Competencies of Outstanding Executive Coaches: A Grounded Theory Approach

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COMPETENCIES OF OUTSTANDING EXECUTIVE COACHES: A GROUNDED THEORY APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

The personal, business, and executive coaching industry is large and growing. In spite of the size and growth of the industry, the coaching research literature reveals a lack of understanding about the competencies of outstanding executive coaches. This grounded-theory study sought to discover a model of executive coach competencies, through in-depth interviews with coaches rated as outstanding by a large purchaser of coaching services. Sixteen coaches participated in the recorded and transcribed interviews. A line-by-line analysis of the transcripts led to a competency model for executive coaching. For the coaching research community, this study will fill a key gap in our understanding of executive coach competencies. For coaching practitioners, this study will clarify what it takes to become an outstanding executive coach. For prospective coaches, this study will help in self-assessment against competencies and in selecting appropriate coach education programs to fill competency gaps. For buyers of coaching services, this study will be helpful in improving coach recruitment and selection procedures. In addition, large organizations with internal coaching programs might find the results of this study useful in selecting and preparing their coaches. Finally, for coach educators, this study may point to changes in curriculum, and to changes in how students are admitted, trained, and evaluated.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The personal, business, and executive coaching industry is large and growing. It generates estimated worldwide annual revenues of $2 billion. More than 47,500 coaches are practicing across the world ("2012 ICF global coaching study: Executive summary," 2013), a number which has increased 58% in just five years (Bono, Purvanova, Towler, & Peterson, 2009). In 12 years, the number of Google hits on "executive coaching" has risen nearly 3000%, from 99,400 on December 12, 2002 (Boyatzis, 2002) to 2,740,000 on December 10, 2014. A slightly different search on December 10, 2014, for "leadership coaching," yielded 739,000 results. Increasingly, coaching is being seen as a core talent development tool (Bono et al., 2009; Ely et al., 2010; Hamlin, Ellinger, & Beattie, 2009). As many as 60% of large U. S. corporations use coaches for executive development, and another 20% plan on doing so in the near future (Newsom & Dent, 2011). The U. S. Federal government includes coaching as part of its senior executive development programs (Salmon, 2008). In short, "The practice of executive coaching has emerged as one of the five top leadership-development best practices…." (Maltbia, Marsick, & Ghosh, 2014, p. 162). There are 96 ICF accredited coach education firms on the International Coach Federation (ICF) website and 180 institutions offering executive coach education programs (Blumberg, 2014).

In spite of the size and growth of the industry, the coaching research literature reveals a lack of understanding about how outstanding coaches develop (Blumberg, 2014). This study aims to fill that gap, by studying outstanding executive coaches, as defined and nominated by major buyers of coaching services. A specialized grounded theory method was used to derive a model of executive coach competencies, based on interviews with the participant coaches. This chapter presents the background to the study, lays out the research problem, provides an overview of the relevant literature to illuminate the gaps this study will fill, explains the significance of the study, and lists limitations, assumptions, and definitions.

Background

According to Bennett (2006), a profession is only a profession when it includes 11 elements:

- a skill set that is distinct from other professions,
- required minimum training for practitioners,
- recognition by regulators and other professions as a profession,
- an enforced code of ethics,
- an ethic of public service,
- widely accepted professional associations,
- a credentialing process,
- a community of practitioners,
- recognition by the public as a profession,
- recognition that the profession is distinct from others, and
- a theoretical basis for the profession.

Little has been done to find consensus on a skills and training framework for coaches, as in the first two bullets above (Grant, 2011). As coaching meets only a few of these criteria (Bennett, 2006), it will be referred to in the balance of this document as a practice or as an industry.

Coaching researchers and educators have called for better understanding of coach competencies. Bennett, for example, pointed out the need to research the characteristics and competencies of effective coaches, and the need to define coaching competencies (2006). In

2008, a group of 40 coaching researchers proposed 20 questions about the training and development of coaches (Kauffman, Russell, & Bush, 2008). Several of those questions centered on the competencies required of successful coaches. Clayton cited the lack of consensus on competencies as leading to confusion in coach training and development (2011). Grant insisted that growth of the industry would be hampered until agreement was reached on the competencies required of coaches (2011). Maltbia, Marsick, and Ghosh (2014) suggested that confusion over coach competencies hampers the development of theories of coaching, and of coach development.

Research Problem

We know little about which competencies are important to the work of outstanding executive coaches. Because of that lack, we may be wasting time and money in coach preparation. We may be addressing some of the correct competencies, missing others, and over-emphasizing some that have little relationship to outstanding coaching. To begin to fill that gap, the specific problem addressed in this study is the lack of an evidence-based model of executive coach competencies.

Studies that have addressed the problem

A search of the literature on coach competencies yielded 26 competency lists. Of those lists, eight were lists of general coaching competencies, one focused on career coaches, and one focused on school leadership coaches. The balance focused on executive coaching.

None of the competency lists were developed by studying coaches who were rated as outstanding by purchasers of coaching services, and thus all are missing a key step in competency model development. Spencer and Spencer (1993) stressed the importance of working with a criterion sample of superior performers. More than half of the lists, 13, were developed without studying coaches at all ("AC Competency Framework," 2012; Bluckert, 2006; Brotman, Liberi, & Wasylyshyn, 2007; "Core Competencies," 2013; "EMCC Competence Framework," 2010; Ennis et al., 2012; Frisch, 2007; "Guidelines for Education and Training at the Doctoral and Postdoctoral Levels in Consulting Psychology/Organizational Consulting Psychology," 2007; Maltbia, Marsick, & Ghosh, 2014; Spaten & Hansen, 2009; Stern, 2004; Wood & Gordon, 2009; Yi-Ling & McDowall, 2014). Passmore (2010) interviewed the clients of coaches, Dagley (2009) interviewed HR professionals, and Wise and Hammack (2011) surveyed school principals. Four studies (Bono et al., 2009; Hatala & Hisey, 2011; Louis & Fatien Diochon, 2014; Mavor, Sadler-Smith, & Gray, 2010) solicited participants from among the members of specific professional associations, personal networks, or consulting firms. The balance of the studies relied primarily on input measures, such as level of certification (Bennett & Rogers, 2012; Griffiths & Campbell, 2008; Kenney, 2014), degrees attained (Clayton, 2011; Hale, 2008), or amount of coaching experience (Clayton, 2011; Hale, 2008; Kenney, 2014). No list was developed as a result of studying executive coaches who were rated as outstanding by buyers of coaching services.

A wide range of methods for developing the lists was reported. Five sources failed to report any method for developing the lists ("AC Competency Framework," 2012; "Core Competencies," 2013; "EMCC Competence Framework," 2010; Frisch, 2007; Wood & Gordon, 2009). Eight of the lists (Bluckert, 2006; Brotman et al., 2007; Ennis et al., 2012; "Guidelines for Education and Training at the Doctoral and Postdoctoral Levels in Consulting Psychology/Organizational Consulting Psychology," 2007; Maltbia et al., 2014; Spaten & Hansen, 2009; Stern, 2004; Yi-Ling & McDowall, 2014) relied on literature reviews, author opinion, committee discussions, or some combination of the three. The more rigorous approaches included surveys (Bono, Purvanova, Towler, & Peterson, 2009; Gatling, 2014; Hatala & Hisey, 2011; Wise & Hammack, 2011), interviews (Bennett & Rogers, 2012; Clayton, 2011; Dagley, 2009; Griffiths & Campbell, 2008; Kenney, 2014; Louis & Fatien Diochon, 2014; Mavor, Sadler-Smith, & Gray, 2010; Passmore, 2010), or a modified Delphi method (Hale, 2008). None of the lists were developed using the grounded theory approach to competency modeling (Spencer & Spencer, 1993), as will be employed in the current study.

Gaps in the Studies

None of the reported studies have attempted to select participants based on the ratings or nominations of buyers of coaching services. Additionally, no executive coaching competency model was developed using Spencer and Spencer's grounded-theory approach (1993). This study fills both gaps. The sample was selected based on buyer ratings of coach effectiveness, and the study employed a grounded-theory design in order to fully define executive coach competencies.

Significance of the Study

This study has significance for the coaching research community, for coaching practitioners, for prospective coaches, for buyers of coaching services, and for coach educators. For the coaching research community, this study fills a key gap in our understanding of executive coach competencies. For coaching practitioners, this study clarifies and simplifies understanding of what it takes to become an outstanding executive coach, and will thus help drive self-development and continuing coach development. For prospective coaches, this study will help in self-assessment against abilities and other characteristics, and in selecting appropriate coach education programs.

Buyers of coaching services lack objective criteria to use in selecting coaches (Hagen & Peterson, 2014). That leads to uncertainty in the coach engagement process, and, potentially, to wasted time and money. This study will be helpful in improving coach recruitment and selection procedures. In addition, large organizations with internal coaching programs might find the results of this study useful in selecting and preparing their coaches.

Finally, coaching educators are competing to set the standard for coach education (Griffiths & Campbell, 2008). For coach educators, this study may point to changes in curriculum, and to changes in how students are admitted, trained, and evaluated. Partly as a result of this study, it is hoped that coaching schools, just like law schools, medical schools, and business schools, will come to share common curriculum elements. Uncertainty over what to teach will be reduced, and focus can be moved to how best to teach that curriculum.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to discover a model of the competencies that outstanding executive coaches perceive as central to their success, as expressed in behavioral event interviews (Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

Research Questions

The central question of this study was, "what is the competency model that explains outstanding executive coaching performance?"

Sub-questions included:

1. What criteria do buyers of coaching services use when selecting the best coaches from among all of the coaches they employ?
2. What attributes and behaviors characterize those executive coaches rated as best by the buyers of coaching services?

3. How can those attributes and behaviors be structured into a competency model of outstanding executive coaching?

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Because no validated measure of executive coach effectiveness has yet been published (Hagen & Peterson, 2014), this study relied on buyer nominations of outstanding executive coaches. It was assumed that these coaches actually were the best coaches the coaching firm works with. Because the leaders of the coaching firm expressed interest in the results of the study, and stated that they hope to use the results to improve their practice (E. Kumata, personal communication, November 1, 2015), they were likely to provide their best coaches for the study.

As the study relied on interviews, without any confirming data from other sources, it was assumed that participants would tell the truth about their experiences as coaches. To increase the chances that they did tell the truth, names were kept confidential and participants were given opportunities to withdraw from the study at any time. The fact that participants told not only stories about their successes, but also stories about their failures, suggests they were generally honest in their interview responses.

The choice of methodology carries with it inherent limitations. Because grounded theory relies on theoretical sampling techniques, rather than representative sampling, it is not possible to make inferences about the competencies of the general population of coaches, or even those of executive coaches more specifically (Daly, 2007). Interview data is necessarily filtered through the eyes of the interviewees, and may not represent how others view the same events (Creswell, 2014). Further, the data were analyzed solely by me. It is possible, or even likely that another researcher might interpret the data differently (Creswell, 2013). To help guard against that limitation, participants were asked to review the individual behavioral elements. They validated 63 of the original 64 behaviors, which suggests I may have captured their thoughts accurately.

A study-specific limitation is that I cannot be sure that the 16 participants interviewed here represent a small percentage of the coaches used by the coaching firm. The firm was not willing to disclose how many coaches they use, nor what percentage these 16 represent of all of those coaches. Because I personally know 20 other coaches who work with this firm, coaches who were not part of this study, I know that these 16 are certainly fewer than half of the number of coaches the firm hires. The firm's website lists 118 client organizations. In my experience, the coaching firm deploys several coaches with each client organization. This suggests, but does not prove, that the firm works with, perhaps, several hundred coaches. So, while the percentage these coaches represent remains an unknown, and that is a limitation of the study, I believe it is reasonable to assume they are a small percentage of the total.

This study focused on English-speaking executive coaches working in North America. Study participants were all external coaches (not employed directly by the organizations for which they coached), and all were contacted through a single coaching firm. Because the study was limited to English speakers working in North America, the resulting model may not be generalizable to coaches working in other languages or in other cultures. Because the coaches were all external contractors, the results are not necessarily generalizable to internal coaches (working in a human resources development capacity, for instance). Because the coaches were all contacted through a single coaching firm, the results may not be generalizable to coaches doing similar work through other coaching firms. Finally, because only executive coaches were studied, the findings will not necessarily apply to coaches in other specialties (such as business coaching, life coaching, or career coaching).

Definitions

Several terms of general use are used in specific ways in this study. These terms are defined here.

Coachee: For the purposes of this study, the coachee is defined as the executive being coached.

Coaching: For the purposes of this study, coaching is defined as a one-to-one relationship between a coach and an executive, which occurs over several sessions, and is designed to achieve four things: (a) the personal goals of the executive, (b) sustained behavioral change of that executive, (c) enhanced ability of the executive to learn and develop independently, and (d) enhanced performance of the executive's organization (Bennett, 2006; Cavanagh, et al., 2011; Ely et al., 2010; Grant, 2011; Hamlin et al., 2009; Kilburg, 1996; Peterson, 2011).

Executive coaching: For the purposes of this study, executive coaching is defined as coaching that is specifically designed to develop the leadership capabilities and behaviors of the coaching client in an organizational setting. It is unique from other types of leadership development in that it occurs one-on-one, focuses on goals of both the organization and the leader, requires unique skills, and requires process flexibility on the part of the coach (Ely et al., 2010; Ennis et al., 2012).

Corporate buyers of coaching services: For the purposes of this study, corporate buyers of coaching services are defined as those people within an organization who decide which individual coaches to hire for specific coaching engagements (Dagley, 2009).

Outstanding executive coaches: For the purposes of this study, outstanding executive coaches are defined as those executive coaches who are rated as “best” by corporate buyers of coaching services (Dagley, 2009).

Competencies: For the purposes of this study, competencies are defined as collections of knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics that lead to observable behaviors, which in turn lead to successful performance. Competencies are operationalized in this study as those behaviors which surface in the behavioral event interviews and which appear to be related to success as an executive coach. Each competency reported in this study includes two elements: a descriptive title and a set of specific, observable behaviors (Campion et al., 2011).

Conclusion

This chapter has laid out the research problem and its significance, presented the research question and sub questions, and set out limitations, assumptions, and definitions. Two key gaps in our understanding of executive coach competencies were identified. The purpose of this study was to discover a model of the competencies that outstanding leadership coaches perceive as central to their success, as expressed in behavioral event interviews (Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

Chapter 2 delves into the relevant literature. Chapter 3 describes the study methodology in detail, chapter 4 presents the results, and chapter 5 discusses the results and develops the model that answers the research question.

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE*

This chapter reviews definitions of coaching, and explores how coaching is not yet a true profession. Competency models are explained, as a key element of any profession, and then the literature on coach competencies is analyzed. Key gaps are discovered, which support the significance of the current study.

Definitions

The most widely cited definition of coaching is Kilburg's:

> In the context of the concepts provided earlier, executive coaching is defined as a helping relationship formed between a client who has managerial authority and responsibility in an organization and a consultant who uses a wide variety of behavioral techniques and methods to help the client achieve a mutually identified set of goals to improve his or her professional performance and personal satisfaction and, consequently, to improve the effectiveness of the client's organization within a formally defined coaching agreement (1996, p. 142).

More recently, Hamlin, Ellinger, and Beattie defined coaching as a one-to-one relationship between coach and executive, designed to improve the organization's performance by improving the executive's capabilities and performance (2009). Writers who are trained in psychology tended to define coaching as a branch of psychology and to see coaching as the application of the science of psychology to helping individuals and organizations improve performance and wellbeing (Passmore, as cited in Cavanagh, Palmer, & al., 2011; Grant, 2011). Bono and colleagues added sustained behavior change as the key goal of coaching (2009).

Peterson retained the ideas that coaching is a one-to-one process that depends on a trusting relationship between the executive and the coach, that coaching serves both personal and organizational goals for the executive, and that coaching is a structured methodology

*An earlier version of this chapter previously appeared as Blumberg, K. M., (2014), Executive coaching competencies: A review and critique with implications for coach education, *Journal of Psychological Issues in Organizational Culture, 5*(2), 87-97. It is reused by permission of John Wiley and Sons (see license in Appendix A).

(although not necessarily based solely on psychology). He added three new elements: coaching takes place in multiple sessions spread over time, coaching is customized to the client, and coaching has the additional goal of enhancing the client's ability to learn and develop independently after coaching is complete. Finally, he limited his definition to coaching provided by full-time coaches (2011).

For the purposes of this review, coaching is defined as a one-to-one relationship between a coach and an executive or manager. Coaching is:

- based on a trusting relationship;
- customized to fit the needs of the executive;
- grounded in an understanding of behavioral psychology, change, and organizational behavior;
- occurring over several sessions with time in between for action and reflection; and
- designed to achieve four things: (a) the personal goals of the executive, (b) sustained behavioral change of that executive, (c) enhanced ability of the executive to learn and develop independently, and (d) enhanced performance of the executive's organization.

For the purposes of this review, an executive coach is defined as anyone, whether full-time or part-time, internal or external, psychologist or non-psychologist, who provides this service to executives.

Coaching as a Profession

According to Bennett, a profession is only a profession when it includes 11 elements:

- a skill set that is distinct from other professions,
- required minimum training for practitioners,

- recognition by regulators and other professions as a profession,
- an enforced code of ethics,
- an ethic of public service,
- widely accepted professional associations,
- a credentialing process,
- a community of practitioners,
- recognition by the public as a profession,
- recognition that the profession is distinct from others, and
- a theoretical basis for the profession (2006).

At present, executive coaching meets few of these criteria (Bennett, 2006). As such, it will be referred to in this document as a practice or as an industry.

Competencies and Competency Models

Brannick and Levine (2006) explained that the requirements of any job can be divided into four categories: (a) knowledge, (b) skills, (c) abilities, and (d) other characteristics, often abbreviated as KSAOs. Knowledge includes factual and procedural information, can be either general or task-specific, and comes from books, lectures, demonstrations, trial-and-error, and other methods. Skills are usually job or task specific, and take time and practice to develop. Skills are not developed by reading books. Abilities are innate and relatively stable capabilities that tell us what and how a person learns. Abilities can be either mental or physical, although they will be mostly mental in the case of coaching. Abilities may point us toward selection criteria for coaching trainees. Other characteristics include personality traits, behavioral style, values, beliefs, demographics, work history and other things that might affect a person's fit with a job (Brannick & Levine, 2006).

Campion and colleagues saw individual KSAOs as competencies and the set of competencies for a specific role as a competency model. A competency, in their view, should be described with three elements. First, it should be given a descriptive label or title, one that lay people will easily understand. Second, it should be defined in behavioral terms. Finally, a detailed description of the levels of proficiency should be provided for each competency. A set of competencies, called a competency model, should also explain why each competency matters to performance of the role, be mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive, and suggest the relative importance of each competency (2011). Examples of competency statements are listed in Appendix B. This study developed competency labels and behavioral definitions, but did not attempt to describe levels of proficiency.

The literature included several approaches to studying competencies. The most often cited method was McClelland's Behavioral Event Interview (1998), which was based on earlier work by Boyatzis (as cited in McClelland, 1998) and Spencer and Spencer (1993). McClelland described the process as asking subjects to recall six incidents, three positive and three negative. He suggested probing for what the subjects said, thought, felt, and did in each of the cases. The interview notes were to be coded for themes, and then compiled into a competency model, based on the themes that best differentiated strong performers from less successful performers (1998). In a study of alcoholism counselors, Boyatzis went a step further, employing discriminant function analysis to predict counselor performance based on competency scores (2002). While not a part of the current study, discriminant function analysis might be a useful follow-up approach.

A similar approach, the Success Case Method, was developed by Brinkerhoff (2005). Brinkerhoff's approach was to measure the application of learned skills on-the-job, and the impact of that application on results. It was a two-step process, beginning with a short survey designed to identify the best cases (success cases) and the worst cases (nonsuccess cases). The second step involved interviews to document the details of the process that resulted in either success or failure. The success and nonsuccess cases were compared, leading to a deeper understanding of which competencies really mattered to success.

A third approach, the Delphi method, involves recruiting an expert panel. The panel participates in several rounds of surveys, each round informed by the results of the last round. Survey rounds continue until the expert panel reaches consensus (Hsu & Sandford, 2007). Campion and colleagues suggest that surveys (of those already in the role) can be useful, especially if participants are asked to rate the relative current and future importance of each competency (2011).

This study relied on McClelland's behavioral event interview technique, as detailed by Spencer and Spencer (1993). This method is better suited to interviewing outstanding performers than is Brinkerhoff's approach, and more grounded in outstanding coach experiences than the Delphi method. However, a modified Delphi approach was used to validate the emergent competency model.

Evaluation of the Literature on Coach Competencies

The literature was reviewed for lists of competencies for coaches. The search was focused on English-language, peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and PhD dissertations that focused on traits, competencies, or behaviors of coaches working with executives. The initial search (in June, 2013) was limited to material published in 2008 or later, although in March and July of 2015 that was subsequently expanded backwards to 1990 (no sources were found before that) and forwards to July 2015. The search parameters are detailed in Appendix C. The initial searches yielded 270 dissertations and 1,282 journal articles. The titles were scanned for relevance to the problem statement, reducing the count to 28 dissertations and 106 journal articles. The abstracts of these documents were reviewed, again for relevance to the problem statement. Additional articles were added, based on frequent citations in the original group of articles. The final set of 30 sources on competencies included one PowerPoint presentation, two unpublished works, three websites, four dissertations, five book chapters, and 17 peer-reviewed journal articles.

The purpose of this study was to discover a model of the competencies that outstanding executive coaches perceive as central to their success, as expressed in behavioral event interviews. Participants were selected based on buyer ratings of coaching results. A competency modeling approach was used to discover the model, and the model is reported as competency labels and the associated behaviors. In keeping with those goals, sources that did not explicitly provide competencies were eliminated, leaving 25 competency lists. A 26th list (Louis & Fatien Diochon, 2014) was discovered during the data analysis phase of the research, and is included here. The remaining lists were next evaluated for the target population focus (i.e., executive coaches), then by participant selection method, third by study methodology, and finally by whether or not the resulting model included both competency labels and behavioral indicators. The results, for those publications that explicitly listed competencies, are summarized in Table 1, and described in the following sections. As will become clear, each of the lists relied on methods that reduced its usefulness for training and developing executive coaches.

Sources that did not Provide Competency Information

Five sources that initially looked relevant failed on inspection to provide competency information. Bozer, Sarros, and Santora (2014) used a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design

Table 1: Summary of Competency Lists

Source	Type of Coaching	Sample Selection Method	Study Method	Competencies	
				Labels?	Behavioral Indicators?
"AC Competency Framework" (2012)	General	No sample	No method reported	Yes	Yes
Bennett & Rogers (2012)	Executive	Level of certification	Interviews	Yes	No
Bluckert (2006)	General	No sample	Author opinion, literature review, expert committee	Yes	Yes
Bono, et al. (2009)	Executive	Organization membership	Survey	Yes	Yes
Brotman, Liberi, & Wasylyshyn (2007)	Executive	No sample	Collective experience of the authors	Yes	No
Clayton (2011)	Executive	Degree, hours of coaching experience	Interviews	Yes	Yes
"Core Competencies" (2013)	General	No sample	No method reported	Yes	Yes
Dagley (2009)	Executive	No sample	Interviews of HR buyers of coaching services	Yes	No
"EMCC Competence Framework" (2010)	General	No sample	No method reported	Yes	Yes
Ennis, et al. (2012)	Executive	No sample	Committee	Yes	Yes
Frisch (2007)	Executive	No sample	No method reported	No	Yes
Gatling (2014)	Business	Not reported	Survey	Yes	Yes
Griffiths & Campbell (2008)	General	Level of certification	Interviews	Yes	No

(Table 1 continued)

Source	Type of Coaching	Sample Selection Method	Study Method	Competencies	
				Labels?	Behavioral Indicators?
"Guidelines for Education and Training at the Doctoral and Postdoctoral Levels in Consulting Psychology/Organizational Consulting Psychology" (2007)	General	No sample	Literature review, committee	Yes	Yes
Hale (2008)	Executive	Degree, years of experience	Modified Delphi method	Yes	Yes
Hatala & Hisey (2011)	Career	Recruited from association membership	Survey	Yes	Yes
Kenney (2014)	Executive	Level of certification, years of experience	Interviews	Yes	No
Louis and Fatien Diochon (2014)	Executive	Author networks	Interviews	Yes	No
Maltbia, Marsick, & Ghosh (2014)	Executive	No sample	Literature review, committee	Yes	Yes
Mavor, Sadler-Smith, & Gray (2010)	Executive	Employees of a single coaching firm	Interviews	Yes	No
Passmore (2010)	Executive	Clients of coaches	Interviews	Yes	No
Spaten & Hansen (2009)	General	No sample	Literature review	Yes	No
Stern (2004)	Executive	No sample	Author opinion	Yes	No
Wise & Hammack (2011)	School leadership	Convenience sample of school principals	Survey	Yes	Yes

(Table 1 continued)

Source	Type of Coaching	Sample Selection Method	Study Method	Competencies	
				Labels?	Behavioral Indicators?
Wood & Gordon (2009)	Leadership	No sample	No method reported	Yes	No
Yi-ling & McDowall (2014)	General	No sample	Literature review	Yes	Yes

to test how coach background and executive credibility were related to client outcomes. Their participants were clients of four Israeli coaching firms. Client outcomes were assessed using self-reports of job performance. Coach background specifically meant whether or not the coach had training in psychology. Credibility was measured by asking clients how trustworthy and how expert their coaches were. The authors did not define competencies. Grant (2011) and a long list of respondents (Cavanagh et al., 2011) discussed a proposed curriculum for the teaching of coaching psychology. While the various authors offered their opinions on what topics should be covered, and how those topics should be covered, no list of competencies was provided by either Grant or the respondents. Laske (2006) also focused on coach education curriculum without developing or citing a competency model for coaches. Moriarity (2010), as with the previous three papers, focused on curriculum rather than on competencies.

Target Population and Sample Selection Method

The target population for this study is executive coaches. Of the 26 studies in the table, over half (15) explicitly sought to determine executive coach competencies. One (Gatling, 2014) studied business coaches, defined as "…coaches who work with entrepreneurs and business owners to improve personal and business effectiveness" (p. 27). That closely matches this study's definition of executive coaching and might be seen as relevant. Wise and Hammack (2011) surveyed California school principals about the importance of various leadership coach competencies in the school system. Again, the list may be close to what is sought in the current study. Hatala and Hisey (2011) looked only at career coach competencies, arguably not likely to be an exact match to competencies needed by executive coaches. The remaining lists ("AC Competency Framework," 2012; Bluckert, 2006; "Core Competencies," 2013; "EMCC Competence Framework," 2010; Griffiths & Campbell, 2008; "Guidelines for Education and Training at the Doctoral and Postdoctoral Levels in Consulting Psychology/Organizational Consulting Psychology," 2007; Spaten & Hansen, 2009; Yi-Ling & McDowall, 2014) are lists of general coaching competencies. It can be argued that executive coaches may require most of these general competencies, along with additional competencies more specific to their specialty.

