Persistence of Perceived Effects of Executive Coaching on Managers:

A Grounded Theory Exploration

July 2021

Lancaster University

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. I declare that it is my own work and has not been submitted for the award of a higher degree elsewhere.

Table of contents

Summary

Executive coaching (EC) outcome studies generally return positive findings. Effects include better work performance, greater self-efficacy and improved well-being. Most primary studies address only short-term effects of EC. Reliance on short-term outcome measures, however, neglects effects emergent after a latency period as well as long-term effects. The present study used the experience of 40 managers who received EC at different times in their careers, ranging from 2-15 years prior to data collection. Participants were told that the research concerned all aspects of their development as managers; the specific interest in EC was not divulged in order to minimise potential bias for or against coaching. Data were analysed using the methods of grounded theory, with the aim of generating theory to explain 'what's happening in the data'.

The analysis was used first to build a model of how the participants described their development as managers, taking all developmental factors mentioned by participants into account. Eleven sub-processes of major learning were identified from the data; these include acquisition of behavioural techniques, self-discovery, self-acceptance and learning to take fresh perspectives on problems. Analysis at the level of sub-processes indicated that EC contributed to most major management learning areas but was not an essential factor in any area. This part of the analysis further identified the resources which can be cast as analogues of EC, i.e. practices which seems to fulfil the same purposes as EC. These include family support, authentic conversations with peers and personalised leadership training.

Further analysis employed samples of three distinct EC experiences described by participants: EC with long-term effects, EC with short-term effects and ineffective EC. These analyses revealed systematic differences in the coaching interventions related to the different outcomes. These findings were used to generate an explanatory model from participants' accounts. The model is called the *Variable EC Outcome Model – VECOM.* The model and its underlying theory propose that:

- The term "EC" masks two separate interventions, *Reinforcement EC* and *Transformation EC*.
- *Reinforcement* EC strengthens the coachee to deal with management challenges without bringing the coachee's self-concept into question; its impacts are perceived as short-term only.
- *Transformation* EC involves self-questioning and identity work by the coachee, guided by the coach; its impacts are perceived as long-term.
- An EC intervention takes on a reinforcement or transformation character in a micro-process which involves role-taking by coach and coachee.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the many people who helped in the course of this project. My supervisors, Dr Sabir Giga, Dr Abigail Morris and, earlier, Professor Susan Cartwright, gave their precious guidance patiently and generously at every turn. Marian, Maev, Tom and my mother were supportive throughout. Marian listened, commented, transcribed and proof-read. Without the encouragement and practical help from them all I would have given up long ago. Many friends, colleagues and my line managers in the European Institutions showed interest in the project from the beginning and gave encouragement throughout the long process; they know who they are without being named individually. I am especially grateful to the forty managers whose stories supplied the raw data for the research. Few people have heavier workloads yet all gave their time willingly and shared their experience generously and courageously when asked. To them all I wish continuing success. The thesis is dedicated to Marian, *le grá mór*.

List of figures

List of tables

List of acronyms

CEO	Chief executive officer
EC	Executive coaching
EMCC	European Mentoring and Coaching Council
GT	Grounded theory
HR	Human resource(s)
HRD	Human resource development
HRM	Human resource management
ICF	International Coaching Federation
IEC	Ineffective executive coaching
LTE	Executive coaching with long-term effects
OD	Organisational development
RCT	Randomised controlled trial
SAL	Suffering-alleviation-learning process model
SR	Systematic review
STE	Executive coaching with short-term effects
VECOM	Variable executive coaching outcome model

List of appendices

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

Executive coaching (EC) is a costly intervention, often undertaken once only in a manager's lifetime. With 30 years of practice and research to draw on, investigation of any long-term effects of EC on coached managers is now possible. The aim of this study was to develop theory, grounded in data, on the effectiveness of EC as an intervention to support the long-term development of managers. The findings should enable EC to be deployed optimally today to grow the next generation of managers.

1.2 Historical background of executive coaching

The practice of engaging coaches or consultants to improve management performance goes back to the middle of the twentieth century (Blackman, Moscardo, & Gray, 2016; Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001; Kilburg, 1996). Athanasopoulou and Dopson (2015) present an overview of the historical development of EC, from the first recorded use of 'coach' in the sense of 'instructor', in a university context in the 1830s, through to today's status of EC as a tool for optimising managerial performance. In evolving, EC borrowed from or blended with other interventions and learning types. The 1970s, for example, witnessed the flourishing of personal development training, such as Erhard Seminars Training (Baer & Stolz, 1978) and sports coaching (Mouton, 2016), both of which nourished and influenced EC (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2015). Authors agree that the 1980s was when the practice gained a foothold in organisations, at first conducted informally but with standardisation and professionalisation of services discernible from the late 1980s (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2015).

The International Coaching Federation (ICF) was founded in 1995. This development, alongside the establishment of other professional coaching organisations, rapidly advanced the formalisation of EC practice and promoted research. Early outcome studies were usually small-scale and often coach-led, using case-study and survey approaches (Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001). The early 2000s saw more mixed-method investigations, typically with pre- and post-coaching measures, combined with qualitative data collection, followed by the first RCTs (Grant, Green, & Rynsaardt, 2010). The period 2014 to 2020 witnessed several meta-analyses and systematic reviews, summarised below. EC is among the fastest growing interventions in organisations (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2015). In Canada, for example, 72% of organisations were using EC in 2009 (Baron, Morin, & Morin, 2011). Total annual expenditure on professional coaching worldwide was estimated at $2.9 billion in 2019 (ICF, 2020). There are few reliable data on the cost of an EC intervention. A survey of American firms in 2008 suggested that median charge per hour was $500, with a range from $200 to $3500 (Coutu et al., 2009).

Coaching psychology has recently emerged as a sub-discipline of academic and applied psychology, dedicated to applying psychological knowledge and models to improve coaching practice (Palmer and

Whybrow, 2018; O'Riordan & Palmer, 2021). Coaching psychology has achieved institutional recognition in some countries, including the UK and Australia, and is taught in undergraduate and post-graduate university courses (O'Riordan & Palmer, 2021). The British Psychological Society established a Division of Coaching Psychology in 2021. The emergent sub-discipline offers a space to articulate approaches to coaching coherently by drawing from different branches of psychology (Adams, 2016; O'Riordan & Palmer, 2021; Passmore, Peterson & Freire, 2013). Athanasopoulou and Dopson (2015) provide an overview of the main theoretical approaches informing coaching, including cognitive, behavioural, cognitive-behavioural, psychodynamic/psychoanalytic, transactional, existential, humanistic, neurolinguistic and Gestalt. These approaches can be construed as both complementary and competing (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2015). While most coaches are likely to have a dominant theoretical affiliation based on training, coaching psychology assumes that there are common techniques which underpin all interventions and a coach is likely to draw eclectically from many psychological traditions in the course of a coaching assignment (Kilburg, 2000; Passmore et al., 2013). O'Riordan and Palmer (2021) chart the evolution of coaching psychology in terms of its relationship to different psychological approaches. The mission of coaching psychology was initially framed as enhancing performance in non-clinical populations using models of coaching grounded in therapeutic approaches (Passmore et al., 2013). The most recent definition rests on a psychological base broader than therapy, "the application of psychological theory, research, and evidence-based practice to encourage the coachees' learning, resourcefulness, and self-insight in a non-directive collaborative way to enhance their goal-striving and achievement" (O'Riordan & Palmer, 2021: 6). Passmore and Oades (2014) suggest that coaching psychology can be understood as applied positive psychology, with coaching psychologists as translators of positive psychology theory into coaching practice.

Establishing why EC has flourished so fast is the subject of speculation. It is thought that EC's individual focus may be a reflection of and a response to the atomisation of organisational life and increasing competitiveness between people (Gregg, 2018). Arnaud (2003) sees the success of EC as a response to managers being solicited to use the self as an instrument in pursuit of organisational goals. Petriglieri and Petriglieri (2010) suggest that people need to find meaning and space for expression of individual feelings in work environments where the collective sense of belonging has declined. There is also a suggestion that managers constitute an attractive market for psychotherapists at a time of decline in the popularity of therapy (Filipczak, 1998). Arnaud (2003) notes that psychotherapy traditionally paid scant attention of work issues in the lives of patients and that managers who are unwilling to go into therapy appear ready to have a therapist-coach come into their offices.

1.3 Defining executive coaching

There is no agreed definition of executive coaching (Passmore et al., 2013). The task is not helped by a confusion of names. In the literature the terms 'executive', 'leadership', 'business' and 'workplace' coaching are sometimes used interchangeably, sometimes to denote different interventions (Ladegård & Gjerde, 2014). 'Executive' coaching is increasingly offered to non-management staff, leading for calls to avoid the term entirely (Bozer & Jones, 2018). The present study uses 'executive coaching' because the phenomenon of interest is defined exclusively as coaching taken by managers (executives) in the context of their management (executive) roles. EC can be construed as the totality of what happens between coach and coachee (Hargrove, 2003), or defined by its methods and tools (Whitmore, 2010) or by espoused outcomes, such as becoming more effective or realising potential (Peterson, 1996). EC is frequently defined through delineation from psychotherapy. EC, for example, is described as oriented to issues and the future whereas therapy is person-focused and looks to the past (Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001) or EC as grounded in what works well in contrast to therapy which primarily addresses problems (Seligman, 2007). However, these distinctions have a normative quality and differences between therapy and EC are not clear in practice (Dean & Meyer, 2002). With increasing evidence of what actually happens within coaching, the scope for data-driven definition has grown (Bono, Purvanova, Towler, & Peterson, 2009). Myers and Bachkirova (2018) used factor analysis of reported practice to propose a typology based on four dimensions: *client-as-person* (coach attends to the coachee's individual concerns), *performance* (coach attends to the organisation's agenda, not the client's), *processes* (acquisition of management skills) and *dialogue* (reflective space, to explore). EC is both organisational and individual and, crucially for theory development, there is no agreement on what its outcomes *should* be (de Haan et al., 2013; Fillery-Travis & Cox, 2014). Organisations may have different objectives from coachees (Leedham, 2004). Implicit assumptions can shape the definition. The unitarist human resource development (HRD) view assumes that individual improvement translates smoothly into greater organisational effectiveness (Avolio, 2010). This assumption has been challenged with evidence that some individual development does not necessarily accrue as benefit at organisational level (Larsson, Holmberg, & Kempster, 2020; Smith & Kempster, 2019). Recent construal of EC seeks to integrate the interests of organisation and individual as separate but interdependent, with individual well-being proposed as the basis for sustained high performance (Grant, 2017a; Grant, 2017b; Pavur, 2013). The present study adopted the definition by Kilburg (2000), characterised by Passmore et al. (2013) as the standard definition of EC specifically for executives, "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 behavioural 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" (Kilburg, 2000: 142).

1.4 Theorising executive coaching

Many theories are invoked in attempts to explain EC processes (Cox, Bachkirova, & Clutterbuck, 2014). EC can be understood as a form of andragogy (Knowles, 1977), experiential learning (Kolb, 1984), transformative learning (Mezirow, 1978) and double-loop learning (Argyris, 1977). Much EC research relies on models from psychology (de Haan, Duckworth, Birch, & Jones, 2013; McKenna & Davis, 2009; Smither, 2011). Bozer and Jones (2018) analysed 117 coaching studies and inductively identified the seven most important explanatory constructs used: self-efficacy, motivation, goal orientation, trust, interpersonal attraction, feedback and supervisory support, all of which have a place within a broad category of interlocking psychological theories on self-regulation, self-determination, motivation and psychological resources. Self-regulation theory posits a set of processes whereby people set goals, make plans, take action, monitor performance and evaluate performance based on comparison to some standard and adjust action and the literature suggests that EC is effective in developing self-regulatory skills (Diefendorff & Lord, 2008; Grant, Curtayne, & Burton, 2009). Two processes are central in both coaching and self-regulation: goal-setting and feedback. Multiple investigations conclude that supporting coachees to set and achieve goals is at the core of EC (Bono et al., 2009; Grant et al., 2009; McKenna & Davis, 2009; Smither, London, Flautt, Vargas, & Kucine, 2003; Sue-Chan, Wood, & Latham, 2012). Aspects of goal-setting theory (Latham & Locke, 2007) have been proposed to explain sub-processes of EC, such as aligning higher and lower order goals and using feedback to improve performance (Grant, 2012). Higher order goals are rooted in individual values and have an existential dimension while lower order goals are actions which can be planned (Chulef, Read, & Walsh, 2001). Goal-setting theory thus allows EC to be theorised as a mechanism for reconciling and integrating individual and organisational drives, with benefits for both the coachee and the organisation.

Control theory (Carver & Scheier, 1982, 2012) has been suggested as an adequate overall explanatory framework for EC (Gregory, Beck, & Carr, 2011). It construes motivation as the drive to reduce perceived discrepancies between goals and performance. The theory, however, does not explain the fact that people under certain conditions engage in *production* as well as reduction of discrepancies, by setting themselves higher goals, which is a known coaching outcome (Bandura & Cervone, 1983). Feedback, a key sub-process in self-regulation and related theories, is understood as an essential ingredient of coaching (Bozer & Jones, 2018; Joo, 2005; Kilburg, 2001; McDowall & Millward, 2010). Gregory et al. (2011) propose that the personal negative feedback control loop – my awareness that my performance falls short of my standard – is *the* primary motivational mechanism used in coaching.

When feedback indicates a discrepancy, the result is motivation to act. Negative feedback, however, can lead people to adjusting goals downward (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). Careful handling of feedback, especially *negative* feedback, is suggested as core contribution by the coach towards building coachee motivation (Gregory et al., 2011). Findings on feedback processing suggest that social-cognitive theory (Bandura, 2001) is a better framework than control theory in explaining motivation and self-regulation over time (Coultas & Salas, 2015; Ilies & Judge, 2005). Social-cognitive theory holds that people have agency based on self-reflectiveness and intentionality and, in order to understand human action, behaviour models need to combine emotion and cognition. A core construct within social-cognitive theory is self-efficacy, one's belief in one's capability to perform a specific task (Bandura, 1977). Primary studies, systematic reviews and meta-analyses concur that self-efficacy is an essential construct in understanding coaching. Self-efficacy can be construed as a psychological resource which confers resilience in the face of stress (Ebner, Schulte, Soucek, & Kauffeld, 2017; Gyllensten & Palmer, 2005), including when confronted with negative feedback (Bandura & Cervone, 1983). Self-efficacy is proposed as a key component of goal-striving (Latham & Locke, 2007). Of particular significance from a coaching perspective is that self-efficacy is a malleable resource, in contrast to fixed resources such as intelligence or personality (Gist & Mitchell, 1992; Hobfoll, 2002). Gist and Mitchell (1992) suggest that individual coaching can enhance self-efficacy by clarifying personally meaningful strategies and setting goals aligned to what is meaningful. Empirical studies show that improved self-efficacy is a positive outcome of coaching and high self-efficacy is an antecedent of coaching success. Self-efficacy is thus a variable which can theoretically act upon itself in coaching (Gregory et al., 2011; Theeboom, Beersma & Van Vianen, 2013) and could, in theory, explain enduring effects from EC.

Gessnitzer, Schulte and Kauffeld (2016) suggest that coaches build self-efficacy in ways that are explained by attribution theory (Weiner, 1985; 2018) and cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957). Attribution theory proposes mechanisms to account for people's understanding of their own and others' behaviour by attributing the cause internally to the person or externally to environmental factors (Weiner, 1985). Crucially, the type of attribution affects self-efficacy which, in turn, affects future behaviour. Two constructs within attribution theory are important in this regard, locus of action and controllability. Moen and Skaalvik (2009) found that professional workplace coaching was associated with a significant increase in positive self-attribution compared with coaching by line managers. Grant (2012; 2020) argues that coaching involves a manipulation of cognition, behaviour and emotion to build the coachee's resources, with increased self-efficacy from contemplating an achievement in one area being deployed to address challenges in another area. Gessnitzer et al. (2016) speculate that, by inducing coachees to describe desired outcome situations, coaches trigger

dissonance which can then be resolved by committing to actions, in line with the predictions of cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957; Harmon-Jones & Harmon-Jones, 2007).

EC has evolved from being regarded as remedial to be seen primarily as a resourcing intervention, a shift which is also discernible in other helping interventions (Priebe, Omer, Giacco, & Slade, 2014; Seligman, 2007). Psychological resource theory (Hobfoll, 2002) has links to social-cognitive and goal-setting theory and is part of the wider positive psychology movement (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). Resource theory proposes models to account for gain and loss of resources using 'resource caravans' as a metaphor for gain in one area – hope, for example – bringing gains in other areas, such as resilience or affect (Hobfoll, 2011; Salanova, Llorens & Schaufeli, 2011). A critical component in psychological resource dynamics is the moment of cognitive appraisal (Folkman & Lazarus, 1984), when people weigh their available resources against a specific task. Gist and Mitchell (1992) emphasise that this process is entirely subjective and personal i.e. the only resources which matter at the moment of appraisal are the individual's *as perceived by the individual*. EC, with its attention to the individual coachee in the present moment, can be hypothesised as an intervention into the intrapersonal process of resource appraisal. The gain-spiral model (Llorens, Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova, 2007) suggests that, over time, self-efficacy belief plays a pivotal mediating role in resourcing processes. Core elements of social-cognitive, attribution and resource theories can thus be combined to offer a high-level hypothetical model of a recursive resourcing process, which could theoretically account for enduring and even self-renewing effects of EC. The process is represented in figure 1.1.

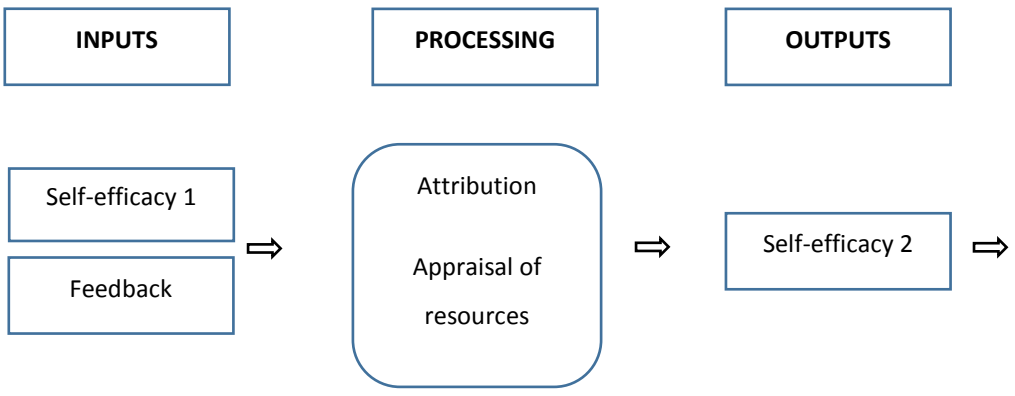


Figure 1.1: Simplified hypothetical process model integrating feedback, attribution, cognitive appraisal and self-efficacy, based on Stajkovic and Sommer (2000: 725)

Self-efficacy (as an input variable) is modified by performance feedback, negative, positive or neutral, in an internal process which involves causal attribution and cognitive appraisal of resources. Depending on the internal processing, there can be a gain in self-efficacy (as outcome variable) even with negative

performance feedback. The resultant 'new' self-efficacy state is an input variable for the next processing episode.

