



PURPOSE

Executive coaching is a class of interventions defined by a one-to-one relationship in which the coach and coachee work together to identify and achieve organizationally, professionally, and personally beneficial developmental goals (Feldman & Lankau, 2005; Kilburg, 2004). Some research suggests that coaching is effective, though due to the lack of a consistent, underlying theoretical framework, it is often unclear why or how coaching works. Furthermore, there is no consensus as to what exactly constitutes an “effective” coaching engagement. Based on similarities with other literature bases, existing theoretical works on coaching, and similar theoretical frameworks in fields related to coaching, we propose a conceptual input-process-outcome (IPO) framework for understanding, researching, and assessing the effectiveness of executive coaching. As part of our model, we highlight the role of interpersonal and intrapersonal psychological processes as being mediating factors that explain the relationship between coaching inputs and outcomes. To assess the validity and utility of such a framework, we conduct meta-analytic tests to determine effect sizes for several of these key relationships.

Research Objectives

- ❖ Propose a context general model for designing and evaluating executive coaching
- ❖ Determine the current state of the empirical literature on executive coaching and propose future directions
- ❖ Test meta-analytic links between key constructs within coaching

Method

- ❖ Meta-analysis systematically aggregates primary studies examining a phenomena of interest in order to obtain a more ‘true’ effect by correcting for sample size and unreliability. We adopted the Hunter & Schmidt (2004) approach to meta-analysis whereby we converted individual study statistics to r statistics.
- ❖ **Search methodology**
 - ❖ Databases: PsycINFO, Business Source Premier
 - ❖ Manual search “International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching & Mentoring”
 - ❖ Keywords:
 - ❖ “leadership coaching” or “business coaching AND
 - ❖ “correlation” or “survey” or “sample” or “experiment”
 - ❖ Returned 240 articles, 14 usable for coding
- ❖ **Inclusion/exclusion criteria**
 - ❖ Must look at leadership/business coaching (i.e., not life or managerial)
 - ❖ Must be empirical and quantitative
 - ❖ Must have sufficient data to convert to common metric r

Literature Review and Theoretical Background

Conceptual summary of coaching research

- Similarities between coaching and training suggest parallel process-based models. These both involve: (1) a facilitator (trainer, training system, or coach), (2) content or techniques, (3) a learner, trainee, or coachee, (4) an organizational context, and (5) proximal and distal outcomes.
- Coaching is similar to therapy and mentoring in that the facilitator-recipient relationship is thought to be a key determinant of intervention effectiveness (McKenna & Davis, 2009)
- Coaching entails a collaborative process of learning and behavior change, making key constructs from the teams, training, learning, and motivation/behavior change literature bases particularly salient
- Coachees’ information processing and regulatory focus should be an important determinant of coaching effectiveness (Gregory, Beck, & Carr, 2011)
- Coachee individual differences – such as self-efficacy, attitudes toward coaching, humility, and goal clarity – may also influence the effectiveness of a coaching relationship (McKenna & Davis, 2009)

Why a process-based model?