Participant sample selection in the current study was based on purchaser rating of coach effectiveness, based on Dagley's findings (2009). None of the 26 lists in the literature were based on a sample of purchaser-rated coaches. For the 13 lists that were not based on a study at all, no sample was selected ("AC Competency Framework," 2012; Bluckert, 2006; Brotman et al., 2007; "Core Competencies," 2013; "EMCC Competence Framework," 2010; Ennis et al., 2012; Frisch, 2007; "Guidelines for Education and Training at the Doctoral and Postdoctoral Levels in Consulting Psychology/Organizational Consulting Psychology," 2007; Maltbia et al., 2014; Spaten & Hansen, 2009; Stern, 2004; Wood & Gordon, 2009; Yi-Ling & McDowall, 2014). Gatling (2014) did not report how participants were selected. Dagley (2009) worked with Australian HR professionals who had experience purchasing coaching services, but did not study coaches themselves. Passmore (2010) interviewed clients of coaches, rather than coaches themselves. Wise & Hammack (2011) studied a convenience sample of school principals who responded to a solicitation. Three studies relied on membership in associations or employment in specific firms (Bono et al., 2009; Hatala & Hisey, 2011; Mavor et al., 2010).The balance of the studies relied primarily on input measures. Three (Bennett & Rogers, 2012; Griffiths & Campbell, 2008; Kenney, 2014) chose level of certification (by the International Coach Federation). That's a problem because certification is based on that body's list of competencies. It can be assumed that those who are certified by that body will be skilled in that list, whether or not that list is evidence based. Other studies included degrees earned (Clayton, 2011; Hale, 2008) or hours or years of coaching experience (Clayton, 2011; Hale, 2008; Kenney, 2014). Louis and Fatien Diochon (2014) began with coaches in their networks, and then used snowball sampling to find additional participants. While simplifying participant selection, such approaches cannot guarantee that the participants have reached any specific level of coaching expertise. In sum, no extant study has attempted to select executive coach participants based on purchaser ratings of coach effectiveness.

Methods Used to Develop the Competency Lists

The current study employed a grounded theory approach to competency modeling (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). The competency lists were evaluated to find which of them were developed with a similarly rigorous approach. Five sources failed to report any method for developing the lists ("AC Competency Framework," 2012; "Core Competencies," 2013; "EMCC Competence Framework," 2010; Frisch, 2007; Wood & Gordon, 2009). Eight of the lists relied on literature reviews, author opinion, committee discussions, or some combination of the three (Bluckert, 2006; Brotman et al., 2007; Ennis et al., 2012; "Guidelines for Education and Training at the Doctoral and Postdoctoral Levels in Consulting Psychology/Organizational Consulting Psychology," 2007; Maltbia et al., 2014; Spaten & Hansen, 2009; Stern, 2004; Yi-Ling & McDowall, 2014). The problem with literature reviews, as the current list demonstrates, is that no list is yet rigorously based on careful study of coaches who are rated as outstanding by the purchasers of coaching services. The more rigorous approaches included surveys (Bono et al., 2009; Gatling, 2014; Hatala & Hisey, 2011; Wise & Hammack, 2011), interviews (Bennett & Rogers, 2012; Clayton, 2011; Dagley, 2009; Griffiths & Campbell, 2008; Kenney, 2014; Louis & Fatien Diochon, 2014; Mavor et al., 2010; Passmore, 2010), and a modified Delphi method (Hale, 2008).

Completeness of the Models Provided

This study sought to derive a competency model that included both descriptive labels for the competencies and associated behavioral indicators. More than half (14) of the models discovered in this search included both labels and associated behaviors. Eleven of the lists (Bennett & Rogers, 2012; Brotman et al., 2007; Dagley, 2009; Griffiths & Campbell, 2008; Kenney, 2014; Louis & Fatien Diochon, 2014; Mavor et al., 2010; Passmore, 2010; Spaten & Hansen, 2009; Stern, 2004; Wood & Gordon, 2009) provided competency labels without associated behavioral indicators, and one (Frisch, 2007) provided behaviors without labeling the associated competencies.

Summary of the Gaps Identified

The current study used a grounded theory approach to analyze interviews of executive coaches who were rated as outstanding by the purchasers of coaching services in order to develop a competency model that includes both competency labels and associated behavioral indicators. No study uncovered to date has combined all four elements (grounded theory approach, executive coaches, buyer ratings, model with labels and behavioral definitions). This study, while covering all four elements, is unique in filling two key gaps. The most important gap is in participant selection. The current study was the first to attempt to select participants based upon ratings of their performance as coaches, as opposed to selection based upon input measures such as degrees, years of experience, or level of certification. The second most important gap is in methodology, as no extant study has employed the grounded theory approach to competency modeling, as first described by Spencer and Spencer (1993).

Conclusion

This chapter included a definition of coaching and showed that the lack of an evidence-based competency model is one barrier to coaching becoming a profession. The literature on coach competencies was analyzed, showing that no extant study has covered all four key elements of the current study (grounded theory approach, executive coaches, buyer ratings, model with labels and behavioral definitions). The two most important gaps identified were participant selection, as no study has yet sought to select coaches based upon buyer ratings of coach effectiveness, and methodology, as no study has sought to use Spencer and Spencer's grounded-theory approach to competency modeling (1993).

CHAPER 3. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to discover a model of the competencies that outstanding executive coaches perceive as central to their success, as expressed in behavioral event interviews (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). The central question of this study was, "what is the competency model that explains outstanding executive coaching performance?" As shown in Chapter 2, this question remained unanswered, in two key ways. First, no study had sought to select participants based upon buyer ratings of coach effectiveness. Second, no study had employed Spencer and Spencer's grounded-theory approach to competency modeling (1993). The objective of this study was to close those gaps.

This chapter begins with a statement of the specific objectives of the study and explains the choice of methodology in light of those objectives. After a reflexive section, detailing the role of the researcher in this study, participant recruitment, and selection is covered. Data collection and data analysis occurred simultaneously, as noted in the methodology section, but are described in separate sections in this chapter. The final sections of this chapter explain how a model emerged from the data analysis process; a few practical considerations for the study; and an approach for evaluating the credibility, reliability, validity, and usefulness of the study.

Statement of Specific Objectives

The primary objective of this study was to develop a grounded model of outstanding executive coach competencies. Achievement of that primary objective required achieving the following specific objectives:

1. Defining and describing the target population (outstanding executive coaches) in enough detail that the referrer (a buyer of coaching services) was able to suggest potential participants.

2. Asking referrers to nominate their best coaches.
3. Having referrers explain the criteria they used when choosing their best coaches.
4. Recruiting participants who meet the study criteria, based on 1 and 2 above.
5. Interviewing each participant to elicit detailed descriptions of critical coaching events.
6. From the interview data, extracting common themes that lead to a model of outstanding-coach competencies.
7. Using a modified Delphi approach to elicit participant rankings of the relative importance of the individual competencies.

Description of Methodology

This study employed the grounded theory methodology of analysis, using behavioral event interviews to gather raw data (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). In this section, qualitative research is explained, and then contrasted with quantitative research. Following that, the grounded theory method is explained in detail, drawing on the works of its founders, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, and on several contemporary writers. Finally, Spencer and Spencer's specific use of behavioral event interviews is described.

Qualitative Research

Quantitative research seeks to describe the incidence and distribution of measureable phenomena; to explain, predict, or control variables; and to test theories and concepts. Qualitative research, on the other hand, seeks to understand how people experience phenomena; how intrapersonal, inter-personal, and social processes work; and how people make meaning of their experiences. While quantitative research is appropriate for testing theories and concepts, qualitative research is appropriate when theories and concepts have yet to be developed (L. D.

Marks, personal communication, May 30, 2014). As the aim of this study was to discover what is important to outstanding coaches, a qualitative approach was appropriate.

Qualitative researchers tend to use one of five major methodological approaches. *Phenomenology* is the study of how participants experience and make meaning of a specific phenomenon. For example, a phenomenology study might explore how participants lived and understood the process of mentoring a student. *Ethnography* is the study of a group that shares a particular culture. The researcher seeks to understand patterns of behavior within a cultural group, and to discover how culture affects those behaviors. An example might be an exploration of the fraternity culture on a college campus. A *narrative* study tells the story of an individual, and seeks to make meaning of that story. An example might be the story that an expert coach tells of her journey from novice to expert. *Case studies* explore, describe, and analyze specific instances of a phenomenon in detail. An example might be a rich description of the implementation of an internal coaching program at a single company. The *grounded theory method* seeks to develop a theory or model of a process or phenomenon, grounded in data. An example of this approach might be a study seeking to build a theory of how middle-aged men cope with baldness (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2010; Creswell, 2013; Daly, 2007). As the primary aim of this study was to develop a model of outstanding-coach competencies, the grounded theory method was appropriate.

Grounded Theory Method

Glaser and Strauss developed the grounded theory method in 1967 (Covan, 2007; Glaser, 1978). The approach was their reaction to the belief, widely held at the time, that only brilliant, lone thinkers could successfully develop theories. Glaser and Strauss felt that these great-man theories were often accepted with little evidence and no verification, and that the process of theory creation was inherently elitist. They believed that any researcher, carefully applying rigorous research methods, could create theory. They called their approach grounded theory because the theories that came out of their work were explicitly and carefully grounded in, and emerged from, the data they had gathered. The theories developed using their methods were considered tentative and subject to change. These theories simply represented the best explanation of a given phenomenon so far. Because of this tentative nature, grounded theory methods are particularly important in fields where understanding is shifting and changing (Daly, 2007). Coaching, given its infancy in terms of scientific research, fits the model of such a field (Blumberg, 2014).

The goal of the grounded theory method is to create a theory or model, although many studies using this method fail to take the final step of proposing a theory or model (Charmaz, 2006; Daly, 2007). Most often, that theory or model should be substantive, about a specific, narrow phenomenon. A substantive theory consists of categories (abstract concepts), and the relationships between them (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Daly, 2007). The aim of the current study was to develop a substantive model of outstanding leadership coach competencies.

Five concepts are important to understanding the grounded theory method: theoretical sensitivity, theoretical sampling, theoretical saturation, constant comparison, and emergent theory (Daly, 2007). In quantitative research, theory is reviewed before a study begins. In some qualitative methodologies, the literature is not relevant at all. Grounded theorists use the literature at two stages of their research. They begin with a literature review that helps them find the gaps in current knowledge on a topic (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). In addition to the knowledge that researchers gain from the initial literature review, they cannot help but bring other prior knowledge and experiences into their studies. *Theoretical sensitivity* means that, while prior literature, knowledge, and experiences may inform the study, the researcher holds that prior knowledge and experience only provisionally, leaving it subject to change as the data demand (Daly, 2007). In the current study, for example, Spencer and Spencer's specific interview protocol guided questioning of participants (1993). The second time grounded theorists turn to the literature is once a theory or model has emerged from the data. At that point, the literature is reviewed to see how the new theory or model fits with earlier research (Glaser, 1978).

Quantitative researchers seek to draw a random, representative sample from the target population. In quantitative studies, "meaning comes from the mean," and outliers are bad. In qualitative methods, including grounded theory, "meaning comes from the extremes." The outliers are more likely to yield the rich and deep insights required for qualitative research (L. D. Marks, personal communication, May 30, 2014). In grounded theory, researchers begin by seeking outstanding, prototypical examples. As data analysis progresses, the researcher focuses ever more tightly, looking for participants who can help fill in specific missing data in the theory or model. At that point, the researcher is looking for ideas, rather than for specific people. This purposive sampling strategy is called *theoretical sampling* (Daly, 2007).

The grounded theory researcher initially looks for themes in the data, and then seeks to combine those themes into categories. Those categories have properties, which the researcher seeks to discover and understand. *Theoretical saturation*, ideally, occurs when all the properties for all the categories have been fully described. The researcher must decide when this point has been reached, and must be able to explain that decision to readers. In practice, perfect theoretical saturation can never be reached. Practical saturation occurs when new data no longer yields new properties for the categories (Daly, 2007).

Initial data analysis in grounded theory involves line-by-line coding; assigning codes to individual chunks of interview data. A code is a word or phrase that gives a name to an abstract concept, category, or property that is indicated by the data (Glaser, 2011). The researcher compares data to data (incident to incident) in order to generate concepts (or codes), then compares those concepts to new data in order to flesh out the properties of those concepts, and then finally compares concepts to concepts, in order to find relationships between the concepts. Codes emerge from the data as the result of asking what the data are a study of, what category each piece of data indicates, and what is actually happening in the data (Glaser, 1978). At every level, the researcher constantly looks back to the data, comparing data to codes, categories, and theory (Glaser, 2011). Glaser believed it was also valid and important to compare data, codes, and categories to the researcher's prior knowledge and experience (anecdotal evidence). This process of comparing data, codes, categories, and prior knowledge is called *constant comparison* (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2006; Covan, 2007; Daly, 2007; Glaser, 1978).

Glaser believed that theory must emerge from the data, rather than be forced by the researcher. He wrote repeatedly about the need to allow concepts and theory to emerge from the data, arguing against any attempt to generate theory by brute force (1992). Strauss, Corbin, Charmaz and others have shown how constant comparison and memoing, described below, can allow theory to emerge (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Daly, 2007). The researcher searches inductively for possible explanations of the data, often looking to analogs outside of the specific field under study. The researcher then deductively seeks further data to test the possible explanations, looking for the best, and most plausible explanation for the data. The process of seeking the most plausible explanation is called *abduction*, and that process is what leads to *emergent theory* (Daly, 2007).

Competency Modeling

Spencer and Spencer saw competency model development as a special case of the grounded theory approach (1993). They described a six-step process. First, criteria for effective performance were to be defined. In other words, researchers were to define exactly how they would distinguish superior performers from average performers. Next, a sample was identified, based on the criteria defined in the first step. The authors claimed a sample of 20 was ideal (12 superior performers and 8 average performers), but suggested a sample as small as nine might be adequate for some roles. The present study looked only at superior performers, and was expected to include between eight and 15 participants. (In the end, 16 interviews were included in the study.) Once the sample is defined, participants were to be interviewed using a technique they called Behavioral Event Interviewing (BEI). This type of interview is described in more detail in the study plan below. The fourth step employed grounded theory's constant comparison method (described above), comparing superior performers to average performers, looking for themes that were present in superior performers and not in average performers. In the fifth step, the model was to be verified, to establish both face validity and predictive validity. Finally, the model was to be applied to Human Resource management processes (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). This study followed the first four steps described above. The fifth step, verification, was partially completed, as described in the validity section of this chapter. Complete verification will be the subject of a subsequent study.

Role of the Researcher

In quantitative research, the researcher is seen as an objective, neutral, external observer. Researchers design studies to eliminate researcher bias as much as possible (Ary et al., 2010; Campbell & Stanley, 1963). In qualitative research, on the other hand, the researcher is more intimately involved, particularly as the researcher is often the instrument. The researcher is biased, and surfaces those biases in a process known as reflexivity (Ary et al., 2010). In this section, I discuss what I bring to the current study, and how that might have influenced the study. In later sections, I will show how the research design allowed those influences to surface and be integrated into data analysis.

I grew up the son, grandson, and great-grandson of surgeons. By the time I began my college career in 1973, I was convinced that research could lead us to surgical cures for any medical problem. Surgeons were my heroes, and I wanted to be one. I began my university studies in a pre-medical program. My first year in college, though, I took two philosophy courses, one a survey of the great philosophers of history and the other on the philosophies of science. Both exposed me to the idea that we may not, in fact, be able to observe or measure an objective reality. In the spring of that year, a physical chemistry course, in which we learned about the probability nature of electron orbits, and about Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, further decreased my faith in the certainty of knowledge, and in our ability to observe the world without changing it. By the middle of my second year, I had changed my major to mechanical engineering, which seemed certain, knowable, and immutable. I was back on solid ground.

I continued to feel secure in the certainty of mechanical engineering for the first two or three years of my career. I went to work for a forest products firm, in a large factory that extracted pure cellulose from trees. That factory felt like a tangible affirmation that the world was solid, unchanging, knowable, and controllable.

Then I became a supervisor, in charge of 40 men (in 1982 it was still all men) who were operating two large papermaking machines. People, it turned out, were much less predictable, understandable, immutable, or controllable than machinery and fluids were. Even on technical issues, I could look at a situation in our process and see one thing, while one of my operators would see something entirely different. Often, we would both be right, and just looking at the situation from different backgrounds. In the intrapersonal and inter-personal realms, however, my belief in certainty and objectivity was shaken. As I rose through the ranks of management, I became less and less convinced that my view of reality was necessarily the only possible view of reality.

Between 1996 and 2004, I lived and worked abroad, in New Zealand and in Thailand. I saw my behaviors and the behaviors of other Americans through the eyes of my native neighbors, and the view was completely different from how I had viewed myself before. Similarly, I saw how New Zealanders and Thais perceived our political and economic systems, and realized again how different people could perceive the same reality differently. Without knowing the words for the change, I had morphed from a positivist view of the world to a more constructivist view (see below for more on that distinction).

When I decided to undertake training as a coach, I looked for information on the industry. My search led me to the International Coach Federation (ICF). The ICF listed 11 core competencies required to be certified ("ICF core competencies rating levels,"). I read the list not with an eye towards its provenance, (as I did for the current study), but trying to decide what it would take to meet those requirements. I took the 11 core competencies as givens. Convinced that the ICF knew what they were doing, I searched the organization's list of accredited coach training programs and settled on Coach U.

Coach U's training program consisted of four-hour courses, each delivered once a week in one-hour calls. The courses covered the ICF core competencies, supplemented with courses on specific coaching sub-specialties, coaching practicums, and business building strategies. As it turns out, the ICF core competencies included skills, but did not address knowledge, abilities, or other characteristics. The model, in short, was incomplete. Moreover, it was not based on research evidence. The textbook used in the course (*The Coach U personal and corporate coach training handbook*, 2005) contained no citations, no references, and no mention of coaching research.

Since finishing Coach U, I have coached nearly 200 executives, met several hundred other coaches, attended coaching conferences, and read many books on coaching. It is now clear to me that outstanding coaching takes more than just the training I received. Just as nurses do not come out of nursing school as experts (Benner, 1984), I do not believe coaches are experts upon completion of their training or education.

This study sought to discover what competencies are common to outstanding leadership coaches. Given my background, I have opinions on the topic. My experience over the last eight years has made me skeptical of the ICF core competency model. I had to guard against letting my skepticism blind me to the possibility that the ICF model may, in fact, be correct.

This study was important to me beyond just being the vehicle that allows me to complete my Ph.D. I hope eventually to found an evidence-based coach development program, based on the findings of this and subsequent studies. That aspiration might have lead me to try to force novel interpretations out of the data, in order to create a competitively differentiated model of coach excellence.

Among grounded theory researchers, there are three major epistemological approaches: post-positivist, interpretivist/constructivist, and critical. Post-positivists believe that there is an objective reality outside of ourselves, but that it cannot be perfectly understood. Knowledge cannot be verified, and is always subject to subsequent falsification. Measurements and observations are imprecise. Researchers are biased. Researchers can and should design studies to minimize the influence of this bias on study conclusions. Post-positivists believe the proper approach to studying reality is methodological rigor, including the use of large samples and statistical tests of significance (Daly, 2007; Walsh et al., 2015).

Constructivists, or interpretevists, believe that the only reality that matters is the reality that we construct when we make meaning of our experiences. While there is an objective reality, in the constructivist view, there are many perspectives of that reality. In constructivist research, the researcher and the participants jointly create this reality. The participants make meaning of their experiences, and the researcher makes meaning of how the participants explained their meaning. I conceive of this as a six-step process: 1) reality happens to participants, 2) participants make meaning out of what they experience, 3) participants tell the researcher what meaning they have made of their experiences, 4) the researcher makes meaning of what the participants say, 5) the researcher reports those findings, and 6) the reader makes meaning of the report. Constructivist researchers are intimately involved in the research, and the researcher's biases are part of the process. What the researcher knows and believes, for example, influences the initial list of research questions, for example. Those initial research questions will limit and guide the interviews, and therefore influence the stories participants tell (Charmaz, 2006; Daly, 2007).

Finally, researchers taking the critical approach see conflict, power, and unequal relationships as the true reality. They see science as a political endeavor, and seek solutions to social inequality. In this tradition, reflexivity and collaboration with participants are seen as key (Daly, 2007).

I place my epistemology between post-positivism and constructivism, leaning more toward the latter. Like post-positivists, I value rigor in research. Like constructivists, however, I believe there are multiple perspectives of the same reality, and am vitally interested in how participants make meaning of their experiences. I see myself as influencing how participants tell their stories, no matter how hard I try to be completely objective (Daly, 2007). Knowing that, I was careful to ask questions that let my participants tell their stories, with as little influence from me as possible. I also checked interview transcripts to look for evidence that my questions or reactions might have influenced participant responses.

In another view of epistemology, Charmaz contrasts positivist theorists with interpretive theorists. Positivist theorists see to explain relationships between variables. Interpretive theorists seek understanding of the concepts and the relationship between them, interpret the data to find that understanding, and look for patterns and connections (Charmaz, 2006). Understanding, in the interpretivist view, is seeking to, "make sense of what one knows, to be able to know why it's so, and to have the ability to use it in various situations and contexts" (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, p. 353). Interpretivists believe that we cannot know objective reality, only how our participants interpret that reality, that facts and values are linked, and that all truth is provisional. Good theory can contain elements of both positivist and interpretive theory (Charmaz, 2006). In Charmaz's terms, my approach is largely interpretivist.

Study Method

The study approach will be discussed in detail in the following sections, and is illustrated in Figure 1 on page 36. At a high level, the study began with in-depth interviews of participants. Interviews were transcribed within a week. Immediately after each transcript was complete, coding began (Glaser, 2011). Early interview analysis lead to changes in future interviews, in

Figure 1: Study Approach Flow Chart

order to fill in missing details. As analysis proceeded, links and relationships between the themes were discovered, eventually leading to a model based upon those themes (Charmaz, 2006).

Participant Recruitment and Selection

Unlike in quantitative research, where large samples are desired, qualitative research often depends on deep analysis of small samples. Grounded theory methodology, in particular, depends on detailed, in-depth interviews of participants. Because the sample must be small, the participants need to be able to provide the greatest depth and breadth of perspectives on the study topic. Participants should represent extreme cases, to provide the maximum information on the study topic (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). For this study, that meant that outstanding executive coaches were required. Unfortunately, there is not yet a valid, reliable, and credible scale to measure either coaching process or outcomes, nor any scale that allows identification of outstanding coaches (Hagen & Peterson, 2014).

In the absence of a reliable and valid scale, organizational purchasers of leadership coaching services must still select coaches somehow. For those purchasers, coach selection is a high-stakes game, with their personal credibility on the line. Those purchasers report that they make initial coach selections based on referrals and reference checks, and on face-to-face interviews. It takes time and multiple coaching engagements, however, for outstanding leadership coaching to become evident to purchasers. Only when the clients of a coach exhibit significant and sustained behavior change do purchasers begin to call them outstanding coaches (Dagley, 2009). Because of the importance to them of accurately evaluating coach expertise, because of their experience selecting and evaluating coaches, and because of their unique ability to observe long- term coaching client behavioral change, organizational purchases of coaching services were valid sources of outstanding coach referrals for study.

A purchaser of leadership coaching services provided a list of their best executive coaches (Step 1 in Figure 1). The coaching firm was asked to explain the criteria they used in choosing the best from among all of their coaches. The 20 recommended coaches were invited, via email, to be part of the study (Step 2 in Figure 1). Follow up calls were held with the 18 coaches who responded to the emails, and research interviews were scheduled for all 18. Two of those were unable to keep the research interview appointments, but the remaining 16 were included in the data for this study. Study participants received interview preparation instructions (Appendix D) and a consent form (Appendix E). Before the interview began, each participant returned a signed copy of the consent form via emailed scan or photo.

Data Collection

Although data collection and analysis proceeded simultaneously (Charmaz, 2006), they are described separately here, for clarity. This section describes the data collection plan.

Participants completed the research interviews over freeconferencepro.com, allowing the calls to be recorded. As a backup, calls were recorded using the iPhone app TapeACall. At the start of each recorded interview, I read the informed consent aloud, and asked the participant to consent verbally. This provided a backup to the written consent and gave participants a second opportunity to back out of the study.

Interview questions were open-ended to elicit the maximum amount of data. Appendix F presents the list of questions that were approved by the IRB. The interview format closely followed the protocol and questions detailed by Spencer and Spencer (1993, pp. 119 – 132), and the questions are taken verbatim from that text. The four initial questions were designed to get the participant talking, and to learn about that coach's developmental path to coaching.

The heart of the interviews were the questions in the middle section, which elicited detailed descriptions of one or two critical incidents which had occurred in the participant's coaching practice recently. Spencer and Spencer suggested opening this section with the following prompt:

> Now I'd like to get a complete example of the kinds of things you do on your job. Can you think of a specific time or situation which went particularly well for you, or you felt particularly effective … a high point? (1993, p. 124)

As the participant told the story of each critical incident, the seven questions listed in the middle section served to elicit the rich detail necessary for a clear picture of competencies. The questions moved sequentially through the story, beginning with the situation, moving to the participant's thoughts, feelings and goals regarding that situation, then to what the participant actually did and said, and finally to the outcome of those actions and words. The final question sought to surface the participant's beliefs about what drove success (Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

About an hour after each interview was complete, I downloaded the MP3 file of the interview, and saved two copies; one on my laptop, and one on my password protected DropBox site. I transcribed all interviews verbatim, completing each transcript within a few days of the interview.

Data Analysis

The goal of the analysis phase was to develop a model, of outstanding executive coach competencies. As already noted, data collection and analysis proceeded simultaneously, in what Charmaz described as a braid: collect data, analyze those data, collect more data, based on what the analysis has revealed, and then analyze some more (Charmaz, 2006). Elements of data analysis included coding and memo writing.

Coding. Glaser advocated coding from field notes, rather than from transcripts, because, “taping long interviews and having to have them typed or trying to listen to them slows down achieving the goal of a GT. Field notes are much faster. The researcher can start coding field notes immediately that night" (2011, p. 12). Following Glaser’s lead, coding of the field notes on the first interview (Step 5 in Figure 1) was completed within 24 hours of the interview. That first analysis step, however, showed that the field notes were not complete enough to support robust analysis, and field note coding was abandoned in favor of coding the full transcripts. I continued to take field notes, but used them mainly to guide my follow-up questions during each interview.

Theoretical sampling began after the first few interviews were analyzed, adding questions in order to test early themes that are emerging from the data (Steps 5.1 and 5.2 in Figure 1). That process (analysis, followed by theoretical sampling) continued until new data stopped yielding new insights or category properties (Charmaz, 2006; Daly, 2007). That point in this study was reached after nine interviews, by which point 99% of all codes generated had emerged.

The first level of coding (Step 4 in Figure 1) involved a line-by-line review of the field transcripts, assigning codes (names for bits of data) to words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs (Daly, 2007). This intra-interview analysis (L. D. Marks, personal communication, May 26, 2014) broke down the data into discrete chunks of meaning, which were subsequently compared to each other in order to build categories. At this point in the analysis, the goal was to experiment, to try out codes, looking for themes that make sense (Daly, 2007).

A second round of coding (Step 5 in Figure 1) entailed a search for categories, or broad themes that emerged from the initial codes. Comparing codes to codes allowed them to be grouped into categories. As categories emerged, subsequent interviews filled in the properties of each category. The next stage of coding involved comparing category to category, looking for similar categories that could be combined, and for trivial categories that could be eliminated. The goal of this stage was to combine and eliminate categories in order to find the most parsimonious set that answered the research question (Campion, et al., 2011).

Memo writing. An important tool in grounded theory is memo writing (Step 5.3 in Figure 1). Memos are short or long notes that capture the researcher's thinking and decisions as analysis proceeds. Memos capture reflexive thoughts on the researcher's reactions to the data and the process, immediate impressions before and after interviews, thoughts on category properties and dimensions, thoughts about codes, thoughts about the relationships between codes, and between categories, and research decisions made (Charmaz, 2006). Memos might be textual (capturing early thoughts in the process), observational (recording what the researcher's other senses are seeing, including intuition), conceptual/theoretical (categories, relationships, theory), operational (questions to ask next time, sampling strategies, method details), or reflexive (Strauss, 1987, as quoted in Daly, 2007). Other purposes of memos might include detailing processes that are hidden within codes, documenting the specific data used in defining categories, sparking ideas, developing the researcher's writing voice, and increasing researcher confidence and competence as a qualitative analyst (Charmaz, 2006).

Glaser saw memo writing as the core of grounded theory. He argued that memoing should occur whenever an idea arose. His instruction was to stop everything, even coding, in order capture thoughts in memos (1978; 2011). Over the course of this study I wrote 37 memos, most of which ended up in early versions chapters 4 and 5.