Grant (2012) and Theeboom, van Vianen and Beersma (2017) propose the transtheoretical model of change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1986) as an overarching framework to make sense of different theories proposed to explain the effects of EC. This model, which has its origins in treatment of unwanted behaviour, posits that human change follows a relatively stable sequence of stages. In Prochaska and DiClemente's (1986) original model the six stages are: pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance and termination. Both Grant (2012) and Theeboom et al. (2017) assign special importance to the contemplation stage of coaching, which they see as the coach working to build the personal commitment of the coachee to change. They hypothesise that coaching at the start is focused on building the coachee's intrinsic motivation through exploration of ambivalence between life goals and work-related goals. Theeboom et al. (2017) suggest that social-cognitive theory explains the essential coaching dynamics in this stage, as the coach aligns the coachee's personal values with potential coaching outcomes in order to activate the coachee's drive towards self-determination in line with intentional change theory (Boyatzis, 2006). The coach's ability to build the coachee's self-efficacy, using Bandura's (1977) four-route model, may be crucial for the success of this coaching stage: experience of mastery, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and addressing physiological-emotional state issues.

There are minor differences in how the different authors construe the planning / preparation / action stages. For Grant (2012), *preparation* involves shifting the coachee from a deliberative mindset to an implementional mindset, in which boosting self-efficacy is still a key factor while the *action* stage involves short-term new behaviours, out of which new self-efficacy can be gained. Theeboom et al. (2017) propose goal-setting theory as the key explanatory mechanism in this stage and cite the findings of Moen and Skaalvik (2009) in this regard. Theeboom et al. (2017) speculate, following Prochaska and DiClemente (1986), that building implementation intention must be an important role of the coach in this stage but do not propose theories to explain the mechanisms used in EC. Nevertheless, the literature offers lines to explore: Gregory et al. (2011) suggest that goals framed in terms of loss avoidance should engage coachees more strongly based on prospect theory (Kahneman & Tversky, 2013), suggesting that fear of loss is a greater motivator than hope of gain. Another avenue to explore is cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) which Gessnitzer et al. (2016) speculate might be used by coaches to build commitment through verbal shaping. Overall, the adaptations of the transtheoretical model have the merit of allowing different theories to find specific places in explaining the effects but do not constitute an overarching theory of coaching.

There is consensus in the literature that the quality of the relationship between coach and coachee, referred to as the working alliance or coaching alliance, is an important factor in explaining the effects of coaching (Baron et al., 2011; Graßmann, Schölmerich & Schermuly, 2020; Kilburg, 2001). The coaching alliance "reflects the quality of the client and coach's engagement in collaborative, purposive work within the coaching relationship" (O'Broin & Palmer, 2007: 305). The quality of the working alliance has been confirmed as a success factor in a wide range of relationships characterised by 'helping', including leadership, mentoring and teaching (Graßmann et al., 2020). Within coaching, alliance is a 'common factor' (Rozenzweig, 1936) as is appears to be consistent across all types of coaching intervention (Baron & Morin, 2010; Kilburg, 2001). Early construal of the alliance in coaching was primarily in psychodynamic terms, framing its quality in terms of factors such as unconditional positive regard, support, empathy and trust (Graßmann et al., 2020). The Working Alliance Inventory (Horvath & Greenberg, 1989) exploits the degree of agreement between coach and coachee on three components: goals of coaching, tasks to be completed by the coachee and the strength of the bond between coach and coachee. Graßmann et al. (2020) conducted a meta-analysis of 23 quantitative studies to explore the relationship between quality of alliance and outcomes. Individual ('life') coaching was included as well as workplace coaching. Most of the retained studies used the Working Alliance Inventory but some used other measures. The authors found that working alliance in coaching was almost twice as important as in psychotherapy in explaining outcomes. Graßmann et al. (2020) interpret these findings as a greater readiness and ability by coachees than psychotherapy patients to build an effective working relationship in a short time period, noting that the relationship between coach and coachee is more equal than between therapist and patient. These findings are based on cross sectional or observational study designs and therefore offer correlational rather than causal explanations.

There is little clarity on the factors which affect the quality of the coaching alliance (Graßmann et al., 2020). Studies have addressed factors such as personality (de Haan et al., 2016), mood and specific behaviours of coaches (Ianiro & Kauffeld, 2014), coach skills and behaviours and coachee motivation (Sonesh, Coultas, Marlow, Lacerenza, Reyes & Salas, 2015) and discrepancies between coaches and coachees in appreciation of the alliance (Baron, Morin & Morin, 2011). Graßmann and Schermuly (2020) conducted a meta-analysis of 18 studies in search of factors which drive the coaching alliance. The primary studies involved work related and individual ('life') coaching; factors were categorised as appertaining to coaches, coachees or to the coaching dyad. The authors note that there appears to have been no investigation of the alliance specifically in EC for managers. Graßmann and Schermuly (2020) found that coachee motivation and the coachee's perception of the coach's competence affected the alliance but that neither personality nor issues of similarity mattered, thereby supporting

the conclusions of de Haan (2019) and de Haan et al. (2016); they also found that the extent of the coach's experience is not a factor affecting the quality of the alliance. The authors propose social exchange theory (Blau, 1968) as an explanatory framework for the building of trust which, in turn, enables access to deep emotions but recognise that social exchange theory cannot adequately explain why personality is not a factor in this process.

1.5 Research on executive coaching

Research is lagging behind practice in EC (Blackman et al., 2016; Osatuke, Yanovsky & Ramsel, 2017). Meta-analyses have addressed the short-term effects of executive coaching on performance and skill improvement (De Meuse, Dai & Lee, 2009), performance/skills, well-being, coping, work attitudes and goal-directed self-regulation (Theeboom et al, 2013); behaviour change, personal attitude change, work-related behaviour change, cognitive outcomes and relations with others (Sonesh, Coultas, Marlow et al., 2015); affective, cognitive, skill-based and changed performance (Jones, Woods & Guillaume, 2016). Overall, the meta-analyses show a positive impact for EC across the measured outcome categories but effect sizes are weak, in most cases under 0.5 (Cohen's d). Systematic reviews also offer evidence for positive, short-term effects of coaching in organisations (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018; De Haan, 2019). By including qualitative studies, SRs also show the breadth of EC outcomes. Athanasopoulou and Dopson's (2018) SR, for example, found over 70 positive EC effects. The discovery of new EC effects has broadened research beyond studies of performance improvement to include outcomes such as well-being and meaningfulness of work (Bates & Chen, 2004; Grant, 2017a; Grant, 2017b; Theeboom et al., 2013). At the same time, investigation has moved from *Does EC work?* to *How does EC work?* No meta-analysis has addressed medium or long-term effects of EC and only one focused exclusively on coaching of managers (De Meuse et al., 2009).

1.6 The present study

1.6.1 The problem

Investigation of specific outcomes of EC has returned almost universally positive findings but generally using measures taken only at the end of the coaching. The extant outcome research makes two implicit assumptions, firstly that outcomes are manifested immediately (i.e., without a latency period) and, secondly, that these outcomes are sustained over time. (Fischer, Dietz & Antonakis, 2017; Grover & Furnham, 2016; MacKie, 2014). These assumptions may not be valid. A longer time perspective may yield different outcomes. To link outcomes to actions requires a guiding theory, which EC does not yet have (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018; Myers & Bachkirova, 2018). An effect which is not linked to a predictive theory can have any cause, including placebo (Gaab, Locher & Blease, 2018). Without developing theory alongside empirical research, EC cannot become a truly evidence-based practice (Smither, 2011). The present study aimed to contribute both evidence on long-term effects and

theoretical insights into the phenomenon of EC derived from data. The study responds to the call for qualitative investigation to take account of the contextual factors which affect the process and its outcomes (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018; de Haan, 2019). The findings aim to strengthen the capacity of organisations, HR specialists, executive coaches and individual managers to use EC optimally through modelling of choices and consequences.

1.6.2 Rationale for the chosen research approach

A grounded theory (GT) approach was chosen with the aim of narrowing the theory gap at the heart of EC. GT is designed to develop explanatory theories for social processes studied in their ecological context (Glaser, 1992). The Straussian variant of GT was chosen with the objective of explaining more than merely understanding. This choice reflects a belief on the part of the researcher that explanations for the observed phenomena can be found, perhaps not universal or permanent but nevertheless stable enough to be useful.

1.6.3 Research aims and objectives

The aim of this study was to deepen understanding of the effectiveness of EC as an intervention to support the long-term development of managers. The research question asks: *How do managers describe the place of executive coaching in the context of their overall development as managers?*

The specific objectives were to:

- identify any long-lasting individual effects of executive coaching,
- propose theoretical insights to explain how individual executive coaching effects unfold over time.

Chapter 2 Systematic review of the enduring individual effects of executive coaching on managers

2.1 Introduction

Coaching is a relatively recent addition to the interventions used by organisations to develop their personnel, especially their managers. It became popular in organisations in the United States in the 1990s (Brock, 2018), in the United Kingdom from the early 2000s and continues to grow in use (Passmore, Brown, Wall, & Stokes, 2018; Passmore & Tee, 2020). While outcome research on EC has advanced significantly in recent years, major gaps persist, including the lack of a systematic review of the effects of coaching specifically on managers and the persistence over time of EC effects. This systematic review seeks to address these two gaps by focusing specifically on (a) the outcomes of EC for managers and (b) the persistence over time of any EC effects on managers.

2.2 Overview of meta-analyses and SRs to-date

There have been several meta-analyses but only one used exclusively data on managers (De Meuse et al., 2009). This work, based on only six studies with a cumulative sample of n=764 participants, found an overall positive effect for coaching. Effect sizes were greater in studies based on self-reports (Cohen's d=1.27) than when reported by others, peers, team members and / or line managers (d=0.5). Theeboom et al. (2013) included 18 studies of 'organisational' coaching; coachees included managers and non-managers and one included study involved students. This meta-analysis found significant positive effects for coaching on performance, skills, well-being, coping, work attitudes and goal directed self-regulation. Effect sizes were large, Hedges *g* 0.5 or higher for the well-being, coping and attitudes categories. Performance/skills showed the weakest effects, from 0.1 to 0.3. The meta-analysis of Sonesh, Coultas, Lacerenza et al. (2015) used 24 studies. The inclusion criteria specified studies on "leadership, business or executive coaching" (Sonesh et al, 2015, p. 78) but the data show that non-manager coachees (N = 2151) greatly outnumber managers (N = 999) in the included studies, with some students (N = 367) also included in the sample. This meta-analysis concluded that coaching was significantly associated with changes in all categories except for "cognitive outcomes", where the number of primary studies was small. Most effect sizes (Cohen's d) were weak: behavioural change (0.19), work-related attitude change (0.18) and personal attitude change (0.08), with the strongest effect for relations with others (0.32). The meta-analysis by Jones, Woods, & Guillaume (2016) included 17 studies and showed a positive impact for coaching on all investigated categories. Across the included studies the combined effect of coaching on all criteria 0.36. The effect was strongest (1.24) for individual performance improvement and affective outcomes (0.51) and lowest for skill-based outcomes (0.28). Overall, the meta-analyses contain evidence that EC has weak effects in the short-

term across several outcome categories but say nothing about the unfolding over time of these effects, which may well grow, fade or transform into new effects. Several systematic reviews on coaching effectiveness have been published, including Kampa-Kokesh and Anderson (2001), Grover and Furnham (2016), Bozer and Jones (2018), Athanasopoulou and Dopson (2018) and de Haan (2019). None, however, addresses effects specifically on managers and none investigates persistence of effects beyond the end of the coaching. Taken together, the systematic reviews offer evidence for a wide range of positive effects of coaching in work contexts in the short-term. Athanasopoulou and Dopson (2018), for example, found over 70 positive effects from EC.

2.3 Challenges in investigating enduring effects of EC

Common to all developmental interventions, investigating the longer-term outcomes of EC carries the risk of making invalid cause-effect assumptions. A coached manager may change behaviour for reasons other than coaching. Most coaching studies use pre- and post- measures applied just before and just after the coaching, or they use retrospective designs (Grover & Furnham, 2016). This is for good reason, as establishing cause-effect relations over time is particularly challenging (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018). In the case of EC there are specific barriers to conducting investigation in the field: managers generally have little time to offer to researchers and organisations may be reluctant to give access to the people concerned or to relevant data (Ellam-Dyson & Palmer, 2008).

Organisational purchasers of coaching may have different timeframes and different objectives from coachees (Leedham, 2004; Fillery-Travis & Cox, 2014). Bates and Chen (2004) suggest that human resource development in an organisational context can be seen through three distinct lenses. In *performance*, the focus is on the goals of the organisation and human development has value only if it supports the goals of the organisation. Using a *learning* lens the focus is on individual learning, which may or may not lead to improvement at the organisational level; aligning individual and organisational development is a key management concern in this context. The *meaning-of-work* lens shows a perspective is wider than the organisation: human development is understood as simultaneously supporting the individual, society at large and the organisation. Early coaching outcome studies were predominantly within the *performance* paradigm, investigating only the effects on organisational performance (De Meuse et al., 2009; Athanasopouolou & Dopson, 2018). However, as 'new' outcomes of EC emerged, especially in relation to health and well-being, the *meaning-of-work* paradigm has become predominant in research, with leading scholars investigating the outcomes of coaching on quality of life as well as performance (Theeboom et al., 2013; Grant, 2017a; Grant, 2017b).

The question of which effects, if any, persist over time is an important part of a decision to invest in an intervention (Dagley, 2006). Following psychotherapy conventions, 'long-term' was defined as two years or more after the end of the intervention (Gibby, Casline, & Ginsburg, 2017). 'Medium-term' was

defined as one month after the end of the intervention up to two years. For parsimony of language the terms “persisting” and “enduring” have been used when distinction between medium and long-term effects is not relevant. To the author’s knowledge, this was the first systematic review of peer-reviewed studies on the medium and long-term effects of EC on coached managers. The aim of the review was to explore the individual effects of EC on managers where outcome data were collected at least one month after the end of the coaching. The independent variable was executive coaching, as defined above. The population of interest was managers, defined as people with responsibility for the work of at least one other person.

2.4 Methods

2.4.1 Design

The review took the approach described as an interpretation meta-synthesis (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018, following Hoon, 2013) in order to bring together extant knowledge meaningfully on the “what”, “why” and “how” of enduring effects on managers from EC. The specific objectives of the review were to:

a. identify relevant empirical studies,

b. synthesise the evidence they offer on enduring outcomes (the “what” question), and

c. synthesise research insights from these studies into meaningful theoretical constructs to explain the reported phenomena (“how” and “why” questions).

The review was conducted using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses guidelines (PRISMA: http://www.prisma-statement.org/).

2.4.2 Philosophical underpinnings

The worldview informing this systematic review is characterised by openness to many kinds of knowledge, on the assumption that the different insights may converge to produce stable and useful explanations (Miles & Huberman, 2002). The paradigm is thus essentially post-positive in that it construes the research process as discovery of social phenomena and realities which are more than transient social constructions (Hoon, 2013). Social realities are nevertheless ontologically different to material phenomena and the predictive goal of positivist research is an inadequate frame for their study. Creating the desired knowledge involves bringing together findings from multiple primary studies of the phenomenon of interest in a process of accumulation and interpretation more than aggregation, given that the data, experiences and findings reported in each study will reflect the specific context of that study (Hoon, 2013).

2.4.3 Eligibility criteria

Table 2.1 presents the inclusion and exclusion criteria. To be eligible, primary studies needed to report individual outcomes on managers from EC where data were collected at least one month after the end of the coaching. No time limits regarding publication were applied and only papers published in English, French, German, Dutch, Spanish or Italian in peer-reviewed journals were eligible. There were no criteria relating to study design, methodology or quality of the overall research process. EC is still a young research field and much of the extant primary research has been carried out by coaching practitioners who did not always follow academically sanctioned research procedures (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018).

Table 2.1: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for the SR

Inclusion	Exclusion
Studies with empirical evidence of effects of executive coaching at the individual (coachee) level beyond the end of the intervention	Opinion pieces and studies where outcomes were assessed only at the end of the intervention
Coaching in a work setting	Laboratory or study settings
Coachees were managers, defined as holding management responsible for the work of at least one other person	Non-managers or students as coachees
Coaching provided by trained, professional coaches, whether working inside the organisation or contracted in	Coaching provided by line managers or peers
Intervention purely or predominantly coaching; in the case of complex interventions, studies which assess the specific effects of the coaching component	Coaching as an add-on to another, non-coaching intervention, where the coaching outcomes are not separately assessed
Coaching on leadership / management competencies	Life coaching; coaching focused exclusively on specific workplace skills; coaching on health practices; other non-management coaching
Texts in languages which the authors could read (English, French, German, Dutch, Spanish, Italian)	Texts in languages that the authors could not read (following de Haan, 2019)
Published in peer-reviewed journals, no date limits	
Studies using any design or methodology	

2.4.4 Search strategy

A literature search drawing on 21 databases was conducted in March 2020. The databases included Scopus, ABI/INFORM Global, Social Sciences Citation Index and PsycARTICLES. The all-text search terms were: “executive coaching” OR “leadership coaching” OR “work* coaching” AND effect* OR outcome. Earlier pilot searches indicated that identifying studies reporting specifically on long-term outcomes

was not feasible at the search stage. The initial search returned 563 papers. To supplement the search, four leading researchers were asked for advice on relevant studies, yielding three additional papers.

2.4.5 Data extraction

Data were extracted from the retained studies to the following predefined categories:

a. Time from end of the coaching intervention to collection of data on outcomes
b. Participants
c. Hours of coaching received or number of coaching sessions (where given)
d. Setting
e. Design
f. Methods
g. Outcomes
h. Other findings
i. Theoretical insights
j. Implications for practice

2.4.6 Synthesis of results

2.4.6.1 Synthesis of outcomes reported in the included studies

The synthesis of outcomes combined elements from Popay et al. (2006) and Hoon (2013). The narrative approach of Popay et al. (2006) was used to develop a conceptual framework of outcomes reported in the different studies. The outcomes operationalised in studies with hypotheses (n=7) provided the basis for an initial categorisation. These were: change in different behavioural variables, core self-evaluations and developmental readiness. Next, the conceptual framework of outcomes was completed using thematic analysis of the *Results* and *Discussion* sections in all studies (n=16) which generated the following additional categories: a strengthened sense of self, self-reflective skills and insight, and strengthened leader identity.

2.4.6.2 Synthesis of explanatory constructs evoked in the included studies

The meta-synthetic approach of Hoon (2013) was used to integrate researchers' insights from all the studies in an effort to make an overall theoretical contribution while respecting the unique context of each study (Yin, 2009). Meta-synthesis builds on insights of the original researchers based on their interpretation of the data. The elaborated insights of the researchers constitute in effect the data of meta-synthesis. (Hoon, 2013). The meta-synthesis involved three steps:

1. The principal explanatory constructs evoked in each study were identified; these include theories underlying supported and partially supported hypotheses and insights offered by researchers in the discussion sections of papers.

2. Common themes were noted across studies and merged to generate unifying themes or meta-insights.
3. The results were linked to the wider literature on psychology, coaching and management.

2.5 Results

2.5.1 Screening process

The search identified 566 papers of which 16 were retained following application of the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Figure 2.1 presents an overview of the screening process in four phases following the PRISMA model proposed by Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff et al. (2009). Decisions were discussed and agreed by all three authors.