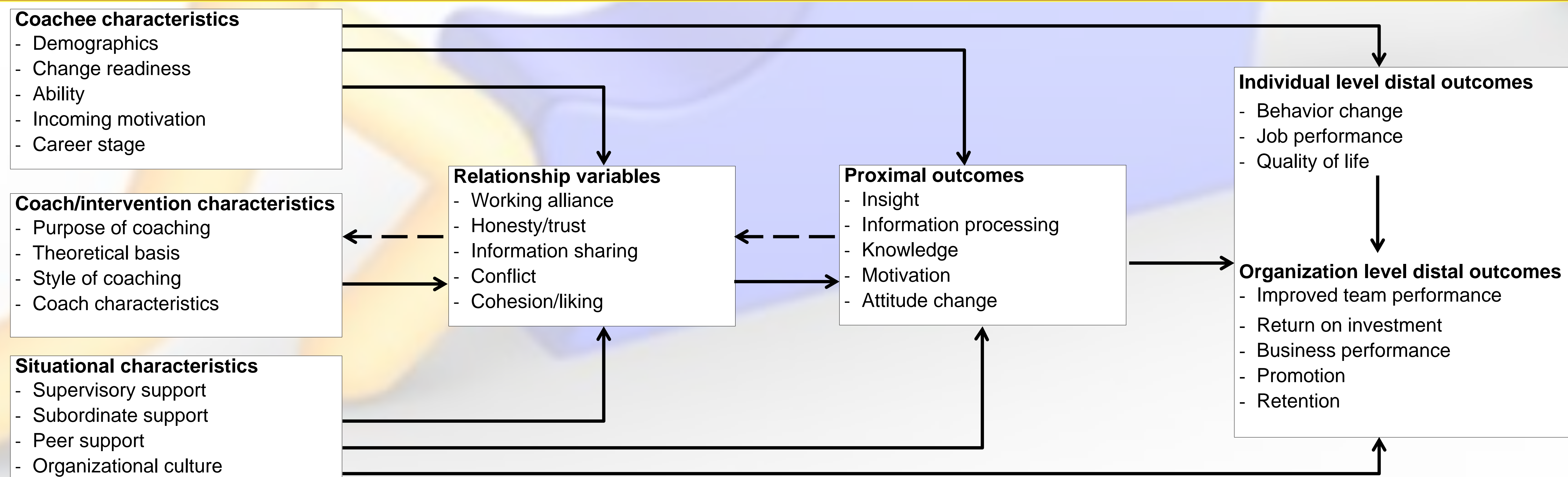
- Mediation and process-based models explain how and why things work (Hayes & Preacher, 2013)
- Existing models of coaching tend to link coaching inputs to coaching outcomes without discriminating the theoretical “distance” between inputs and outcomes or suggesting causal mediating variables (Carey, Philippon, & Cummings, 2011; Grant, 2007; Joo, 2005; Mackie, 2007).
- Process-based models of coaching would enable...
 - Dynamic assessment of coaching effectiveness
 - More effective tailoring/customization of coaching interventions
 - Deeper training of new coaches

Meta-analytic Results

Table 1. Meta-analytic effect sizes between key coaching variables

IV	DV	K	N	r	Corr r	% var RM	95% CI range
Coaching	Coachee Outcomes	11	2519	.168	.177	.007	.043 .29 4
Coaching	Behavioral change	2	1088	.083	.085	4.484	.072 .094
Coaching	Attitude change	2	184	.219	.421	7.324	.090 .347
Coaching	Coachee Outcomes (Self rated)	8	1240	.213	.225	.018	.095 .331
Coaching	Coachee Outcomes (Subordinate rated)	5	1977	.074	.078	.005	-.005 .154
Coaching	Coachee Outcomes (Supervisor rated)	2	1544	.095	.097	.002	.018 .172
Coaching	Relationship outcomes (Working alliance)	2	229	.503	.542	.015	.301 .706
Relationship (Working alliance)	Coachee Outcomes	2	186	.432	.463	.783	.418 .445
Coachee psychological characteristics	Coachee Outcomes	4	397	.135	.153	.027	.00 3 .268
Coachee Self-efficacy	Coachee outcomes	2	266	.207	.232	.151	.13 5 .278
Coachee psychological characteristics	Coachee Outcomes (Self rated)	3	372	.083	.092	.040	.000 .165
Coachee psychological characteristics	Coachee Outcomes (Supervisor rated)	2	131	-.092	-.094	.008	-.275 .275

Proposed Context-General Coaching Framework



Discussion and Future Research

- ❖ The field of coaching continues to lack substantial empirical research
- ❖ Coaching has positive effects, though effect sizes are relatively small
 - ❖ **Attitude change** effect sizes are significantly larger than behavioral changes – this may indicate that coaching has stronger or more immediate effects on attitudes than behaviors
 - ❖ **Rating source** may be an important moderator to consider, but insufficient K. More research using multisource indicators of coaching effectiveness is needed
- ❖ **Coaching processes** are more strongly affected than outcomes by coaching, and may be an important mediator of the overall coaching to outcomes relationship
- ❖ Coachee psychological characteristics – especially **self-efficacy** – have significant effects on outcomes obtained through coaching. Coaches may leverage coachees’ self-efficacy to increase the effectiveness of their coaching engagements
- ❖ **Areas for fruitful coaching research include:** comparing different coaching techniques, assessing effects of different coaching relationship variables, determining importance of other coachee psychological variables, test the mediational effects of coaching relationship and proximal outcomes on distal outcomes