Practical Considerations

This section discusses three practical considerations of the study: ethical arrangements, validity approaches, and the research timetable.

Ethics

In any research that involves human subjects, utmost care must be taken to protect participants from harm, and to protect their identities. Participants in this study were asked to give their informed consent twice: in writing before the study began and verbally at the beginning of the interview recording.

This study was not expected to pose any risk to participants, and the IRB granted an exemption (Appendix G). I needed to know participant names, in order to contact them at the member checking stage of the study (see below), so I was not be able to promise anonymity. However, I did protect participants' confidentiality. No real names will be used in any publication that results from this work. Only a number (i.e., Coach #1) identified participants during analysis, and I used pseudonyms in chapters 4 and 5. Recordings will be destroyed the day after the committee approves the dissertation. The match between coach names and coach number was documented in an Excel file that will be destroyed after the committee approves the dissertation. Field notes, codes, memos, and other MaxQDA products were saved on my laptop and on a password-protected DropBox site.

Validity

Internal validity is a measure of the rigor of a study, addressing whether the study design and execution are likely to have led to true results. In quantitative research, that means the use of the full power of random assignment, maintaining instrument calibration, and monitoring and reporting on threats to validity that are not controlled by the full power of random assignment. Internal validity in quantitative research rests on Kerlinger's Max-Min-Con principle: maximizing variability due to the experimental treatment, minimizing variability due to random error, and controlling variability due to extraneous variables (Burnett, 2013).

In qualitative research, internal validity is not quite as straightforward. Experts suggest five specific strategies for increasing internal reliability (Charmaz, 2006; Daly, 2007), four of which I was able to incorporate into the present study. The one strategy I was not able to successfully employ was the use of peer coders. At an early stage of the analysis I provided a set of codes and several pages of transcript to a Ph.D. student (in an educational leadership program) and to a long-term Ph.D. counselor. Unfortunately, the codes provided at this early stage were poorly defined, and the coders agreed on fewer than 50% of the codings. This disagreement, in part, spurred further development and refinement of the codes and categories.

First, readers need to see that I have carefully followed rigorous procedures (Daly, 2007). In Chapter 4 I describe my methodology and research decisions fully and completely, so that readers can see clearly how I selected participants, what questions I asked in interviews, how I coded the data, and how theory emerged from those codes. Second, the more I allow my participants' voices to shine through, the more easily readers can decide if I made the right choices during my analysis (Saunders & Rojon, 2014). I have made extensive use of verbatim participant quotes, particularly in Chapter 4. Third, I made extensive use of memos to track my thinking, ideas, decisions, and biases (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Daly, 2007), and I discuss these reflexive issues in the appropriate sections of Chapters 4 and 5.

Fourth, and finally, member checking (taking ideas, concepts, and theories back to the participants for their comments) provided further evidence of validity (Charmaz, 2006). This last is shown as Step 8 in Figure 1. A modified Delphi approach (Hsu & Sandford, 2007) was employed as a member-checking device. In their description of the process, Hsu and Sandford saw the first round of Delphi as an open-ended questionnaire (2007). I will replaced that round with the interviews and coding described above. In Round 2, the model that emerged from my analysis formed the basis of a survey questionnaire that was administered to participants. Participants were asked to rate each behavior in terms of its importance in assisting them in meeting their coaching goals. The rating scale was a Likert-type scale with five levels: extremely important, very important, moderately important, slightly important, and not at all important. The results of the modified Delphi process are reported in Chapter 4.

External validity means different things in qualitative research than it does in quantitative research. In quantitative research, external validity is the extent to which the results are objectively generalizable to situations that are different from the specific research conditions. Primarily, this means controlling for Campbell and Stanley's four threats to external validity (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). In qualitative research, on the other hand, external validity is the extent to which the findings are transferrable to other situations. Transferability means that readers are able to understand the study findings well enough that they can make decisions about how the findings are similar and different from their own situations (Charmaz, 2006). Transferability requires four conditions in grounded theory. First, the theory or model, and the processes and conditions underlying that model, must be described in full rich detail. Second, the theory must clearly match, or be grounded in, the data. Third, the theory should be plausible and believable. Finally, the findings should be useful in the specific realm of study, and potentially useful in other realms (Daly, 2007). All four of these conditions are met as part of Chapter 5.

Conclusion

The literature review highlighted a gap in current understanding of what competencies are important to outstanding leadership coaches. The aim of this study was to develop a model of those competencies, grounded in behavioral event interviews with outstanding coaches. A purchaser of coaching services provided a list of their best coaches, 16 of whom participated in the study. Two stages of coding led to a competency model for executive coaches. That model was revised for clarity, and based on participant feedback, as detailed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

We know little about which competencies are important to the work of outstanding executive coaches. Because of that lack, we may be wasting time and money in coach preparation. We may be addressing some of the correct competencies, missing others, and over-emphasizing some that have little relationship to outstanding coaching. To begin to fill that gap, the specific problem addressed in this study was the lack of an evidence-based model of executive coach competencies. The purpose of this study was to discover a model of the competencies that outstanding executive coaches perceive as central to their success, as expressed in behavioral event interviews (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). The central question of this study was, "what is the competency model that explains outstanding executive coaching performance?"

The purpose of this chapter is to detail how the data were analyzed, and to present the results of that analysis. Participant selection and demographics are detailed first. The bulk of the chapter is devoted to illustrating the process by which a competency model emerged from the interview data. Initial coding is described, followed by a discussion of how codes were combined into categories, and then of how categories were transformed into a first draft competency model. The process of member checking, and subsequent model revisions is detailed, and a final model is presented.

Participants

Primary data for this study were the transcripts of interviews with executive coaches. A coaching firm provided a list of the 20 executive coaches they consider the best that they work with. The coaching firm reported that they suggested coaches who had performed well on coaching engagements, were often likely to be selected when coachees had a choice among two or more potential coaches, and who had received consistently positive feedback from coachees after the end of engagements. All of the 20 of the coaches were independent coaches, who worked with this firm, and other firms, and who also had clients of their own. All 20 were invited to participate in the study. One did not respond to the invitation. Three had schedule conflicts and were not able to schedule research interviews before the conclusion of the study. Sixteen coaches participated in the one-hour research interviews.

Seven of the participants were male and nine were female. The most common earned degree was an MBA or MS in Management (eight participants). Five participants had earned degrees in Psychology (two bachelors, one masters, two doctoral). Three had earned master's degrees in Organizational Development. One had earned an MA in Executive Coaching.

The participants had worked in business for a median of 16.5 years before entering coaching, with a range from zero years (one participant) to 30 or more years (four participants). All but two participants had ten or more years of business experience before beginning their coaching practices. Participants had been coaching executives for a median of 15 years, with a range from six years (two participants) to 28 years (one participant).

Participants had received their coach training from a variety of organizations. Two of the study participants had no formal training in coaching or in executive coaching. Four were trained by Coaches Training Institute, and four by Coach U/Corporate Coach U (sister organizations). The remaining six had pursued a variety of coach training opportunities.

Each participant was assigned a random, two-digit code number in order to preserve anonymity during analysis. For purposes of clarity in this document, each participant was also assigned a random name. Those names will be used to identify participants throughout this chapter. Table 2 provides brief career sketches for the 16 study participants.

Table 2: Study Participant Career Sketches

Pseudonym	Career Sketch
Allan	Allan is a male with six years' experience as an executive coach. He earned an MA in executive coaching, and is certified in various assessment instruments. Before becoming a coach, he spent 26 years in Human Resources for a financial services firm.
Ariel	Ariel is a female with 20 years' experience as an executive coach. She earned an MS in Human Resource Management and Marketing, and a Ph.D. in Human Resource Development. She completed coach training at Coach U. Before becoming a coach, she spent 15 years consulting for the banking industry.
Brady	Brady is a male with six years' experience as an executive coach. He earned an MA in Management, with a concentration in Human Resources Management. Before becoming a coach, he spent 30 years in Human Resources in the chemicals industry.
Colby	Colby is a male with 26 years' experience as an executive coach. He earned an MS in Organizational Development, and is trained in various assessment instruments. Before becoming a coach, he spent 15 years as an Organizational Development consultant. He describes himself as a serial entrepreneur, with current investments in four startup companies.
Debi	Debi is a female with 15 years' experience as an executive coach. She earned a Ph.D. in Industrial and Organizational Psychology. Before becoming a coach, she spent ten years in a Human Resources consulting firm.
Esther	Esther is a female with 15 years' experience as an executive coach. She earned a BA in Psychology and an MA in Literature. Before becoming a coach, she spent 20 years running an independent book publishing firm.
Fred	Fred is a male with 28 years' experience as an executive coach. He earned an Ed.D. in Psychology and Education. Before becoming a coach, he briefly worked as a therapist, changing his focus to coaching early in his career.
Jarod	Jarod is a male with 12 years' experience as an executive coach. He earned an MA in Industrial and Organizational Psychology, and completed coach training at Corporate Coach U, the College of Executive Coaching, and the Newfield Institute. Before becoming a coach, he spent 20 years in manufacturing, mainly in sales and marketing.
Jessica	Jessica is a female with 16 years' experience as an executive coach. She earned an MS in Organizational Development and completed coach training at the Coaches Training Institute. Before becoming a coach, she spent 10 years working for a management consulting firm.
Jolene	Jolene is a female with 15 years' experience as an executive coach. She earned an MBA, and completed coach training at the Coaches Training Institute. Before becoming a coach, she spent 18 years in the financial services industry, in positions as high as Senior Vice President for Human Resources.

(Table 2 continued)

Pseudonym	Career Sketch
Kathlyn	Kathlyn is a female with 15 years' experience as an executive coach. She earned a BA in Industrial and Organizational Psychology, and an MBA. She completed coach training at Coach U. Before becoming a coach, she spent 12 years as a Human Resources executive.
Kevin	Kevin is a male with 16 years' experience as an executive coach. He earned an MBA, and completed coach training at Corporate Coach U. Before becoming a coach, he spent 30 years in senior leadership roles in the chemicals industry.
Marjorie	Marjorie is a female with 13 years' experience as an executive coach. She earned an MBA, and completed coach training at New Ventures. Before becoming a coach, she spent 13 years in equities sales.
Nellie	Nellie is a female with 14 years' experience as an executive coach. She earned an MBA with a concentration in Marketing and Finance, and completed coach training at the Coaches Training Institute. Before becoming a coach, she spent 14 years in banking and telecommunications.
Phyllis	Phyllis is a female with eight years' experience as an executive coach. She earned an MBA, and a Certificate in Coaching. Before becoming a coach, she spent 31 years in senior banking roles, the last seven of which were in Human Resources.
Seth	Seth is a male with 15 years' experience as an executive coach. He earned a JD, and completed coach training at the Coaches Training Institute. Before becoming a coach, he spent 30 years in various business leadership roles, including Chief Administrative Officer.

Overview of the Analytical Process Employed

Figure 2 shows an overview of the analytical process that was employed in this study. This section described that process at an overview level. Detailed data analysis is described in subsequent sections. As noted in Chapter 3, each interview was transcribed in days immediately following the interview. Transcripts for the 16 interviews totaled 164 pages and 112,546 words. Interview recordings and transcripts, project memos, and other documents were stored in data analysis software ("MaxQDA, software for qualitative data analysis," 1989-2016). The same software was used for coding the data.

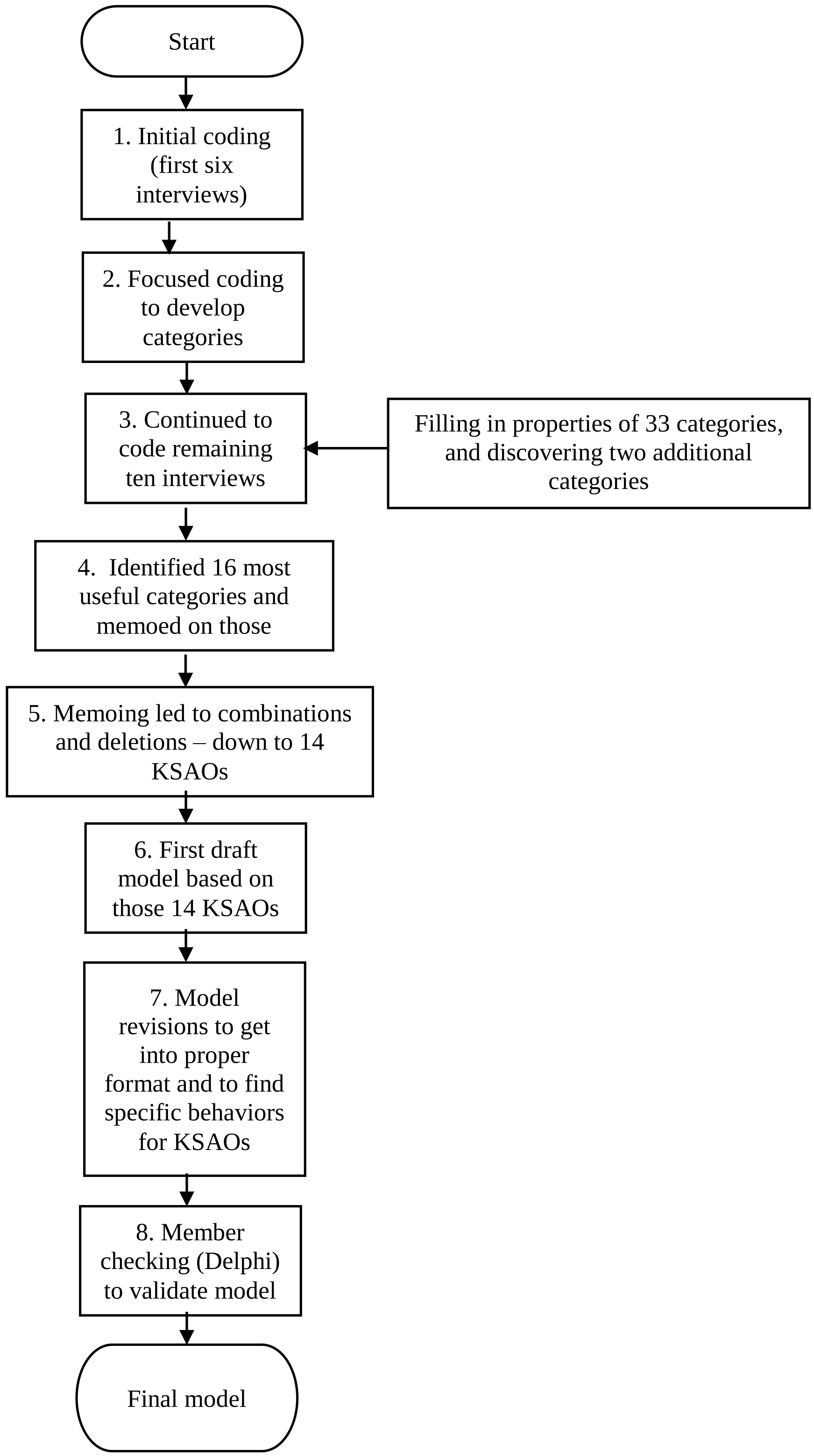

Figure 2: Analytical Process Flow Chart

Stage 1: Initial Coding

Charmaz (2006) defined coding as creating names (words or short phrases) to represent chunks of data. Stage 1, initial coding, involved going through each interview line by line, and assigning a name to each coherent element of meaning. New data elements were compared to previous data and to earlier codes. If earlier codes did not fit a new piece of data, a new code was created. At this point, the codes served mainly as labels that could later be compared to each other in order to find order in the data. Following Charmaz, initial coding was completed relatively quickly.

The chunks in this analysis were not usually individual words, nor individual lines. Most of the interview data consisted of participant stories. Often the meaning was in the final sentence of a story, but earlier sentences were required to put the meaning into context. Those were coded as single chunks. For example, Brady told a relatively long story (500 words in the transcript), the point of which came at about 300 words in. Brady recognized a pattern of behavior by his coachee. When he confronted the coachee with the pattern, it led to a breakthrough:

> And he had that moment, that you get in coaching examples, where the person is just quiet after a question, which is the thing I'm always listening for, because that's the point in time that real learning is happening; that real examination is going on; that someone is really starting to process, "Wait a second, there's something going on here." Well the neat part of the story is is that finally, after having [unintelligible], he says, "Okay, I understand. I will give it a try."

The entire 500-word story seemed to be about observing patterns of behavior, and was coded as such.

Stage 2: Focused Coding

The initial coding of the first six interviews yielded 136 codes. Stage 2, focused coding, helped to group those codes in to categories. Charmaz (2006) explained that the researcher should choose a few codes, those that have shown up in the data most often, or that seem significant for another reason. The research is to compare codes to codes, looking for similarities and differences, in order to categorize, or group, the data. To accomplish this, each of the 136 codes was written on a separate index card. The cards were sorted into piles of similar codes, comparing each card to other cards in general, and to the cards in each pile. The end result of that stage was a set of 20 categories. Glaser (1978) suggested the use of coding families as a way of categorizing data, as was explained in the Methods chapter of this study. Charmaz (2006), though, suggested that this might artificially impose a framework that the data did not support. In this case, it was useful at this point to combine the 20 categories into a framework that is common in competency work (Brannick & Levine, 2006): knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs). While this framework simplified the remaining coding, it did not support development of a behaviors-based competency model, and was dropped later in the analysis.

Stage 3: Coding the Remaining Ten Interviews

The categorized code system developed in Stage 2 drove the coding of the remaining ten interviews. While those codes worked for most of the remaining data, 11 additional codes were needed to adequately describe some of the data in these last ten interviews. Two additional categories also emerged, so that the code system at the end of Stage 3 included 35 categories and 147 codes.

Theoretical saturation occurs when all the properties for all the categories have been fully described. The researcher must decide when this point has been reached, and must be able to explain that decision to readers. In practice, perfect theoretical saturation can never be reached. Practical saturation occurs when new data no longer yields new properties for the categories (Daly, 2007). Saturation was reached in this study when new interviews yielded very few new codes. A total of 214 codes emerged from the interview data, 210 of which had appeared by the ninth interview. The final seven interviews yielded only four new codes, suggesting saturation was probably reached at nine interviews. Table 3 shows the percentage of codes generated at six stages in the coding.

Table 3: Cumulative Codes

Cumulative # of interviews coded	Cumulative # of codes generated	Cumulative percentage of all codes generated
4	70	33
5	128	60
6	207	97
9	210	99
16	214	100

Stage 4: Memoing on the Most Relevant Categories

In stage 4, following Charmaz (2006), the 16 categories were identified that appeared with the most frequency in the interview data, were mentioned in at least 25% of the interviews, and seemed to capture the essence of the data. A detailed memo on each of the categories pulled together all the relevant quotes, in an attempt to make sense of the properties of the category.

Stage 5: Combining and Deleting Categories

A review of the memos generated in Stage 4 suggested that some of the categories could be combined, and some could be eliminated as not analytically significant. As a result, and as detailed below, the number of categories dropped to 14.

Stage 6: First Draft Model

In stage 6 of the analysis, the 14 categories names were transformed into competency area names, as explained below. Memos provided the basis for initial competency descriptions, resulting in a first draft model.

Stage 7: Model Revisions

Comparing the draft model to other completed competency models suggested several problems. Extensive revisions in Stage 7 yielded a model more in line with standard competency model format.

Stage 8: Member Checking

Study participants reviewed the model from Stage 7, rating the importance of each of the behaviors proposed in that model. As a result, one behavior was dropped from the final model. This model comprised eight competency areas, and 63 specific behaviors, and is covered in detail later in this chapter. Before covering that, though, the next few sections provide greater detail on how the analysis was accomplished.

Initial Code Development

Interviews were transcribed by the author using Express Scribe Transcription Software ("Express Scribe Pro," 2016), with a pedal control, and then uploaded to MaxQDA ("MaxQDA, software for qualitative data analysis," 1989-2016) for coding. Coding began as soon as the first interview was transcribed, and continued as each subsequent transcription was completed. A code was assigned to each phrase, sentence, or paragraphs that seemed to be about one particular topic. For example, Cody's interview was the first to be transcribed. The following quote was coded initially as "experience," as it illustrated Colby's business experience:

> And prior to that I had always been an entrepreneur. Owned several businesses. I still do. I'm partner in about four types of businesses, ranging from restaurants to home care for elderly people with friends from high school, so I'm active in about four businesses, through partnerships that are more investing type and certainly at the board of director level, but not actively on a day to day basis.

In this next quote from Colby's interview, "focus" and "journey" stood out. The quote was coded as "Focus on the journey:"

> The main task is to oversee the quality of the process; to be very focused on what they, on what their learning journey is, on what their journey through the process is. This is very central and I think the most important responsibilities as a coach to keep good records, their folders in good standing, up to date, to spend the time after the coaching session to chronicle a little bit and be ready for that next one, so that you carry their journey with you. And to have all of those very well, discrete one from the other.

In this final example, Colby spoke of the many ways he stayed on top of developments in the field. “Staying current” seemed to fit well as a code for this segment:

> Then there’s this piece around continuing education as a coach; to keep abreast of the latest research in the field, and how coaching is evolving, whether it’s the neurosciences and the contribution they’re making to us. Certainly just stay in the know through education

More examples of quotes from Colby’s interview, and the codes they were assigned, are included in Appendix H. Codes were assigned in similar fashion to subsequent transcripts. After the first six interviews (Colby, Brady, Marjorie, Jessica, Debi, and Jolene) were coded, 136 different codes had been used on 446 transcript segments. While 76 of the codes had been used only once or twice, nine had been used ten or more times.

Grouping of Codes into Categories

Once the first six interviews had been coded, each of the 136 codes was handwritten onto an index card. The cards were manually sorted, combining similar codes into stacks. Some codes seemed to so similar as to be the same, and they were combined into single codes. The end result was a set of 74 codes, grouped into 20 categories (Table 4).

Memoing on Initial Categories

As interviewing and coding progressed, memos were written to better understand the categories that were emerging. Each memo was an attempt to tie together quotes that would explain the category, illustrate how it was derived from the quotes, and show the parameters that seemed to be important to the category. Appendix I includes an example memo from this stage

Table 4: Categories and Codes After Card Sort

Category	Codes included
360-degree feedback	360
Authenticity	Being authentic Trustworthiness
Availability	Always thinking about coachees Always available
Context awareness	Organization Politics Perspective Looking ahead
Courage	Taking risks Vulnerability Coach as instrument Ambiguity
Curious	Genuinely curious About the client Learning from the coachee Open-minded
Education	Psychology Strozi CTI David Rock's group MS in OD MBA Stay current
EQ	Other awareness – urgency, behaviors, emotions Self-awareness – intuition, emotions
Experience	Credibility Coach's journey Other clients and organizations Business acumen Change leadership Countries and cultures Domain specific Trust in my experience
Flexibility	Timing
Intuition	Using it Trusting it Hearing it

(Table 4 continued)

Category	Codes included
Maintaining focus on the coachee	Caring about and for the coachee Goals What does this person need from me? Coachee's agenda Timing Holding coachee accountable
Managing relationships	Building trust Boundaries Coachee – trust, safety, creating a space Confidentiality Triangular Explaining the coaching process
Observing	Words and music Energy Body language Patterns of behavior Levels of attention Listening Noticing
Patience	Timing
Presence	Connection In the moment Lack of self-talk Let it be
Questioning	Questioning
Speaking truth to power	Challenging Being clear and direct Confidence
Theories or models	Systems thinking Selling and Closing Coach generated Action learning Adult learning
Tools	Books DISC Hogan

of the process. The example is an initial memo on 360-degree feedback, pulling together the data from the first six interviews.

As coding progressed on additional transcripts, it became clear that some of the categories in Table 4 were only lightly supported by the data. After an additional six interviews had been coded (Nellie, Seth, Fred, Allan, Phyllis, and Kathlyn), fourteen categories accounted for 75% of coded segments. Five of the six lower frequency categories were added into the most appropriate of the remaining 14, as shown in Table 5. One, "Theories or Models" was deleted, because no single theory or model was mentioned by more than a single participant, and seven of the 16 participants did not mention any theory or model at all.

Table 5: Low Frequency Categories Disposition

Original category	Added to category
Availability	Maintaining focus on the coachee
Courage	Managing relationships
Curious	Observing
Questioning	Observing
Theories or Models	Deleted – no commonality
Tools	Maintaining focus on the coachee

The 14 categories at this point in the analysis were: 360-degree feedback; authenticity; context awareness; education; EQ (emotional intelligence); experience; flexibility; intuition; maintaining focus on the coachee; managing relationships, observing; patience; presence; and speaking truth to power. Those categories served as the raw material for the first draft of the competency model.

First Draft Model

Each memo, and the associated interview segments, was reviewed in order to define competency areas. A title for each area, in gerund form, was developed. For example, the memo on the category "360-feedback process" suggested a competency area name of "Gathering and giving 360-degree feedback." Appendix J includes the original category names, notes on how the category names were transformed into a competency area names, and the resulting competency area names.

Once competency area names had been refined as explained above, memos were revised to include codes newly added to categories. The final version of the memo on the 360-degree feedback process, for example, is shown in Appendix K. The revised version includes twice as many quotes as the original memo (28 quotes), reflecting the added detail provided by the additional codes and by the remaining interviews. The final memo for each competency area was the reviewed to collect specific definitions for each competency area. For example, a review of the memo on the 360-degree feedback process (Appendix K) led to the following definition statements:

> Outstanding executive coaches excel at gathering qualitative feedback from coachees' managers, peers, and subordinates. These coaches carefully time the 360-degree process, waiting, if necessary, until the coachee is ready to receive the feedback. They are able to frame the 360-degree feedback process as a source of useful information for the coachee, and as a way for the coachee to deepen relationships with key stakeholders. These coaches focus, in the interview phase, at eliciting specific, behavioral details, details that will help their coachee understand and work with the feedback. Executive coaches who exhibit this competency think carefully about how to present the feedback to coachees in a way that maximizes the chances the coachee will take it on board and work with it. They tend to excel at drawing out the strengths of their coachees, especially those that others see and that the coachee does not. These coaches often work to normalize developmental areas, so that coachees see them as normal issues for people in similar situations. Outstanding executive coaches think strategically about what level of anonymity they will promise to participants, and then hold to those promises completely.

Competency area names and definitions were collected into a first draft of the model (Appendix L).

Model Revisions

At this point there remained a few problems with the model. First, the "growing and managing relationships" competency area combined relationships with the boss and the Human Resources coaching contact with the relationship with the coachee. As perhaps may be seen in the definition of that competency area, and as will be clearly seen in the final version of the model, the relationship with the coachee demands behaviors distinctly different from those needed for the relationships with the boss and with the Human Resources coaching contact. To solve this problem, two separate competency areas were created, one focusing on the relationship with the coachee, and the other focusing on relationships with the boss and with the Human Resources coaching contact.

Second, reviews of all of the memos made it clear that some of the competency areas were supported by rich data sets, while some others were only lightly supported. Those that were lightly supported by the data were combined into other competency areas. “Attending to context” could be seen as essentially another aspect of “Observing, listening, and noticing.” “Being fully present” also fit well into that competency area. “Being flexible” and “Being patient” both fit well in the “Focusing on the coachee competency area,” as did “Speaking truth to power.” “Being authentic” fell neatly into “Growing and maintaining the relationship with the coachee.” “Trusting intuition” matched well with other codes and categories in the “Understanding and managing emotions” competency area.

Third, a review of other completed competency models suggested changes in the structure of the model. First, the competency area names were changed to present tense verb phrases, with added explanatory detail. Appendix M shows the original competency area names and the final names.

Second, the original definitions were not observable behaviors. For example, the first sentence of the definition for 360-degree feedback was “Outstanding executive coaches excel at gathering qualitative feedback from coachees’ managers, peers, and subordinates.” It would be difficult to measure what “excel” meant in this context, or to observe a coach “excelling.” A related problem was that the paragraph form of the definitions made them hard to follow. The definitions needed to be divided into specific, discrete, observable behaviors, and presented in list form. The memos were again reviewed, and specific behaviors were extracted for the model. Appendix N illustrates how the specific and observable behaviors for the 360-degree feedback competency area emerged from interview data. Behaviors for the other seven competency areas were derived in similar fashion, leading to 64 behaviors in eight competency areas.