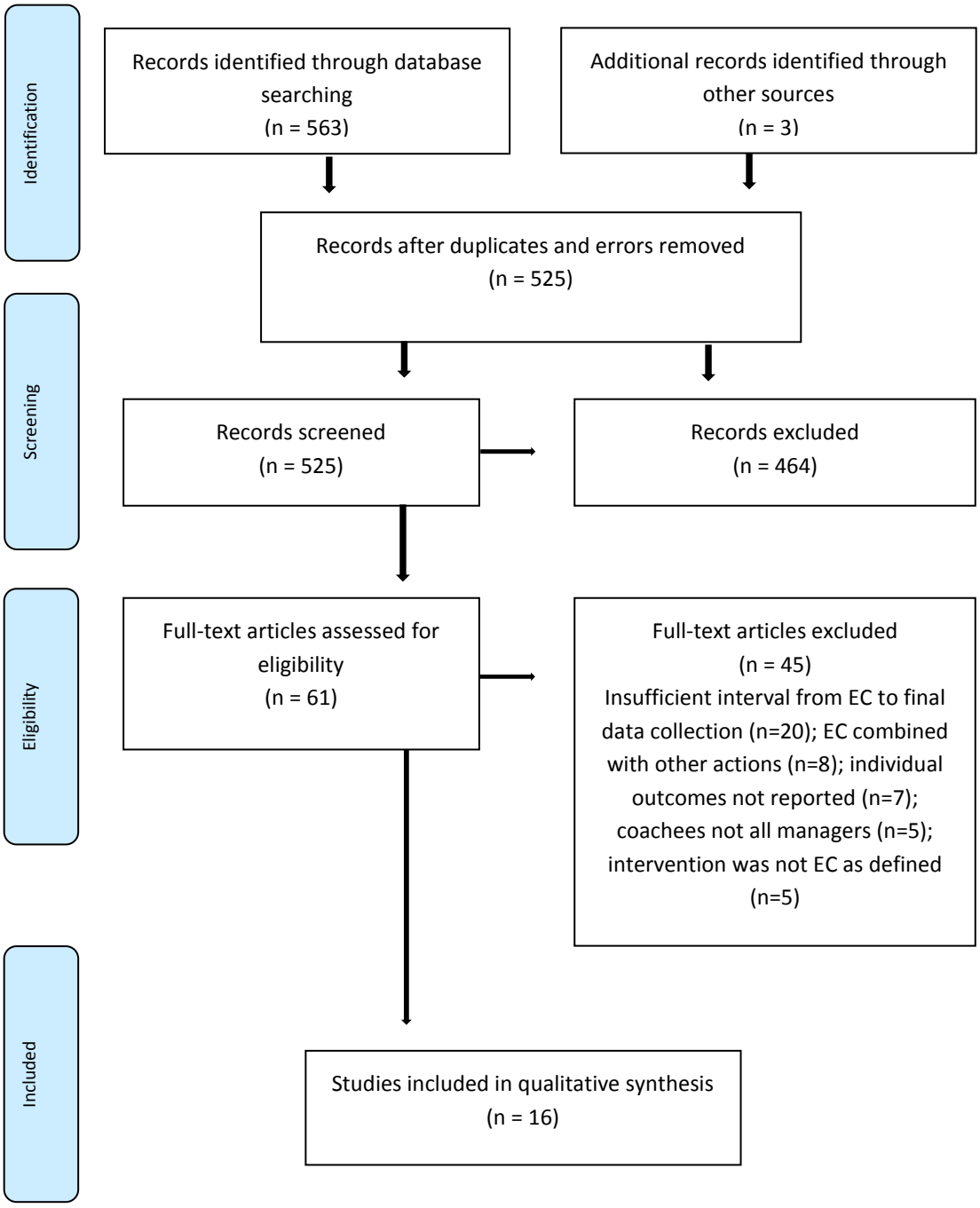


Figure 2.1: Screening process flow

2.5.2 Overview of the included studies

Table 2.2 presents an overview of the 16 included studies and the categories of data extracted from each. Seven studies [2,3,7,9,12,13,14] were qualitative. Five studies[4,5,6,11,16] use pre and post measures. Only one[6] reports effect sizes. In two studies[11,12] the persistence of effects over time – one year later – was the entral aim of the research. In seven studies[4,5,7,12,13,14,15] the researcher was involved directly or indirectly in the coaching intervention. Eight of the included works used case-study designs[2,3,7,9,10,12,13,14]. While no study was excluded on language grounds, all of the retained works were written in English (n=16).

Table 2.2: Overview of the included studies

N°	First author	Year	Area	Participants (coached managers)	Coaching sessions received	Control group	Design	Analysis	Baseline data collection	"Other reports"[a] used	Time from end of coaching to final data collection	Author involved in intervention
1	Anthony	2017	USA	75	Not specified	N	Cross-sectional	Quantitative	N	Y	Not specified	N
2	Brand	2013	RSA	5	Not specified	N	Case-study	Qualitative	N	N	Not specified	N
3	Freischlag	2019	USA	1	Not specified	N	Case-study	Qualitative	N	Y	15 years	N
4	MacKie	2014	AUS	37	6	Y	Experimental	Quantitative	Y	Y	4 months	Y
5	MacKie	2015	AUS	30	6	Y	Experimental	Quantitative	Y	N	4 months	Y
6	Nieminen	2013	USA	227	4-5	Y	Experimental	Quantitative	Y	Y	3 months	N
7	Rathmell	2019	USA	1	Not specified	N	Case-study	Qualitative	N	Y	Not specified	Y
8	Rekalde	2017	Spain	99	Not specified	N	Survey	Quantitative	N	Y	Several years	N
9	Skinner	2014	USA	11	6	N	Case-study	Qualitative	N	N	2 years	N
10	Smith	2013	USA	30	Not specified [b]	N	Case-study	Quantitative	N	N	18 months	Not clear
11	Smither	2003	USA/global	286	2-3	Y	Experimental	Mixed	Y	Y	1 year	N
12	Spence	2019	USA	15	Not specified [c]	N	Case-study	Qualitative	N	N	8-12 months	Y
13	Trevillion	2018	UK	6	Not specified	N	Case-study	Qualitative	N	Y	Not specified	Y
14	Wales	2003	UK	16	Not specified	N	Case-study	Qualitative	N	N	Up to 1 year	Y
15	Wasylyshyn	2003	USA	106	Not specified	N	Survey	Quantitative	N	N	Several years	Y
16	Williams	2018	USA	64	4	Y	Experimental	Quantitative	Y	Y	5 weeks	N

[a] "Other reports" include data from line managers, peers, subordinates and/or human resource managers.

[b] Time investment by participants in the coaching averaged 82 hours, including homework assignments.

[c] Coaching was delivered over a ten-week period.

2.5.3 Findings

In line with the objectives, the findings of the systematic review are presented in two parts:

1. Synthesis of evidence from the retained studies on enduring individual outcomes (the *what* question)
2. Synthesis of the constructs evoked in these studies to explain the reported outcomes (the *how* and *why* questions).

2.5.3.1 Enduring individual outcomes

Table 2.3 presents an overview of all individual outcomes reported in the studies, organised into a conceptual framework using an approach based on Popay et al. (2006). The outcome categories are: changed behaviour, a strengthened sense of self, increased readiness to learn and change, improved self-reflective skills, insight and strengthened leader identity.

Table 2.3: Enduring individual outcomes reported in the studies

	Outcomes	Study n°	How the outcome was defined or described in the study	How the outcome was operationalised or identified in the study
1	**Changed behaviour (effects reported by third parties: peers, line managers, team members or HR managers)**			
1.1	Improved leadership behaviour generally	8	Value judgements by workplace observers	Observers used a seven-point Likert scale to report whether change had been seen, if it was sustained and positive for the organisation in the opinion of the raters.
1.2	Comprehensive shift towards a transformational leadership style	4	"Transformational leadership is the process whereby leaders engage and influence their followers toward attaining a shared vision through their capacity to inspire, innovate and personalize their attention." (MacKie, 2014: 118)	Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire: workplace observers reported behaviour on a five-point Likert scale; the 49 items describe idealised manager behaviours and attributes.
1.3	Individualized consideration (as a dimension of transformational leadership)	1	"The leader's developmental orientation toward followers' developmental needs and concerns" (Anthony, 2017: 931)	Observers rated their leader's behaviour on a five-point Likert scale using a four-item measure adapted from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.
1.4	Delegation (as a dimension of transformational leadership)	1	"A leader behavior whereby the leader assigns, and thereby, relinquishes responsibilities and authority to their followers" (Anthony, 2017: 932)	Observers rated their leader's behaviour on a five-point Likert scale using a six-item measure based on scales developed and validated by Schriesheim et al. (1998).
1.5	Close supervision (as an inverse dimension of transformational leadership)	1	"When leaders engage in close supervision, they micro-manage their followers' actions and behaviors. Consequently, followers often feel that they are constantly being evaluated, managed, and controlled" (Anthony, 2017: 933)	Observers rated their leader's behaviour on a seven-point Likert scale using an eight item measure adapted from George & Zhou (2001).
1.6	Soliciting ideas for improvement	11	The extent to which the coached manager subsequently solicited suggestions from her/his supervisor on to improve (Smither et al., 2003)	Supervisors rated managers under their responsibility on frequency of soliciting ideas using an ad-hoc five point scale.

1.7	Setting specific goals	11	The extent to which development goals set by managers are specific as opposed to vague (Smither et al., 2003)	The researchers rated the specificity of participants' development goals on a four-point scale.
1.8	Presentation and influencing style	14	"Pithy, powerful, timely presentation with Senior Leaders; High Impact with presence: influencing and inspiring" (Trevillion, 2018: 33)	Analysis of semi-structured interviews with coachees and their line managers.
2	**Cognitive and affective outcomes**			
2.1	**Strengthened sense of self**			
2.1.1	Self-reported performance improvement and self-confidence	10	Increased competencies in areas such as strategic thinking, decision making, communication, interpersonal skills	Interviews, structured and semi-structured: interview questions resulted in either categorical or ordinal/continuous codes depending on the nature of the responses.
		12	Improved communication style Enhanced confidence Leadership self-efficacy	Narrative enquiry – thematic analysis of participant responses to open questions on their coaching experience.
		14	Improvements in self-awareness, confidence and performance of team manager roles	Phenomenological analysis of participants' descriptions.
		16	Increased competency in a) modelling the way, (b) inspiring a shared vision, (c) challenging the process, (d) enabling others to act and (e) encouraging the heart	Participants' self-reports using the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI; Kouzes and Posner , 2003)
2.1.2	Core self-evaluations	5	A combination of four constructs, self-esteem, self-efficacy, neuroticism and locus of control, understood as representing personality traits (MacKie, 2015)	Participants completed the Core Self-evaluation Scale (CSES), a five-point Likert scale with 12 items.
2.1.3	Self-efficacy	6	"Belief in their ability to perform effectively as leaders" (Nieminen et al., 2013: 167)	The researchers interpreted positive changes in coached leaders' self-ratings as evidence for strengthened self-efficacy.
		13	-	Thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with coachees and their line managers.

2.2	Developmental readiness	5	"the ability and the motivation to attend to, make meaning of, and appropriate new knowledge into one's long-term memory structure" (MacKie, 2015, p 121)	Coachees completed the 14-item Developmental Readiness Questionnaire constructed by the author bringing together five dimensions: development orientation, mastery orientation, emotional regulation, developmental efficacy and growth mindset.
2.3	**Self-reflective skills and insight**			
		2	"More aware and understanding of themselves, their emotions and behaviour." (Brand & Coetzee, 2013: 254)	Grounded theory analysis of semi-structured interviews with coachees and their coaches.
		7	"learning to recognize what style I was using and what voice I was drawing from." (Rathmell, Brown, & Kilburg, 2019: 149)	Coachee voice.
		12	"capacity to reflect on aspects of self, others and the environment." (Spence, Stout-Rostron, Reenen, & Glashoff, 2019: 134)	Thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with coachees.
		14	"Self-awareness appears to consist of four elements: the ability to understand one's past and learn from it; openness to one's own and other's feelings; the ability to reflect on situations before moving to action; and the ability to make appropriate choices." (Wales, 2002: 278)	Thematic analysis of participant responses to open questions on their coaching experience.
		15	"Increased understanding of self" (Wasylyshyn, 2003: 103)	Analysis of survey responses from coachees.
2.4	**Strengthened leader identity**			
		3	Staying "true to myself" while embracing a new role Freischlag, 2019: 172)	Coachee voice.
		7	"At the end of 6 months, I felt ready to tackle hard problems, and I was having more comfort in the role than I could have ever imagined" (Freischlag)	Coachee voice.

		9	“their executive coaching experience helped them to define their own personalised approach to leadership rather than internalising prevailing male norms of leading.” (Skinner, 2014: 107)	Grounded theory analysis of semi-structured interviews with coachees.
		12	“profound leadership identity change” (Spence et al, 2019: 136)	Thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with coachees.

Changed behaviour reported by others

Five studies[1,4,8,11,14] found evidence of behaviour change reported by line managers, peers or team members one month or more from the end of the coaching. Rekalde et al. (2017)[8] surveyed 99 Spanish managers who had taken executive coaching in the previous years and 122 HR managers involved in purchasing and evaluation of coaching. The HR managers were asked to rate the effectiveness of coaching relative to other HR interventions to bring about sustained, observable change in management behaviour. Change was measured using a scale adapted from Ely & Zaccaro (2011), comprising eight indicators assessing whether the coachee's behaviour had changed and if any changes were sustained over time, interval not specified. Findings suggest a "strong capacity" (Rekalde et al., 2017: 2155) of executive coaching to modify managerial behaviour. In an Australian study using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass & Avolio, 1997), MacKie (2014)[4] found that transformational leadership behaviour of coachees continued to improve in the four months after the coaching stopped. Data came from participants, their line managers, direct subordinates and peers. Smither et al. (2003)[11] used the multi-source feedback system in a large, US based, global firm to investigate the effect of executive coaching on three variables: overall management performance, setting of specific (as opposed to vague) goals for team members and soliciting ideas for improvement. The quality of goal setting was assessed by the researchers qualitatively based on texts supplied; ad-hoc, non-validated scales were used to measure the other variables. The design was quasi-experimental: 400 participants received coaching between feedback rounds; approximately 800 managers served as a control group. There was almost one year between the coaching intervention and the second feedback round. Analysis of the feedback (n = 286) showed that managers who had been coached were more likely to set specific goals and to solicit ideas for improvement from their supervisors.

Overall, managers who were coached were judged by supervisors and team members to have improved more than non-coached managers but the effect size (d = 0.17) was small. Anthony (2017)[1] surveyed 75 leaders and 188 followers in US firms to assess the relationship between coaching and three outcome variables: individualised consideration for team members, delegation and close supervision. Individualised consideration was measured using Avolio and Bass' (2004) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, delegation using a scale based on Schriesheim et al. (1998) and closeness of supervision using a scale adapted from George and Zhou (2001). The interval between the end of the coaching and data collection was longer for some participants than for others. Results showed that coaching had a positive association with individualised consideration. Individualised consideration, in turn, had a positive association with delegation and a negative association with close supervision. Results were significant at the level of $p = < 0.05$. Trevillion (2018)[14] analysed semi-

structured interviews with coachee-supervisor dyads with the objective of identifying behaviour changes which both coachees and their line managers agreed resulted from executive coaching. Alongside attitudinal changes there was agreement that the coachees had improved presentation and influencing styles.

Strengthened sense of self

Seven studies[5,6,10,12,13,14,16] found evidence of improvement in coached managers' self-confidence, core self-evaluations, self-efficacy and self-perceived performance. These outcomes are assigned to a conceptual category "strengthened sense of self". Four studies[10,12,14,16] describe behavioural improvement beyond completion of the coaching but perceived by coachees only. Wasylyshyn (2003)[15] surveyed 106 high-level US managers, 85% male, who had been coached at different times during the previous 16 years. 63% of participants reported sustained behaviour change as an outcome of their coaching. Smith & Brummel (2013)[10] analysed semi-structured interviews with 30 high-level US managers (70% male) approximately 18 months from the end of coaching. Participants provided examples of how their performance had improved through coaching in areas such as strategic thinking, decision making, communication, interpersonal skills and leadership. Spence, Stout-Rostron, Reenen, & Glashoff (2019)[12] used a similar retrospective study design to investigate outcomes eight to twelve months after a coaching intervention among 15 US managers (80% male). As well as change in confidence and self-reflection, participants reported significant improvement in their communication style and in a range of management behaviours, assigned by the authors to a category of "performance foundations".

Williams & Lowman (2018)[16] analysed data from supervisors as well as self-reports from 64 coached senior managers in the USA five weeks after their coaching. Participants reported strong increases in leadership competencies and continuing use of the acquired competencies. However, these improvements were not visible to the supervisors of the coached managers. MacKie (2015)[5] found that managers' core self-evaluations (Johnson, Rosen, & Levy, 2008), including self-efficacy, locus of control, neuroticism and self-esteem, continued to improve in the four months following the intervention. In two studies[6,13] the authors interpret increased self-confidence as strengthened self-efficacy. Self-reported increases in confidence in four more studies[10,12,14,16] can be interpreted as an increase in self-efficacy.

Developmental readiness

MacKie (2015)[5] investigated change in levels of "developmental readiness" using the Brief Coaching Readiness Scale (BCRS; Franklin, 2005), a 14 item questionnaire based on Prochaska and DiClemente's (1986) work on stages in clinical change. MacKie (2015) found that developmental readiness did not

increase during the coaching but increased significantly in the four months afterwards, which provides some support for a latency effect.

Self-reflective skills and insight

Five studies[2,7,12,14,15] identify self-reflection and insight as enduring outcomes. In a study from South Africa, Brand and Coetzee (2013)[2] report, in a participant's words, that coaching was "a significant positive and magical process. Initially, it seems uncomfortable and tough, because you have to face yourself honestly, discover yourself ..." (Brand & Coetzee, 2013: 254). The sole participant in Rathmell, Brown, & Kilburg's (2019)[7] US case study says "I was helped tremendously by learning to recognize what style I was using and what voice I was drawing from." (p. 149). Spence et al. (2019)[12] applied narrative analysis to rich descriptions of coaching experience of 15 managers to conclude that "the coaching process greatly enhanced their capacity to reflect on aspects of self, others and the environment. For some participants, the purposeful reflection encouraged in coaching was entirely new and even revelatory;" (Spence et al., 2019: 134)[12]. Wales (2002)[14], using a phenomenological approach to analyse the experience of 16 coached UK managers, identified self-awareness as the key outcome of the intervention, on which all further development was predicated. Wasylyshyn's (2003)[15] US survey of former coachees identified increased understanding of self and personal insight as the second most valued outcome, after behaviour change.

Strengthened identity as leader

The formation of a leadership identity (Derue & Ashford, 2010) is reported as an outcome in four studies[3,7,9,12]. Freischlag's (2019)[3] personal account stresses that in coaching she learned to be "true" (p. 174) to herself in her leadership role: her changing dress style is a metaphor, first dressing to fit in with her new work environment, later finding a style that was hers. The coachee voice in Rathmell et al. (2019)[7] states "At the end of 6 months … I could step into many foreign situations, able to be me" (p. 147). Skinner (2014)[9] interviewed 11 women in senior management positions in the USA who had taken executive coaching in the preceding two years. Interviews were analysed using grounded theory techniques. A core finding was that coaching helped the women to form and refine their identities as leaders in settings where male leadership norms were dominant. Spence et al. (2019)[12], using narrative enquiry, found evidence of "profound leader identity change" (p. 136) eight months to one year after coaching, noting that this effect emerged only after "a period of incubation" (p. 136), i.e. it was not present at the end of the intervention.

2.5.3.2 Explanatory constructs evoked in the retained studies

Table 2.4 presents an overview of the meta-synthesis of theoretical constructs evoked in the studies. The initial analysis identified 51 researcher insights involving explanation of the outcomes reported. In a second step these study-specific insights were merged into six meta-insights on the basis of unifying themes, as follows:

1. Intrinsic motivation
2. Identity work
3. Mental reframing of relationship to subordinates
4. Coach as teacher
5. Building confidence
6. Metabolising the learning.

