-476. Retrieved October 20, 2009 from ProQuest database.
- Sheth, J. (2008). *Chindia rising: How China and India will benefit your business* New Delhi: TATA McGraw-Hill Publishing Company.
- Skiffington, S., & Zeus, P. (2003). *Behavioral coaching: How to build sustainable personal and organizational strength*. New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill.
- Sparrow, S. (2008). An individual approach to coaching leadership [Electronic Version]. *Training & Coaching Today*. Retrieved 24 April, 2009 from Proquest database.
- St Claire-Ostwald, B. (2007). Carrying cultural baggage: The contribution of socio-cultural anthropology to cross-cultural coaching [Electronic Version]. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, 5, 45. Retrieved July 20, 2009 from ProQuest database.
- Stake, R. E. (2005). Qualitative case studies. In N. K. Denzin & S. L. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). California: Sage Publications.

- Stober, D. R., & Grant, A. M. (Eds.). (2006). *Evidence based coaching handbook: Putting best practices to work for your clients*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Whitworth, L., Kimsey-House, H., & Sandahl, P. (1998). *Co-Active Coaching* (1st ed.). Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black Publishing.
- Wilson, C. (2008). *Best practice in performance coaching: A handbook for leaders, coaches, HR professionals and organizations* New Delhi: Kogan Page.
- Zhu, Y., Bhat, R., & Nel, P. (2005). Building business relationships: A preliminary study of business executives' views [Electronic Version]. *Cross Cultural Management*, 12, 63-85. Retrieved February 27, 2007 from ProQuest database.

Lina Nangalia ACC is CEO of Global Coach Trust. She is a doctoral student at XLRI, India; her research interests include OD and positive psychology.

Dr. Ajay Nangalia ACC is MD of Global Coach Trust and visiting faculty at various institutes; his research interests include cross-cultural leadership and executive coaching.