From that point, the model was revised for clarity and consistency, without changing the meaning of competency area names or definitions. For example, the coachee relationship competency area was originally titled as, "Managing relationship between coach and coachee: Builds a safe and trusting relationship with the coachee, to enable coach and coachee to address coaching issues openly and directly." Through several revisions, the title for that competency area became the one shown in Table 6: "Builds rapport with the coachee: Takes steps to establish mutual respect, determine purpose of coaching relationship, and establish appropriate roles, behaviors and expectations." As a final step, the memos were reviewed again to check that every behavior listed in the model was supported by specific quotes from the interviews. The result of these revisions was the model shown in Appendix O, comprising eight competency areas and 64 specific behaviors.

Delphi Results and Final Model

As a form of member checking, a survey was created to gauge interview participants' perceptions of the importance of each specific behavior in the model (Appendix P). Participants were asked to rate each behavior in terms of its importance in assisting them in meeting their coaching goals. The rating scale was a Likert-type scale with five levels: extremely important, very important, moderately important, slightly important, and not at all important.

The survey was sent to all 16 interview participants, and ten of them completed it. Raw survey data are shown in Appendix Q, listed in the same order as the behaviors appear in the model. An answer of "extremely important" was assigned a value of 1, "very important" was assigned a value of 2, "moderately important" was assigned a value of 3, "slightly important" was assigned a value of 4, and "not at all important" was assigned a value of 5. Given that scoring approach, the lower the average rating, the more important the behavior element was seen to be by the respondents.

Appendix R shows the behaviors listed in order of importance, from most important to least important. This graph suggested that one behavior (#3: Obtains multiple perspectives on coachee's work-related behavior prior to the first meeting) was seen as much less important than the other behaviors. Upon reflection, it was clear that this behavior was covered already by behavior #44 in the 360-degree feedback competency area. Based on that, this one behavior was dropped from the model. The remaining 63 behaviors, all rated 2.50 or better (important to very important), were retained in the final model (Appendix S).

Detailed Description of the Model

The final model comprises eight competency areas and 63 specific behaviors. The following sections describe the competency areas and the behaviors.

Manages Relationship Between Coach and Client Organization

Participants discussed how they worked closely with the coachee's organization. This usually included working with the coachee's manager, except when the coachee was the CEO of the organization. Most participant engagements also included a relationship with someone in the Human Resources function, called the HR coaching contact in the competency model. That person was often the one who found and contracted with the coach, and who managed the contractual details of the coaching engagement. Participants described how they managed the competing interests that sometimes arose from the three different stakeholders in the engagement (coachee, manager, HR). They told of how important they believed it was to set up the engagement properly, especially so that the coachee saw coaching as a constructive opportunity rather than as punishment. Participants also explained working to get a full picture of the situation from the coachee's manager and the HR coaching contact.

Seven behaviors fit into this competency area. Coaches determine the purpose and the outcomes of the coaching engagement, in the eyes of the coachee's manager and in the eyes of the HR coaching contact. Coaches assess the organizational culture and processes, and their fit with the coaching engagement. Some coaches reject assignments where the fit seems poor, while others see lack of fit as a challenge to be overcome. Confidentiality boundaries are set explicitly at this point, so that the coach can communicate those to the coachee in the initial meeting. The coach maintains contact with the coachee's manager and with the HR coaching contact throughout the coaching engagement. With the manager, this is often about facilitating manager engagement in the coaching process, and negotiating a role for the manager in helping achieve the coaching goals. With both manager and HR coaching contact, the constant contact enables the coach to manage organizational expectations about coaching outcomes.

Builds Rapport with the Coachee

Coaches take steps to establish mutual respect and trust with the coachee, reporting in the interviews that this sort of rapport is crucial to coaching success. Participants report that it takes time to build the sort of safe and trusting relationship that allows the coachee to experiment. Coaches in this study are able to build those relationships even with coachees who are initially resistant. Participants report that they hold their coachees in high regard.

This competency area comprises ten behaviors. As with the manager and the HR coaching contact, coaches carefully and explicitly set confidentiality boundaries with the coachee. Coaches build rapport with resistant coachees by focusing first on the issues the coachee most wants help on, even if those issues are not what the organization sees as important. Later in the relationship, coaches move the coaching to align with organizational goals. Study participants spoke of the importance of listening, eye contact, empathy, careful questions, and conscious use of body language in developing rapport with their coachees. Coaches emphasized the importance of responding to coachees in nonjudgmental ways, while still being able to point out coachee behaviors that might be ineffective or inappropriate. Part of building credibility, study participants said, is keeping the commitments they make to coachees; being on time or early for sessions, following up with resources as promised, and others. A flip side of that is that coaches hold coachees accountable for the actions they promised to take in previous sessions. Study participants expressed hope and optimism for the coachees, and held them in high regard, often reminding their coachees of their strengths. Finally, coaches challenge their coachees to be honest and direct with the coach.

Brings Business Understanding and Experience to the Coaching Interaction

Study participants had a median 16.5 years of business leadership experience before beginning their coaching careers, and integrate that experience in the coaching relationship in ways that facilitate attainment of coaching goals. Business experience helps coaches in this study build credibility with new and prospective coachees. They have often experienced what the coachees are going through, and use that experience first two connect with their coachees, and second to show their coachees that the experience is normal.

Six behaviors are included in this competency area. Executive coaches understand business concepts and apply them appropriately in each coaching engagement. Coaches draw stories from their business experience, and from other coaching engagements, in order to benefit coachee progress. These coaches remember sessions with other coachees, and use words and stories from those sessions to help the current coachee. When it will help the coachee achieve coaching goals, study participants share their own business successes and failures. Because they understand business, and because they understand organizational behavior, coaches in this study help coachees draft action plans that are realistic and achievable in a business context.

Integrates a Diversity of Data into the Developmental Interaction

Study participants interpret information from a wide array of sources and share that information in order to help the coachee understand developmental needs and how to achieve them. These coaches say they see everything as data. They listen carefully to what coachees say and to what they don't say. They listen for words, emotions, beliefs, and values. In addition to listening, they observe body language. Coaches are attentive to patterns of behavior over time, and bring those to the coachees' attention. These coaches go beyond what they learn in sessions with the coachee, paying attention to the work environment, organizational culture, and to what those around the coachee say and do. Study participants also mentioned paying attention to their own intuition as a trusted source of insight.

This competency area comprises ten behaviors. Study participants gather data from multiple sources, in order to better understand the coachee and the coachee's work goals. They collect data through interviews, document analysis, observation, and other means, and synthesize that data, distilling key points for the benefit of the coachee. Coaches listen to what coachees say, and probe what they don't say. They listen for inconsistencies in coachee words and for inconsistencies between coachee words and body language. They attend to word choice, pace, tone, volume, and other nuances of how coachees speak. Study participants observe coachee behavioral patterns to identify areas for discussion. They notice when coachees seem to be dismissing important issues, and bring focus to those issues. Finally, these coaches listen for metaphors that are appropriate to the coachee, and use those metaphors to help the coachee better understand current situations.

Gathers and Provides 360-Degree Feedback

Study participants interview subordinates, peers, and superiors of the coachee in order to provide a full picture of how others view the coachee's behavior, and to help in setting the agenda for the coaching process. This 360-degree feedback process is described by coaches as central to many of the coaching incidents explored in this study. As Fred noted, coaching without 360-degree feedback, "…makes me feel like I'm coaching in a vacuum." These coaches carefully time the 360-degree process, waiting, if necessary, until the coachee is ready to receive the feedback. They frame the 360-degree process as a source of useful information and as a way for the coachee to deepen relationships with key stakeholders. During the interviews, coaches focus on eliciting specific, behavioral details that will help the coachee understand and work with the feedback. Coaches think carefully about how to present the feedback in a way that maximizes the benefit to the coachee. Although study participants had individual ways of doing this, all reported that they had modified their approach over time in order to improve the results.

Eight specific behaviors define this competency area. Study participants select the appropriate time (in the coaching engagement) to provide the feedback, they frame it as both an information gathering process and as a way to strengthen relationships with key stakeholders. During the interviews, they work to elicit specific behavioral details that will allow the coachee to understand strengths and opportunities. Coaches deliver the feedback in a way that maximized coachee acceptance, and often accomplish that by focusing first on the strengths that have emerged from the data. They set specific homework tasks for the coachee, focused on drawing key lessons from the feedback. Using the data, coaches work with coachees to select two or three specific developmental opportunities on which to focus subsequent coaching, showing the coachee how these areas are normal for people in similar situations.

Focuses on the Coachee

Study participants maintain their focus on the coachee's goals, current situation, capabilities, and emotions in order to design appropriate and effective actions. They report that they have no agenda of their own, focusing instead on the coachee's agenda. They do not use the same approach for every coachee, but customize the approach to match coachee capabilities and situations. These coaches reported in the research interviews that they hold their coachees in unconditional, positive regard, and care for the success of their coachees. They express optimism and hope for their coachees.

This competency area includes eleven specific behaviors. Coaches work on, and talk about, what the coachee wants to achieve, and employs tools and techniques that are most appropriate for the coachee in light of those goals. Coaches modify their coaching approach to suit the coachee. They collaborate with the coachee in setting the agendas for individual sessions, in order to accomplish the overall coaching goals. They assess where the coachee is currently, and what the coachee is ready for, recognizing when to push and when to be patient. Coaches create coaching sessions free of distractions. They recognize each coachee's unique strengths, and help the coachee use those strengths in achieving coaching goals. They help the coachee discover multiple paths to the coachee's goals, and then collaborate to help the coachee choose from among those paths. When they sense underlying motivations and issues that the coachee may not have verbalized yet, study participants approach those issues in ways that facilitate coachee acceptance.

Engages in Continuous Learning to Develop Coaching Skills

Study participants work to improve their knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics in order to maximize their performance as coaches. They learn from their success and from their failures, and incorporate those lessons into their coaching approach.

Six specific behaviors support this competency area. Coaches reflect on coaching successes and failures to identify ways to improve their coaching approach and outcomes. They attend conferences and workshops, read books and articles, and consult with peers to improve their coaching skills, and to stay abreast of coaching science. To help future coachees, study participants collect and maintain large collections of tools, techniques, books, and resources. Finally, study participants work on their own physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional well-being, in order to enhance their presence during coaching sessions.

Understands and Manages Emotions in the Coaching Environment

Study participants are aware of their own emotions and those of others, and manage those emotions in order to maximize coachee learning and growth. As appropriate, they use how the coachee makes them feel to help the coachee understand how others around the coachee may feel. Coaches are aware of coachee emotions, and help them explore those emotions when it might benefit the coachee. They also use their understanding of coachee emotional state to help them pace the coaching engagement and to set the right level of challenge at each stage of the process.

Five specific behaviors were identified as fitting into this competency area. Coaches manage emotions in ways that facilitate achievement of coaching goals. They set challenges and tasks that are appropriate for the coachee's current emotional state. They reflect coachee emotions, beliefs, and values in ways that enable the coachee to increase self-understanding. Coaches share their insights into how coachee behaviors affect others emotionally, and they reveal when coachee behavior is out of alignment with coachee goals or with the organizational context.

Discussion of Findings in Relation to Research Questions

The central question of this study was, "what is the competency model that explains outstanding executive coaching performance?" That question was answered by the model, as described in this chapter. The model also served to answer to two of the study sub-questions. The model specifies the behaviors of executive coaches rated as best by buyers of coaching services, and it structures those behaviors into a competency model of outstanding executive coaching.

The third sub-question, what criteria do buyers of coaching services use when selecting the best coaches from among all of the coaches they employ was answered in an email from the coaching firm that referred participants for this study. When asked how they developed the list, they replied in an email:

> We thought through the coaches in our network, considering those coaches that we know well enough that we feel familiar with their work, style and approach, have had very positive experiences with projects/engagements we've contracted them for, the client response we see (e.g., they're frequently selected when being considered against multiple coaches), and the feedback from coachees they work with. We do recognize that there are probably coaches who are equally strong, but we just haven't had a chance to get to know them or use them as often with our clients yet (personal communication, December 3, 2015).

Based on this information, it appears that this coaching firm used four criteria in selecting their best coaches:

1. Coaches who have worked with the firm long enough for the firm to be familiar with their work
2. Coaches who have provided very positive experiences on projects for which they were contracted.
3. Coaches who were frequently selected by prospective coachees when more than one coach was in the running, and
4. Coaches who received positive feedback from their coachees.

Summary

Sixteen executive coaches, rated as most effective by a large coaching firm, were interviewed for this study. Study participants had been coaching executives for a median of 15 years. Coaches participated in one-hour research interviews, which were transcribed and then coded. Codes were grouped into categories, leading to a first-draft competency model comprising 14 competency areas. Further analysis and revision led to a model including eight competency areas and 64 specific behaviors. Ten of the study participants responded to a survey asking the importance of each of the behaviors, after which one low-importance behavior was deleted. The final model, comprising 63 behaviors, was described. In Chapter 5, each behavior in the model is discussed in the context of the literature, implications are suggested for coaches, prospective coaches, buyers of coaching services, and coach educators, and research suggestions are offered.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Prior chapters laid out the study problem, explored the literature, detailed the study methodology and the findings. This chapter begins with a restatement of the study problem and a brief overview of the methodology. Study findings are summarized in the form of a competency model, which is then placed into the context of the literature. Study limitations are discussed, followed by implications of the findings. The chapter concludes with suggestions for further research.

Statement of Problem

We know little about which competencies are important to the work of outstanding executive coaches. Because of that lack, we may be wasting time and money in coach preparation. We may be addressing some of the correct competencies, missing others, and over-emphasizing some that have little relationship to outstanding coaching. To begin to fill that gap, the specific problem addressed in this study was the lack of an evidence-based model of executive coach competencies. The purpose of this study was to discover a model of the competencies that outstanding executive coaches perceive as central to their success, as expressed in behavioral event interviews (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). The central question of this study was, “what is the competency model that explains outstanding executive coaching performance?”

Review of Methodology

A coaching firm provided access to their 20 best executive coaches. All but four on that list were able to be part of this study. Each was asked ahead of time to think of a one or two incidents that stood out in their coaching practice. The interviews lasted about an hour each, and were recorded. The recordings were transcribed and then coded. The codes were sorted, combined, resorted and recombined, eventually yielding nine competency areas. In a first round Delphi survey, interview participants were asked to rate the importance of the competency areas. One of the nine areas was rated very low importance, and was dropped from the model.

The interview transcripts were next analyzed for specific, observable behaviors that might serve as indicators for each competency area. Over several drafts, the behavior statements were refined for clarity and consistency. The model consisted of eight competency areas and 64 specific behaviors. As a second check with interview participants, they were asked to respond to a second survey, ranking each specific behavior's importance to their coaching practice. As a result, one behavior was dropped from the final model, resulting in eight competency areas and 63 specific behaviors.

Summary of the Model

The study yielded a competency model with eight competency areas and 63 specific behaviors (Appendix S). The eight competency areas are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Manages relationship between coach and client organization

Almost all engagements that participants discussed in this study involved three parties: the person being coached (the coachee in the balance of this paper), the coachee's manager, and someone in the Human Resources function who was responsible for managing the coaching contract (HR coaching contact). This first competency centers on how executive coaches manage their relationships with the manager and with the HR coaching contact. The specific behaviors ensure that the engagement is setup for maximum coaching success, and that the manager and HR coaching contact are engaged in the coaching process in ways that assist the coachee in achieving the coaching goals.

Builds rapport with the coachee

Study participants said that they could not make progress in a coaching engagement until they had established a safe and trusting coaching relationship with the coachee. The specific behaviors in this competency area help build trust, maintain trust, and deepen the relationship with the coachee. They also help increase coachee self-esteem, while moving the coaching process forward.

Brings business understanding and experience to the coaching interaction

All but two of the study participants had ten or more years of business leadership experience before becoming coaches. The other two had, by the time the interviews were completed, 16 or more years of executive coaching experience. That experience allowed coaches to understand how business and organizations work, and to be able to speak the business language of their clients. The experience also gave the coaches a broad set of stories and examples they could use to help their clients.

Integrates a diversity of data into the developmental interaction

Five or the eight competency models in the literature usually listed some form of listening as a core competency (Clayton, 2011; Hale, 2008; Kenney, 2014; Louis & Fatien Diochon, 2014; Passmore, 2010). Coaches in the current study echoed that, but went well beyond listening as a way to gather data. As Jolene said, “For coaches, everything is data.” In addition to listening, study participants observe coachee behavior (in the coaching session and in the work environment), listen to those around the coachee, and pay attention to their own intuitions about the coachee. Study participants absorb all of this data and distill it into key points to help move the coaching forward.

Gathers and provides 360-degree feedback

Gathering and delivering qualitative 360-degree feedback (coach interviews with the coachee's boss, peers, and subordinates) it was prominent in the study interviews. Study Participants see this process, the data it generates, and the actions it leads to, as central to the coaching relationship. Research participants said little about how they carried out the actual 360-degree interviews. However, coaches spoke quite a bit about preparing to do the 360, and about how they handled delivering the feedback to the coachee in a way that moved the coaching forward.

Focuses on the coachee

Study participants maintain a focus on the coachee's goals, situation, capabilities, and emotions. Coaches suppress their own agendas in order to forward those of their coachees. Rather than coaching by formula, following the same approach for every coachee, these coaches tailor their approach to each individual coachee. Study participants help their coachees find their own paths to their goals, and are willing to advise the coachee when no other ideas are coming forward.

Engages in continuous learning to develop coaching skills

Even though they have been coaching for an average of 15 years, study participants continuously work to improve their coaching skills. They seek feedback from coachees, engage in self-reflection, attend conferences, read books, work with peers, and a wealth of other things to hone their skills. They stay up to date on the science of coaching, and contribute to that science themselves. Over the years, they have collected, and created, a large set of tools (articles, models, templates, questionnaires, and so on), from which they draw when a coachee might be helped by one of the tools. Finally, study participants take care of themselves, believing that will enhance their ability to be present and focused for their coachees.

Understands and manages emotions in the coaching environment

Study participants appear to have high emotional intelligence. They tell of being aware of their own emotions, and of managing those emotions to maximize coachee learning and growth. They are sense coachee emotions, and reflect those emotions back to their coachees in order to help increase coachee self-awareness. Finally, study participants understand how coachee behavior is affecting other people emotionally, and work to help the coachee sense emotions with the same level of acuity, in order to lead more effectively.

Discussion of the Model in Relation to the Literature

The literature included eight executive coach competency models that were compiled either through semi-structured interviews (Bennett & Rogers, 2012; Clayton, 2011; Dagley, 2009; Kenney, 2014; Louis & Fatien Diochon, 2014; Mavor, Sadler-Smith, & Gray, 2010; Passmore, 2010) or using a modified Delphi approach (Hale, 2008). Appendix T lists all 63 specific behaviors identified in the current study, and shows which of them were evident in the eight published studies. In the table, a black box indicates a behavior that was covered by a published study. For example, Passmore (2010) included a behavior that matched behavior #4 in the current study. The most comprehensive previously published list, Hale (2008), included only 14 of the 63 behaviors identified in the current study. The following sections discuss each competency area in relation to the literature, explain why each new behavior is important, and suggest implications for coaches, educators, and buyers of coaching services, as appropriate. A table in each section recapitulates the relevant section of Appendix T.

Manages relationship between coach and client organization

In competency area I (Table 6), only one behavior (#4) was mentioned in any of the published lists, and there only by name. Passmore (2010) mentioned confidentiality briefly. Determining purpose and outcomes, assessing fit, setting confidentiality boundaries, negotiating a role for the coachee's manager, and managing organizational expectations help get a coaching engagement off to a strong start. Without agreement on purpose and outcomes (behavior #1), the coach would be in danger of working on issues that were not important to the organization, while missing those that were. Assessing fit (behavior #2) helps coaches decide the likelihood of success in an engagement. Participants in this study were willing to reject an assignment when the fit seemed poor. Confidentiality (behavior #3) is a key to building rapport with the coachee, and ensures that boundaries have been set with the manager and with HR that will limit what the coach must disclose to those parties. The coachee's manager can be either supportive, neutral, or disruptive to the coaching engagement. Negotiating a role for the manager (behavior #6) helps the coach ensure that the manager will be ready to constructively support the coaching. Finally, coaching results take time to become evident to those outside the coaching relationship. Managing organizational expectations (behavior #7) ensures that the manager and HR contact person understand and accept that timing issue, hopefully avoiding excessive pressure on the coach and the coachee.

While those behaviors ensure a strong start to the coaching engagement, the other two behaviors in this area focus on what happens during the engagement. Coaches maintain regular contact with both the coachee's manager and with the HR coaching contact (behavior #4). As with stakeholders for any project, these stakeholders likely will be more supportive if they are regularly updated on progress with the coaching engagement. Coaches actively engage the

Table 6: Comparison of Competency Area I to the Literature

Behaviors	Bennett & Rogers (2012)	Clayton (2011)	Dagley (2009)	Hale (2008)	Kenney (2014)	Louis & Fatien Diochon (2014)	Mavor et al. (2010)	Passmore (2010)
I. Manages relationship between coach and client organization								
1. Determines purpose and desired outcomes of coaching engagement.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Assesses fit of coaching intervention with organization culture and processes.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Explicitly sets confidentiality boundaries with manager and HR coaching contact so that it is clear what information will be shared and with whom.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	■
4. Maintains contact with the coachee’s manager and with the Human Resources coaching contact throughout the coaching engagement.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. Facilitates engagement of coachee’s manager when he or she can bring added benefit to the coaching process.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6. Negotiates an appropriate role for the coachee’s manager in the coaching engagement.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7. Manages organizational expectations about coaching outcomes.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

coachee’s manager (behavior #5) when they believe it will be useful to the coaching engagement. Study participants provided stories of managers who acted as partners in the process, helping to move the coaching forward.

Taken together, the seven behaviors in this competency area address the relationship between the coach and the two organizational stakeholders most important to the coaching engagement. They address, and may prevent, the relationship problems that were surfaced by Louis and Fatien-Diochon (2014). In addition to self-reflection and improvement of individual behaviors in this area, practicing coaches might find it useful to develop a pre-start checklist that will ensure coverage of all of these behaviors. Coaching buyers might ask prospective coaches to describe their pre-engagement process, and look for evidence of all seven of these behaviors.

Builds rapport with the coachee

The behaviors in competency area II (Table 7) were somewhat supported by the lists in the literature. Dagley (2009), Hale (2008), and Kenney (2014) all contained some version of behavior #10. Kenney (2014), Mavor et al. (2010), and Passmore (2010) included behaviors similar to #11.

Setting confidentiality boundaries (behavior #8) is a repeat of behavior #3 in competency area I, except that here it applies to the coachee-coach relationship. The coach will have clarified confidentiality boundaries with the coachee's manager and with the HR coaching contact. In the initial meeting with the coachee, those boundaries are discussed and agreed to. Those boundaries are critical to coachee feelings of trust and safety, and to coachee willingness to discuss potentially tricky topics.

Coachees may need to confront their own weaknesses and vulnerabilities in order to achieve their coaching goals. However, they may not be ready to do that at the start of the coaching engagements. If pushed to do so, they may resist the coaching. Coaches help avoid or reduce that resistance by working first on whatever the coachee feels comfortable with, and move deeper only as the coachee appears ready (behavior #9).

Several of the behaviors in this competency area (#10, #11, #12, #14, #15) work together to build a safe and trusting relationship between coach and coachee. Behavior #10 includes all the small behavioral details by which the coach attempts to make the coachee comfortable during

Table 7: Comparison of Competency Area II to the Literature

Behaviors	Bennett & Rogers (2012)	Clayton (2011)	Dagley (2009)	Hale (2008)	Kenney (2014)	Louis & Fatien Diochon (2014)	Mavor et al. (2010)	Passmore (2010)
II. Builds rapport with the coachee								
8. Explicitly sets confidentiality boundaries with coachee so that it is clear what information will be shared and with whom.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
9. Overcomes coachee resistance, by working first on issues that are of interest to the coachee.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10. Utilizes body language, questioning, eye contact, listening, empathy and other behavioral elements to establish a positive relationship with coachee.	-	-				-	-	-
11. Responds to coachee in a nonjudgmental way, while being direct about inappropriate or ineffective coachee behavior.	-	-	-	-		-		
12. Demonstrates dependability and reliability by keeping commitments made to the coachee.	-	-	-		-	-	-	
13. Holds coachee accountable for coaching actions.	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
14. Expresses hope and optimism for coachee.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15. Holds coachee in high regard, speaking passionately about the coachee's strengths and possibilities.	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
16. Works with the coachee to align coachee goals with organizational goals for the coaching.	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
17. Challenges coachee to be honest and direct when working with the coach.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

coaching sessions. A judgmental approach to the coachee would make it difficult for the coachee to disclose weaknesses, worries, and vulnerabilities, which is why behavior #11 is important. The non-judgmental stance also allows the coach to discuss coachee behaviors in a relatively objective manner, helping ensure the coachee can understand and work on the behaviors. Being dependable and reliable (behavior #12) builds coachee trust in the coach, and also models a key business leadership behavior. Expressing hope and optimism for the coachee (behavior #14) and holding the coachee in high regard (behavior #15) not only have the effect of increasing rapport between coach and coachee, but also may help build coachee self-understanding and appreciation.

Three behaviors in this area (#13, #16, and #17) are more about what the coach does with the rapport once it is built, rather than about building rapport. Once built, rapport allows the coach to hold the coachee accountable for commitments made in coaching sessions (#13). That accountability drives the coaching forward. When the coachee fails to meet commitments, that lack of accountability may also provide insights that will help drive the coaching. Aligning coachee goals with organizational goals (behavior #16) ensures that, once the relationship has reached a state of high rapport, the coachee's agenda is aligned with the organization's agenda, which in turn helps ensure the organization sees the desired outcomes. Challenging the coachee to be honest and direct (behavior #17) helps teach the coachee how to be direct and honest in an appreciative way. For executives in coaching, that can be a skill that is required for success outside of the coaching relationship. Additionally, coachees must be honest and direct in the coaching relationship if underlying issues are to surface and be addressed.

Four published models referred to the importance of a safe and trusting relationship between coach and coachee. Clayton (2011) mentioned the need for building connection, trust, and rapport. Kenney (2014) suggested that coaches should create a safe environment, in which trust and intimacy were possible. Louis and Fatien-Diochon (2014) listed building trust as one way to avoid some of the relationship problems identified in their study. Mavor, et al. (2010)

described rapport as a key skill. However, none of these suggested specific coach behaviors that might create the required rapport. The current study is unique in that regard.

Practicing coaches might find the behaviors in this competency area as useful reminders of what it takes to build rapport with coachees. When a relationship is not going as well as it might, coaches might consider which, if any, of these behaviors might be missing. Coachees, when interviewing prospective coaches, might want to ask those coaches how they approach building rapport with new coachees, and should expect to hear many of the behaviors in this competency area.

Brings business understanding and experience to the coaching interaction

Competency area III (Table 8) was new to the literature. Dagley listed "working to the business context" (2009, p. 6). Other than that, these behaviors have not been identified before. That is surprising, given the importance participants in the current study put on this area.