A further synthesis of these six meta-insights using higher-level unifying themes suggests that the EC interventions investigated in the retained studies comprised two dominant dimensions, as follows:

1. Leader identity formation (*Intrinsic motivation, Identity work, Mental reframing of relationship to subordinates*), and
2. Psychological resourcing (*Coach as teacher, Building confidence, Metabolising the learning*).

Table 2.4: Synthesis of explanatory constructs evoked in the retained studies

Study N°	"How" and "Why" research insights in the included studies	Constructs and works cited	References in the wider literature	Unifying theme	Higher order construct
1	EC may induce a wish by the coachee to reciprocate the investment made by the organisation.	Social exchange (Alge, Ballinger, Tangirala, & Oakley, 2006; Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Van Dick, Hirst, Grojean, & Wieseke, 2007)	Self-knowledge and insight (Grant, Curtayne, & Burton, 2009; Green, Grant, & Rynsaardt, 2007; Spence, 2008) Cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) Introjected motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000)	Intrinsic motivation	Leader identity formation
1	EC motivates managers to align behaviour with values.				
2	The coach used mirroring to create self-awareness.	Self-discovery (Mink, Owen & Mink, 1993) Non-judgemental space (Bluckert, 2005)			
9	EC deepened the desire to lead authentically.	Authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005)			
9	EC helps introject positive motivation.	Self-determination theory (Deci, Eghrari, Patrick, & Leone, 1994; Deci & Ryan, 2012)			
10	The involvement of the coachee is a critical success factor.	Therapeutic relationship (McKenna & Davis, 2009)			
12	Coaching conversations take people to the edge of their current capacities.	Leader development (Berger, 2011) Innate tendency to develop and grow (Rogers, 1961)			
12	The coach may challenge some long-held beliefs about leadership abilities.				
12	Observation of the coach may lead to a re-appraisal of own learning abilities.				
15	The coachee's motivation to learn and / or change is a key success factor.				

***

Study N°	"How" and "Why" research insights in the included studies	Constructs and works cited	References in the wider literature	Unifying theme	Higher order construct
1	EC motivates managers to align behaviour with values.		Identity work (Brown, 2015) Leader identity development (DeRue, Ashford, & Cotton, 2009; Haslam & Ellemers, 2011; Lord, Gatti, & Chui, 2016) Cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) Authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005)	Identity work	Leader identity formation
3	EC promotes authentic leadership.				
7	EC helps to integrate different aspects of personality and different life experiences into the person.				
8	EC personalises competency development.	Personalisation of competency development (Bozer & Baek-Kyoo, 2015; Jones et al., 2016; Witherspoon & White, 1996)			
9	EC helps build a personalised approach to leadership.				
9	EC helps with negotiating identity formation in a social context.	Social identity theory (Burke, 1996; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) Processes of identity development (DeRue et al., 2009; Dutton, Roberts, & Bednar, 2010; Stets & Burke, 2005) Leadership and self-concept (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Ely & Rhode, 2010; Ibarra, 1999; Lord & Brown, 2004)			
9	EC brought coherence and meaning to experiences.	Schemas to give coherence and meaning to experience (Markus & Wurf, 1987; Stets & Burke, 2005)			
9	The coach is an enabler of and a role model for identity formation.				
14	Increased self-confidence enabled coachees to bring more of themselves to the workplace.				
14	EC helped managers to be more honest about their feelings.				

***

Study N°	**"How" and "Why" research insights in the included studies**	Constructs and works cited	**References in the wider literature**	Unifying theme	Higher order construct
1	EC helps managers gain an understanding of their followers' strengths as individuals.	Individualised consideration and transformational leadership (Arnold & Loughlin, 2010; Avolio & Bass, 2004; Bass, 1985; Cho & Dansereau, 2010; Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006; Rafferty & Griffin, 2004, 2006)	Transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006)	Mental reframing of relationship to subordinates	Leader identity formation
1	EC inspires managers to liberate staff from fears / build a supportive climate.	Transformational leadership (George & Zhou, 2001; Grant et al., 2010; MacKie, 2014)			
3	The coachee discovered empowerment of teams.				
3	EC enabled the manager to care about the team's growth.				
14	EC helped managers to be more sensitive to the feelings of others.				
14	EC increased desire to help people in the team.				

***

Study N°	"How" and "Why" research insights in the included studies	Constructs and works cited	References in the wider literature	Unifying theme	Higher order construct
1	EC teaches how to engage followers.	Coaching and engagement (Bennett & Bush, 2013; Grant et al., 2010; Sonesh, Coultas, Lacerenza, et al., 2015; Tooth, Nielsen, & Armstrong, 2013)	Coach-client micro-interactions (Gessnitzer et al., 2016)	Coach as teacher	Psychological resourcing
3	The coaching involved practising skills for different social situations.				
7	The coaching involved training in skills (social, political, self-evaluation).				
7	The coach taught emotion management.				
7	EC teaches how to set goals and expectations.				
9	The coach is a role model and guide, as in school.				
11	The coach guides people through the stages of change.	Stages of change (Dalton & Hollenbeck, 2001; DiClemente, Norcross, & Prochaska, 1995)			
14	The coach taught how to understand team dynamics.				
14	The coach taught how to reflect.				

***

Study N°	"How" and "Why" research insights in the included studies	Constructs and works cited	References in the wider literature	Unifying theme	Higher order construct
1	EC builds self-confidence.	Confidence to model appropriate behavior (Tooth et al., 2013)	Cognitive appraisal (Folkman & Lazarus, 1984) Social-cognitive theory (Bandura, 2005) Self-efficacy belief (Bandura, 1977) Core self-evaluation (Johnson et al., 2008)	Building confidence	Psychological resourcing
3	EC deepened self-knowledge and confidence.				
5	EC improves core self-evaluation (CSE).	CSEs changed by executive coaching (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2011) CSEs correlated with performance and satisfaction (Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoresen, 2003)			
6	EC improves belief in self as leader.	Effect of coaching on leaders' self-efficacy (Baron & Morin, 2009; Evers, Brouwers, & Tomic, 2006; Goodstone & Diamante, 1998; Moen & Allgood, 2009; Moen & Skaalvik, 2009) Feedback (DeNisi & Kluger, 2000; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996; Smither, London, & Reilly, 2005)			
7	EC teaches self-awareness and confidence.				
10	The coachees's perception of developability of competence is a success factor.	Individual implicit theory (Dweck & Leggett, 1988) Perceptions of developability (Gibbons, Rupp, Snyder, Holub, & Woo, 2006) Motivation (Dweck, Tenney, & Dinces, 1982)			
10	Merely planning actions leads to improved self-ratings.	Goal setting theory (Ajzen, 1991; Gollwitzer, 1999; Edwin A Locke & Latham, 2002; Sheeran & Orbell, 1999; Webb & Sheeran, 2004)			
12	EC builds self-confidence.				
13	EC built self-efficacy.				
14	EC built self-confidence and self-esteem.				

***

Study N°	"How" and "Why" research insights in the included studies	Constructs and works cited	References in the wider literature	Unifying theme	Higher order construct
1	The coaching motivates the manager to transfer acquired skills to the workplace.	Coaching and transfer of learning (Baron & Morin, 2009)	Double-loop learning (Argyris, 1977) Cognitive appraisal (Folkman & Lazarus, 1984) Psychological resource theory (Hobfoll, 2002)	Metabolising the learning	Psychological resourcing
4	The coaching helped the manager transfer acquired skills to the workplace.				
5	Developmental readiness grew in the months following the coaching.	Developmental readiness (Hannah & Lester, 2009) Stages of change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983)			
6	Positive outcomes cascade from greater self-efficacy.	Role of self-efficacy in work-related performance (Moen & Allgood, 2009; Smither et al., 2005; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1997)			
6	Others may directly sense the growth in self-efficacy and respond positively to it.	The looking-glass self (Gecas & Schwalbe, 1983)			
7	The coachee metabolised the learning from the coaching sessions.				
12	EC can engage a process of transformative learning that will continue after the coaching has ended.	Double-loop learning, meta-cognition (Mezirow, 1978, 2000) Punctuated Equilibrium model of evolutionary change (Gould & Eldredge, 1972)			
12	Insights from coaching can fundamentally alter a manager's network of beliefs, attitudes and behaviour.	Change in deep structures (Gersick, 1991) Evolving Transformational Shift model of change (Moons, 2016)			

***

2.6 Discussion of SR findings

Findings from the systematic review offered limited evidence of individual positive effects persisting after the end of the intervention in relation to changed behaviour, a strengthened sense of self, increased developmental readiness, improved self-reflective skills, insight and manager/leader identity formation. There is some evidence that some individual effects begin to operate only after a period of latency or incubation. The synthesis of theoretical constructs evoked in the studies suggested that the reported enduring effects of executive coaching reflect two principal dimensions, construed as sub-processes: leader identity development and psychological resourcing.

2.6.1 Discussion of outcomes reported in the studies

Quality of evidence

De Haan et al. (2013) assert that, by the standards of medical and psychological research, all executive coaching outcome studies have to be considered as weak. The field is characterised by self-reporting, with risks of self-serving bias (Heron, 1956) and recall bias (Evers et al., 2006). The risk of bias is increased when the researcher was the coach or otherwise involved in the intervention, as is frequently the case in coaching research to-date. Third party reports carry risks of leniency and observer-expectancy effects given that the raters by definition work closely with the coachees (Taylor & Wherry, 1951). The included studies contain no evidence of negative or adverse outcomes from EC. This may be substantively meaningful or an artefact of the research methods, with social desirability leading to non-reporting of negative effects. On the other hand, some of the most important outcome data are available only to coachees, who also hold information on the social environment, which is an important contextual factor in investigating effectiveness (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018). Qualitative approaches, especially case-studies, have specific advantages in a young research field as phenomena need to be adequately described before they can be understood and the included qualitative studies describe a wide range of coaching outcomes (Langdridge, 2008). Fillery-Travis and Cox (2014) argue that quantitative research has delivered many methodologically robust findings which do not add up to an understanding of EC overall.

The included studies have specific weaknesses. MacKie's two investigations (2014, 2015)[4,5] represent a major contribution to outcome research but the researcher was involved in organisation of the intervention from which the data were obtained, as were the researchers in studies 7,12,14 and 15. This can been seen as compromising the independence of the research (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018). Studying coaching in its natural environment can enhance ecological validity but limit scientific rigour. Smither et al. (2003)[11], for example, were able to use the appraisal system of a large organisation to conduct an extensive investigation of changes in behaviour but their data were based in part on behavioural feedback which was not anonymous and thus susceptible to bias from the

relationship between individual participants and their raters. Nieminen et al.' (2013)[6] were also able to conduct a large scale quasi-experimental study in an organisational setting but assignment to the coached and control groups was decided by the organisation, with newly promoted managers assigned to the coaching condition while the control group comprised more experienced managers; this intervention may have been effective because the coachees were inexperienced. Anthony (2017)[1] found a significant association between EC and coachee behaviour in the months following the coaching. However, the interval between the end of the intervention and data collection was longer for some participants than for others, confounding time as a variable in the unfolding of the reported effects. Williams and Lowman (2018)[16] did not find independent validation of self-perceived behavioural changes in coached managers five weeks after the end of coaching. The intervention, however, involved only four sessions, which may not be enough to generate visible changes. The authors also note that the raters may not have had sufficient opportunity to observe the coached managers in the interval between the end of the coaching and collection of data.

Improvement in the eye of the coachee: self-delusion or self-efficacy?

When the coachee is the sole supplier of data, the outcomes appear to be more positive (de Haan et al., 2013). Authors of SRs and meta-analyses regard self-reported improvement data as unreliable (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018). However, Nieminen et al. (2013)[6] found that improved self-perception by coachees at one point in time was an antecedent of substantive changes later in the developmental process and expressed caution against simply dismissing uncorroborated self-reports. They studied coached and non-coached managers, both of whom received feedback from supervisors, peers and team members. The only significant difference initially was in the self-perception of the coached group, who felt they were performing better than the non-coached managers. However, regression modelling suggested that participants' self-ratings at one time point predicted improvements seen later by others, thus construing perceived self-improvement as possibly a useful transitional effect of EC. This suggestion is in line with findings in psychology that biases such as over-confidence may be self-protective and on occasion even adaptive for human (Gigerenzer, 2000). Only one study[5] employed psychometric tools to measure effects in the period after coaching. MacKie's (2015)[5] finding, that core self-evaluations and developmental readiness improved in the four months after the end of EC, suggests that there were changes in psychological functioning linked to the coaching. In the wider literature, improved self-efficacy is a common outcome at the end of coaching (Baron & Morin, 2009; Bozer & Jones, 2018). Self-efficacy may have an added importance for leaders as it appears to have a direct effect on attitudes and motivation of followers (Chemers, Watson, & May, 2000). Future research is therefore warranted to measure self-efficacy pre, post and at regular

follow-up intervals to explore whether these effects are sustainable within ongoing management practices.

2.6.2 Discussion of theoretical constructs evoked in the studies

Executive coaching as leader identity formation

DeRue, Ashford & Cotton (2009) construe leader identity development as a process involving resolution of ambiguity related to performance of leader roles. Resolution of leadership identity issues was reported as an enduring outcome of EC in three studies[3,7,9]. Two further studies [12,13] conclude that EC involved transformative learning, an overlapping construct with identity change (Illeris, 2014). Identity development or 'identity work' (DeRue & Ashford, 2010) involves testing provisional identities and refining them based on feedback, both self-generated and from the social environment (Lord et al., 2016). When successfully implemented, identity work harmoniously links "the past and present to the future" (Lord et al., 2016). Lackritz et al. (Lackritz, Cseh, & Wise, 2019) describe EC as a means to gain agency over identity development. Transformative learning (Mezirow, 1978, 2000) proposes that, by engaging meta-cognition (thinking about thinking), the way the learner experiences the world can be transformed, in contrast to 'instrumental' learning which aims to help the learner control and manipulate the world (Habermas, 1984; Mezirow, 1978). These findings reflect the emergence in management literature of identity as central to leadership. Effective performance of the leader role is associated with strong leader identity (Day & Sin, 2011) and internalisation of a leader identity, a process which is social as well as individual, is proposed as central to becoming a leader (Haslam & Ellemers, 2011; Lord, Gatti & Chui, 2016).

Executive coaching as creation of psychological resources

Psychological resource theory (Hobfoll, 2002) is part of a set of overlapping theories which address motivation in the context of psychological self-regulation (Gregory et al., 2011) and build on the idea of 'cognitive appraisal' in Folkman & Lazarus' (1984) seminal work. These include social-cognitive theory (Bandura, 2001, 2005), goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 2013), and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2012). All assign a central importance to two sub-processes, feedback and goal-setting, which are evoked directly or indirectly in six studies[2,7,10,12,14,15]. Feedback, defined as awareness of discrepancy between one's performance and one's standards (Kluger & DiNisi, 1996), has been proposed as an essential ingredient of coaching (Kilburg, 2001; Joo, 2005; McDowall & Millward, 2010; Bozer & Jones, 2018). As noted above, Gregory et al. (2011) propose that the negative feedback control loop is a primary motivational mechanism used in EC. Self-generated feedback appears to enhance motivation (Bandura & Cervone, 1983; Gist, 1987), while feedback from others is more complex i.e., negative feedback can result in a loss of motivation and negatively adjusted goals

(Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). Careful handling of feedback, especially when negative, is suggested as a core contribution by the coach towards building coachee motivation (Gregory et al., 2011).

Goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 2013) proposes two main factors as influencing the goals people set: the perceived importance of the goal and the person's sense of self-efficacy. Grant (2012) suggests that coaching helps people align their lower order goals with their higher order goals. Thus, work-related goals (lower order) gain in value through becoming associated with life values. Self-efficacy is a central construct within social cognitive theory and is a psychological resource which shapes people's motivation to act and protects in case of setback (Bandura, 2001). Improved self-efficacy as an enduring outcome of coaching is identified inductively by the researcher in two of the included studies[6,13], is objectively measured in one[5] and can be inferred in four others [10,12,14,16]. This finding is in line with previous research, for example Baron & Morin (2010) and Moen & Federici (2012). Bozer & Jones' (2018) systematic review concluded that self-efficacy is a "key psychological variable" in understanding how coaching works (Bozer & Jones, 2018: 348).

Situating the constructs

The two constructs, 'leader identity formation' and 'psychological resourcing' can be seen as reflecting a tension at the core of executive coaching, embracing positive psychology (Seligman, 2007) while echoing the therapeutic origins of coaching (Kilburg, 2004; Smither, 2011). Construing coaching as a psychological resourcing exercise is not novel (Seligman, 2007; Grant, 2017b). However, the evidence that EC can be a locus of lasting resolution of identity issues may be significant for the field of management development, with the data suggesting that at least some identity issues really were 'resolved' (i.e. stayed resolved) in the EC process.

2.7 Knowledge gaps

Table 2.5 summarises the main specific knowledge gaps which emerged from the SR together with appropriate research strategies, building on the work of Athanasopoulou and Dopson (2018). These empirical knowledge gaps co-exist with an absence of theory on executive coaching (Theeboom, Van Vianen & Beersma, 2017).

Table 2.5: Overview of specific knowledge gaps

N°	Knowledge gap	Key references	Suggested research approaches		
			Designs	**Data collection**	**Analysis**
1	Which behavioural outcomes reported at the end of coaching last and for how long?	MacKie, 2014	Longitudinal, cross-sectional, retrospective	"Self" and "other" reports, e.g. multi-source feedback	Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods
2	Is executive coaching associated with long-term changes in psychological variables, including use of meta-cognition?	Grant, 2003; Ladegård, 2011	Experimental, longitudinal, cross-sectional	Psychometric measures	Quantitative
			Retrospective, case-studies	Coachee reports	Qualitative
3	Do important long-term effects emerge only after the intervention?	Spence et al., 2019	Longitudinal and retrospective Case-studies	Coachee and "other" reports	Qualitative
4	What are the long-term effects of executive coaching on managers' well-being?	Grant et al., 2009	Experimental	Organisational metrics, e.g. illness absences, surveys	Quantitative
			Longitudinal and retrospective Case-studies	Coachee and "other" reports	Qualitative
5	How do women and men experience professional identity development within executive coaching?	DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Lord et al., 2016;	Retrospective, cross-sectional Case-studies	Coachee reports	Qualitative and mixed
6	Are there differences in long-term outcomes of executive coaching by gender and other demographics?	Bonneywell, 2017	Longitudinal, cross-sectional Case-studies	Coachee reports, "other" reports, organisational metrics	Quantitative and mixed methods
7	Interactions between factors affecting long-term outcomes e.g. personality traits, sex, post-coaching experiences, organisational context.	Ladegård, 2011	Experimental with follow-up measures over time	Psychometric measures, coachee reports	Quantitative

2.8 Conclusions and implications for the empirical research

The studies included in the SR (1) offered some evidence of enduring cognitive, behavioural and affective changes in managers associated with executive coaching and (2) associated two processes within the intervention with achievement of these outcomes: 'leader identity formation' and 'psychological resourcing'. Overall, the existing literature does not offer sufficiently robust data either to demonstrate convincingly that the positive short-term effects of EC on managers are sustained over time or to explicate the processes involved in achieving enduring effects. The empirical research described in chapters 4 and 5 aimed to contribute new knowledge in relation to specific gaps 1 to 4 identified in table 2.5 and to offer theoretical insights into processes by which EC creates its perceived effects. Chapter three presents and explains the design used for this research.