Business experience and understanding allows coaches to communicate with coachees in words and concepts that are familiar (behavior #18). That saves time and helps build rapport. Business experience allows the coach to help the coachee understand the current situation in three ways. First, the experience provides the coach with a library of stories that can be used to help coachees understand their current situations (behavior #19). Second, the coach builds credibility and connection by sharing his or her own success and failures with the coachee (behavior #21). That can also help make the coachee's experience feel normal (because the coach went through it, too), which can help the coachee accept the situation and move forward on developmental areas. Third, the coach can use stories from previous coaching engagements (within the bounds of confidentiality) to help the coachee develop solutions to problems (behavior #22). Without business experience and understanding, coaches might lead coachees to

Table 8: Comparison of Competency Area III to the Literature

Behaviors	Bennett & Rogers (2012)	Clayton (2011)	Dagley (2009)	Hale (2008)	Kenney (2014)	Louis & Fatien Diochon (2014)	Mavor et al. (2010)	Passmore (2010)
III. Brings business understanding and experience to the coaching interaction								
18. Understands business concepts, and applies them appropriately to each coaching engagement.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
19. Draws stories from business and coaching experience to benefit current coachees.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20. Uses business understanding to craft coachee action plans that are realistic and achievable in a business context.	-	-	■	-	-	-	-	-
21. Shares own business successes and failures with the coachee, when sharing will help the coachee achieve coaching goals.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
22. Remembers sessions with other coachees, and uses words and stories from those sessions in order to help current coachee with current situation.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
23. Understands organizational behavior, and uses that understanding to help coachee design actions and behaviors that align with the coachee's workplace.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

craft action plans that would not be realistic inside the organization (behaviors #20 and #23). With the experience, however, action plans created in the coaching sessions will be more likely to succeed.

Collectively, these behaviors depend on the coach having business experience, and understanding how business and organizations work. That has implications for prospective coaches, coach educators, and buyers of coaching services. Prospective coaches without business experience may want to consider another area of coaching, rather than attempting to coach executives, or they may wish to gain business experience before entering the coaching field. Coach educators with limited spaces for new students may wish to consider limiting admissions to students with some years of experience. Buyers of coaching services might wish to consider coach resumes carefully, and to explore prospective coaches' understanding of business concepts when interviewing them.

Integrates a diversity of data into the developmental interaction

For executive coaches, "everything is data" (Jolene). A key finding of this study that differs from the published models is the use that study participants make of data from many sources (Table 9). Those data provide more information to help the coach and the coachee understand the current situation and to craft effective actions to achieve coaching goals. The additional data also serve to validate what is surfacing in the coaching sessions. That helps coach and coachee understand the relative importance of the issues.

While four of the published lists (Clatyon, 2011; Hale, 2008; Kenney, 2014; and Louis and Fatien-Diochon, 2014) mentioned listening and questioning as key skills, none described specific behaviors to support those. This study uncovered six specific listening behaviors. Coaches listen not only to what coachees say, but they also probe what the coachee does not say (behavior #25), noticing when the coachee seems to be dismissing or ignoring important issues (behavior #30). In the incidents described by study participants, these two behaviors led to coachee insights that otherwise might have been unlikely to occur. Coaches listen for inconsistencies in coachee words (behavior #26), and for inconsistencies between coachee words and coachee behaviors (behavior #27). As with noticing unspoken issues, noticing and raising these inconsistencies can lead to coachee insights that might not otherwise occur. Coaches pay attention not only to what coachees say, but to how they say it (behavior #28). Observations on

Table 9: Comparison of Competency Area IV to the Literature

Behaviors	Bennett & Rogers (2012)	Clayton (2011)	Dagley (2009)	Hale (2008)	Kenney (2014)	Louis & Fatien Diochon (2014)	Mavor et al. (2010)	Passmore (2010)
IV. Integrates a diversity of data into the developmental interaction								
24. Gathers data from multiple sources in order to better understand the coachee and his/her work goals.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25. Probes what coachee does not say.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
26. Listens for inconsistencies in coachee’s words.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
27. Probes inconsistencies between coachee words and body language.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
28. Attends to coachee’s word choice, pace, tone, volume, and other nuances of how the coachee is speaking.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
29. Observes coachee behaviors and behavioral patterns to identify critical instances or patterns for discussion.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-
30. Notices when coachee seems to be dismissing an important issue, and asks questions to focus coachee attention on that issue.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
31. Synthesizes large amounts of data, distilling key points for the benefit of the coachee.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-
32. Uses metaphors appropriate to the coachee to help him/her better understand current situations.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
33. Collects data through interviews, document analysis, observation, and other means in order to understand the coachee’s work context.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-

pace, tone, word choice, and volume can lead coaches to insight on coachee emotions, which they can then raise with coachees in order to raise coachee self-awareness. Finally, coaches listen for the metaphors their coachees use (behavior #32). Coaches are then able to use those metaphors to help coachees see their situations in new ways, which can lead to insights.

In addition to listening in the coaching sessions, study participants gather data from other sources (behaviors #24, #31, and #33). They also observe coachee behavioral patterns (behavior #29). Study participants said, for example, that they looked at organizational websites and paid attention to physical aspects of the coachee's workplace. All of that helped them better understand the context in which the coachee was working, which led to more effective actions. Only Hale (2008) touched on any of the behaviors in this paragraph, writing that the coach, "…recognizes patterns, uses concepts to diagnose situations, and has the ability to perform diagnostic questioning" (p. 85).

Practicing coaches might find these behaviors as useful reminders of the many sources of data that can be mined for information to drive the coaching forward. Coach educators may wish to expand their training beyond the questioning and listening skills, adding training in how to gather contextual information through observation and document analysis. Buyers of coaching services may wish to consider providing the coach access to internal sources of organizational information, as a way to support the coaching.

Gathers and provides 360-degree feedback

Competency area V (Table 10) was new to the field. None of the specific behaviors that emerged in this study was cited in any of the eight prior competency models. Only two (Clayton, 2011; Hale, 2008) mentioned 360 assessments, and then only by name. This is surprising, given the amount of time study participants devoted to discussing how they setup the 360 process, how they delivered the feedback to their coachees, and how they used the feedback to help coachees develop. For the coaches in this study, these behaviors were core, and highly important. They described a thoughtful 360-degree feedback approach as providing essential information for the coaching, and as a way to enhance the coachee's relationships with key stakeholders. And yet

Table 10: Comparison of Competency Area V to the Literature

Behaviors	Bennett & Rogers (2012)	Clayton (2011)	Dagley (2009)	Hale (2008)	Kenney (2014)	Louis & Fatien Diochon (2014)	Mavor et al. (2010)	Passmore (2010)
V. Gathers and provides 360-degree feedback								
34. Selects appropriate time to provide 360-degree feedback for greatest impact on the coaching process.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35. Frames the 360-degree feedback process as providing information for the coachee and as a way for the coachee to strengthen relationships with key stakeholders.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
36. During 360-degree interviews, elicits specific behavioral details that will help the coachee understand strengths and developmental opportunities.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
37. Using 360-degree interview data, helps coachee select two or three specific developmental opportunities on which to focus subsequent coaching.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
38. Delivers the feedback in a way that maximizes coachee acceptance and integration.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
39. Focuses coachee attention first on the strengths that have emerged from the feedback, especially on those strengths the coachee has not yet recognized.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
40. Talks about developmental areas using words that show those areas as normal for people in similar situations to the coachee.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
41. Sets specific homework tasks for the coachee, focused on drawing key lessons from the 360-degree report.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

none of these behaviors appeared in the eight competency lists previously published. Gathering behavioral feedback from the coachee's supervisor, peers, and subordinates, and then providing that feedback to the coachee in ways that will promote acceptance and integration requires a thoughtful approach. It begins with choosing the right time in the coaching engagement to gather the feedback (behavior #34). Study participants generally prefer to gather the feedback early in the coaching engagement, in order to use the resulting information to maximum benefit. However, some coachees are not immediately ready to accept and integrate the data, in which case coaches wait. That's key, because the data-gathering effort is wasted if the coachee is not ready to hear it.

Once the coachee is ready, coaches frame the 360-feedback process as serving two needs (behavior #35). First, it provides information for the coaching process that the coachee may not otherwise have (specifically, how others see the coachee). Second, coaches frame this process as a way to enhance the coachee's relationships with key stakeholders. Stakeholders may feel better about the coachee just because they were asked for their opinions. If the coachee is able to make behavioral changes as a result of the feedback, that is a second way relationships might be enhanced.

During 360-degree interviews, coaches strive to elicit specific behavioral details that will help the coachee understand strengths and weaknesses (behavior #36). For example, Jolene noted that telling at coachee, "You're being arrogant," didn't help the coachee to understand what to change. However, telling the coachee, "When you do this, people perceive you as being arrogant," did give the coachee something specific to change.

The trickiest part of the 360-feedback process appears to be delivering the feedback. Coaches deliver the feedback in a way that maximizes coachee acceptance and integration (behavior #38). This may require a different approach for each coachee, rather than a standard template. However, some common behaviors did emerge from the study. Coaches focus first on the coachee's strengths (behavior #39), for two reasons. First, the coachee is more ready to hear about developmental areas after having first heard about things he or she does well. Second, those strengths might possibly be employed in crafting actions to correct developmental areas. After covering strengths, coaches talk about developmental areas in ways that show these areas as normal for people in similar situations, making it easier for the coachee to accept and integrate the feedback (behavior #40). Study participants sometimes set homework tasks that require the coachee to dig deeper into the data (behavior #41), and incorporate coachee insights when helping the coachee select a small number of developmental opportunities (behavior #37). Practicing coaches may want to consider whether or not they are making best use of 360-degree feedback, and then use the behaviors list to enhance their approach. While not a full recipe for success, these behaviors should lead to better coaching outcomes. Coach educators may want to consider whether their programs need increased attention to this coaching approach.

Focuses on the coachee

This competency area (Table 11) was more extensively covered in the literature, especially by Hale (2008) and Passmore (2010). However, several of the specific behaviors in this competency area were new to the field, as described below. Focus on the coachee begins with the environment of the coaching session. Whether in person or over the phone, the coach creates an environment that is free of distractions – for either party in the session (behavior #49). That behavior was not described in any other model. Without a distraction-free environment, though, it would be difficult for the coach to be fully present and attentive to the coachee.

Working on what the coachee wants to achieve (behavior #42) also was not mentioned in any of the models reviewed. This behavior, at least in this study, has to do with the coach allowing the coachee to set much of the overall agenda for the coaching engagement, while ensuring the organization's goals are also met (behavior #16). Coaches also allow the coachee to

Table 11: Comparison of Competency Area VI to the Literature

Behaviors	Bennett & Rogers (2012)	Clayton (2011)	Dagley (2009)	Hale (2008)	Kenney (2014)	Louis & Fatien Diochon (2014)	Mavor et al. (2010)	Passmore (2010)
VI. Focuses on the coachee								
42. Explicitly works on, and talks about, what the coachee wants to achieve.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
43. Employs those tools and techniques that are most appropriate for the coachee in any given moment.	-	-	■	■	-	-	-	■
44. Recognizes each coachee’s unique strengths, and helps the coachee use those strengths to achieve coaching goals.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45. Assesses where coachee is currently, and what coachee is ready for.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-
46. Collaborates with the coachee in setting agenda for individual coaching sessions.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
47. Recognizes when to push and when to be patient with coachee.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
48. Approaches underlying motivations and issues in ways that facilitate coachee acceptance.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-
49. Creates a coaching session environment free of distractions.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
50. Modifies coaching approach to suit coachee and coachee’s current situation.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-
51. Helps the coachee discover multiple paths to the coachee’s goal.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	■
52. Collaborates with the coachee to choose the path to goal attainment that best fits his/her needs and capabilities.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

set much of the agenda for individual coaching sessions (behavior #45). Coaches see both of these behaviors as an important way to give the coachee a stronger feeling of being in control of the process, leading to greater willingness to engage in the process. However, coaches also know that underlying issues, issues the coachee has not asked to work on, may be the source of the coachee's current situation. Coaches are able to approach these in ways that facilitate coachee acceptance and integration (behavior #48). Hale found similar behavior in his study, noting that the executive coach, "Discovers and works to meet client's underlying needs" (2008, p. 84).

Coaches recognize each coachee's unique strengths, and help coachees use those strengths to achieve coaching goals (behavior #44). Coaches see coachee strengths as levers, tools to help drive goal achievement. In addition to seeing those strengths themselves, coaches help coachees learn how to use their strengths to solve future problems (after the coaching engagement is completed). This aligns well with the growing use of strengths in coaching (Roche & Hefferon, 2013).

Coaches are flexible, modifying their approaches to suit each individual coachee (behavior #50). When it comes to specific tools and techniques, coaches choose those that are appropriate to the coachee at the current time (behavior #43). Three authors mentioned flexibility. Dagley listed "flexibility and range in approach" (2009, p. 6). Hale found that the executive coach, "Is flexible in responding to client needs by adapting approaches to client responses" (2008, p. 84). Passmore found that coaches use, "a variety of focusing tools and techniques" (2010, p. 48). Of the three, only Hale explicitly tied flexibility to meeting client needs. This behavior is important because executive coaching clients are individuals, and require customized approaches if they are going to benefit from the coaching. This flexibility would probably not be possible if coaches did not assess the coachee's current state of readiness (behavior #45). Hale found a similar behavior, noting that the executive coach, "Tailors presentation and language to client by recognizing where client is…." (2008, p. 84). Related to that is a sense of timing; recognizing when to push and when to be patient with the coachee (behavior #47). Even the correct coaching intervention or tool can be ineffective if applied at the wrong time.

Executive coaches do not tell coachees how to attain their coaching goals. Rather, they help their coachees to discover multiple paths to each goal (behavior #51), and then to choose the path that best fits the coachee's needs and capabilities (behavior #52). This is important in building coachee ownership and accountability for the action plan, as they will have generated many of the alternative approaches, and will have decided for themselves which to pursue. In addition, coaches seek to increase the abilities of their coachees to self-coach after the engagement is completed. Engaging coachees in discovering and choosing their paths to goal attainment helps achieve that goal. The only mention of either of these behaviors was by Passmore, who found that coaches help, "…the coachee develop alternative perspectives" (2010, p. 57).

All told, these 11 specific behaviors provide direction for the coach wishing to fully focus on the coachee. Practicing coaches may wish to compare their approach to this list, in order to increase their ability to focus on their coachees. Buyers of coaching services might want to ask coaches to describe how they focus on coachees, and coachees may find the list helpful when they are interviewing prospective coaches.

Engages in continuous learning to develop coaching skills

That this competency area (Table 12) emerged was not a surprise. Coaches reflect on what goes well and not so well in their coaching engagements, seeking ways to improve their approach (behavior #53). They modify their approaches to coaching, based on those lessons learned (behavior #54). Hale didn't have either of these exactly, but did report that a coach,

Table 12: Comparison of Competency Area VII to the Literature

Behaviors	Bennett & Rogers (2012)	Clayton (2011)	Dagley (2009)	Hale (2008)	Kenney (2014)	Louis & Fatien Diochon (2014)	Mavor et al. (2010)	Passmore (2010)
VII. Engages in continuous learning to develop coaching skills								
53. Reflects on coaching successes and failures to identify ways to improve coaching approach and outcomes.	-	-	-	■	-	-	■	-
54. Modifies coaching approach based on lessons learned.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55. Attends conferences and workshops, reads books and articles, and consults with peers to improve coaching skills.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-
56. Stays abreast of coaching science.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
57. Collects and maintains a large collection of tools, techniques, books, and other resources that might be useful for coachees.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
58. Works to maintain own physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional well-being, in order to enhance presence during coaching sessions.	-	-	-	-	-	-	■	-

"takes responsibility for problems and failings" (2008, p. 84), which is perhaps similar to behavior #53. Mavor and colleagues (2010) saw individual reflective practice as a way to increase coaches use of intuition, although they did not specify what that meant in terms of behaviors. Reflection on coaching practice, along with follow up changes in coaching approach, seems important to keeping coaches sharp and fresh. Coaches stay abreast of coaching science and practice (behavior #56). Coaches attend conferences and workshops, read books and articles, and consult with peers in order to improve their coaching skills (behavior #55). Hale

(2008) found that coaches participated in professional development and read books and research articles.

Executive coaches collect and maintain large collections of tools, techniques, books, and other resources that might be useful for coachees, acting almost as curators (behavior #57). I have a collection similar to what coaches discussed in this study, and find that it allows me to provide nearly the perfect tool, model, assessment, or recipe when it seems appropriate for a coachee. As this collection has grown over my nine years as a coach, my value to my coachees has increased. None of the published studies included this curator function as a key coaching behavior.

Finally, coaches work to maintain their own physical, spiritual, mental and emotional well-being, seeing it as helping them be more effective with their coachees (behavior #58). They see this as particularly important for developing presence and focus. Mavor and colleagues, in a similar vein, found that it was important for coaches to relax, meditate, and exercise (2010).

These learning practices add up to continuous improvement and growth. That seems important for several reasons. First, coaches in this study had been coaching for 16.5 years (median). If they were not constantly seeking new knowledge and better skills, these coaches might have been left behind by newer coaches long ago. Second, the science of coaching is growing more rapidly now than ever before (Grant, 2011), and coaches must make a specific effort to stay on top of the newest developments. Finally, expertise is not grown in a vacuum. Like any other practice or profession, coaches require new information and new challenges in order to continue growing (Hunt, 2006).

Practicing coaches may wish to compare their personal growth approaches with the behaviors in this competency area, and add those that they feel might help them grow as coaches.

Buyers of coaching services may want to ask coaches to describe their approaches to continuous learning. And coach educators may wish to train their students in reflective practice, in how to find and study peer reviewed research, and in how to maintain physical, spiritual, mental and emotional well-being as a coach.

Understands and manages emotions in the coaching environment

This competency area (Table 13) includes five behaviors connected with emotional intelligence. Coaches manage their emotions and, to some extent, those of the coachee, in order to facilitate achievement of coaching goals (behavior #59). Mavor and colleagues (2010) found that coaches had to get themselves into the proper emotional state in order to access their intuition, but did not otherwise address emotions in coaching. Hale (2008) found that coaches are aware of client emotions, and that coaches keep their own emotions from interfering with the coaching engagement. Passmore (2010) found that coaches create a safe space for coachees to express their own emotions.

Coaches in the present study use emotions more actively than either Hale or Passmore’s work implied. They are not only aware of coachee emotions, but they reflect those emotions back to the coachee in order to help the coachee increase his or her self-awareness (behavior #61). They also adjust the level of challenge they present to coachees based on coachee emotional state. Coaches in the present study don’t necessarily keep their own emotions from interfering with the coaching process. Rather, they sometimes choose to make their emotions explicit, using them to illustrate how coachee behavior might make others feel (behavior #62). The final behavior in the model, #63, may seem misplaced in this competency area, as it is about the coach revealing when coachee behavior is out of alignment with the coachee’s goals, or with the organizational context. It is placed here, though, because coaches describe the importance of

Table 13: Comparison of Competency Area VIII to the Literature

Behaviors	Bennett & Rogers (2012)	Clayton (2011)	Dagley (2009)	Hale (2008)	Kenney (2014)	Louis & Fatien Diochon (2014)	Mavor et al. (2010)	Passmore (2010)
VIII. Understands and manages emotions in the coaching environment								
59. Manages emotions in ways that facilitate achievement of coaching goals.	-	-	-	■	-	-	■	■
60. Sets challenges and tasks appropriate to coachee emotional state.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
61. Reflects coachee emotions, beliefs, and values in ways that enable the coachee to increase his or her self-understanding.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
62. Shares insights into how coachee behaviors affect others emotionally, in order to increase coachee other-awareness.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
63. Reveals when coachee behavior is out of alignment with coachee's stated goals, or with the organizational context.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

their own courage in standing up to powerful coachees, or in speaking truth to power, and that courage is an example of being aware of and employing coach emotions in the service of coachee growth.

In sum, these behaviors suggest that executive coaches need to develop all aspects of their emotional intelligence: emotion regulation, emotion perception, and emotion understanding (Joseph & Newman, 2010). Practicing coaches might choose to work with a mentor coach in order to understand their strengths and developmental opportunities in this area. Coach educators may wish to include material on emotional intelligence in their curricula.

Summary of the Relation of the Model to the Literature

This study identified 63 specific behaviors, grouped into eight competency areas. Nearly two-thirds of these behaviors, 40, have not appeared in the literature to date. As shown in this section, these new behaviors, if adopted by coaches, should improve executive coaching process and outcomes. Specific implications were suggested for prospective coaches, practicing coaches, coach educators, and buyers of coaching services.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Because no validated measure of executive coach effectiveness has yet been published (Hagen & Peterson, 2014), this study relied on buyer nominations of outstanding executive coaches. It was assumed that these coaches actually were the best coaches the coaching firm works with. Because the leaders of the coaching firm expressed interest in the results of the study, and stated that they hope to use the results to improve their practice (personal communication, November 1, 2015), this assumption is probably true.

The study relied on interviews, without any confirming data from other sources. It was assumed that participants would tell the truth about their experiences as coaches. To increase the chances that they did tell the truth, names were kept confidential, participants were volunteers, and they were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. The fact that participants told stories not only about their successes, but also about their failures, suggests they were generally honest in their interview responses.

The choice of methodology carries with it inherent limitations. Because grounded theory relies on theoretical sampling techniques, rather than representative sampling, it is not possible to make inferences about the competencies of the general population of coaches, or even those of executive coaches more specifically (Daly, 2007). Interview data is necessarily filtered through the eyes of the interviewees, and may not represent how others view the same events (Creswell, 2014). Further, the data were analyzed by a single researcher. It is possible, or even likely that another researcher might interpret the data differently (Creswell, 2013). To help guard against that limitation, participants were asked to review the individual behavioral elements. They validated 63 of the original 64 behaviors, which suggests the resulting model may accurately represent their thoughts.

A study-specific limitation is that it cannot be guaranteed that the 16 participants represent a small percentage of the coaches used by the coaching firm. The firm was not willing to disclose how many coaches they use, nor what percentage these 16 represent of all of those coaches. Because I personally know 20 other coaches who work with this firm, coaches who were not part of this study, I know that these 16 are certainly fewer than half of the number of coaches the firm hires. The firm's website lists 118 client organizations. In my experience, the coaching firm deploys several coaches with each client organization. This suggests, but does not prove, that the firm works with, perhaps, several hundred coaches. So, while the percentage these coaches represent remains an unknown, and that is a limitation of the study, it is reasonable to assume they are a small percentage of the total.

This study focused on English-speaking executive coaches working in North America. Study participants were all external coaches (not employed directly by the organizations for which they coached), and all were contacted through a single coaching firm. Because the study was limited to English speakers working in North America, the resulting model may not be generalizable to coaches working in other languages or in other cultures. Because the coaches were all external contractors, the results are not necessarily generalizable to internal coaches. Because the coaches were all contacted through a single coaching firm, the results may not be generalizable to coaches doing similar work through other coaching firms. Finally, because only executive coaches were studied, the findings will not necessarily apply to coaches in other specialties (such as business coaching, life coaching, or career coaching).

Implications for Stakeholders

This study has significance for the coaching research community, for coaching practitioners, for prospective coaches, for buyers of coaching services, and for coach educators. For the coaching research community, this study fills a key gap in our understanding of executive coach competencies, especially with regards to competency areas I and V. It also provides 40 specific executive coaching behaviors that have not been identified in previous studies.

For coaching practitioners, this study clarifies how executive coaches behave, and why. Practitioners might find it useful to complete a self-assessment against the 63 behaviors, and to formulate a plan for developing skills in areas of need. For prospective coaches, the list of specific behaviors, especially those in competency area III (brings business understanding and experience to the coaching interaction), might serve as a useful readiness assessment. Given the prominence of business experience among the coaches in this study, prospective executive coaches with little business experience might choose to wait before embarking on a coaching career. The list might also prove useful to prospective coaches when reviewing the curricula of coach training programs, in order to select programs that cover the key skills and behaviors in the model.

Buyers of coaching services lack objective criteria to use in selecting coaches (Hagen & Peterson, 2014). That leads to uncertainty in the coach engagement process, and, potentially, to wasted time and money. This study may be helpful in two ways. First of all, the study shows that behavioral event interviews are able to elicit detailed information about coaches' behaviors. Buyers of coaching services might consider following this study's interview protocol (Appendix F) when screening potential coaches.

Second, buyers might consider asking specific questions in order to gauge to what extent prospective coaches understand and are able to talk about the behaviors identified in this study. They might ask prospective coaches to describe their pre-engagement process, and look for evidence of all seven of the behaviors listed in competency area I. Given the importance of competency area III, buyers might consider asking prospective coaches what they know about the buyer's organization, and about how they integrate business concepts into their coaching. Executive coaches in this study all employed a 360-degree interview process. Buyers of coaching services might consider asking prospective coaches to describe their process for gathering and providing 360-degree feedback. Buyers may also find it useful to ask prospective coaches what they do to continuously learn and grow as coaches, in support of competency area VII.

Finally, coaching educators may wish to compare their curricula to the coaching competencies and behaviors identified in this study. Specifically, they may wish to consider adding basic business courses, and also focused course work and practice with qualitative 360-degree feedback. Finally, they may wish to review their admissions requirements, and consider limiting admissions only to prospective students with business leadership experience.

On a broader level, as many as 60% of large U. S. corporations use coaches for executive development, another 20% plan on doing so in the near future (Newsom & Dent, 2011), and the U. S. Federal government includes coaching as part of its senior executive development programs (Salmon, 2008). With such wide and growing use, it would seem important to increase the effectiveness of coaches and of coaching. Perhaps adoption of this competency model could help accomplish that improvement.

Recommendations for Future Research

One of the delimitations of this study was the decision to work with only one coaching firm in identifying study participants. Spencer and Spencer (1993) suggested collecting behavioral event interview data on a second sample of participants, as a method of concurrent cross-validation. If that were to be done with a sample of coaches referred by a different coaching firm, such a study might help overcome this delimitation. The data in that case would be scored against the model, rather than coding from scratch. In other words, the 63 behaviors in the model would become the codes, which would be applied, as they fit, to the new interview data. As a second validation method, Spencer and Spencer suggested developing an instrument based on the model, and using it with a new sample of coaches to ascertain whether or not the instrument has the power to discriminate between average and superior coaches. That approach is described next.

This study has proposed eight executive coaching competency areas and 63 specific executive coaching behaviors. A follow-up research question might be to ask to what extent these 63 items are correctly sorted (or factored) into eight competency areas. More specifically, researchers might ask whether this model could be used to develop a valid and reliable instrument to measure executive coach competencies. Answering this question would entail transforming the behaviors into Likert-type items, perhaps measuring how often coaches reported using each behavior. The instrument could be administered to a sample of executive coaches and the results analyzed using factor analysis. Pett, Lackey, and Sullivan (2003) recommended at least ten subjects per item for optimum power, which study would require at least 630 subjects. Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), on the other hand, suggested that 300 subjects might be adequate in many cases. In either case, a large number of participants would be required, which might make this study difficult. The factor analysis could be expected to show whether or not all eight competency areas are appropriate, and how strongly the individual behaviors load onto the competency areas (factors).

Once such an instrument was validated, researchers might next ask whether the instrument reliably predicted the probably that a coach would be rated as either superior or average by buyers of coaching services. Discriminant analysis might be the approach to answering that question. Buyers of coaching services could be asked to rate the coaches they use as either average or superior. The validated instrument would be administered to those coaches, and discriminant analysis could be employed to test how well the instrument predicted whether a coach was rated average or superior by the buyer.

Finally, as reported by Hagen and Peterson (2014), a valid and reliable scale of coaching effectiveness (i.e., coaching outcomes) has yet to be developed. In terms of the present study, such a scale would have provided a more objective method for selecting coaches to be interviewed. Such a scale could be developed using an approach much like the grounded theory method of the present study, but by interviewing coachees, coachee managers, and HR coaching contacts in order to allow a model of coaching outcomes to emerge. That model could then be validated much as discussed above for the coaching behaviors model.

Conclusion

A review of the literature identified two gaps in our understanding of executive coaching competencies. First, none of the existing models were developed by studying coaches who were rated as outstanding by the buyers of coaching services. Second, none of the existing models were built using Spencer and Spencer's approach (1993). This study has closed both gaps. Participants were selected as the best by a large buyer of coaching services. Spencer and Spencer's approach was employed to develop a model with eight competency areas and 63 specific behaviors. Of those 63 behaviors, 40 had not appeared in the literature before this study. The competency model has implications for practicing coaches, prospective coaches, buyers of coaching services, and for coach educators. Future research might develop a validated instrument based on this model, and test its ability to predict coach effectiveness.