Chapter 3 Methodology and methods

3.1 Research paradigm

The empirical research was situated within a post-positivist paradigm. The research paradigm should reflect the researcher's beliefs as well as the nature of the investigation (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Evans, 2013; Rieger, 2019). I believe that neither positivism nor interpretivism can adequately explain the phenomenon of executive coaching, which is a human and social endeavour, not predictable but demonstrating some regularity.

3.1.1 Assumptions

Creswell, Hanson, Clark Plano and Morales (2007) hold that researchers undertaking qualitative inquiry should make their assumptions explicit in relation to five aspects of the research: ontology, epistemology, axiology, rhetorics and methodology. It is the coherence of these assumptions that constitutes the research paradigm.

3.1.1.1 Ontology

I do not subscribe to the view that there are as many realities as there are people. In organisational contexts there is great systematic regularity evident at the empirical level (Lee, Mitchell, & Sablynski, 1999). I recognise that there is not just one reality of EC, but neither is there a need to embrace a different reality for every instance of EC. I believe, therefore, that themes reside in data, not merely in researchers' heads, but that the researcher has to invest intensely in avoiding subjectivity in order to find them (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

3.1.1.2 Epistemology

While reality is objective, I recognise that our knowledge of it is culturally, historically and socially situated (Collier, 1994). Knowledge of social phenomena is achieved by articulating insights from multiple, diverse standpoints but the knowledge gained will always remain to some extent context-dependent. Over time and drawing from multiple investigations by different investigators, the disparate insights, each tainted by subjectivity, can eventually converge to produce useful explanations of the observed phenomena (Miles & Huberman, 2002).

3.1.1.3 Axiology

Qualitative research is inherently subjective because the researcher is the instrument of analysis (Starks & Brown Trinidad, 2007). My chosen methodology has an objectivist longing but I recognise that the work is inevitably value-laden. I am assuming that I was able to be a faithful witness to the rich accounts entrusted to me (Starks & Brown Trinidad, 2007) and that I could recognise and bracket

out enough potentially biasing elements to achieve credible findings. These include personal values which could have influenced the conduct of this research, among which the following are salient:

- I see the study participants as playing heroic roles, often insufficiently recognised, in pursuit of worthy goals (peace, environmental protection, social improvement);
- After decades spent in the field of management development I am sceptical about 'new solutions' for the 'problems' of managers, including EC;
- I am instinctively on the side of individuals against power structures; I see managers first and foremost as individuals, even when they are exercising organisational power;
- I am in awe of the power of organisations to do good in the world as well as to be self-serving;
- I believe that organisations can be loci of human fulfilment but that they can also be destructive of the well-being of their own staff and managers, even when led by well-intentioned people.

Throughout the research process I have noted my own reflexive interpretations in memos as I became aware of them. The risk of unconscious bias nevertheless remains.

3.1.1.4 Rhetorics

The thesis is written in the third person with the exception of the present chapter where the first person is used consciously to remind the reader that, despite the work's objectivist aspirations, there is an individual, human researcher active in the analytic process (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Where descriptions of the same analytic processes recur, principally in chapters four and five, for example, I have not repeated the same references in the interest of readability. In general I have taken a parsimonious approach to referencing, preferring to cite only centrally relevant works, knowing that others can be followed up from the cited texts. I have occasionally chosen to employ evocative language when more neutral, 'scientific' alternatives were available. I name an important factor *executive suffering* in place of *executive distress*, for example, reflecting a wish to respect emotions as described by participants and to recall that the 'data' are about people, not inanimate objects (Hatch, 2002).

3.1.1.5 Methodology

The study employs a qualitative design based on classical or 'Straussian' grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The aim is to propose theoretical insights into an important phenomenon, executive coaching, which is currently lacking in explanatory theory. The pre-requisites for appropriate use of GT methods are present: the phenomenon of interest is a human process (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Strauss & Corbin, 1998); practice and research are hindered by the lack of guiding theory (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018); with its rich contextual factors, EC has too many

variables for quantitative investigation to explain the phenomenon (Yin, 1981). Research, therefore, has to go into the field to discover what is really happening (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

3.2 Study design

The study design is exploratory using grounded theory (GT) methods to analyse qualitative data.

3.2.1 Grounded theory

Qualitative methods are especially suited to *how* and *why* questions concerning organisational phenomena, particularly the study of human processes in organisations, where the context is important (Gray, Stensaker, & Jansen, 2012). A marked weakness in coaching research to-date is the absence of context (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018). GT was developed specifically to extract explanatory theory for social processes studied in their ecological context (Creswell et al., 2007). It is especially suited to studying human behaviour in organisations and to research on leadership (Starks & Brown-Trinidad; Kempster & Parry, 2011). GT is implicitly longitudinal and produces a richer understanding of change over time than static investigations, such as cross-sections (Hunt & Ropo, 1995; Parry, 1998). The social processes studied in GT can be multivariate, integrating interactions between variables from psychology (e.g. self-efficacy, motivation), anthropology (corporate culture), organisation theory (business engineering, information technology) and can exploit implicit theories held by participants (Parry, 1998).

GT is not a unitary method but its variants all have the same goal, namely to arrive at a theory to explain observed phenomena that is plausible and useful (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Even if all GT has roots in symbolic interactionism (Clarke, 2021; Corbin & Strauss, 2008), different epistemological assumptions have resulted in GT approaches which are either objectivist-positivist or constructivist in orientation (Charmaz, 2008; Creswell et al., 2007; Ralph, Birks & Chapman, 2015). In both paradigms the researcher interacts with and stays close to the participants in the interest of gathering quality data and then interacts reflexively with the data to interpret them scientifically. In the constructivist paradigm, however, researchers are assumed to be part of what they see, unable to stand apart. In the objectivist variant the researcher aims to stand apart, while recognising that this is not possible in an absolute way. The present research is more objectivist than constructivist, more Strauss than Charmaz. This stance rests on the assumption that there is sufficient similarity across organisational and management life to discover an explanatory theory and to identify variables, i.e. to go beyond mere understanding of processes situated in time, place and social context (Evans, 2013).

3.2.2 Ensuring trustworthiness

The challenge was to conduct the research in valid, reliable and objective manner despite the presence of the researcher in the process. To mitigate the risks, an established method, GT, was chosen and

adhered to in so far as feasible and a variety of experiences was gathered to enhance external validity of the findings. Participants' words and theorising were preferred to researcher's interpretations (Parry, 1998; Shenton, 2004). Reflexivity is the key to confirmability or objectivity (Miles & Huberman, 2002), and I noted my assumptions and prejudices as I became aware of them throughout the process. Memos were also used to note aspects of the study which could affect transferability of findings (Shenton, 2004). A sample of these memos is included in appendix 1.

3.3 Organisational context of the research

3.3.1 Organisational structure and culture

The participants were recruited from six transnational organisations with their headquarters in Belgium which share features such as rules for financial and HR management and but are legally separate entities. They vary in size from 600 to 32 000 employees. All operate in the sector of public service and trans-national governance. In structure the organisations correspond principally to Mintzberg's (1993) 'machine bureaucracy', where tasks and roles are highly formalised, including some middle manager roles. The organisations recruit primarily graduates who work in expert roles (principally legal, economic and scientific) for 10 to 15 years before being appointed to their first management role. Many experts choose not to follow a management career path and develop their careers as specialists in their professional areas, working as legal, economic or scientific advisors. In terms of structural evolution, the organisations formally consolidated machine bureaucracy structures and associated practices in the period 2000 to 2010.

3.3.2 EC in the management development systems of participants' organisations

In all organisations sampled, extensive in-house development programmes are in place to prepare candidates for their first management roles and to accompany them throughout their management careers. The offer includes classroom training, mentoring, peer group learning, team and individual coaching. Only classroom training has a mandatory character. Executive coaching, usually called 'coaching for managers' is optional but recommended as part of the manager's development. The timing is decided by the coachee, in consultation with the HR department. The coachee's line manager usually plays no role in the decision to undertake coaching. He/she may be solicited by the coach for advice on the coachee's developmental needs in the course of the coaching or at the outset, with the agreement of the coachee. Appendix 2 has further information on management development approaches and systems in these organisations.

3.3.3 Coaching content and approaches in participants' organisations

Coaching in participant organisations is provided either by external or in-house coaches, in both cases qualified and certified to the standards the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC), the

International Coaching Federation (ICF) or equivalent. External coaches are selected by a central HR development service and contracted to work for the organisations for a five-year period at a fixed hourly remuneration rate. Most managers choose an external coach. All coaches have regular supervision with an accredited coach supervisor and undertake a minimum of four days continuous professional development per annum. Coaching is described in the organisational material promoting EC, reproduced in appendix 2, as addressing both organisational and personal goals. Coaching goals specific to management are mentioned in the promotional material, including using strengths in a more focused way, managing workload, leading teams for well-being as well as performance, personal fulfilment, managing challenges and change, improving communication and relationships at work as well as developing management capacity overall. The organisations do not specify or endorse particular coaching approaches. Perusal of coach profiles indicates that the main psychological approaches underpinning coaching, such as cognitive-behavioural, psychodynamic and Gestalt (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2015), are represented in the overall coaching offer. Given the strict cadre of confidentiality, information on approaches used in specific coaching assignments is not available. There are common techniques which underpin all interventions and a coach is likely to draw on different approaches in the course of any single coaching assignment (Kilburg, 2000; Passmore et al., 2013) and even psychologist and non-psychologist coaches seem to use similar techniques and behaviours in practice (Joo, 2005; Passmore et al., 2013).

3.4 The researcher

The researcher worked for 30 years (1990-2020) in one of the organisations from which the participants were drawn, six of these years as a policy-adviser and programme manager and 24 years in HR development, the last 17 of which were primarily devoted to manager development. The researcher has advised potential managers on learning, career and organisational development (OD). This work involved identifying learning needs, designing learning and change interventions and contracting coaches and consultant to work with the managers. The researcher is not a coach and came to the present investigation with more curiosity than prejudice, having seen failures of EC as well as spectacular successes.

3.5 Sampling

The sampling was purposive in order to have participants who were ‘fit for purpose’ (Carmichael & Cunningham, 2017). The aim was to identify people with rich, relevant information who were willing and able to contribute meaningfully to the research aims and objectives (Boddy, 2016).

3.5.1 Sampling strategy

Drawing upon existing relationships, the sampling strategy targeted individuals with a rich lived experience of developing as managers. An exhaustive list of 59 potential participants from middle and

senior manager roles was drawn up based on long-standing relationships with the researcher. People were invited to participate using an invitation message which screened participants against the following essential criteria:

- minimum five years' management experience, AND
- known personally to the researcher through work contacts, AND
- a programme of executive coaching completed two or more years in the past.

The invitation is reproduced in appendix 3 and the accompanying participant information sheet in appendix 4. The research interest in EC was camouflaged in order to explore EC and its context without bias. Merely knowing that the salient concern was EC could lead participants to skew its place in their overall developmental narratives. A cover story was used to create psychological separation between the method and the phenomenon under study in order to mitigate effects such as priming and social desirability (Podsakoff, MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 2012). The cover story implied that the research was on participants' overall development as managers. The recruitment invitations were issued in four waves in the period August to October 2019. Interviewing began with the first acceptances and each invitation wave sought to correct gender balance and to add diversity of experience in terms of age, management level and accounts of EC, a form of theoretical sampling concurrent with data gathering (Saldaña, 2013). Ultimately the entire pool of potential participants was contacted. Twelve individuals did not meet the requirement of having undertaken a one-to-one coaching programme or their EC had finished less than two years previously. Six invitees were unable to be interviewed in the required timeframe, citing work pressure or absence. One invitee did not respond.

3.5.2 Sample size

Sampling continued until all eligible participants were included, n = 40. In GT, as in qualitative research generally, the quality of the data is more important than their quantity (Charmaz, 2008, 2014; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Strauss and Corbin (1998) advise that a minimum of ten interviews are needed for grounded theory to emerge. Starks and Brown-Trinidad (2007) note that, typically, a GT study will have from 10 to 60 participants. In a review of guidelines for sample size in seven GT studies, Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) found a range from six to 35 participants. The present study aimed to build an overall sample with sufficient diversity for theoretical insights to be credible, with sex and years of management experience the main diversity criteria. Given the organisational setting a rich mix of nationalities was in any event guaranteed.

3.6 Data collection process

3.6.1 Interviews

Interviews were conducted from August to November 2019. Each participant was interviewed once. The first substantive phase of each interview was a chronological account by participants of their development as managers. Key dates were noted along a timeline drawn on a sheet of A4 paper. This rough drawing was used for the second substantive phase, as participants were invited to go back over occasions in their career when they learned most about management and to describe the context, what happened and the consequences. The question guide was adjusted after five interviews to adjust the wording of some questions in the interest of clarity. The final version of the guide is attached as appendix 5. An illustrative worked transcript is included as appendix 6; some details have been changed and some information removed in order to protect the identity of the participant. All but two of the interviews took place in participants' individual offices, with researcher and participant seated at an angle of 45 degrees to each other, with visual attention of both moving regularly to the timeline to note significant learning moments.

As interviewing progressed, the different experiences of EC reported by participants constituted a new and important diversity criterion. Three different EC experiences were identified concurrently with interviewing. These theoretical samples were consolidated as part of the analysis and confirmed through member-checking:

A. Participants describing effects of EC enduring to the present day (n = 18),
B. Participants describing effects EC in the short-term only (n = 10), and
C. Participants reporting that their EC had no effect, even in the short-term (n = 12).

When the pool of potential participants was exhausted the overall sample contained almost equal numbers of women (n=21) and men (n=19), 15 nationalities and management experience ranging from 5 to 25 years. Participants were not asked to confirm their sex; these data are based on researcher perception.

3.6.2 Written exchanges with participants

Each participant was thanked in an individual message in the days following the interview. A 'member check' (Shenton 2004) was conducted as part of the analysis in order to exclude any misinterpretation of each participant's stance on the core question of persistence of any effects from EC. A second member checking message / informant feedback was sent to all participants as the analysis neared completion. The main motivation was courtesy in response to requests from individual participants for information on progress with the study. This message described the emerging construct of 'executive suffering' and the roles it might play in explaining EC outcomes. This communication generated 18

responses from participants. Comments received in the context of these exercises were added to the data and included in the analysis. The member-check messages are reproduced in appendix 7.

3.6.3 Ethical considerations relative to participants

Risks were identified in advance and ethical clearance obtained, reference FHMREC18087, included in appendix 8. Data collection followed the plan, with one exception: when noting ages at the end of interviews it emerged that five participants were under the age of 50, which I erroneously entered as the minimum age in the ethics request. Age was not an essential criterion and data from these under-fifty participants were included in the analysis. Steps were built into the study design to mitigate any risks of psychological distress to participants. The sample included only managers who, to my knowledge, were 'doing well' in their management roles, this to avoid occasioning distress to any participant. This choice constitutes a limitation on the range of experiences sampled, discussed in chapter six.

The interview was framed in positive terms, 'how I became the manager I am today'. Probing or exploiting any difficulties mentioned by participants was not part of the design. In the event there were no distressful moments in the interviews. One participant talked about burnout in a previous management job, which I had not known about. Time was spent at the end of the interview talking around some of the issues in order to create a respectful exit and not leave participants feeling abandoned (Hatch, 2002). The purposive sampling criteria used mean that I have a personal as well as a professional connection to participants, in some cases spanning decades. I was aware throughout the process of the privilege of being given access by participants to personal information and reflections. I recognise that my ethical duty to them goes beyond mere confidentiality, as they invested not only time in the study, many also joined in its purpose and asked to be informed of progress. This has been done within two member checking exercises, honouring that participants are part of the process and the product (Hatch, 2002). They will receive the executive summary and an invitation to discuss the findings at an appropriate time.

3.7 Data

The data comprise 22 hours of recorded interviews, transcribed, and written responses from 27 participants in the context of member checking; the mean interview length was 33 ±15 minutes.

3.8 Analysis

3.8.1 Foci of analysis

Two sets of analyses were conducted. Both derived from the research question: *How do managers describe the place of executive coaching within the context of their overall development as managers?*

Analysis of the place of EC within participant accounts of their development as managers

The first analysis used data from all participants and culminated in a processual model of major management development experiences which situates EC in a macro-developmental context. This emergent model is called the *Suffering-alleviation-learning* (SAL) *model of major management development*. This analysis is described in chapter 4.

Analysis of distinct EC experiences

The second analysis used theoretical samples which were constructed concurrently with data collection. The samples were based on participants' distinct experiences of EC having (a) long-term effects, (b) short-term only effects or (c) no effects. These three experiences were analysed to describe the outcomes and identify the processes operating in each case. The product of this analysis is a model to account for the reported differences, called the *Variable EC Outcomes Model* (VECOM).

3.8.2 GT phases

GT analysis requires at least two phases of qualitative coding to generate the concepts from which theory can be woven (Charmaz & Henwood, 2017). The essence of the process is moving to ever higher abstraction while remaining faithful to the data, a journey that should be re-traceable (Carmichael & Cunningham, 2017; Saldaña, 2013). There were four rounds of GT analysis; each followed the same sequence based on the precepts of 'Straussian' GT (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Rieger, 2019). I was wary of personal interpretation and strove to stay close to surface meanings of participants' words and to integrate participants' own theories when available (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Each analysis involved open coding, axial coding and theoretical integration. Many alternative terms are available for the same or similar GT phases. The terms I use are defined and delineated intrinsically from each other in this section, without recourse to a wider terminological discussion on GT phases.

Open coding

The anonymised transcript data were broken down in three open coding steps (Saldaña, 2013):

- in vivo coding line-by-line, or almost line-by-line,
- translating the in vivo codes to conceptual codes, where possible using gerunds to capture the action, and
- identifying conceptual categories based on properties of the conceptual codes.

The analysis of each transcript started on paper. The transcripts were printed on to the left half of A3 size pages, with columns to the right of the text, labelled 'conceptual codes' and 'memos'. The in vivo segments were marked directly in the transcripts using a highlight pen. This had the advantage of keeping the context accessible throughout the open coding work. Gerunds were used to capture the action in the in vivo segments, for example 'recruiting staff' or 'planning changes', or emotions

(Saldaña, 2013). The working of in vivo codes into conceptual categories was done first in a Word document, noting decisions, doubts and self-reflexive thoughts as the categories emerged in a process of constant comparison (Davoudi, Dehghan Nayeri, Raiesifar, Poortaghi & Ahmadian, 2017). When available in the data, participant understandings, theories and words were used in naming and describing categories. When consolidated, the categories were entered into an Excel table, with a definition of each. For each analysis, examples are used to illustrate the emergence of conceptual categories through constant comparison.

Axial coding

The fractured data were recombined by making connections between categories. A conditional relationship guide was constructed using the Excel file of conceptual categories, with an elaboration of each category in terms of contextual conditions and boundaries using *when*, *where* and *why* questions and consequences (Scott & Howell, 2008). This work involved multiple iterations with many tentative schemas tested and abandoned.

Theoretical integration

This phase involved exploring the relationships between the core category and all categories. The product of this phase for each analysis was a description of human processes at work in the data. These process descriptions seek to integrate the contextual factors with causes, conditions and emotions into theoretical propositions to explain human actions (Saldaña, 2013; Scott & Howell, 2008). An overview of the conditional relationship guides is provided in the text with further information in the appendices.

There are no agreed rules for the transition points between different phases of coding (Flick, 2002). Table 3.1 is a schematic representation of the steps followed for each analysis in the present investigation. The schematic does not represent the recursive dynamics in the process, as new insights in one step occasioned a return to earlier steps, to clarify, to redefine or to change.