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APPENDIX B: COMPETENCY EXAMPLE

Competency Example (Campion, et al., 2011, p. 240)

Competency title: Project Management

Behavioral definition: Project management is the art of creating accurate and effective schedules with a well-defined scope while being personally accountable for the execution and invested in the success of the project. People who exhibit this competency effectively and continuously manage risks and dependencies by making timely decisions while ensuring the quality of the project.

Proficiency Level 1: Identifies risks and dependencies and communicates routinely to stakeholders. Appropriately escalates blocking issues when necessary. Understands project objectives, expected quality, metrics, and the business case. Champions project to stakeholders and articulates business value.

Proficiency Level 4: Proactively identifies implications of related internal and external business conditions to risks and dependencies. Instills a system and culture that facilitates effective decision-making across organizations, product lines, or portfolios. Evaluates project results against related examples and incorporates best practices and key learnings for future improvements. Champions business value across multiple organizations and gains alignment and commitment to prioritization to ensure long-term project deliverables.

APPENDIX C: LIST OF SEARCH TERMS

Search dates: June 2, 2013. Updated March 8, 2015, and July 3, 2015

Search terms: "Coaching skills" OR "Coaching behaviors" OR "Leadership coaching" OR "Coaching competencies" OR "Psychology in coaching" OR "Cognitive Coaching" OR "Evidence-based coaching" OR "COACHING" OR "Coaching education" OR "Behavioral coaching" OR "Business coaching" OR "Executive coaching" OR "Coaching-school training" OR "Coaching leadership" OR "Solution-focused appreciative coaching" OR "Coaching competency" OR "Coaching and leadership".

Excluded subjects: sports, athletes, sports coaching, athletic performance, sports psychology, soccer, athletic training, school based intervention, physical activity, health promotion, health, wellbeing, basketball, college students, exercise, football, parent training, health behavior, human sex differences, mental health, early intervention, health education, obesity, adolescent development.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this research study is to discover a theory or model of the competencies that outstanding executive coaches perceive as central to their success. I want to find out what it takes to become an outstanding executive coach; and will be exploring how you do your work, the issues you face, and the specific behaviors you use.

I will be asking about a few of the most important incidents in your coaching practice over the last year or two. I'll ask detailed questions about each incident (see attached questions for a preview). As preparation for our call, please think back over the last 12-18 months, and list a few incidents; about an equal number of high points and low points.

Our interview will last about an hour. We'll start on <date> at <time, time zone>. At that time, please dial (712) 432-3011, and enter 639904 when prompted for the conference code. Once we are settled on the call, I will begin the recording. Next, I'll review the informed consent and ask for your consent once more, and then we'll begin working through the interview.

I'm looking forward to our call, and to learning your take on executive coaching.

APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORM

1. Study Title:	Competencies of Outstanding Executive Coaches: A Grounded Theory Approach
2. Performance Site:	Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College
3. Investigator:	Kent Blumberg is available M-F, 8 am – 6 pm, Mountain time, at (225) 226-0761, kent@kentblumberg.com Supervisor: Dr. Reid Bates, (225) 578-5748, rabates@lsu.edu.
4. Purpose of study:	The purpose of this study will be to discover a model of the competencies that outstanding executive coaches perceive as central to their success.
5. Subject Inclusion:	Individuals between the ages of 30 and 90.
6. Number of subjects:	20
7. Study Procedures:	Subjects will participate in one-hour, recorded interviews. Subjects will also be asked to provide feedback on the draft theory or model.
8. Benefits:	The study may yield valuable information about the competencies that are important to outstanding leadership coaching.
9. Risks:	There are no known or anticipated risks for participation in this study. Every effort will be made to maintain participant confidentiality. All information will be coded by number, and no names will be used in study analysis or reporting.
10. Right to refuse:	Subjects may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss.
11. Privacy:	Results of the study may be published, but no names or identifying information will be included in the publication. Subject identity will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law.

12: Signature:

This study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the investigator. If I have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, I can contact Dennis Landin, Institutional Review Board, (225) 578-8692, irb@lsu.edu, www.lsu.edu/irb. I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the investigator's obligation to provide me with a signed copy of this consent form.

Subject Signature:____Date:_________________

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Initial questions:

What is your educational background?

What major jobs did you hold before becoming a coach?

How did you become a coach?

As a coach, what are your major tasks and responsibilities?

For each critical incident, ask:

What was the situation?

What events led up to it?

What were you thinking about the situation and about the people involved?

How were you feeling?

What did you want to do?

What did you actually do?

What was the outcome?

Final question:

What characteristics, knowledge, skills, or abilities do you think are required to do your job?

Source: Spencer & Spencer, 1993, pp. 119-132.

APPENDIX G: IRB EXEMPTION APPROVAL

ACTION ON EXEMPTION APPROVAL REQUEST

Institutional Review Board
Dr. Dennis Landin, Chair
130 David Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
P: 225.578.8692
F: 225.578.5983
irb@lsu.edu | lsu.edu/irb

TO: Kent Blumberg
Human Resource Education and Workforce Development

FROM: Dennis Landin
Chair, Institutional Review Board

DATE: October 20, 2015

RE: IRB# E9132

TITLE: Competencies of outstanding executive coaches: A grounded theory approach

New Protocol/Modification/Continuation: Modification

Brief Modification Description: Change name of title, updated consent and interview questions, added interview preparation instructions, and has a new co-investigator.

Review date: 10/20/2015

Approved ___X____ **Disapproved** ___________

Approval Date: 10/20/2015 **Approval Expiration Date:** 1/4/2018

Re-review frequency: (three years unless otherwise stated)

LSU Proposal Number (if applicable):

Protocol Matches Scope of Work in Grant proposal: (if applicable) ________

By: Dennis Landin, Chairman D Landin

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING –
Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
7. Notification of the IRB of a serious compliance failure.
8. **SPECIAL NOTE: When emailing more than one recipient, make sure you use bcc.**

**All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at http://www.lsu.edu/irb*

APPENDIX H: EXAMPLE CODINGS FOR CODY'S TRANSCRIPT

Example Quote	Code
It just came from me seeing where he was and that logic and reason wasn't gonna win the day for him.	Noticing
When coaching really flows there's a very, very strong listening and a space where I'm not present.	Listening
Obviously a little bit of business acumen to know in the end that this is a business that we're trying to help, to have some basic understanding of financials I think is important and to know that the customer is King and that they're trying to have a viable business serving somebody, giving some product or service and that that's in the end what worries them and what keeps them up at night. To understand those things as a helper to them.	Experience
Then there's this piece around continuing education as a coach; to keep abreast of the latest research in the field, and how coaching is evolving, whether it's the neurosciences and the contribution they're making to us. Certainly just stay in the know through education.	Education, training, certification
To know, I'm just totally present. Present in the story, in the dialogue, and trusting that it's in me. That it's in me and that in the next. So I don't even think about where we're going. It evolves.	Presence
We need to become good at providing feedback and understanding the various tools to bring feedback to people when we use those methods. We need to be able to conduct and interview process for 12 stakeholders, create a report, and sit back down with the coachee. We need to be able to know how to do those things.	360 feedback process
I would say, "this is a dance that we're about to embark on. Who do you think is leading the dance." 90% of the people say that I am and I help them understand that I'm not, that I'm the kind of coach that is following. Now I might put on, play the music, I might select the dance that we might – of all the dances that there are, I might say, "Okay, now we're going to do a tango" but so I am bringing a little something, but you're in the lead." And it takes them a little while to understand that, and to begin to take the lead, and to be powerful in taking the lead.	Coachee's agenda
Think about it, call me in a couple weeks or a couple days if you'd like to continue to have the discussion. Much to my surprise he called me back. And then began the unfurling, I call it, of Charlie and it was very rocky start and early on he says, when we finally meet face to face, he said that what turned it around for him in terms of he and I working together was the unstructured beginning and how I was interested in he as a person, as an individual and the preparation that he was going through for an ironman that he was going to be participating in soon. That I listened and that I asked questions and that I was generally interested in what he was about encounter.	Managing relationships

Example Quote	Code
There's a term out there: things happen for a reason but often the reason doesn't reveal itself for a while. Between the time that you might say the statement to the time that you get it – oh that's why that happened – there's ambiguity and there's frustration until that reason reveals itself.	Ambiguity
I felt, I probably felt, I would say inspired, I felt confident in what I was saying. I didn't think that I was saying something in the moment to a guy that might have found it airy fairy, or too far to stretch to something like that.	Intuition
The main task is to oversee the quality of the process; to be very focused on what they, on what their learning journey is, on what their journey through the process is. This is very central and I think the most important responsibilities as a coach to keep good records, their folders in good standing, up to date, to spend the time after the coaching session to chronicle a little bit and be ready for that next one, so that you carry their journey with you. And to have all of those very well, discrete one from the other.	Maintain focus on the journey
Then there's this piece around continuing education as a coach; to keep abreast of the latest research in the field, and how coaching is evolving, whether it's the neurosciences and the contribution they're making to us. Certainly just stay in the know through education.	Stay current
I can't explain what coaching is, it's just something he's going to have to have the faith that if he engages himself with a professional coach that in that relationship things get better. I can't promise those things but the ball's in his court.	Explaining coaching process
In the second one he was different. He was beginning to get some legs under him, he was not as angry and as furious, and asking questions, so I said here's how we begin: I gotta come and see you. We can do a very structured process; we can do an unstructured process, we just have to invent this thing as we go forward, Charlie, but we gotta get to know each other. I'll be there next week (I was working with others), so that's when we first met. I flew out there and in that first dinner. We had an early dinner. We talked all night. This was a four hour beginning. That's when he began to build the trust between he and I. Outside of the customary ethical beliefs that we have about confidentiality; all those things are there for reasons and certainly we believe in those things. They have to come to believe in those. They have to really see that you are genuinely in their – that they – that you are their primary customer. That I'm not here to report to Tom. I'm not here to write reports, so I had to lay it all out there for this guy to begin to want to endeavor into something that he'd never done before.	Building trust
We can do a very structured process; we can do an unstructured process, we just have to invent this thing as we go forward, Charlie, but we gotta get to know each other.	Flexibility
… being so deep into his story and his feelings because I was with him, we were connected.	Connection

Example Quote	Code
I tell people more now than I would have at the beginning, that I'm gonna learn from them, that yes, I've done hundreds, but that doesn't guarantee anything. That all of this hinges on their readiness and that this is something we're both going to learn a lot from. And I would never had said that 15 years ago.	Learning from the coachee
I just wanted to help him begin to see that there was hope for him. That not all was lost and that there is; there are proven methodologies and ways to get out of the situation that he was in. And I was trying to help him want for himself. Not to do this because Tom was encouraging it, or wanted to give him a shot as opposed to just firing the guy. To not do it for those reasons.	Unconditional positive regard

APPENDIX I: SAMPLE CATEGORY MEMO

January 20, 2016 memo on 360 feedback process

After coding first six interviews: Colby, Brady, Marjorie, Jessica, Debi, Jolene

Five of the first six coaches mentioned using some sort of 360-degree process. Usually this meant interviews with subordinates, peers, and the boss. In all cases, I think, it was qualitative, in that coaches asked open ended questions rather than asking participants to rate the level of pre-determined skills. The process of using the 360 appears to be a central skill for outstanding executive coaches.

I haven't yet heard much about the interviews themselves, although that did come up in one of today's interviews (not yet transcribed or coded). The areas I have heard most about so far are in the setup or framing of the process before the interviews and the delivery of the results after the interviews.

Coaches, first, are cognizant of coachee readiness for a 360. Coaches don't automatically do a 360 at the start of an engagement. Jessica says, "Now, in my career, that's just not the way I approach it. "What's this person ready for?" Can I, what are they hungry for, what are they willing to take on, that kind of thing." [Note: Readiness will show up elsewhere as a separate code (Maintaining focus on the coachee).]

In terms of setup, I think these coaches paint the 360 as a source of information for the coachee. It's certainly about collecting data, and as such it is part of the overall observation skill of the coach. Jolene explains:

> I once had a person who said, "I don't want you to do a 360, don't do a 360, I don't want you to do a 360." And I said, "That's fine. I won't do a 360. The only concern I want to point out to you is there's only gonna be one person who doesn't know what they're saying about you. And that's gonna be you. So you decide."

But it's more than that. Jolene paints the 360 process as a way for the coachee to build or repair key relationships:

> …and then I tell them that the 360 is not just collecting data, but there's an opportunity to leverage and improve your relationships with some people, who will be impressed that you asked them to give feedback and who then you can go back to afterwards and say what you're working on. So people start to get, "Oh, I can use this to have a conversation I'd like to have, or to network with this person, or to have visibility with a more senior person, or to rebuild, start to rebuild the relationship."

Brady sees the 360-degree feedback as a way of holding a mirror up to the coachee:

> I mean the mirror is really saying, "Here's what others have said about you." So when I do a qualitative 360, that's in essence what I'm trying to do. I'm trying to say, "Let's put a mirror up around here."

These coaches are also careful to be clear about how the results will be used, and that's a key part of the setup. Marjorie told an agonizing story of a recent coachee on whom a 360-degree report was produced. Marjorie had not been clear up front with all parties how the report was to be used. "I hadn't specifically agreed that, "When I give this 360, this is who it's going to, and this is who it's not going to." I left that fuzzy, to my cost, as I've discovered." The coachee edited the report and then sent the edited report to her boss and to HR. She edited out the key developmental areas, but left the coach's header on the report, so it appeared to have come directly from the coach. [what else can I say here??]

Reporting back the results in a way that the coachee can accept and work with them is where the participating coaches really seem to shine. Coachees may have trouble accepting the feedback results:

> Probably, most chances, there's 80, 85 percent of that, sometimes less, but mostly 80, 85 percent that people will agree with. It's generally the five to 15 percent that people get irritated about because they don't see themselves that way. And that's where the defensiveness potentially comes in. And a coach really has to help that individual work their way through (Brady).

All of them seem to have thought long and hard about how best to deliver the results of the 360-degree feedback in order to counter that defensiveness, and they all seem to be continuously improving the process. For example, Jolene described a feedback session that didn't quite go as planned:

> I gave him the feedback and his reaction was something along the lines of, "Well, if they don't think I'm doing well, then I'll just quit." Which was really surprising, given how he had been up until that point…. I was shocked in how he took it.

Eventually Jolene was able to bring the coachee around and begin to work with the feedback. She modified her feedback approach with future clients based on this incident. She said,

> I learned that you never know how they're gonna take the feedback. I think I learned that most people suck it up and put on a better poker face than really what they're feeling, and that the feedback is harder to take than I have thought about in a long time. So I started to have a little more empathy and soften that bit of it.

Brady described a very difficult feedback session, in which the coachee's defensiveness was a real challenge:

> Hers was probably the most difficulty 360 I think I've ever done, because it was really difficulty for her to accept any feedback that just didn't fit her paradigm. She'd always been so successful in various different roles and had never gotten feedback in terms of some of these relationships. To the extent that she had in the past, they were usually shrouded in, it was the other person's issue, not hers. So there was a ton of defensiveness that needed to be overcome. I think the part of that coaching engagement that I thought about for this discussion was in going through that feedback and having her come back at various different points – now these were thematic reports – especially important that anonymity for the individuals be preserved. And she understood that, but she wanted to go through and say, "Well I think so and so said that,: I finally looked at her and I said, "Now, help me understand what good is it gonna do you in your relationships to have in the back of your mind, so-and-so said this and I know this about them and therefore I don't have to accept that feedback." And she sat back. Again, that was one of those moments where she sat back.

It's that moment of sitting back, of stopping to think, that Brady was trying to create. He did that because,

> She wanted the benefit of the coaching. Until she could appreciate the full range of the feedback, without having to accept it, she just had to understand it, and then decide

> what of that she was gonna act on and what she wasn't…. But as long as you continue to discount different parts of it, it's almost like I'm still living in my own paradigm of, "I'm only gonna think about things as I have always believed them." So it's a similar kind of perspective, but it's just about a different…it's about the challenge of getting and dealing with information and feedback that is contrary to your own beliefs

The coaches have different approaches to the written report, but all seem to have thought carefully about what would be in writing, and how they would share it. Jolene prints out three unbound pages: "a page of strengths, a page of development areas, and a page of recommendations or action plans." She hands the coachee one page at a time, and helps them fully digest one page before moving on to the next.

Coaches are careful to protect the anonymity of the interview respondents. As Brady put it,

> There's a mutual responsibility, or multiple levels of responsibility that go along with that. I think you've got a responsibility, certainly to your client to provide them accurate, thoughtful, meaningful feedback. At the same time, you've got a responsibility to the people you've spoken to, to make sure that what gets shared fits exactly within the context of the commitment that you've made to those individuals, so you're protecting anonymity. You absolutely have to be able to sustain that. And that is sometimes very hard, because to get the point across of the feedback, you have to be able to do that in a way that makes the point, and yet and the same time doesn't give away who said it, unless you have an understanding with that individual about it…. That's often very difficult. That takes some thought process on the part of the coach in terms of how to frame that in a way that'll satisfy those sometimes competing objectives.

Most seem to be skilled at drawing out strengths from the results, and normalizing the development areas. Jolene said, "I make them focus, actually, on what they do well, which is hard for them to do. And sometimes they don't even know what the organization thinks they do well, or how highly the organization values them."

Coaches tried to normalize the developmental areas; to help the coachee see those areas as normal for that stage of a person's career. Jolene said,

> And very often the things that we need to work on are, like just makes absolute sense for where the person is in the role they're in or development. So this guy had been

> promoted, and there were a few things that he needed to work on that were so normal for people in his role.
>
> and,
>
> "There's nothing here that's a surprise for anybody that's done what you've done, gotten to where you've gotten to and is now at a much more senior level." So then they like that. You play to their vanity and their pride and then they'll go with you, cuz you're saying, "You're absolutely great. Don't worry about this stuff. Everybody gets through it. We're just gonna do it together a little bit faster."

Coaches also work to translate adjectives (e.g., arrogant) into behaviors. Jolene put it this way:

> So let's say they say somebody's being arrogant. If I come to a client and I say, "You're being arrogant," that's really not helpful because what I want to say to them is, "When you do this, people perceive you as being arrogant." So I try and get very behavioral…. Most people who give feedback don't know how to do that mano-a-mano. Like a boss [will] say, "You're arrogant." Well that's really not too helpful. And [the boss] doesn't know how to say, "When you do this, I perceive you as arrogant," or, "When you do that, people think you are arrogant."

Presenting the areas of development in that fashion helps the coachee move to action:

> So you really normalize it. And then you say, "These are the things we need to work on." And usually it's not new news. So they just want to know how, "what do we do?" Because they may have gotten some of that feedback before, they know this piece isn't working, but you're there to actually help them, help them move forward. So when you come with an action plan, or some ideas on what you could do to develop those areas, they really appreciate it… (Jolene).

Because of earlier negative reactions to 360-degree feedback, the coaches often have modified their tone when writing their reports. Jolene, for example, said, "I'm more careful with the wording. I'm not as direct, or I'm direct but a little softer. And I'm very direct, so being less direct is still direct. But I'm also just more careful. I read it over more."

On the other hand, sometimes the coachee's seemingly negative reaction can actually be a turning point:

> I had to… when I actually did the 360 and got some pretty tough feedback, I had to figure out how I'm gonna give her that feedback in a way that she hears it but that doesn't alienate her and as she did receive the feedback she told me that she cried for 24

hours, she found it deeply wounding. And I thought, "Oh my God, what have I gone and done now?" But it was interesting because she said, in time she said that was an absolute turn around for her, because she had no idea what impact she was having on other people. Absolutely no idea. And just getting that very, very tough feedback, but couched in a gentle and caring way, because she knew that I cared about her. That was the beginning of the turnaround (Marjorie).

Following that incident, Marjorie now says,

I don't seek to wound but I don't shy from very tough feedback, and I think people can get the distinction, you know, that I'm not there to put them down but I am there to reveal to them, if they've got a blind spot or if they're doing some crappy things in the world, I'm there not to sugar coat it.

Coaches can be strict with their coachees about how to use the data after the first feedback session. Jolene has a rule:

…which is after I've given you the feedback, you don't get to talk to anybody except your spouse about it for a week. Nobody at work, nobody in your network, nobody. "You can call me and we'll talk about it." Cuz I know that it can be rough.

In sum, these coaches are skilled at setting up 360-degree feedback, gathering the interview data, and then feeding back the data in a way that is helpful for the coachee. This appears to me to be a core competency for these coaches.

APPENDIX J: COMPETENCY AREA NAME CREATION

Original Category Name	Transformation Notes	Competency Area Name
360-degree feedback	Straightforward transformation of a noun (360-degree feedback process) into what coaches do (gathering and giving 360-degree feedback)	Gathering and giving 360-degree feedback
Authenticity	At this point in the analysis, "being authentic" seemed to capture the interview segments that fit into these codes.	Being authentic
Context awareness	Name chosen to describe the generic coaching action of paying attention to the context outside of the coaching relationship, both in space and time.	Attending to context
Education	Study participants spoke of constantly seeking new knowledge and understanding in order to enhance their coaching skills.	Learning and developing constantly
EQ	Coach interviews include examples of understanding coachee emotions, and adapting to those, and of understanding and managing the coach's own emotions.	Understanding and managing emotions
Experience	The net result of the study participants' experience – in business, and with many coachees, was an understanding of business and of how organizations work.	Understanding business and organizations
Flexibility	Study participants did not follow a single recipe for all coachees, but tailored it to each individual.	Being flexible
Intuition	Trusting intuition implies that the coach is hearing, or aware of, intuition. Trusting intuition leads to using it.	Trusting intuition
Maintaining focus on the coachee	Gerund form (focusing) seemed stronger and more direct. Sweet spot had to do with the individual characteristics and needs of the coachee, which seemed to fit as part of this broader competency area. Tools were discussed by participants in the context of choosing the right tools for each coachee and each situation.	Focusing on the coachee
Managing relationships	All of these seemed to be about growing relationships and managing those relationships. At this point in the analysis, relationships included those with the coachee, with the coachee's boss, and, usually, with the Human Resources coaching contact.	Growing and managing relationships

Original Category Name	Transformation Notes	Competency Area Name
Observing	This competency area was about collecting data in a myriad of ways, and making meaning of it. At this point in the analysis, the three verbs (observing, listening, and noticing) seemed to capture all of the various ways of gathering data. However, the competency area name was not yet fully satisfying as a descriptor.	Observing, listening, and noticing
Patience	Study participants were able to wait for the proper time to work on tough issues with coachees	Having patience
Presence	Transformed noun into gerund.	Being fully present
Speaking truth to power	Study participant stories included standing up to powerful coachees and telling them what others were afraid to say, and of doing the same with the bosses of coachees.	Speaking truth to power

APPENDIX K: FINAL VERSION OF THE MEMO ON 360-DEGREE FEEDBACK

Memo on S7 360 feedback process

February 14, 2016

All of the coaches in this study mentioned using some sort of 360-degree process. Usually this meant interviews with subordinates, peers, and the boss. In all cases it was qualitative, in that coaches asked open ended questions rather than asking participants to rate the level of pre-determined skills. The process of using the 360 appears to be a central skill for outstanding executive coaches.

It's clear that these coaches would not be as successful if they did not have the 360-degree interview data. Fred said:

> One of the drawbacks of 360, not in terms of a coach's process, but in terms of the marketplace, is that it's labor intensive. We have electronic versions of the 360 now and that's saving some cost, but for those of us who prefer as many interviews as possible, it becomes a costly part of the process, and it's one of the first things that some executives may say, "I really don't think I want to spend the money on that part of it." Or, "Instead of interviewing 15 people, can you do three or four, will that give you enough data?" Occasionally that push back, it doesn't happen that much, but it's sometimes when it does happen makes me feel like I'm coaching in a vacuum.

Coaches, first, are cognizant of coachee readiness for a 360. Coaches don't automatically do a 360 at the start of an engagement. Jessica says, "Now, in my career, that's just not the way I approach it. "What's this person ready for?" Can I, what are they hungry for, what are they willing to take on, that kind of thing." [Note: Readiness will show up elsewhere as a separate code (Maintaining focus on the coachee).]

In terms of setup, I think these coaches paint the 360 as a source of information for the coachee. It's certainly about collecting data, and as such it is part of the overall observation skill of the coach. Jolene explains:

> I once had a person who said, “I don’t want you to do a 360, don’t do a 360, I don’t want you to do a 360.” And I said, “That’s fine. I won’t do a 360. The only concern I want to point out to you is there’s only gonna be one person who doesn’t know what they’re saying about you. And that’s gonna be you. So you decide.”

Phyllis tells coachees:

> “Everybody, especially at senior levels, everybody has a view on you, but you many times don’t know what it is. So you don’t know what they think is really powerful about what you do. They don’t, you don’t know what they’re thinking is kind of a gap. So you’re always guessing. And it’s a function of your boss, and the evaluation process, and your bonus. There are all these proxies you’ve come up with, but in terms of really being able to analytically assess what am I doing well and what could I afford to do better or differently, I think that’s hard to come by.”
>
> So I think that that’s a real value add. I look forward to that, adding that piece to the puzzle. That’s where the magic starts, is having that information.

Fred tells coachees:

> “This is going to be our roadmap for coaching. We’re going to apply this, or overlay this, onto the conversation we had earlier, about what success will look like. Here’s our roadmap. Then I discover, probably two or three specifics that fit into what your goal is. That’s where we’re gonna work around.”

But it’s more than that. Jolene paints the 360 process as a way for the coachee to build or repair key relationships:

> …and then I tell them that the 360 is not just collecting data, but there’s an opportunity to leverage and improve your relationships with some people, who will be impressed that you asked them to give feedback and who then you can go back to afterwards and say what you’re working on. So people start to get, “Oh, I can use this to have a conversation I’d like to have, or to network with this person, or to have visibility with a more senior person, or to rebuild, start to rebuild the relationship.”

Jarod helps the coachee rebuild relationships using the results of the 360-degree interviews:

> I ask each of my clients to go back to each of the interviewees, ultimately, and share with them what [they've] learned, what [they're] committing to, and the areas in which [they] would welcome ongoing feedback on an informal basis.
>
> So they begin to establish feedback sources. And because most of my clients are senior leaders, they're modeling for the rest of the organization, or the rest of their team, what it looks like to take responsibility for your own, ongoing, professional development. There's an exponential collateral benefit to this entire process, if we can play it out in full. That's all done inside the coaching relationship. I want to hear back, "Who have you spoken with? What became of that conversation?"

Brady sees the 360-degree feedback as a way of holding a mirror up to the coachee:

> I mean the mirror is really saying, "Here's what others have said about you." So when I do a qualitative 360, that's in essence what I'm trying to do. I'm trying to say, "Let's put a mirror up around here."

Allan has the coachee do self-assessments before doing the 360-degree interviews:

> Prior to the 360 I took him through the Hogan and the EQI, so we went through the assessments to get him to look internally first. "Let's take a look at what's happening inside you." That was particularly relevant, given his reactions, which I knew going in that was one of the things they wanted to fix, from an organization standpoint.
>
> The reason I came up with the assessments first is that I found that everyone is always interested in learning more about themselves, no matter how experienced they are. And I just find it humbles people. It gets them in that introspective space and then when you come in with the two by four of the 360, sometimes, they're listening to it a little less defensively and they're coming from a more curious place.
>
> They just naturally start connecting dots, "Oh, that's how that's showing up for me, that piece we saw before." I use the Hogan a lot, for example. "I see how people are experiencing that. I didn't really see that before." So they can give it a frame of reference to look. I key thing is they tend to be more curious.