Table 3.1: Schematic representation of the steps followed for each analysis

Step number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Actions	In vivo coding of transcripts and exchanges	Conceptual coding	Generation of categories	Identification of central category	Relating of all categories to the central category	Mapping of social processes identified in the data	Theoretical propositions and assertions
GT terms	Open coding				Axial coding		Theoretical integration

3.9 Summary and transition to chapters 4 and 5

Chapter 3 has described the scientific basis of the research. The next two chapters describe the four analyses applied to the data. This work involved examining the phenomenon of EC from macro and micro perspectives. The macro level analysis framed EC as a unitary phenomenon and generated theoretical insights, grounded in the data, on EC as factor *within participants' overall development* as managers; this work is presented in chapter four. The micro level analysis sought to elucidate processes operating *within the EC intervention* to produce the different reported outcomes. This work is presented in chapter five.

Chapter 4 Analysis of the place of EC in participant accounts of their development as managers

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the application of GT methods to generate theoretical insights into the place of executive coaching (EC) in participants' accounts of their development as managers. The analysis followed the seven steps set forth in chapter 3: in vivo coding, conceptual coding, generation of categories, identification of a central category, relating of all categories to the central category, mapping of processes identified in the data and theoretical propositions. The result is a process model, grounded in the data and integrating EC alongside all other developmental factors described by participants as formative of them as managers.

4.1.1 Characteristics of the sample

The salient characteristics of the sample are presented in table 4.1. Two of the 40 participants were at Director General (CEO) level, each responsible for departments of over 1000 staff; five participants were Directors, each responsible for 100-250 staff; 33 were middle managers (Unit Heads), responsible for the work of 15 to 55 people. The sample comprised 15 nationalities. English is a native language of six of the 40 participants. In the overall sample, 50 of the 57 interventions were delivered by external coaches. Data on sex of participants are based on researcher perception.

Table 4.1: Salient characteristics of the sample

Age (years)	52.5 (41.0-61.0)
Sex (perceived by researcher)	22 F; 18 M
Years in management	15.0 (5.0-25.0)
Years since first EC	8.2 (2.0-15.0)

4.1.2 Data collection

The data were collected in individual interviews and from participant responses to written member checks. All data were collected in English, which is a second or third language for most participants (n=34). Using the interview question guide (appendix 5), each interview first constructed a timeline for the participant's development as a manager. In a second phase within the interview the timeline was used to probe important management learning moments along the way. Participants were asked to tell what happened at each juncture mentioned, what was the learning and if any of that learning had a lasting effect. In drawing the timeline n=17 participants spontaneously mentioned EC as a learning moment. The specific questions on EC came only after the timeline had been constructed and most

other learning addressed. The final phase of the interviews invited information on any aspects of management development which had been missed in the conversation up to that point. Participants overall responded warmly to the invitation to tell their stories and readily added their personal interpretations of important developmental moments. The interview data were supplemented in n=27 cases by further comments offered by participants in response to member checking.

4.2 Analysis

The analytic steps are presented in considerable detail, supported by illustrative examples in the text and appendices to make the process transparent.

4.2.1 Open coding

Open coding followed the steps for breaking down the data described in chapter 3, moving from in vivo codes through conceptual codes to conceptual categories (Saldaña, 2013). In vivo coding was chosen as a first step in order to capture participants' own words (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Participants' precise words have particular value when they contain interpretations of events or reveal how they themselves understand the resolution of their problems (Lal, Suto & Ungar, 2012; Saldaña, 2013). Where meaningful, in vivo codes were drawn upon in naming conceptual categories, sub-processes and emergent theoretical constructs. In vivo coding involved marking text fragments in paper versions of transcripts using a highlight pen. The result was almost line-by-line coding (Saldaña, 2013). The average number of in vivo codes per interview transcript was 107 (± 40). Table 4.2 presents illustrative examples using one in vivo code from each of the first five transcripts.

Table 4.2: Examples of in vivo codes for management development

"My first management job was … my very worst professional experience in terms of management. I f***ed up a lot." (P1)
"In particular as a female manager … it was very good to have a coach at that moment." (P2)
[The management training course] "was very detached from the reality, it was about the ideal manager in an ideal world but it didn't give me any tools that I could use to apply in real life." (P3)
"The fact that I was changing [management jobs] meant that I could start anew with another step. I didn't have to suddenly walk in one morning and say 'Now I'm going to be different' with, about the same people, that's not very credible … this ladder was very good for me in in improving constantly." (P4)
"This second coaching was in response to the stress, the difficulties. The idea was to discuss with the coach what it was that makes me stressed, it was to work on the dissonance. I mentioned that my superiors told me I was doing a good job, but I was still stressed. Then I could work on that with the coach, an external person, to find out where does this come from." (P5)

Translation of in vivo codes into conceptual codes

The in vivo codes were translated into conceptual codes based on similarity. Participant verbalisations were used where feasible in naming the conceptual codes in order to stay close to the surface meaning

of the data and avoid interpretation at this early stage (Lal et al., 2012). Gerunds were used to focus attention on any dynamics as perceived by participants and embedded in the data (Charmaz & Keller, 2016; Saldaña, 2013). Table 4.3 presents illustrative examples of the translation of seven in vivo codes into two conceptual codes. There were on average 40 conceptual codes per transcript.

Table 4.3: Examples of the translation of in vivo codes into conceptual codes for management development

In vivo codes	Conceptual codes
"Saving my subordinates and pleasing my bosses, I think are the two things that could wear me out." (P4) "You've got to try and trade and develop goodwill really to get the results on time." (P14) "The most difficult points are the ones where I get in trouble with somebody of the team." (P12)	People are hard work
"Everything you do is analysed inside-out". (P3) "Not just because I felt alone but I was attacked…. and I was attacked by the trade unions and it was a hard time, I was horrified and I did wonder whether I should quit or not." (P35) "That continuous tension between having, you know, to deliver the work and a suboptimal human resource system." (P14) "You have the impression that the people on who you rely are not giving you what you want and what you need, disappoint you and they're not being fair." (P9)	Feeling challenged, burdened

Generation of categories

Conceptual codes were grouped based on conceptual similarity and merged into conceptual categories. This step involved moving to a higher level of abstraction, going beyond participants' words and descriptors (Carmichael & Cunningham, 2017). The order of processing transcripts was random and coded transcripts were constantly revisited in the light of emergent categories, a process of constant comparison (Davoudi et al., 2017; Shepherd & Suddaby, 2017). The emergence of two conceptual categories is described in some detail to illustrate this phase of the analysis.

The category *Seeing people as problems* builds principally on four conceptual codes *People are hard work, Fearing conflict, Difficult to give negative feedback* and *Feeling people's fragility.* The emergent category is delineated from three other categories conceptually adjacent: *Feeling powerless*, *Worrying about challenges* and *Suffering from over-caring*. At the core of the category *Seeing people as problems* is the notion of the relative difficulty participants expressed in integrating the human side of management. According to participants, task management came 'naturally', while people management had to be learned; "I learned to deliver results before I discovered how important people

are" (P24); "I was only into the substance" (P8), describing his attention to the work content while neglecting or ignoring people management; "I saw people as problems more than resources" (P11). "My big learning was on the people side" (P2), describing her overall development as a manager. People management challenges persist nevertheless: "I still have a problem with giving negative feedback" (P4); "I hate it [confronting underperformance] to this day" (P1).

The conceptual category *Feeling work environment unfair, unhelpful, uncaring* builds on participant data which were coded as *Feeling challenged, burdened, Boss not caring, Mismatch between expectations and resources* and *Seeing the injustice of the reward system.* The category is delineated from categories that are conceptually adjacent: *Feeling alone, Feeling powerless* and *Being exhausted and stressed.* The core concept in the *Feeling work environment unfair, unhelpful, uncaring* category is the perceived inherent unfairness of a (human) manager's dependence on a system which is not human, a "machine" (P14; P40). Images of mechanical violence recur in the data: the manager can be "caught" (P20) between the pressure of organisational goals and concern for staff welfare; "squeezed" (P29) between angry staff and pressure from higher management to deliver results, "crushed" (P21) while trying to meet expectations with limited resources. Participants longed for a more humane senior management to transform the environment: "I was lucky" (P22; P39), each referring line managers who protected and nurtured them, which they attribute to good fortune; "most senior managers just don't care" (P11); "nobody is interested in how you are doing" (P20); "there is no recognition for your efforts" (P32).

Saturation in identifying conceptual categories

Merging conceptual codes led to an initial set of 44 conceptual categories. This work was done transcript by transcript, with constant comparison and revision. The assignment of different participants' experiences to the same category was a fraught process. In typing, successive changes in category definitions used different colours in order to retain traces of the emergence of each category. Memos were used to record doubts in relation to each decision taken. The first transcript generated 23 of the 44 initial categories. All of the 44 initial categories were present in the first twelve transcripts processed, suggesting that inductive thematic saturation was achieved at this stage (Saunders et al., 2018). Table 4.4 presents an overview of the processing of these transcripts.

Table 4.4: Saturation in identifying initial conceptual categories for management development

Transcript coding sequence		**N° of in vivo codes marked**	**N° of conceptual codes identified**	**N° of initial conceptual categories added**	**Cumulative n° of initial conceptual categories**
1st	4	112	52	23	23
2nd	14	112	37	7	30
3rd	39	122	48	3	33

4th	9	98	37	3	36
5th	16	130	44	1	37
6th	38	95	31	0	37
7th	33	91	34	1	38
8th	40	126	46	2	40
9th	1	67	30	1	41
10th	12	134	48	1	43
11th	2	96	42	0	43
12th	34	97	33	1	44

Consolidation of conceptual categories

When all transcripts were processed, each category was compared to all others in terms of similarity, difference, definition and assumptions in order to merge similar categories and sharpen definitions, a process of constant comparison (Davoudi et al., 2017). After several rounds of revision, the outcome was a consolidated list comprising 24 conceptual categories. The objective was to do justice to all of the data in a limited number of coherent categories which, although abstract, involved minimal interpretation by the researcher. The titles given to categories and their definitions foreground the movement and emotions embedded in participants' accounts (Charmaz, 2008; Saldaña, 2013). The set of 24 consolidated conceptual categories is presented in table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Consolidated set of 24 conceptual categories for management development

N°	**Conceptual categories**	**Definitions ("emic")**
1	Feeling alone	Lonely at the top, nobody cares for you with pressure 24/7; nobody called or came to talk; people left me; I felt excluded; the shock of being alone; nobody interested in me.
2	Feeling uninspired / disappointed by own bosses	Not impressed by senior managers' actions or values; not wanting to be like them.
3	Feeling work environment unfair, unhelpful, uncaring	Feeling pushed about by external forces; the organisation is a machine; there are people with more power than you; the system doesn't help the manager; the manager must realise this; the organisation can be hostile, toxic; some environments are bad, some good; you have to avoid or leave bad ones; people around you can encourage you; the environment shapes the manager you are; I arrived in the wrong place.
4	Feeling powerless	Feeling the responsibility without the power; caught between pressure from above and the people below you; you need skills of persuasion as you don't have enough power to get things done directly.

5	Worrying about challenges	Fearing to repeat mistakes, feeling challenged, burdened; anxious that expectations cannot be met.
6	Feeling different inside versus outside, person versus manager	Me-the-person versus me-the-manager; should be holistic; I should be allowed to be myself; I changed inside but I couldn't show it outside.
7	It is more difficult for a woman	I feel becoming a manager is more difficult for a woman; it is especially hard for a mother; female role models were very important to me; I needed to talk with other women managers; the team was all male and older than me.
8	Being exhausted and stressed	I was always exhausted; fearing for my health; I liked the management job but hated the toll it was taking; sleep problems, sleeping pills, medical bills; so exhausted that that that the rest of my life had very little quality.
9	Fearing damage to family life	Work-life balance impossible; sleep problems; work/home interface not good; coming home tired and troubled.
10	Blaming myself	Internal attribution of failures, not admitting or expressing own needs or limits; fear that I will mess up again; feeling inadequate; feeling stupid; an imposter, not fit for the manager job.
11	Suffering from over-caring	Caring, agonising, trying to please; caring for own people as an act of defiance of a bad system; feeling responsible for people's whole lives.
12	Seeing people as problems	I saw people as problems, I feared people's reactions; it's the people you have to manage that make management easy or difficult; with sufficient managerial power there is little problem; when I'm fed up, it is with them; task management is easier than people management; managing people is the part that brings most pain; it is hard to deal with people who do not want to work.
13	Learning every day	Learning was gradual; I was always growing; I was thinking about developing further; moving on to new beginnings and new opportunities; the passage of time helps reduce the suffering, time works wonders; I admitted errors and learned all the time; you have to be well in order to learn; I learned in every job; I learned every day.
14	Remembering I am a born leader	I was born a manager; I was a leader in school; I was brought up to be a leader, to take responsibility; I am naturally resilient; I know I can cope, get through, survive; I have natural talent to be a leader.
15	Accepting it cannot all be good	Discovering that I am not responsible for everyone's life and happiness; I'm more at ease now (after coaching and life experience) with not being able to manage people well; I learned it's not my fault, some things cannot be changed.
16	Learning to "act" / getting tips & tricks	I learned to "act"; "what will you do next time this happens?" the coach suggested readings; you learn to act but deep down the trait persists; how to deal with specific cases; I got tips and tricks from mentors, coaches, peers

		and team members; I observed others and copied behaviour.
17	Becoming the manager / person I wanted to be	I felt allowed to be myself, a kind of liberation from what I thought the job required; feeling able to bring more of myself to work.
18	Remembering I have a helpful environment	I was lucky, I had a great boss; the environment was very good for learning; there was someone close to whom I could turn; my staff helped me a lot; I left and went to a better place.
19	Discovering it's "not just me"	Finding out that others face the same difficulties and feel like me; such a surprise; reassuring; I wish I knew earlier.
20	Confirmation that I am OK	The feedback was confirmation of who I am; doubts were resolved; people tell me I'm a great boss, it's nice; restoring lost confidence; regaining confidence from identification with valued role-models; proud of my resilience; the coaching brought a kind of final confirmation that I am a good manager; the coaching helped me deal with harsh feedback; the external view and confidentiality were precious.
21	Discovering people	I learned that people are important and trustable; I had learned to deliver results before discovering the importance of people, this was not good; discovering the complexity of people as something positive; realising that people are different to me and do not know what is in my head.
22	Self-discovery	Looking inside, listening to myself, listening to my feelings, working on myself; I got to know a deeper me.
23	Reappraising problems	I learned not get rolled over by small things; time brought better perspective on problems; I learned to worry less; coaching gave me space to think and see priorities; coaching was a break in the constant pressure; it let me see my role.
24	Finding purpose, remembering the joy of being a manager	Purpose, making a difference; seeing what I / we have achieved; knowing why I put up with the suffering of being a manager; I learned in the training to find purpose; we are lucky here because our motivation can be idealistic.

4.2.2 Axial coding and identification of the central category

Axial coding involves putting the fragmented data back together meaningfully and is a further step towards abstraction. During this phase, relationships between categories are explored and a central category is identified (Saldaña, 2013). While these tasks are sometimes presented as separate, in practice they are often interwoven as categories continue to be refined and consolidated during this phase (Böhm, 2004). During this work, the categories were not fundamentally changed but definitions were sharpened. The 24 categories were entered in an Excel table and relationships were observed

and imagined between them, initially in an unstructured way. Criteria for identifying the central category include repeated occurrence of a specific category and relationships which conceptually link one category to all or many others (Carmichael & Cunningham, 2017; Glaser & Holton, 2007).

The first overview indicated two obvious groupings, 'problems' and 'progress', with problems as the background from which progress emerged. Categories 1 to 12 describe the problems in terms of negative emotions linked to exercise of the management role: "I felt alone" (P3; P26; P35; P39); "I was afraid" (P1); "I was getting sick" (P20); "I feared for my health" (P13); "it [first post as manager] was my worst professional experience" (P1). These emotions include dimensions which are private, mentioned to few people or to nobody. "Only the coach knew about this" (P40), "I couldn't talk even to my wife about this" (P5). One participant used the evocative expression "private suffering" (P5), leading to the naming of this sub-category initially as *suffering.* This construct was refined and its name later amended to become *executive suffering* to reflect its importance in *executive* coaching.

A conditional relationship guide was adapted from Scott & Howell (2008) to help identify relationships across categories and memos were written to explore possible links (Böhm, 2004; Carmichael & Cunningham, 2017). Possible central categories were evaluated and '*Gradual learning every day*, *major learning from suffering'* was chosen as the central category. All categories have conceptual links to this central concept, through adversity or learning or by linking adversity and learning, its essence captured by participant 40, "I learned most when I suffered most" (P40). The twelve categories (13 to 24 in table 4.6), involving aspects of learning evoked by participants, can be construed as sub-processes of management learning. Notions of emotion as well as temporality were thus present from the outset, grounded in participants' repeated description of progress from suffering to relief and even joy (Böhm, 2004; Saldaña, 2013).

4.2.3 Mapping the social processes and theoretical integration

The final challenges in using the GT approach are to identify the important social processes embedded in the data and to propose theory to explain them (Parry, 1998). The major risk at this stage is to jump to conclusions which are not grounded firmly in the data (Schatzman, 1991). For example, sequences in time can appear more related than they are in reality (Lal et al., 2012). To mitigate this risk, all sub-processes relating to management learning were contextualised using the conditional relationship guide. The objective was to capture the participants' perspective on how the actions occur and under which conditions (Ryan & Bernard, 2000; Scott & Howell, 2008). For each category the following fields were completed in an Excel table:

- *Context*, with subdivisions of time, locus and causation/attribution (*when, where, why*),
- *Actions* and *interactions* to elucidate process from the participants' perspective, and

- *Consequences* of actions and interactions as described by participants.

Table 4.6 presents the elaboration of the conditional relationship guide for the twelve categories cast as sub-processes of management learning. An overview of the conditional relationship guide integrating all categories is presented in appendix 9.

Table 4.6: Overview of the conditional relationship guide integrating sub-processes of management learning

Sub-processes	Contextual conditions			Actions & interactions	Consequences
	Time *(When?)*	**Locus** *(Where?)*	**Attribution** *(Why?)*	*How do participants describe the emergence of consequences?*	*From the perspective of participants*
Learning every day	Continuous, every moment is a learning opportunity	At the workplace, in courses, meetings; when good practice can be observed	Because I am like that, a constant learner; life and the organisation provide endless opportunities to learn from experience and observation	By being aware and open to learning; learning from good examples and bad	Acquisition of tips and tricks for every situation; getting better able to deal with problems all the time; valuing the beneficial effects of time
Remembering I am a born leader	In times of trouble	In my private reflections	Because of my DNA, my parents, my upbringing and personal values; my good fortune	By relying on own resilience; knowing that people will support me if needed, including mentors and coach; by recalling difficult episodes I have survived	Restoring self-confidence, belief in the future; feelings of power and independence
Accepting it cannot all be good	In times of trouble	I learned this in conversation with peers, mentors and in coaching; it grew over time	Life is like that; the organisation is like that; somethings cannot change	By experience and with time; by listening to others, wise people, mentors and thinking it through; insights, either	Finding internal calm; acceptance; becoming resigned to the way things are

				fast or slowly coming, with age	
Learning to "act" / getting tips & tricks	Every day; in times of challenge and necessity: routine meetings, tricky one-to-one discussions	In all work activities and areas (by observing), with mentors, in training and coaching; reading	Because there were new behaviours I needed to learn and wanted to learn; because I had to survive	By observing good models; by using mentors and buddies, coaches, by reading; by putting mantras on my desktop	Practical coping mechanisms, techniques for different situations; feeling of "acting"
Becoming the manager / person I wanted to be	When growing and changing in the job; moving to a new job; moments of insight	In coaching and personalised leadership training; in friend-mentor support moments; private reflection	Because I learned and changed; because the old way did not work anymore; because of the dissonance I felt inside	By self-reflection, applying learning successfully, finding my role; by feeling the holistic effects (including from coaching) at home and at work	Consonance; self-esteem; coaching confirmed me as a person as well as a manager
Remembering I have a helpful environment	Following a change of job or line manager; happy realisation in time of trouble	Within the management team (looking upwards); within my own team (looking downwards)	Because the individual people make a big difference; micro-climates matter	By taking action, moving; by being fortunate; by being open to help and inspiration by people around me; by being mindful of the help available	Joy, security, learning, belonging
Discovering it is "not just me"	When people speak honestly, tell about their feelings, especially peers and mentors, people in the same situation	In rare, authentic peer discussions, going for a drink together, coffee breaks in courses, coaching	Because I thought I was the only one with these problems and troubled feelings	By listening to what people say, by discovering I'm not alone; by telling my story	Relief

Confirmation that I am OK	When I'm down and something nice happens	In coaching, 360 exercises and other sources of positive feedback, including from clients and client organisations	Because I felt the need for feedback or for a morale boost; because I had doubts about myself, my ability; because of criticism or failure	By listening to what people say, by the coach's regard; by listening to friend-mentors; by daring to be myself	Relief; confidence to be myself; permission to "bring more of myself to the party"
Discovering people	Continuous, gradual; insight and breakthrough moments, including incidents and EC	In coaching, mentor advice	Because task management was much more important than people management in my life until then; my training had been as a specialist	Through seeing myself as others see me, engagement with people, guidance from colleagues, reading, coaching, self-awareness, important experiences; becoming able to see things from others' perspectives	Relief, belonging, sense of power in the collective; trusting people; realising that there are other ways of being; being able to be with people; enjoying being a manager
Self-discovery	In times of crisis, in developmental actions	In coaching an in personalised leadership training	Because of suffering, hitting a wall; being ready	Gaining new perspectives on myself and my emotions, new understandings; having a sounding board from outside (coaching); learning to be myself; the expert external view; coaching opened my eyes; self-reflection; the coach looked inside me	Confidence in who I am, relief, a kind of "distance" from suffering, separation of me from the problem; relaxing a bit; I learned to feel the influence I can have; I could bring more of myself to the party; I could be true to myself; acceptance of my way of managing; learning that I have more power than I thought

Reappraising problems	In times of crisis, in developmental actions	In coaching and in conversations with friend-mentors	Because of being overwhelmed and needing new approaches	By stepping back, taking psychological distance, seeing that it is not a disaster; recognising that there are different perspectives; I learned to stop and think; I learned to search for the solution within me; the coach encouraged me to be more open; coaching was eye-opening; seeing relative importance of things.	Relief, new insights, distance from the problems, not getting stressed so quickly; happier in the family; learning to deal with stress positively; staying alive; belief in the future; I learned to take myself out of the picture
Finding purpose, remembering the joy of being a manager	In times of achievement; when a major challenge or difficulty was overcome	In private reflection; coaching; personal leadership training	Personal satisfaction, alignment of work with personal values	By introspection and talking with others, including peers, team members and coaches	Purpose, self-esteem, confidence, consonance; feeling I make a difference

Based on Scott and Howell (2008)

Forming a theoretical model

Theoretical integration involves interpreting the relationships between the categories in terms of consequences and conditions and drawing on memos to write a storyline to tell the emergent theory (McCaslin & Scott, 2003; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). 'Theoretical integration' corresponds to 'selective coding' or 'theoretical sorting and integration' in some prescriptions (Charmaz & Henwood, 2017). Grounded theory is derived inductively from the data, through elaboration of relationships between categories in terms of time, space, cause-effect and human motivation (Böhm, 2004). The process requires creativity on the part of the researcher but the storyline has to be credible and its emergence transparent (Scott & Howell, 2008).

Emotions are important in understanding human action and the conditional relationship guide paid particular attention to emotions in participants' narratives (Böhm, 2004; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Saldaña, 2013). Only emotions declared by participants were included in the guide and these are captured almost exclusively using participants' own words. The data describe major management learning as a result of the alleviation of suffering through reflection and action. The learning is framed as a by-product of alleviation, which is construed as a crucible, with inputs and outputs visible but its internal workings not elucidated. The data reveal the resources deployed by participants in the alleviation process (inputs into the crucible) as well as the main areas of learning resulting from alleviation. The resources called upon include participants' own mental strengths and abilities as well as help from other people, including line managers, peers, friends, family members and executive coaches. The resultant learning involves the cognitive, behavioural and affective domains. Table 4.7 presents the proposed process elements.

Table 4.7: Process elements of major management learning revealed by the data

Main process element		Participant quotes
Description of executive suffering as antecedent to learning	The data describe feelings of fear for the managers' own health, their family situation, doubts about their suitability for the roles they are expected to perform, anger and frustration at the organisational systems and times of great loneliness.	"When I was appointed director here, I felt alone … nobody was coming to talk to me for whole days, nobody was phoning me." (P39) "I was in trouble, I had so much to do and had a very small team. I felt alone. I had to face a bad time." (P9) "The worst was … the toll it took in terms of energy and reducing my capacity to be a more active person outside of work." (P4) "I did ask myself the question 'is it all worth it?' The time, the energy, the stress, the private life." (P7) "I had a moment when I thought I wasn't fit for it." [the manager job] (P13) "I was crying in my office." (P29)
Causal attribution of executive suffering	Participants attribute their suffering to organisational dysfunctions (poor HR, allocation of resources), aspects of organisational and management culture (e.g. gender models), unrealistic performance expectations of senior management, troublesome individuals in their teams and throughout the organisation, ineffective or uncaring line managers.	"When they are over-demanding and don't understand the constraints staff are under it can be ... when you're in the buffer between additional workload for things that are not relevant and you're trying to protect your staff who you feel are ... they just can't take anymore." (P14) "He [line manager] was undermining me all the time. I was lucky I survived." (P34) "Doing things that were antipathetic, the opposite to how I felt we should be doing things, so your conscience is bothering you, you have a role to play in holding the team together and you are a firewall to protect your team from that situation, and you do violence to yourself, if you've been put in a very difficult situation by your boss." (P18) "I was the only one [woman], at the time. The manager image as somebody physically older, a man, and more senior, hampered me in this context." (P7)
Alleviation	The data suggest that alleviation involves reflection and action. Alleviation may come from reflection alone, e.g. mental reframing of a problem. Actions involved behavioural changes and, on occasion,	"I told myself, if it is going to continue like this I'm going to drop it." (P34) "With time and experience, the intensity of this dilemma decreases, but it's always latent and can re-emerge in a particularly difficult or high-pressure episode, or at the start of a new post when some of the feelings of disorientation and doubts about one's proper role come to the fore again." (P27) "The longer I'm a manager, I'm easier with not doing it well." (P16)

	leaving a distressing management situation.	“It wasn't so much that I didn't want to be a manager, but I didn’t want to be a manager in this place.” (P11) “I felt quite stupid, I said, well, if I don't move I will I will die here. The solution was to move away.” (P2) “I had to learn to say no.” (P31)
Resources used in alleviation	The data suggest that participants call upon a wide range of resources (assets) in alleviating ES. The following are mentioned: advice and support from family, colleagues, team members, friend-mentors and coaches; own efforts in the form of observation, (philosophical) reflection and reading; recall of positive past experiences, including learning in school and childhood; values acquired in the family of origin and over the life course; training.	“Proximity to someone you admire.” (P33) “I’m resilient, I was sent away to boarding school at the age of 9, I’m self-contained, I like my own company, I have a thick skin, I can cut myself off from the content of my work.” (P25) “I think the fact that when I came in the path to become a manager I had a very stable family situation with support to discuss to decide whether I would take a certain position or not, I knew I was supported.” (P24) “I look at the Directors, I observe what they use, how they use the strengths, each one of them.” (P7) “You take what you get, because you don't choose, you have to accept humanity.” (P19) “One of the things that I learned, and that was through coaching, was this, not to take full responsibility for all of the staff members' general life and happiness.” (P4) “I was lucky I survived … because I had a Director who supported and understood me very much.” (P34)
Major learning	The data describe important management learning as an outcome of alleviating ES. These are increased self-confidence, insights into self and others, ability to empathise with others, including team members, ability not to be overwhelmed by problems, sense of proportion, self-acceptance, sense of own potential and strengthened identification with the manager role.	“Hardship is the best learning; from the bad experiences you learn most.” (P3) “It was not a choice to become resilient, either I became resilient or I died.” (P35) “If you don't know yourself, as the manager you cannot be a role-model for the staff.” (P34) “It [EC] functioned as a strengthening of self-confidence.” (P32) “Informal learning by yourself is probably more important in getting the work-life balance right.” (P14) “[I learned] the importance of listening to myself to my own feelings.” (P2) “I also discovered, much later, that it's rewarding to be a manager; there are there are good moments when you, when people are leaving and they tell you that you've been a great boss.” (P39)

The proposed theoretical model involves a process driven by the motivation of the manager to alleviate executive suffering. Casting the elements in sequence results in a process model called the *Suffering-alleviation-learning* (SAL) model, which describe the stages of major management learning based on participant data. The stages are shown in figure 4.1. Executive suffering flows from aspects of the management role (box 1). The data are rich in description of how the manager's environment can feel hostile and the organisation dysfunctional. "I had so much to do and had a very small team. I felt alone. I had to face a bad time" (P9). "I felt alone … nobody was coming to talk to me for whole days" (P39). Holding responsibility for people can involve distress, notably in addressing underperformance, which can be especially difficult for new managers. Performance expectations from top management may not be aligned with resources, leaving the manager feeling trapped with unattainable goals and excessive workload. New managers especially may feel unsuited to the role, identifying with operational than management challenges and will seek to protect subordinate staff while not being themselves protected by higher management: [senior managers] "are over-demanding and don't understand the constraints staff are under" (P14); "he [line manager] was undermining me all the time" (P34). Suffering is described in terms of fear, loneliness, frustration, dissonance and doubt (box 2). "You do violence to yourself if you've been put in a very difficult situation by your boss" (P18).

Managers confront this suffering in a sub-process described as alleviation, represented figuratively as a crucible of intense reflection and action. The inputs into the alleviation crucible are resources. Box 4 lists all resources recalled by participants as having helped them deal with episodes of suffering contingent on their management roles: family support, support from peers and friend-mentors, previous lived experience, values taken from their family of origin, their nature ("DNA"), and the activities of reading, following personalised leadership training and conventional training, observing other managers, private reflection and executive coaching. The outputs of the alleviation process are construed as survival and major learning (box 5): "either I became resilient or I died" (P35); [I learned] "the importance of listening to myself to my own feelings" (P2); "the longer I'm a manager, I'm easier with not doing it well" (P16); "sometimes you must realise you cannot change things" (P3). Participants' words are used in naming the sub-processes of major learning. These include practical behaviours, mental skills and shifts in values and perspective.

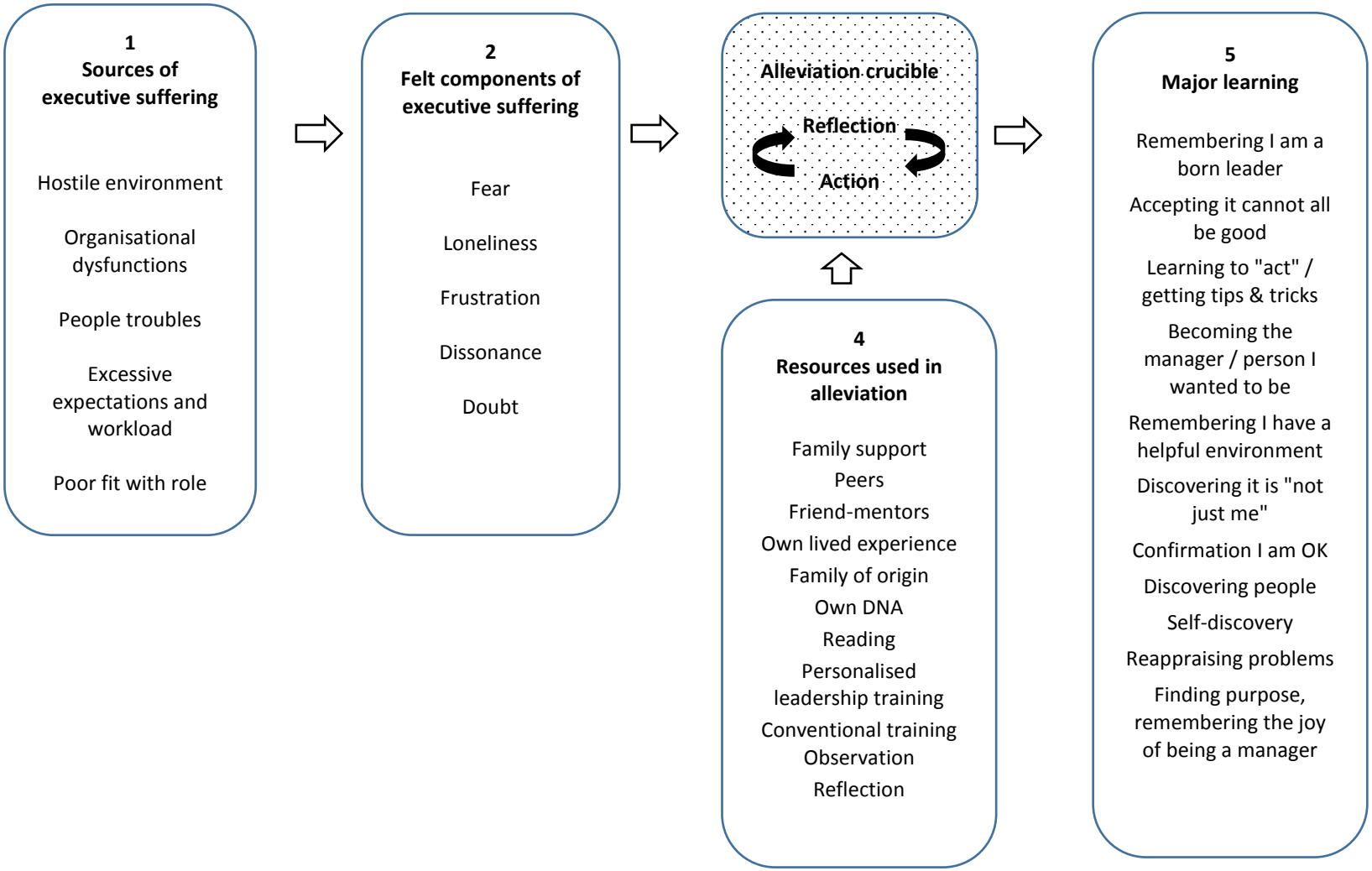


Figure 4.1: Suffering-alleviation-learning (SAL) model of major management learning

EC in the sub-processes of major management learning

The conditional relationship guide was used to identify the sub-processes of major management learning which involved EC. Nine sub-processes are involved: *Accepting it cannot all be good, Learning to 'act' / getting tips & tricks, Becoming the manager / person I wanted to be, Discovering it is 'not just me', Discovering I'm OK, Discovering people, Self-discovery, Reappraising problems* and *Finding purpose, remembering the joy of being a manager*. The conditional relationship guide allowed identification from the data of resources other than EC in relation to each of these sub-processes. These are: *Authentic conversations with peers, Family support, Advice from friend-mentors, Private reflection, Lived experience, Positive feedback, Personalised leadership training, Conventional training, Reading,* and *Observing other managers* and *Time.* Table 4.9 presents a matrix of the resources and sub-processes involving EC. The data suggest that EC is used in all but two sub-processes of major learning. Only *Feeling a born leader* and *Remembering I am in a helpful environment* did not draw on EC. No sub-process of management learning described in the data is reliant on EC alone and most sub-processes using EC draw on two or more resources alongside EC. The exception is *Discovering it is 'not just me'* which, apart from EC, draws only on *Authentic conversations with peers* as a resource. The resource *Advice from friend-mentors* is employed in all sub-processes using EC with the exception of *Self-discovery*. Overall these resources can be construed as part analogues of EC. Two are developmental in design, conventional training and personalised leadership training. These might be called developmental analogues of EC. The others are properties of organisational functioning and might be called organisational analogues of EC.

Assertions

The following assertions are made based on analysis of the data:

1. Executive suffering (ES) is an antecedent factor of major management learning.
2. Executive coaching (EC) is one among several resources used by managers in alleviating ES.
3. While EC can be used in almost all sub-processes of major management learning, no sub-process is dependent on EC.

The data suggest multiple ways in which other resources might be combined to serve the sub-processes supported by EC, for example using *Advice from friend-mentors, Private reflection, Positive feedback* and *Personalised leadership training*. If practical circumstances permitted, the emergent relationships, which are hypothetical in nature, would be checked using new data (Böhm, 2004). This was not possible in this case but the relationships are strong and are grounded in a rich diversity of data and experiences.

Table 4.8: EC as a resource in sub-processes of major management learning in the data – Analogues of EC

Resources / Sub-processes	**Executive coaching**	**Authentic conversations with peers**	**Family support**	**Advice from friend-mentors**	**Private reflection**	**Lived experience**	**Positive feedback**	**Personalised leadership training**	**Conventional training**	**Reading**	**Observing other managers**
Accepting it cannot all be good	X		X	X	X	X					
Learning to "act" / getting tips & tricks	X			X				X	X	X	X
Becoming the manager / person I wanted to be	X			X				X			X
Discovering it is "not just me"	X	X		X							
Discovering I'm OK	X		X	X		X	X				
Discovering people	X			X		X		X		X	
Self-discovery	X				X		X	X			
Reappraising problems	X		X	X		X					
Finding purpose, remembering joy of management	X			X	X	X	X				X

4.3 Summary and transition to chapter 5

Open coding of the data generated a consolidated list of 24 conceptual categories. Axial coding identified relationships across categories and related them all to a central, dominant category, called *Gradual learning every day*, *major learning from suffering*. Multiple sub-processes can be integrated around this central category to arrive at a theoretical model, called the *Suffering-alleviation-learning* (SAL) model of major management learning. The SAL model situates EC as one of twelve resource types used by managers in alleviating suffering associated with exercise of their management roles. Axial coding was further used to link sub-processes involving EC to sub-processes using other resources to alleviate ES. This analysis suggests that EC can contribute to many aspects of management learning but it does not identify a unique role for EC in management learning. Analysis concurrent with data collection suggested that participants attributed strongly differing roles to EC in their accounts of how they developed as managers. Chapter five presents the analysis of theoretical samples of three different EC experiences, using the same GT methods, to arrive at new insights into the different experiences.

Chapter 5 Analysis of three different EC experiences

5.1 Introduction

The analysis presented in chapter four offers macro-level insights in response to the research question of how managers describe the place of EC in the context of their overall development. The *Suffering-alleviation-learning* (SAL) model of management learning suggests that participants' major developmental episodes were associated with suffering contingent on exercise of the management role. The management learning described by participants includes new behaviours, mental skills, problem-solving techniques, sensitivity to others and self-awareness. This learning is acquired through multiple routes, including training, reading, lived experience, the support of mentors, family and friends as well as EC. The next phase involved analysis of participant data in order to explore the specific place of EC in this overall context in line with the second research objective, to *propose theoretical insights to explain how individual effects unfold over time*.