These coaches are also careful to be clear about how the results will be used, and that's a key part of the setup. Marjorie told an agonizing story of a recent coachee on whom a 360-degree report was produced. Marjorie had not been clear up front with all parties how the report was to be used. "I hadn't specifically agreed that, "When I give this 360, this is who it's going to, and this is who it's not going to." I left that fuzzy, to my cost, as I've discovered." The coachee edited the report and then sent the edited report to her boss and to HR. She edited out the key developmental areas, but left the coach's header on the report, so it appeared to have come directly from the coach. [what else can I say here??]

Reporting back the results in a way that the coachee can accept and work with them is where the participating coaches really seem to shine. Coachees may have trouble accepting the feedback results:

> Probably, most chances, there's 80, 85 percent of that, sometimes less, but mostly 80, 85 percent that people will agree with. It's generally the five to 15 percent that people get irritated about because they don't see themselves that way. And that's where the defensiveness potentially comes in. And a coach really has to help that individual work their way through (Brady).

All of them seem to have thought long and hard about how best to deliver the results of the 360-degree feedback in order to counter that defensiveness, and they all seem to be continuously improving the process. For example, Jolene described a feedback session that didn't quite go as planned:

> I gave him the feedback and his reaction was something along the lines of, "Well, if they don't think I'm doing well, then I'll just quit." Which was really surprising, given how he had been up until that point…. I was shocked in how he took it.

Eventually Jolene was able to bring the coachee around and begin to work with the feedback. She modified her feedback approach with future clients based on this incident. She said,

> I learned that you never know how they're gonna take the feedback. I think I learned that most people suck it up and put on a better poker face than really what they're feeling, and that the feedback is harder to take than I have thought about in a long time. So I started to have a little more empathy and soften that bit of it.

Brady described a very difficult feedback session, in which the coachee's defensiveness was a real challenge:

> Hers was probably the most difficulty 360 I think I've ever done, because it was really difficulty for her to accept any feedback that just didn't fit her paradigm. She'd always been so successful in various different roles and had never gotten feedback in terms of some of these relationships. To the extent that she had in the past, they were usually shrouded in, it was the other person's issue, not hers. So there was a ton of defensiveness that needed to be overcome. I think the part of that coaching engagement that I thought about for this discussion was in going through that feedback and having her come back at various different points – now these were thematic reports – especially important that anonymity for the individuals be preserved. And she understood that, but she wanted to go through and say, "Well I think so and so said that,: I finally looked at her and I said, "Now, help me understand what good is it gonna do you in your relationships to have in the back of your mind, so-and-so said this and I know this about them and therefore I don't have to accept that feedback." And she sat back. Again, that was one of those moments where she sat back.

It's that moment of sitting back, of stopping to think, that Brady was trying to create. He did that because,

> She wanted the benefit of the coaching. Until she could appreciate the full range of the feedback, without having to accept it, she just had to understand it, and then decide what of that she was gonna act on and what she wasn't…. But as long as you continue to discount different parts of it, it's almost like I'm still living in my own paradigm of, "I'm only gonna think about things as I have always believed them." So it's a similar kind of perspective, but it's just about a different…it's about the challenge of getting and dealing with information and feedback that is contrary to your own beliefs

Kevin used an extensive debrief process:

> We had a full-day session. Sat down, went through the whole thing. I sent it to him a day or so ahead, so he could give it a quick read. And we went through it. Hit the main points, and then I went through a bunch of questions: what did he pick up, what jumped out at him, what'd he learn that he didn't know before, what did he see that he already knew. Those kinds of questions. I got a reaction from him, and tried to help him pull out some insights: "What are some things that are really important about this that you want to focus on?"

The coaches have different approaches to the written report, but all seem to have thought carefully about what would be in writing, and how they would share it. Jolene prints out three unbound pages: "a page of strengths, a page of development areas, and a page of recommendations or action plans." She hands the coachee one page at a time, and helps them fully digest one page before moving on to the next. Kevin provides, "…about a 25-page summary, with an executive summary up front."

Phyllis tries to "package it all up in a way that that is helpful for the individual:"

> I look for trends, so I look for, as I pull it together, I look for are there differences of opinion depending on the view. So do peers see you differently than bosses, than direct reports. So I'll look for those themes. I will look for actionable things.
>
> When I pull it together I may hear some very subjective things, but I always strive for examples and more concrete evidence of the point of view, so that I can share this more tangible, feedback that's more tangible to the individual, so it evokes less feeling, you know like, "Who said they can't trust me? What does that mean?" I can cite some more specific examples, which is very powerful.
>
> I spend a lot of time on the strengths. I really do. I think that's so important that we know what our strengths are, and what do other people see as our strengths, because I had that experience of someone told me I had a strength that I didn't realize that I had, and that was very powerful for me.
>
> So that ends up being a really rich part of the conversation on the feedback, is where people see strengths that you didn't realize you had, or you didn't realize it was being noted. That's empowering. So I view it, it's not all about, "Here are the things you could do differently, or fix," but all about reinforcing, as well, where you might uniquely be adding value, relative to others.

Most coaches in this study are careful to protect the anonymity of the interview respondents. As Brady put it,

> There's a mutual responsibility, or multiple levels of responsibility that go along with that. I think you've got a responsibility, certainly to your client to provide them accurate, thoughtful, meaningful feedback. At the same time, you've got a responsibility to the people you've spoken to, to make sure that what gets shared fits exactly within the context of the commitment that you've made to those individuals, so you're protecting anonymity. You absolutely have to be able to sustain that. And that is sometimes very hard, because to get the point across of the feedback, you have to be able to do that in a way that makes the point, and yet and the same time doesn't give away who said it, unless you have an understanding with that individual about it…. That's often very difficult. That takes some thought process on the part of the coach in terms of how to frame that in a way that'll satisfy those sometimes competing objectives.

Jarod, though, has a unique approach:

> As much as possible, I try and do those transparently, so they're not anonymous. So my client contracts with each of the interviewees with whom I'll talk with, that, "This is gonna be a transparent process, and I'm gonna know who says what." And then there's a little bit more specific contracting around that, in terms of what that means, more broadly in terms of what are we gonna do with this information, how's it gonna be used. The context is knitted together in that fashion.

He reasons that,

> …research bears out that the non-anonymous feedback is actually more accurate and more useful, because it carries with it context. If you know who said what and it's event specific, then the feedback is that much more useful, if you know the source of it. And it's even further useful if you can go back to that person and say, "Hey, here's an opportunity for us to deepen our relationship." There's no retribution, right. Often times I've heard, "If it's anonymous, then I can be more candid." That's possible that you can be more candid in an anonymous interview process, but that's actually colluding with the problem that we're trying to solve.

Most seem to be skilled at drawing out strengths from the results, and normalizing the development areas. Jolene said, "I make them focus, actually, on what they do well, which is hard for them to do. And sometimes they don't even know what the organization thinks they do well, or how highly the organization values them."

Coaches tried to normalize the developmental areas; to help the coachee see those areas as normal for that stage of a person's career. Jolene said,

> And very often the things that we need to work on are, like just makes absolute sense for where the person is in the role they're in or development. So this guy had been promoted, and there were a few things that he needed to work on that were so normal for people in his role.

and,

> "There's nothing here that's a surprise for anybody that's done what you've done, gotten to where you've gotten to and is now at a much more senior level." So then they like that. You play to their vanity and their pride and then they'll go with you, cuz you're saying, "You're absolutely great. Don't worry about this stuff. Everybody gets through it. We're just gonna do it together a little bit faster."

Coaches also work to translate adjectives (e.g., arrogant) into behaviors. Jolene put it this way:

> So let's say they say somebody's being arrogant. If I come to a client and I say, "You're being arrogant," that's really not helpful because what I want to say to them is, "When you do this, people perceive you as being arrogant." So I try and get very behavioral…. Most people who give feedback don't know how to do that mano-a-mano. Like a boss [will] say, "You're arrogant." Well that's really not too helpful. And [the boss] doesn't know how to say, "When you do this, I perceive you as arrogant," or, "When you do that, people think you are arrogant."

Presenting the areas of development in that fashion helps the coachee move to action:

> So you really normalize it. And then you say, "These are the things we need to work on." And usually it's not new news. So they just want to know how, "what do we do?" Because they may have gotten some of that feedback before, they know this piece isn't working, but you're there to actually help them, help them move forward. So when you come with an action plan, or some ideas on what you could do to develop those areas, they really appreciate it… (Jolene).

Because of earlier negative reactions to 360-degree feedback, the coaches often have modified their tone when writing their reports. Jolene, for example, said, "I'm more careful with the wording. I'm not as direct, or I'm direct but a little softer. And I'm very direct, so being less direct is still direct. But I'm also just more careful. I read it over more."

On the other hand, sometimes the coachee's seemingly negative reaction can actually be a turning point:

> I had to… when I actually did the 360 and got some pretty tough feedback, I had to figure out how I'm gonna give her that feedback in a way that she hears it but that doesn't alienate her and as she did receive the feedback she told me that she cried for 24 hours, she found it deeply wounding. And I thought, "Oh my God, what have I gone and done now?" But it was interesting because she said, in time she said that was an absolute turn around for her, because she had no idea what impact she was having on other people. Absolutely no idea. And just getting that very, very tough feedback, but couched in a gentle and caring way, because she knew that I cared about her. That was the beginning of the turn around (Marjorie).

Following that incident, Marjorie now says,

> I don't seek to wound but I don't shy from very tough feedback, and I think people can get the distinction, you know, that I'm not there to put them down but I am there to reveal to them, if they've got a blind spot or if they're doing some crappy things in the world, I'm there not to sugar coat it.

Seth, on the other hand, says that blunt feedback is most useful with his coachees:

> The executive may be skilled with his direct reports, but not with his peers. He may be skilled with the boss and not with his direct reports in particular areas. Pointing those out to him. In preparing a report which highlights that, and really hits them between the eyes with what needs to be worked on. And most executives, in my experience, when that occurs, they roll up their sleeves and they work on it.

Coaches can be strict with their coachees about how to use the data after the first feedback session. Jolene has a rule:

> …which is after I've given you the feedback, you don't get to talk to anybody except your spouse about it for a week. Nobody at work, nobody in your network, nobody. "You can call me and we'll talk about it." Cuz I know that it can be rough.

Allan sets a homework assignment for the coachee:

> And then I gave him a homework assignment. I said, "Okay, let's capture what the main messages are, which of these are most important, and which of these, from a developmental standpoint, you want to take on and change." So tried to keep it very simple with him, and leave it with him to say look, "Let's look at this data together, but I really want to encourage you to interpret it." I think that was important.
>
> I have a template I use and just say, "Look, let's turn this into bullet points." I'm giving them 20, 25 pages of information. "Extract from that what really matters in bullet point form." (They're used to that.) "Extract out what's really key." And then if they miss something or something I think's important or they're glossing it over, I'll offer my take as well. They usually welcome and like that.

It doesn't always work as well as the coach had planned, but these coaches are able to understand why that happened, and have modified their approach accordingly. Phyllis said,

> The way that the feedback landed on the person was the person thought that the manager didn't like them anymore, and was trying to move them out, was trying to marginalize them. It just completely backfired, between how it felt to the individual and what the manager intended.

Phyllis described another surprising 360-degree feedback session:

> I interviewed several people, and I heard very, very, extremely negative things about her around not being able to trust her, that she was very mean, difficult to work with. I mean really, really harsh things.
>
> I did my very best to, I thought, "Okay, now I think my goal is to help her accept some aspect of this feedback." She was totally blocked from being able to hear anything having to do with enhancing her performance. I was very careful about trying to share some of the feedback in a way that wasn't just gonna totally push her into a defensive mode. As careful as I thought I was, it did not go well. This has never happened before and never happened since, but she stood up and said, "You can leave." I was stunned. And I just thought, "Okay I think I need to leave." I said, "Alright. I'm sorry if I upset you. May I just take two minutes…." And she said, "No. Leave." So I left.

APPENDIX L: FIRST VERSION OF THE COMPETENCY MODEL

Competency Title	Behavioral Definition
Growing and managing relationships	Executive coaches who exhibit this competency effectively juggle relationships with the coachee, the coachee's manager (if one exists) and with HR. Outstanding executive coaches pay attention to the setup of an engagement before they ever meet the coachee, working with HR and with the coachee's manager to get a full picture of how the organization views the coachee. Executive coaches create, over time, a safe and trusting relationship with the coachee, one in which the coachee feels free to share and to experiment. Outstanding executive coaches are able to build these relationships even with coachees who are initially very resistant. These coaches avoid judging their coachees, other than to hold them in unconditional high regard, and see that lack of judgment as key to building the coaching relationship.
Understanding business and organizations	Executive coaches who exhibit this competency understand how business works, how organizations work, and how individuals operate inside businesses. They often have "been there, done that," and use that experience both to connect with their coachees and to normalize what their coachees are going through. Outstanding executive coaches also use this competency to build credibility at the start of coaching engagements. They speak the language of their coachees, so the coachees don't have to waste time translating from business-speak into English. Executive coaches who exhibit this competency have a wide client base, and have seen many or most of the situations that their current coachees are encountering. When it is helpful to their coachees, executive coaches will offer insight from their experiences with other coachees.

Competency Title	Behavioral Definition
Observing, listening, and noticing	Executive coaches who exhibit this competency see everything as data. They listen carefully and intently to what coachees say and to what they don't say. In addition to content, they listen for emotions, beliefs, and values. They notice patterns in coachee behavior over time, and bring those to their coachees' attention. In addition to what they observe in coaching sessions, coaches gather data directly from other members of the coachee's organization, and from outside the organization. Outstanding executive coaches exhibit a knack for noticing seemingly trivial details that can lead to coachee breakthroughs. They demonstrate the ability to take in large amounts of information and then distill the key points for the benefit of their coachees. Outstanding executive coaches also notice their own emotional responses to the coachee, and bring those up for discussion when they believe it will help the coachee.
Gathering and giving 360-degree feedback	Outstanding executive coaches excel at gathering qualitative feedback from coachees' managers, peers, and subordinates. These coaches carefully time the 360-degree process, waiting, if necessary, until the coachee is ready to receive the feedback. They are able to frame the 360-degree feedback process as a source of useful information for the coachee, and as a way for the coachee to deepen relationships with key stakeholders. These coaches focus, in the interview phase, at eliciting specific, behavioral details, details that will help their coachee understand and work with the feedback. Executive coaches who exhibit this competency think carefully about how to present the feedback to coachees in a way that maximizes the chances the coachee will take it on board and work with it. They tend to excel at drawing out the strengths of their coachees, especially those that others see and that the coachee does not. These coaches often work to normalize developmental areas, so that coachees see them as normal issues for people in similar situations. Outstanding executive coaches think strategically about what level of anonymity they will promise to participants, and then hold to those promises completely.

Competency Title	Behavioral Definition
Focusing on the coachee	Executive coaches who exhibit this competency express no agenda of their own. Their entire focus is on what the coachee wants to achieve, and on how to help the coachee achieve those goals. Outstanding executive coaches do whatever makes the most sense for the coachee in the moment, and do not attempt to use the same tools and techniques on all coachees. These coaches hold their coachees in unconditional positive regard, honoring them, and caring about them. This focus shows up in the coaches' continual search for the right approach for each coachee. Outstanding executive coaches express hope and optimism for their coachees that exceeds that of the coachees themselves.
Learning and developing constantly	Outstanding executive coaches learn from their successes and their mistakes, and are able to show how they have improved their coaching approach by reflecting on past engagements. Executive coaches who exhibit this competency often talk about books or articles they have read, conferences or workshops they have attended, and peers they have consulted.
Attending to context	Executive coaches who exhibit this competency pay attention not only to what happens in their interactions with the coachee, but to the wider context in which the coachee is operating. Outstanding executive coaches learn how the coachee's organization operates, what its culture is, and how things get done (internal politics). These coaches also pay attention to what's happening in the wider world, because those events often impact on their coachees. Outstanding executive coaches use their understanding of the context to help expand the thinking of their coachees, asking questions and offering observations that help the coachee see his or her place in the larger picture.

Competency Title	Behavioral Definition
Understanding and managing emotions	Outstanding executive coaches are aware of their own emotions, manage those emotions for the benefit of their coachees, and often use those emotions to help coachees see how they affect other people. Executive coaches who exhibit this competency also are aware of and understand the emotions of others, especially of their coachees. Outstanding executive coaches will often help their coachees explore and talk about their emotions, in order to increase coachee self-awareness. These coaches use their understanding of coachee emotions to make decisions about pacing and about the level of challenge the coachee can handle. Outstanding executive coaches see emotions, theirs and others, as just one more type of data that they can use to help their coachees grow and develop.
Speaking truth to power	Executive coaches who exhibit this competency see it as part of their job to speak truth to their coachees, no matter how powerful the coachee may be. They offer their feedback and observations directly and clearly, and often say they are the only person who does that for their coachees. Outstanding executive coaches tell their coachees early in the relationship that they will be direct, and that they see that as a key piece of the value they bring to the coaching relationship. These coaches willingly confront coachees whose behavior is out of alignment with their goals. They aren't afraid to challenge a coachee who appears to be saying what the coach wants to hear, rather than what the coachee really believes.
Trusting intuition	Outstanding executive coaches pay attention to their hunches and insights, trust their intuition, and act on their intuition. When asked to explain why they asked a coachee a particularly impactful question, coaches who exhibit this competency often say it just came to them. These coaches often describe a feeling or a nudge that something seemingly trivial was worth exploring, and then ask the coachee about it.
Having patience	Executive coaches who exhibit this competency understand that coachees need time for some things to sink in and begin to create change. Rather than trying to force a change, these coaches are content to plant seeds and give them time to sprout. Outstanding executive coaches are willing to take months, in some cases, to get a coaching relationship to the point where the coachee is willing to work on foundational issues. Coaches who exhibit this competency help coachees first with tactical, short term issues, in order to build feelings of trust and safety.

Competency Title	Behavioral Definition
Being fully present	Outstanding executive coaches focus 100% of their attention on their coachees during coaching sessions. They ignore distractions, attend to the coachee fully, and avoid thinking about what they (the coach) will do or say next. Executive coaches who exhibit this competency focus on what the coachee is saying at the deepest level. Some of these coaches describe being in the coachee's head. Outstanding executive coaches tend to take care of themselves, physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually, in order to be more present for their coachees.
Being authentic	Executive coaches who exhibit this competency know who they are, and act in alignment with that identity. These coaches feel comfortable being themselves when with coachees, and see no need to pretend to be anything they are not. They are comfortable sharing their successes and their failures with coachees, when sharing those stories will help the coachee (particularly by normalizing the coachee's experience). Outstanding executive coaches are able to be vulnerable with their coachees, when that vulnerability will help the coachee achieve his or her goals.
Being flexible	Outstanding executive coaches are flexible in their approach to coachees. These coaches do not follow a formula or script for coaching, but do or say what seems best in the moment for each coachee. The assess where the coachee is, and meet the coachee at that point. Executive coaches who exhibit this competency challenge their coachees just enough to move them forward in any given moment, rather than forcing a fixed time line on their coachees. They adjust their approach to whatever they believe will work best for their coachee in the present moment. When it seems like it might help, and when their schedules allow, these coaches sometimes offer extra coaching conversations to their coachees. They are not bound by a fixed rhythm of coaching sessions. Executive coaches who exhibit this competency see that there are many possible paths to any goal, and help their coachee choose the path that fits that person the best.

APPENDIX M: COMPETENCY AREA NAMES EVOLUTION

Original	Final
Growing and managing relationships	Manages relationship between coach and client organization: Works closely with HR coaching contact and with the coachee's manager to ensure alignment on coaching goals, and to support the coaching process.
	Builds rapport with the coachee: Takes steps to establish mutual respect, determine purpose of coaching relationship, and establish appropriate roles, behaviors and expectations.
Understanding business and organizations	Brings business understanding and experience to the coaching interaction: Integrates business, coaching, and personal experience in the coaching relationship in ways that facilitate attainment of coaching goals.
Observing, listening, and noticing	Integrates a diversity of data into the developmental interaction: Interprets and shares information from a wide array of sources in order to help coachee understand developmental needs and how to achieve them.
Gathering and giving 360-degree feedback	Gathers and provides 360-degree feedback: Interviews subordinates, peers, and superiors of the coachee in order to provide a full picture of how others view the coachee's behavior and to help in setting the agenda for the coaching process.
Focusing on the coachee	Focuses on the coachee: Maintains focus on the coachee's goals, current situation, capabilities, and emotions in order to design appropriate and effective actions.
Learning and developing constantly	Engages in continuous learning to develop coaching skills: Works to improve coach knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics, to maximize performance in the coaching role.
Understanding and managing emotions	Understands and manages emotions in the coaching environment: Is aware of own emotions and those of others, and effectively manages those emotions to maximize coachee learning and growth.

APPENDIX N: EMERGENCE OF BEHAVIORS FROM INTERVIEW DATA

Interview segment	Indicated behavior
"One was to really take it very slowly with her and let her. Not push too hard. Not try to. We did not do 360 for a year into the project" (Jessica). "She was very distrustful and really hard nut. And so I had to use all my tact and diplomacy to win her over. I had to relax my process a little bit and allow her to just work with me for a couple of months before I did the 360" (Marjorie).	Selects appropriate time to provide 360-degree feedback for greatest impact on the coaching process.
"…and then I tell them that the 360 is not just collecting data, but there's an opportunity to leverage and improve your relationships with some people, who will be impressed that you asked them to give feedback and who then you can go back to afterwards and say what you're working on" (Jolene). "I mean the mirror is really saying, "Here's what others have said about you." So when I do a qualitative 360, that's in essence what I'm trying to do. I'm trying to say, "Let's put a mirror up around here" (Brady). "More that it's a point of data, additional data for us to learn from. Give us kind of a window into perceptions and what may be going on behind the scenes. That's how I sell it" (Fred).	Frames the 360-degree feedback process as providing information for the coachee and as a way for the coachee to strengthen relationships with key stakeholders.
"I will look for actionable things. When I pull it together I may hear some very subjective things, but I always strive for examples and more concrete evidence of the point of view, so that I can share this more tangible, feedback that's more tangible to the individual, so it evokes less feeling, you know like, "Who said they can't trust me? What does that mean?" I can cite some more specific examples, which is very powerful" (Phyllis). "…in the feedback I try and get …. So let's say they say somebody's being arrogant. Okay. So if I come to a client and I say, 'You're being arrogant,' that's really not helpful because what I want to say to them is, 'When you do this, people perceive you as being arrogant'" (Jolene).	During 360-degree interviews, elicits specific behavioral details that will help the coachee understand strengths and developmental opportunities.

Interview segment	Indicated behavior
"I got a reaction from him, and tried to help him pull out some insights: "What are some things that are really important about this that you want to focus on" (Kevin)? "…being able to say, "This is going to be our roadmap for coaching. We're going to apply this, or overlay this, onto the conversation we had earlier, about what success will look like. Here's our roadmap. Then I discover, probably two or three specifics that fit into what your goal is. That's where we're gonna work around" (Fred).	Using 360-degree interview data, helps coachee select two or three specific developmental opportunities on which to focus subsequent coaching.
"In preparing a report which highlights that, and really hits them between the eyes with what needs to be worked on. And most executives, in my experience, when that occurs, they roll up their sleeves and they work on it" (Seth). "I learned that you never know how they're gonna take the feedback. I think I learned that most people suck it up and put on a better poker face than really what they're feeling, and that the feedback is harder to take than I have thought about in a long time. So I started to have a little more empathy and soften that bit of it" (Jolene).	Delivers the feedback in a way that maximizes coachee acceptance and integration.
"I spend a lot of time on the strengths. I really do. I think that's so important that we know what our strengths are, and what do other people see as our strengths, because I had that experience of someone told me I had a strength that I didn't realize that I had, and that was very powerful for me. So that ends up being a really rich part of the conversation on the feedback, is where people see strengths that you didn't realize you had, or you didn't realize it was being noted. That's empowering. So I view it, it's not all about, "Here are the things you could do differently, or fix," but all about reinforcing, as well, where you might uniquely be adding value, relative to others" (Phyllis). "…the first thing I focus on is their strengths. And actually I give them a report, but I give it to them a page at a time: a page of strengths, a page of development areas, and a page of recommendations or action plans, usually. So I make them focus, actually, on what they do well, which is hard for them to do. And sometimes they don't even know what the organization thinks they do well, or how well the org…or how highly the organization values them" (Jolene).	Focuses coachee attention first on the strengths that have emerged from the feedback, especially on those strengths the coachee has not yet recognized.

Interview segment	Indicated behavior
"And very often the things that we need to work on are, like just makes absolute sense for where the person is in the role they're in or development. So this guy had been promoted, and there were a few things that he needed to work on that were so normal for people in his role. 'There's nothing here that's a surprise for anybody that's done what you've done, gotten to where you've gotten to and is now at a much more senior level.' So then they like that. You play to their vanity and their pride and then they'll go with you, cuz you're saying, 'You're absolutely great. Don't worry about this stuff. Everybody gets through it'" (Jolene). "And that's, I think, where the David Rock stuff comes in, when you understand the way brains work, guess what, 'It's not just you. Everybody's got that reptilian brain'" (Nellie).	Talks about developmental areas using words that show those areas as normal for people in similar situations to the coachee.
"And then the key is I really do literally set them homework. I have a template I use and just say, 'Look, let's turn this into bullet points.' I'm giving them 20, 25 pages of information. 'Extract from that what really matters in bullet point form.' (They're used to that.) 'Extract out what's really key.' And then if they miss something or something I think's important or they're glossing it over, I'll offer my take as well. They usually welcome and like that" (Allan).	Sets specific homework tasks for the coachee, focused on drawing key lessons from the 360-degree report

APPENDIX O: SECOND VERSION OF THE COMPETENCY MODEL

I. Manages relationship between coach and client organization: Works closely with HR coaching contact and with the coachee's manager to ensure alignment on coaching goals, and to support the coaching process.

1. Determines purpose and desired outcomes of coaching engagement.

2. Assesses fit of coaching intervention with organization culture and processes.

3. Obtains multiple perspectives on coachee's work-related behavior prior to the first meeting.

4. Explicitly sets confidentiality boundaries with manager and HR coaching contact so that it is clear what information will be shared and with whom.

5. Maintains contact with the coachee's manager and with the Human Resources coaching contact throughout the coaching engagement.

6. Facilitates engagement of coachee's manager when he or she can bring added benefit to the coaching process.

7. Negotiates an appropriate role for the coachee's manager in the coaching engagement.

8. Manages organizational expectations about coaching outcomes.

II. Builds rapport with the coachee: Takes steps to establish mutual respect, determine purpose of coaching relationship, and establish appropriate roles, behaviors and expectations.

9. Explicitly sets confidentiality boundaries with coachee so that it is clear what information will be shared and with whom.

10. Overcomes coachee resistance, by working first on issues that are of interest to the coachee.

11. Utilizes body language, questioning, eye contact, listening, empathy and other behavioral elements to establish a positive relationship with coachee.

12. Responds to coachee in a nonjudgmental way, while being direct about inappropriate or ineffective coachee behavior.

13. Demonstrates dependability and reliability by keeping commitments made to the coachee.

14. Holds coachee accountable for coaching actions.

15. Expresses hope and optimism for coachee.

16. Holds coachee in high regard, speaking passionately about the coachee's strengths and possibilities.

17. Works with the coachee to align coachee goals with organizational goals for the coaching.

18. Challenges coachee to be honest and direct when working with the coach.

III. Brings business understanding and experience to the coaching interaction: Integrates business, coaching, and personal experience in the coaching relationship in ways that facilitate attainment of coaching goals.

19. Understands business concepts, and applies them appropriately to each coaching engagement.

20. Draws stories from business and coaching experience to benefit current coachees.

21. Uses business understanding to craft coachee action plans that are realistic and achievable in a business context.

22. Shares own business successes and failures with the coachee, when sharing will help the coachee achieve coaching goals.

23. Remembers sessions with other coachees, and uses words and stories from those sessions in order to help current coachee with current situation.

24. Understands organizational behavior, and uses that understanding to help coachee design actions and behaviors that align with the coachee's workplace.

IV. Integrates a diversity of data into the developmental interaction: Interprets and shares information from a wide array of sources in order to help coachee understand developmental needs and how to achieve them.

25. Gathers data from multiple sources in order to better understand the coachee and his/her work goals.

26. Probes what coachee does not say.

27. Listens for inconsistencies in coachee's words.

28. Probes inconsistencies between coachee words and body language.

29. Attends to coachee's word choice, pace, tone, volume, and other nuances of how the coachee is speaking.

30. Observes coachee behaviors and behavioral patterns to identify critical instances or patterns for discussion.

31. Notices when coachee seems to be dismissing an important issue, and asks questions to focus coachee attention on that issue.

32. Synthesizes large amounts of data, distilling key points for the benefit of the coachee.

33. Uses metaphors appropriate to the coachee to help him/her better understand current situations.

34. Collects data through interviews, document analysis, observation, and other means in order to understand the coachee's work context.

V. Gathers and provides 360-degree feedback: Interviews subordinates, peers, and superiors of the coachee in order to provide a full picture of how others view the coachee's behavior and to help in setting the agenda for the coaching process.

35. Selects appropriate time to provide 360-degree feedback for greatest impact on the coaching process.

36. Frames the 360-degree feedback process as providing information for the coachee and as a way for the coachee to strengthen relationships with key stakeholders.

37. During 360-degree interviews, elicits specific behavioral details that will help the coachee understand strengths and developmental opportunities.

38. Using 360-degree interview data, helps coachee select two or three specific developmental opportunities on which to focus subsequent coaching.

39. Delivers the feedback in a way that maximizes coachee acceptance and integration.

40. Focuses coachee attention first on the strengths that have emerged from the feedback, especially on those strengths the coachee has not yet recognized.

41. Talks about developmental areas using words that show those areas as normal for people in similar situations to the coachee.

42. Sets specific homework tasks for the coachee, focused on drawing key lessons from the 360-degree report.

VI. Focuses on the coachee: Maintains focus on the coachee's goals, current situation, capabilities, and emotions in order to design appropriate and effective actions.

43. Explicitly works on, and talks about, what the coachee wants to achieve.

44. Employs those tools and techniques that are most appropriate for the coachee in any given moment.

45. Recognizes each coachee's unique strengths, and helps the coachee use those strengths to achieve coaching goals.

46. Assesses where coachee is currently, and what coachee is ready for.

47. Collaborates with the coachee in setting agenda for individual coaching sessions.

48. Recognizes when to push and when to be patient with coachee.

49. Approaches underlying motivations and issues in ways that facilitate coachee acceptance.

50. Creates a coaching session environment free of distractions.

51. Modifies coaching approach to suit coachee and coachee's current situation.

52. Helps the coachee discover multiple paths to the coachee's goal.

53. Collaborates with the coachee to choose the path to goal attainment that best fits his/her needs and capabilities.

VII. Engages in continuous learning to develop coaching skills: Works to improve coach knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics, to maximize performance in the coaching role.

54. Reflects on coaching successes and failures to identify ways to improve coaching approach and outcomes.

55. Modifies coaching approach based on lessons learned.

56. Attends conferences and workshops, reads books and articles, and consults with peers to improve coaching skills.

57. Stays abreast of coaching science.

58. Collects and maintains a large collection of tools, techniques, books, and other resources that might be useful for coachees.

59. Works to maintain own physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional well-being, in order to enhance presence during coaching sessions.

VIII. Understands and manages emotions in the coaching environment: Is aware of own emotions and those of others, and effectively manages those emotions to maximize coachee learning and growth.

60. Manages emotions in ways that facilitate achievement of coaching goals.

61. Sets challenges and tasks appropriate to coachee emotional state.

62. Reflects coachee emotions, beliefs, and values in ways that enable the coachee to increase his or her self-understanding.

63. Shares insights into how coachee behaviors affect others emotionally, in order to increase coachee other-awareness.

64. Reveals when coachee behavior is out of alignment with coachee's stated goals, or with the organizational context.

APPENDIX P: WORD VERSION OF DELPHI PARTICIPANT SURVEY

Instructions: This survey lists 64 specific executive coaching behaviors that have emerged from my research to date. Please rate each behavior in terms of its importance in assisting executive coachees in meeting their coaching goals. The behaviors are separated into eight sections, one for each competency group.

Manages relationship between coach and client organization: Works closely with HR coaching contact and with the coachee's manager to ensure alignment on coaching goals, and to support the coaching process.	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
1. Determines purpose and desired outcomes of coaching engagement.					
2. Assesses fit of coaching intervention with organization culture and processes.					
3. Obtains multiple perspectives on coachee's work-related behavior prior to the first meeting.					
4. Explicitly sets confidentiality boundaries with manager and HR coaching contact so that it is clear what information will be shared and with whom.					
5. Maintains contact with the coachee's manager and with the Human Resources coaching contact throughout the coaching engagement.					
6. Facilitates engagement of coachee's manager when he or she can bring added benefit to the coaching process.					
7. Negotiates an appropriate role for the coachee's manager in the coaching engagement.					
8. Manages organizational expectations about coaching outcomes.					

Builds rapport with the coachee: Takes steps to establish mutual respect, determine purpose of coaching relationship, and establish appropriate roles, behaviors and expectations	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
9. Explicitly sets confidentiality boundaries with coachee so that it is clear what information will be shared and with whom.					
10. Overcomes coachee resistance, by working first on issues that are of interest to the coachee.					

11. Utilizes body language, questioning, eye contact, listening, empathy and other behavioral elements to establish a positive relationship with coachee.					
12. Responds to coachee in a nonjudgmental way, while being direct about inappropriate or ineffective coachee behavior.					
13. Demonstrates dependability and reliability by keeping commitments made to the coachee.					
14. Holds coachee accountable for coaching actions.					
15. Expresses hope and optimism for coachee.					
16. Holds coachee in high regard, speaking passionately about the coachee's strengths and possibilities.					
17. Works with the coachee to align coachee goals with organizational goals for the coaching.					
18. Challenges coachee to be honest and direct when working with the coach.					

Brings business understanding and experience to the coaching interaction: Integrates business, coaching, and personal experience in the coaching relationship in ways that facilitate attainment of coaching goals.	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
19. Understands business concepts, and applies them appropriately to each coaching engagement.					
20. Draws stories from business and coaching experience to benefit current coachees.					
21. Uses business understanding to craft coachee action plans that are realistic and achievable in a business context.					
22. Shares own business successes and failures with the coachee, when sharing will help the coachee achieve coaching goals.					
23. Remembers sessions with other coachees, and uses words and stories from those sessions in order to help current coachee with current situation.					
24. Understands organizational behavior, and uses that understanding to help coachee design actions and behaviors that align with the coachee's workplace.					

Integrates a diversity of data into the developmental interaction: Interprets and shares information from a wide array of sources in order to help coachee understand developmental needs and how to achieve them.	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
25. Gathers data from multiple sources in order to better understand the coachee and his/her work goals and environment.					
26. Probes what coachee does not say.					
27. Listens for inconsistencies in coachee's words.					
28. Probes inconsistencies between coachee words and body language.					
29. Attends to coachee's word choice, pace, tone, volume, and other nuances of how the coachee is speaking.					
30. Observes coachee behaviors and behavioral patterns to identify critical instances or patterns for discussion.					
31. Notices when coachee seems to be dismissing an important issue, and asks questions to focus coachee attention on that issue.					
32. Synthesizes large amounts of data, distilling key points for the benefit of the coachee.					
33. Uses metaphors appropriate to the coachee to help him/her better understand current situations.					
34. Collects data through interviews, document analysis, observation, and other means in order to understand the coachee's work context.					

Gathers and provides 360-degree feedback: Interviews subordinates, peers, and superiors of the coachee in order to provide a full picture of how others view the coachee's behavior and to help in setting the agenda for the coaching process.	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
35. Selects appropriate time to provide 360-degree feedback for greatest impact on the coaching process.					
36. Frames the 360-degree feedback process as providing information for the coachee and as a way for the coachee to strengthen relationships with key stakeholders.					
37. During 360-degree interviews, elicits specific behavioral details that will help the coachee understand strengths and developmental opportunities.					

38. Using 360-degree interview data, helps coachee select two or three specific developmental opportunities on which to focus subsequent coaching.					
39. Delivers the feedback in a way that maximizes coachee acceptance and integration.					
40. Focuses coachee attention first on the strengths that have emerged from the feedback, especially on those strengths the coachee has not yet recognized.					
41. Talks about developmental areas using words that show those areas as normal for people in similar situations to the coachee.					
42. Sets specific homework tasks for the coachee, focused on drawing key lessons from the 360-degree report.					

Focuses on the coachee: Maintains focus on the coachee's goals, current situation, capabilities, and emotions in order to design appropriate and effective actions.	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
43. Explicitly works on, and talks about, what the coachee wants to achieve.					
44. Employs those tools and techniques that are most appropriate for the coachee in any given moment.					
45. Recognizes each coachee's unique strengths, and helps the coachee use those strengths to achieve coaching goals.					
46. Assesses where coachee is currently, and what coachee is ready for.					
47. Collaborates with the coachee in setting agenda for individual coaching sessions.					
48. Recognizes when to push and when to be patient with coachee.					
49. Approaches underlying motivations and issues in ways that facilitate coachee acceptance.					
50. Creates a coaching session environment free of distractions.					
51. Modifies coaching approach to suit coachee and coachee's current situation.					
52. Helps the coachee discover multiple paths to the coachee's goal.					
53. Collaborates with the coachee to choose the path to goal attainment that best fits his/her needs and capabilities.					

Engages in continuous learning to develop coaching skills: Works to improve coach knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics, to maximize performance in the coaching role.	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
54. Reflects on coaching successes and failures to identify ways to improve coaching approach and outcomes.					
55. Modifies coaching approach based on lessons learned.					
56. Attends conferences and workshops, reads books and articles, and consults with peers to improve coaching skills.					
57. Stays abreast of coaching science.					
58. Collects and maintains a large collection of tools, techniques, books, and other resources that might be useful for coachees.					
59. Works to maintain own physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional well-being, in order to enhance presence during coaching sessions.					

Understands and manages emotions in the coaching environment: Is aware of own emotions and those of others, and effectively manages those emotions to maximize coachee learning and growth.	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
60. Manages emotions in ways that facilitate achievement of coaching goals.					
61. Sets challenges and tasks appropriate to coachee emotional state.					
62. Reflects coachee emotions, beliefs, and values in ways that enable the coachee to increase his or her self-understanding.					
63. Shares insights into how coachee behaviors affect others emotionally, in order to increase coachee other-awareness.					
64. Reveals when coachee behavior is out of alignment with coachee’s stated goals, or with the organizational context.					

APPENDIX Q: DELPHI SURVEY RESULTS

Behavior #	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important	Rating Average
1	6	3	0	0	0	1.33
2	3	5	2	0	0	1.90
3	1	2	4	2	1	3.00
4	8	1	1	0	0	1.30
5	2	6	2	0	0	2.00
6	3	7	0	0	0	1.70
7	4	4	2	0	0	1.80
8	3	7	0	0	0	1.70
9	8	1	1	0	0	1.30
10	2	4	4	0	0	2.20
11	5	2	3	0	0	1.80
12	8	1	1	0	0	1.30
13	10	0	0	0	0	1.00
14	5	4	1	0	0	1.60
15	4	5	1	0	0	1.70
16	6	4	0	0	0	1.40
17	5	5	0	0	0	1.50
18	7	3	0	0	0	1.30
19	1	7	2	0	0	2.10
20	4	6	0	0	0	1.60
21	3	4	3	0	0	2.00
22	1	5	3	1	0	2.40
23	2	4	3	1	0	2.30
24	4	6	0	0	0	1.60
25	3	6	1	0	0	1.80
26	3	5	2	0	0	1.90
27	3	4	3	0	0	2.00
28	2	4	4	0	0	2.20
29	2	5	3	0	0	2.10
30	3	6	1	0	0	1.80
31	7	2	1	0	0	1.40
32	3	6	1	0	0	1.80
33	1	8	1	0	0	2.00
34	6	4	0	0	0	1.40
35	2	8	0	0	0	1.80
36	2	6	2	0	0	2.00
37	5	4	1	0	0	1.60
38	5	4	1	0	0	1.60
39	7	3	0	0	0	1.30
40	5	3	1	1	0	1.80
41	3	5	2	0	0	1.90
42	3	5	2	0	0	1.90

43	3	7	0	0	0	1.70
44	5	4	1	0	0	1.60
45	5	5	0	0	0	1.50
46	6	4	0	0	0	1.40
Behavior #	**Extremely important**	**Very important**	**Moderately important**	**Slightly important**	**Not at all important**	**Rating Average**
47	1	8	1	0	0	2.00
48	5	5	0	0	0	1.50
49	3	6	1	0	0	1.80
50	4	5	1	0	0	1.70
51	3	7	0	0	0	1.70
52	1	7	2	0	0	2.10
53	5	5	0	0	0	1.50
54	4	6	0	0	0	1.60
55	6	3	1	0	0	1.50
56	2	5	1	2	0	2.30
57	2	3	4	1	0	2.40
58	1	5	2	2	0	2.50
59	6	4	0	0	0	1.40
60	5	5	0	0	0	1.50
61	3	6	1	0	0	1.80
62	5	4	0	0	0	1.44
63	6	4	0	0	0	1.40
64	5	5	0	0	0	1.50

APPENDIX R: DELPHI SURVEY RESULTS RANK ORDERED

Behavior #	Average rating
13	1.00
4	1.30
9	1.30
12	1.30
18	1.30
39	1.30
1	1.33
16	1.40
31	1.40
34	1.40
46	1.40
59	1.40
63	1.40
62	1.44
17	1.50
45	1.50
418	1.50
53	1.50
55	1.50
60	1.50
64	1.50
17	1.60
20	1.60
24	1.60
37	1.60
38	1.60
44	1.60
54	1.60
6	1.70
8	1.70
15	1.70
43	1.70
50	1.70
51	1.70
7	1.80
11	1.80
25	1.80
30	1.80
32	1.80
35	1.80
40	1.80
49	1.80
61	1.80
2	1.90
26	1.90
41	1.90
42	1.90
5	2.00
21	2.00
27	2.00
33	2.00
36	2.00
47	2.00
19	2.10
29	2.10
52	2.10
10	2.20
28	2.20
23	2.30
56	2.30
22	2.40
57	2.40
58	2.50
3	3.00

APPENDIX S: FINAL COMPETENCY MODEL

I. Manages relationship between coach and client organization: Works closely with HR coaching contact and with the coachee's manager to ensure alignment on coaching goals, and to support the coaching process.

1. Determines purpose and desired outcomes of coaching engagement.
2. Assesses fit of coaching intervention with organization culture and processes.
3. Explicitly sets confidentiality boundaries with manager and HR coaching contact so that it is clear what information will be shared and with whom.
4. Maintains contact with the coachee's manager and with the Human Resources coaching contact throughout the coaching engagement.
5. Facilitates engagement of coachee's manager when he or she can bring added benefit to the coaching process.
6. Negotiates an appropriate role for the coachee's manager in the coaching engagement.
7. Manages organizational expectations about coaching outcomes.

II. Builds rapport with the coachee: Takes steps to establish mutual respect, determine purpose of coaching relationship, and establish appropriate roles, behaviors and expectations

8. Explicitly sets confidentiality boundaries with coachee so that it is clear what information will be shared and with whom.
9. Overcomes coachee resistance, by working first on issues that are of interest to the coachee.
10. Utilizes body language, questioning, eye contact, listening, empathy and other behavioral elements to establish a positive relationship with coachee.
11. Responds to coachee in a nonjudgmental way, while being direct about inappropriate or ineffective coachee behavior.
12. Demonstrates dependability and reliability by keeping commitments made to the coachee.
13. Holds coachee accountable for coaching actions.

14. Expresses hope and optimism for coachee.

15. Holds coachee in high regard, speaking passionately about the coachee's strengths and possibilities.

16. Works with the coachee to align coachee goals with organizational goals for the coaching.

17. Challenges coachee to be honest and direct when working with the coach.

III. Brings business understanding and experience to the coaching interaction: Integrates business, coaching, and personal experience in the coaching relationship in ways that facilitate attainment of coaching goals.

18. Understands business concepts, and applies them appropriately to each coaching engagement.

19. Draws stories from business and coaching experience to benefit current coachees.

20. Uses business understanding to craft coachee action plans that are realistic and achievable in a business context.

21. Shares own business successes and failures with the coachee, when sharing will help the coachee achieve coaching goals.

22. Remembers sessions with other coachees, and uses words and stories from those sessions in order to help current coachee with current situation.

23. Understands organizational behavior, and uses that understanding to help coachee design actions and behaviors that align with the coachee's workplace.

IV. Integrates a diversity of data into the developmental interaction: Interprets and shares information from a wide array of sources in order to help coachee understand developmental needs and how to achieve them.

24. Gathers data from multiple sources in order to better understand the coachee and his/her work goals.

25. Probes what coachee does not say.

26. Listens for inconsistencies in coachee's words.

27. Probes inconsistencies between coachee words and body language.

28. Attends to coachee’s word choice, pace, tone, volume, and other nuances of how the coachee is speaking.

29. Observes coachee behaviors and behavioral patterns to identify critical instances or patterns for discussion.

30. Notices when coachee seems to be dismissing an important issue, and asks questions to focus coachee attention on that issue.

31. Synthesizes large amounts of data, distilling key points for the benefit of the coachee.

32. Uses metaphors appropriate to the coachee to help him/her better understand current situations.

33. Collects data through interviews, document analysis, observation, and other means in order to understand the coachee’s work context.

V. Gathers and provides 360-degree feedback: Interviews subordinates, peers, and superiors of the coachee in order to provide a full picture of how others view the coachee’s behavior and to help in setting the agenda for the coaching process.

34. Selects appropriate time to provide 360-degree feedback for greatest impact on the coaching process.

35. Frames the 360-degree feedback process as providing information for the coachee and as a way for the coachee to strengthen relationships with key stakeholders.

36. During 360-degree interviews, elicits specific behavioral details that will help the coachee understand strengths and developmental opportunities.

37. Using 360-degree interview data, helps coachee select two or three specific developmental opportunities on which to focus subsequent coaching.

38. Delivers the feedback in a way that maximizes coachee acceptance and integration.

39. Focuses coachee attention first on the strengths that have emerged from the feedback, especially on those strengths the coachee has not yet recognized.

40. Talks about developmental areas using words that show those areas as normal for people in similar situations to the coachee.

41. Sets specific homework tasks for the coachee, focused on drawing key lessons from the 360-degree report.

VI. Focuses on the coachee: Maintains focus on the coachee's goals, current situation, capabilities, and emotions in order to design appropriate and effective actions. 42. Explicitly works on, and talks about, what the coachee wants to achieve. 43. Employs those tools and techniques that are most appropriate for the coachee in any given moment. 44. Recognizes each coachee's unique strengths, and helps the coachee use those strengths to achieve coaching goals. 45. Assesses where coachee is currently, and what coachee is ready for. 46. Collaborates with the coachee in setting agenda for individual coaching sessions. 47. Recognizes when to push and when to be patient with coachee. 48. Approaches underlying motivations and issues in ways that facilitate coachee acceptance. 49. Creates a coaching session environment free of distractions. 50. Modifies coaching approach to suit coachee and coachee's current situation. 51. Helps the coachee discover multiple paths to the coachee's goal. 52. Collaborates with the coachee to choose the path to goal attainment that best fits his/her needs and capabilities.
VII. Engages in continuous learning to develop coaching skills: Works to improve coach knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics, to maximize performance in the coaching role. 53. Reflects on coaching successes and failures to identify ways to improve coaching approach and outcomes. 54. Modifies coaching approach based on lessons learned. 55. Attends conferences and workshops, reads books and articles, and consults with peers to improve coaching skills. 56. Stays abreast of coaching science.

57. Collects and maintains a large collection of tools, techniques, books, and other resources that might be useful for coachees.

58. Works to maintain own physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional well-being, in order to enhance presence during coaching sessions.

VIII. Understands and manages emotions in the coaching environment: Is aware of own emotions and those of others, and effectively manages those emotions to maximize coachee learning and growth.

59. Manages emotions in ways that facilitate achievement of coaching goals.

60. Sets challenges and tasks appropriate to coachee emotional state.

61. Reflects coachee emotions, beliefs, and values in ways that enable the coachee to increase his or her self-understanding.

62. Shares insights into how coachee behaviors affect others emotionally, in order to increase coachee other-awareness.

63. Reveals when coachee behavior is out of alignment with coachee’s stated goals, or with the organizational context.

APPENDIX T: TABLE COMPARING 63 BEHAVIORS TO THE LITERATURE

Behaviors	Bennett & Rogers (2012)	Clayton (2011)	Dagley (2009)	Hale (2008)	Kenney (2014)	Louis & Fatien Diochon (2014)	Mavor et al. (2010)	Passmore (2010)
I. Manages relationship between coach and client organization								
1. Determines purpose and desired outcomes of coaching engagement.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Assesses fit of coaching intervention with organization culture and processes.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Explicitly sets confidentiality boundaries with manager and HR coaching contact so that it is clear what information will be shared and with whom.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	■
4. Maintains contact with the coachee’s manager and with the Human Resources coaching contact throughout the coaching engagement.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. Facilitates engagement of coachee’s manager when he or she can bring added benefit to the coaching process.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6. Negotiates an appropriate role for the coachee’s manager in the coaching engagement.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7. Manages organizational expectations about coaching outcomes.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
II. Builds rapport with the coachee								
8. Explicitly sets confidentiality boundaries with coachee so that it is clear what information will be shared and with whom.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	■
9. Overcomes coachee resistance, by working first on issues that are of interest to the coachee.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10. Utilizes body language, questioning, eye contact, listening, empathy and other behavioral elements to establish a positive relationship with coachee.	-	-	■	■	■	-	-	-
11. Responds to coachee in a nonjudgmental way, while being direct about inappropriate or ineffective coachee behavior.	-	-	-	-	■	-	■	■

Behaviors	Bennett & Rogers (2012)	Clayton (2011)	Dagley (2009)	Hale (2008)	Kenney (2014)	Louis & Fatien Diochon (2014)	Mavor et al. (2010)	Passmore (2010)
12. Demonstrates dependability and reliability by keeping commitments made to the coachee.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	■
13. Holds coachee accountable for coaching actions.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-
14. Expresses hope and optimism for coachee.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15. Holds coachee in high regard, speaking passionately about the coachee’s strengths and possibilities.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-
16. Works with the coachee to align coachee goals with organizational goals for the coaching.	-	-	-	-	■	-	-	-
17. Challenges coachee to be honest and direct when working with the coach.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
III. Brings business understanding and experience to the coaching interaction								
18. Understands business concepts, and applies them appropriately to each coaching engagement.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
19. Draws stories from business and coaching experience to benefit current coachees.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20. Uses business understanding to craft coachee action plans that are realistic and achievable in a business context.	-	-	■	-	-	-	-	-
21. Shares own business successes and failures with the coachee, when sharing will help the coachee achieve coaching goals.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
22. Remembers sessions with other coachees, and uses words and stories from those sessions in order to help current coachee with current situation.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
23. Understands organizational behavior, and uses that understanding to help coachee design actions and behaviors that align with the coachee’s workplace.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IV. Integrates a diversity of data into the developmental interaction								
24. Gathers data from multiple sources in order to better understand the coachee and his/her work goals.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25. Probes what coachee does not say.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
26. Listens for inconsistencies in coachee’s words.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Behaviors	Bennett & Rogers (2012)	Clayton (2011)	Dagley (2009)	Hale (2008)	Kenney (2014)	Louis & Fatien Diochon (2014)	Mavor et al. (2010)	Passmore (2010)
27. Probes inconsistencies between coachee words and body language.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
28. Attends to coachee's word choice, pace, tone, volume, and other nuances of how the coachee is speaking.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
29. Observes coachee behaviors and behavioral patterns to identify critical instances or patterns for discussion.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-
30. Notices when coachee seems to be dismissing an important issue, and asks questions to focus coachee attention on that issue.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
31. Synthesizes large amounts of data, distilling key points for the benefit of the coachee.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-
32. Uses metaphors appropriate to the coachee to help him/her better understand current situations.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
33. Collects data through interviews, document analysis, observation, and other means in order to understand the coachee's work context.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-
V. Gathers and provides 360-degree feedback								
34. Selects appropriate time to provide 360-degree feedback for greatest impact on the coaching process.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35. Frames the 360-degree feedback process as providing information for the coachee and as a way for the coachee to strengthen relationships with key stakeholders.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
36. During 360-degree interviews, elicits specific behavioral details that will help the coachee understand strengths and developmental opportunities.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
37. Using 360-degree interview data, helps coachee select two or three specific developmental opportunities on which to focus subsequent coaching.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
38. Delivers the feedback in a way that maximizes coachee acceptance and integration.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

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39. Focuses coachee attention first on the strengths that have emerged from the feedback, especially on those strengths the coachee has not yet recognized.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
40. Talks about developmental areas using words that show those areas as normal for people in similar situations to the coachee.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
41. Sets specific homework tasks for the coachee, focused on drawing key lessons from the 360-degree report.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
VI. Focuses on the coachee								
42. Explicitly works on, and talks about, what the coachee wants to achieve.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
43. Employs those tools and techniques that are most appropriate for the coachee in any given moment.	-	-	■	■	-	-	-	■
44. Recognizes each coachee's unique strengths, and helps the coachee use those strengths to achieve coaching goals.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45. Assesses where coachee is currently, and what coachee is ready for.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-
46. Collaborates with the coachee in setting agenda for individual coaching sessions.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
47. Recognizes when to push and when to be patient with coachee.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
48. Approaches underlying motivations and issues in ways that facilitate coachee acceptance.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-
49. Creates a coaching session environment free of distractions.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
50. Modifies coaching approach to suit coachee and coachee's current situation.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-
51. Helps the coachee discover multiple paths to the coachee's goal.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	■
52. Collaborates with the coachee to choose the path to goal attainment that best fits his/her needs and capabilities.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

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VII. Engages in continuous learning to develop coaching skills								
53. Reflects on coaching successes and failures to identify ways to improve coaching approach and outcomes.	-	-	-	■	-	-	■	-
54. Modifies coaching approach based on lessons learned.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55. Attends conferences and workshops, reads books and articles, and consults with peers to improve coaching skills.	-	-	-	■	-	-	-	-
56. Stays abreast of coaching science.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
57. Collects and maintains a large collection of tools, techniques, books, and other resources that might be useful for coachees.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
58. Works to maintain own physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional well-being, in order to enhance presence during coaching sessions.	-	-	-	-	-	-	■	-
VIII. Understands and manages emotions in the coaching environment								
59. Manages emotions in ways that facilitate achievement of coaching goals.	-	-	-	■	-	-	■	■
60. Sets challenges and tasks appropriate to coachee emotional state.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
61. Reflects coachee emotions, beliefs, and values in ways that enable the coachee to increase his or her self-understanding.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
62. Shares insights into how coachee behaviors affect others emotionally, in order to increase coachee other-awareness.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
63. Reveals when coachee behavior is out of alignment with coachee's stated goals, or with the organizational context.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

VITA

Kent Mayo Blumberg received his bachelor's degree at Stanford University in 1978. He spent 28 years in the forest products manufacturing industry, in roles from energy engineer to CEO. He earned his master's degree at Marylhurst University in 1987. In 2007, Blumberg received training and certification as a leadership coach, and ran a full-time coaching business for the next six years. A research conference in 2011 sparked his interest in the science of coaching, and he began work on his PhD in early 2012. In 2013, Blumberg joined University of Phoenix as a campus Director of Academic Affairs. Post-PhD, he plans to continue research in the development of expert coaches, and to apply that research to the graduate education of coaches.