5.1.1 Theoretical sampling and member checking

The interviews included questions on the persistence over time of all learning acquired throughout the management career. These data provided the basis for theoretical sampling of three different EC experiences. In a member checking exercise, participants were contacted by email and informed of their proposed assignment to one or other experience category and asked to signal any disagreement or doubt. The three experiences are:

- EC described as having enduring effects up to the present time: "Coaching had an enduring effect on me and is still present in the manager I am today."
- EC described as valuable at the time of the coaching but without lasting effects: "I remember the coaching as useful at the time but it has not left a significant lasting trace."
- EC described as ineffective both at the time and afterwards: "The coaching did not have a significant effect on me, even at the time."

The member-checking message to participants is reproduced in appendix 7. Participants could see all three experience categories and their proposed assignment based on their interview. No participant objected to the proposed assignment. Twenty actively confirmed their proposed assignment in replies and 12 added comments which were included with the respective interview transcripts in the data for analysis. The distinct EC experiences were analysed using the data from the respective samples. The dataset for these analyses comprised all references by participants in the course of the interviews to EC and, where available, comments by participants in response to the member-checking exercise. The three experiences are named and abbreviated *Long-term effects* (LTE), *Short-term effects* (STE) and *Ineffective executive coaching* (IEC). Table 5.1 presents an overview of the three samples.

Table 5.1: Salient characteristics of the theoretical samples and total sample				
	Sample A: LTE	**Sample B: STE**	**Sample C: IEC**	**Total sample**
Age (years)	52.8 (42.0-61.0)	52.3 (41.0-60.0)	52.5 (44.0-58.0)	52.5 (41.0-61.0)
Sex (perceived by researcher)	12 F; 6 M	5 F; 5 M	5 F; 7 M	22 F; 18 M
Years in management	14.8 (9.0-22.0)	16.9 (11.0-25.0)	13.3 (5.0-23.0)	15.0 (5.0-25.0)
Management level	13 middle 5 senior	9 middle 1 senior	12 middle 0 senior	34 middle 6 senior
Years since first EC	8.3 (2.0-15.0)	8.5 (2.0-15.0)	7.8 (2.0-15.0)	8.2 (2.0-15.0)

5.2 Analysis of experience A – executive coaching with long-term effects (LTE)

The data for this analysis came from 18 participants working in three different organisations and drew on their experience of 27 EC interventions.

5.2.1 Open coding

Open coding followed the steps for breaking down the data described in section 4.2.1, moving from in vivo codes through conceptual codes to conceptual categories, striving to remain close to participants' words and meanings.

Identification of relevant in vivo codes

In vivo codes relating to EC were identified in the transcripts of participants in the sample. Written comments from the participants about their coaching experiences were in vivo coded and added to the set. There was an average 48 in vivo codes per transcript (±20). Table 5.2 presents examples of in vivo codes identified in this stage of the analysis.

Table 5.2: Examples of in vivo codes for sample A – EC with long-term effects
"Coaching helped me become the manager I wanted to be; it gave me the strength to go my own way." (P2)
"The coach saw me growing and my resilience coming." (P40)
"I felt alone … and asked for a second coaching." (P39)
"I learned [in coaching] that people do not know what is in your head." (P1)
"In coaching I learned what was important." (P28)

Translation of in vivo into conceptual codes

The in vivo codes were translated into conceptual codes based on similarity. Following refinement there was a total of 63 conceptual codes. Table 5.3 presents examples to illustrate the translation of in vivo into conceptual codes.

Table 5.3: Examples of translation from in vivo codes to conceptual codes for sample A – EC with long-term effects

In vivo codes	Conceptual codes
"Coaching was a mirror." (P13) "The coach held up a mirror." (P31) "The coaching helped me to recognise myself." (P40) "Coaching is about knowing yourself." (P37) "Coaching is someone looking inside you to see what's happening." (P20) "The coaching taught me to look inside." (P2)	Coaching as mirror
"Coaching opened my eyes." (P21) "I got a different way of looking at things." (P12) "The coach was a sounding board not from the organisation." (P5)	New ways of looking at problems
"Coaching taught me how not to get rolled over by small things." (P1) "The coaching brought me distance" [from problems]. (P4) "The coaching helped me take some distance to what had happened." (P28)	Stepping back, taking distance

Generation of categories

Conceptual codes were grouped based on conceptual similarity and merged into conceptual categories. This step involved moving to a higher level of abstraction, going beyond participants' words a descriptors (Carmichael & Cunningham, 2017). The order of processing transcripts was random and coded transcripts were constantly revisited in the light of emergent categories, a process of constant comparison (Davoudi et al., 2017; Shepherd & Suddaby, 2017). The emergence of two conceptual categories is used to to illustrate this phase of the analysis. The category *Embracing my authentic self* builds principally on six conceptual codes: *Coaching as mirror, Listen to myself, Be myself, Be confident in myself, Accept my way* and *You cannot fake being a manager*. This category is delineated from three other conceptually adjacent categories: *Looking inside, Digesting and metabolising unsavoury truths* and *Finding joy*. At the core of *Embracing my authentic self* is the concept of positive self-acceptance through coaching. Visual metaphors recur in the data; EC is described as a mirror in which participants saw new aspects of themselves, "coaching was a mirror" (P13); "the coach held up a mirror" (P31); [EC] "helped me to recognise myself … confirmed me as a person (P40); [the coach] "opened my mind … and my eyes" (P21). Participant 2 describes the importance of feeling understood and accepted by the coach and developing skills of self-awareness, which she continued to use after the coaching: "the coaching taught me to look inside" (P2); "the coach could see me" (P40). Participant 18 describes metaphorically the effect of self-acceptance on his management style: "I learned to bring more of

myself to the party" (P18); [EC] "made me feel more conscious of the importance of sticking to my values and keeping them always in mind in my daily work" (P6).

The conceptual category "*Using the space*" integrates data coded under six headings: *New ways of looking at problems, Stepping back, taking distance, Coaching as space for me, Stop to think, Discovering other ways of being* and *Taking distance from yourself*. At its core is the notion of personal agency in an expanding mental space, developing the ability to step back from problems and troubling events in order to confront them better. Spatial metaphors recur in the data: "the coaching brought me distance" [from a distressful event] (P4); "the coaching helped me take some distance to what had happened" [a setback as a new manager] (P28); "I learned to step back" (P6). With distance comes perspective: "coaching taught me how not to get rolled over by small things" (P1). Distance can also be from the self: [EC involved] "learning not to take myself so seriously … to be happier" (P5). The freedom of the coaching space is contrasted with the constraints of the work space: "the coaching was carving out a space for me to develop" (P39); [at work, as manager] "you are being observed all the time" (P15).

The work of merging conceptual codes involved several cycles of revision in order to arrive at a stable set of conceptual categories. These are presented in table 5.4. Of the ten consolidated categories for use in the next stage of analysis, six were present in the first transcript and all were stable from coding the first seven transcripts, implying inductive thematic saturation of the emergent category set.

Table 5.4: Consolidated set of conceptual categories for sample A – EC with long-term effects

Conceptual categories	Definitions
Experiencing the coach as a free, neutral person	The coach was not from here; was not typical of the organisation; unbiased, free and open to ideas and people
Experiencing the coach as deep and insightful	The coach can quickly see how you are; the coach understood
Eyes opening	Moments of seeing everyday phenomena afresh, including the organisation, priorities, life, people
Using the space	Taking distance, walking around problems to gain new perspectives; seeing self in relation to others; feeling distance from problems
Looking inside	Learning about my deeper self; discussing personal matters; allowing the coach to look inside
Digesting and metabolising unsavoury truths	Coping with difficult feedback, failures, including personal disappointments
Embracing my authentic self	Recognising that I am OK, good enough, as a person and a manager; recognising that I can be myself at work

Feeling shared humanity	Understanding people, and myself as one of them; I can be both a manager and a person
Finding and bringing joy	Learning to be happy, not to bring stress home, to have a more positive mindset
Taking control	Knowing how to act in problem situations; confidence in being myself, even in challenging situations

5.2.2 Axial coding and identification of the central category

Axial coding involved putting the fractured data back together meaningfully, following the steps described in section 4.2.2. A conditional relationship guide was used to help identify relationships across categories and to link as many as possible to a central, dominant category. The central category was identified as *Discovering*, a concept which permeates all other categories and is a term recurring frequently in the data from sample A. In working with the coach, participants discovered new ways of seeing and understanding work problems and new ways of being and relating different to working relations in the organisation. They discovered aspects of themselves by 'looking inside' and taking the perspective of others. An overview of the conditional relationship guide for sample A, including the identified central category, is presented in table 5.5.

Table 5.5: Overview of conditional relationship guide for sample A – EC with long-term effects

Categories	Cause, attribution (Why?)	Actions & interactions (How?)	Consequences (Participant perspective)
Discovering *(central category)*	Because of chance, the time was right, I was ready	By searching, inwards and outwards; by becoming open to new ideas and challenging existing ways of seeing and doing	Feeling renewed, more self-confident, open to others, less fearful
Experiencing the coach as deep and insightful	Because the coach is special by virtue of professional training and personality	By being listened to, being seen, understood, felt	Gratitude for understanding and empathy; inspired to be like the coach
Experiencing the coach as a free, neutral person	Because of the contrast with the constrained manager role and the narrow organisational setting	By the coach showing that s/is different, "not from here"	Coach as model for a different way of being; coach's judgements have a value above and beyond discourse in the organisation
Eyes opening	Because pressure of work, being stressed all the time, clouded vision	By the coach challenging assumptions	Insight into self, organisation, other people; new sense of potential and perspective
Using the space	Because of feeling tightly constrained at work, observed constantly; the burden of managing and the constraints of the role	By dialogue on values and priorities; searching for creativity; taking other perspectives; guidance from coach	Mental distance from problems; revised sense of proportion and priorities; finding creative solutions
Looking inside	Because I was troubled, couldn't understand some feelings in myself; because the coaching offered an opportunity, including time, for this	By trying to understand myself, my reactions and emotions	Self-awareness and the reflex to be self-aware; valuing of self
Digesting and metabolising unsavoury truths	Because of setbacks in the manager role, failures, negative feedback	By working through problems; realising that it is the same for others	Self-acceptance; valuing of self; understanding others
Embracing my authentic self	Because of dissonance between personal values and actions as a manager, not being the person I was or want to be	By talking through troubling issues; by following guidance from the coach	Consonance; embracing own values; confidence in self and own strengths; less need to be perfect
Feeling shared humanity	Because of isolation and loneliness; suffering from difficult interactions with staff	By putting self in the place of the other; by being inspired by the coach's insights	Understanding, empathy; confidence in dealing with people

Finding and bringing joy	Because of sense of guilt and sadness at becoming “negative”, including bringing negative emotions home	By reflecting on values and meaning, of work and life	Relief, pleasure; pride in role
Taking control	Because of feeling I had lost control of my life, fears for my health and family life; recognising that I cannot go on like this	By building confidence, getting practical guidance, behavioural training	Self-confidence; knowing how to act in problem situations

5.2.3 Mapping the social processes and theoretical integration

Social processes embedded in the data were mapped and theoretical integration was achieved with the help of the conditional relationship guide, paying especial attention to the consequences of the different actions in the data, and to the importance of emotions in explaining action. The main process elements identified in the data are *Deciding, Engaging, Role-taking, Working together, Feeling the immediate benefits* and *Continuing to grow.* These are presented in table 5.6 and cast as sequential stages of EC interventions described by participants as being effective in the long-term.

Table 5.6: Process elements revealed by the data in the coaching experience of sample A – EC with long-term effects ('Transformation EC')

Main process elements		Participant quotes
Deciding	The data suggest that people's first EC experience was serendipitous. The organisation offered EC and promoted it in various ways. Participants describe their initial decision as responding to exhortations from the HR department, with minimal intrinsic motivation or knowledge of EC before meeting the coach.	"In the beginning I didn't know what to expect." (P39) "I got the coaching because it was offered to me." (P37) "I had a complete misunderstanding of what coaching was at the time." (P20)
Engaging	The data describe the coach as quickly understanding important aspects of participants' emotional states, which the participants appreciated. The emotions on which the engagement took place involve distress, 'suffering' related to the management role, often undiscussed with anyone other than the coach.	"Coaching helps more when it touches a very deep, emotional nerve in a person." (P12) "The coach could see me." (P40) "Suffering … is a good explanation of the best help I got from my coach." (P31)
Role-taking	Participants in sample A describe the coach as a special figure, playing a role different from other people in the participants' environment and embodying attributes not normally found in the organisation, especially sensitivity, empathy and openness. Coaches bring insight and new ways of seeing: they see the world and the organisation differently; they see through participants' managerial facades to find the real person. The data suggest that, as coachees, the participants willingly adopted roles of discoverers.	"The coach … inspired me. I tried to learn from her and I still use it today." (P37) [The coach] "opened my mind to some elements which I wanted to have but didn't work out fully until then, and she opened my eyes." (P21) [The coach] "got to know me quite well, we got to understand each other very well and how we wanted to work together." (P2)
Working together	The intervention is described as involving discovery: about self (awareness), others (sensitivity) and issues (new perspectives).	"Coaching is about your personal, inner development" (P20) "The coaching was carving out a space for me to develop" (P39)
Feeling the immediate benefits	Participants describe being deeply affected by the EC experience, including feeling confirmed as people and as managers.	"The coaching taught me to be happier … to put less stress on my family." (P5) "The coaching helped me to recognise myself … it confirmed me as a person." (P40)

		"I learned that you can remain human." (P39) "I learned to bring more of myself to the party." (P18)
Continuing to grow	Participants described the effects of their EC as evolving and still present at the time of the interview. They describe reminding themselves not to regress to previous ways of working or being.	"I think that this is the main enduring effect that the coaching had on me, because it made me feel more conscious of the importance of sticking to my values and keeping them always in mind in my daily work." (P6) "Coaching … had an enduring effect indeed … the moment you are open, willing to become a better person, and in a way to be fully you, the whole you, everyone, everything that enters in your life is a door, a step, a stair in that great adventure that is life." (P21)

Forming a theoretical model

Casting the elements in sequence results in a proposed process model, called the *Process model for Transformation EC*, to describe the stages in the EC experience of sample A. The stages are shown in figure 5.1. Suffering in the management role is an antecedent to major learning (box 1). The link from box 1 to 2 is initially temporal: executive suffering is present before the EC but is not the reason for undertaking a first coaching programme: "the first time I took it only because it was being offered, I didn't expect anything from it" (P13); "it was on offer, and I just took it as an opportunity, I jumped on it" (P5). The link between 1 and 2 assumes an emotional quality (Böhm, 2004) when executive suffering constitutes the basis of engagement between coach and coachee (box 2): "my main issue at the time was that to do with the impact on my family of the stress form work, so that's why I say it [EC] was very much about my person, the coaching helped me to calm down" (P5). Engagement with emotional needs is formative of the alliance between coach and coachee; this involves agreement, explicit or implicit, on roles (box 3), with the coach taking the role of leader in a process of discovery and insight, characterised as an "eye-opening" role, following the recurrence in sample A data of visual metaphors such as opening of eyes, gaining of insight and new perspectives. The coachee takes the role of a follower who aligns with the coach sufficiently to see phenomena through the eyes of the coach: [the coach] "opened my eyes" (P21); "he [coach] helped me see the essence of the problem I had then" (P15). This working alliance, quickly deep, enables the intervention (box 4) to have an inward vector, exploring aspects of the coachee's self, as both manager and person: "coaching is about your personal, inner development" (P20); "I see the coaching as something that's there not to fix a problem, but to help you unleash a potential" (P21). The intervention ends (box 5) with a sense of personal transformation as the basis for confidence on the part of the coachee in facing the future as a manager. The development process at the core of the coaching, understood as personal growth, continues after the intervention ends (box 6): "the coaching taught me that I can find good solutions within myself" (P29).

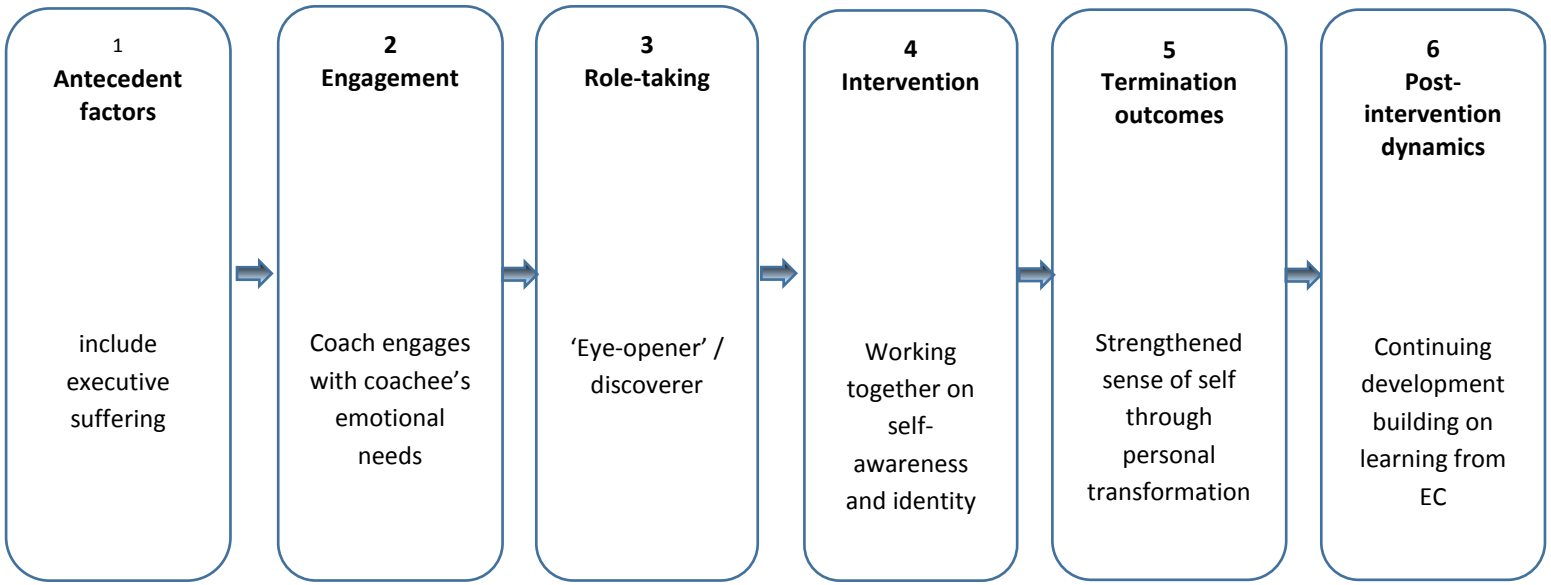


Figure 5.1: Process model for Transformation EC

Long-term effects of EC embedded in the data of sample A

The conditional relationship guide for sample A (table 5.6) captures, from the participants' perspective, the consequences of the sub-processes of EC with long-term effects, including improvements in participants' ability to understand self and others, ability to empathise with others, confidence in dealing with people, sense of proportion and priority, ability to take mental distance from problems, self-acceptance, renewed pride in the management role and greater joy in work and life. These fragmented consequences can be categorised to form a conceptual framework of the long-term effects described by participants. The result suggests that the long-term effects of EC for sample A were improved mental abilities, changed attitudes and values and improved affective outcomes. This categorisation is presented in table 5.7.

Table 5.7: Categories of effects embedded in the data of sample A

Outcomes of EC sub-processes identified in the data	**Conceptual category**
Improved ability to understand self and others; reflex to be self-aware Ability to empathise with others Ability to take mental distance from problems	Mental abilities
New perspectives, sense of proportion and priorities; mental distance from problems Self-acceptance, value of self and own potential Acceptance of others	Changed attitudes and values
Confidence in self Joy in life and work; pride in role Consonance between self and role Less fearful	Affective outcomes

5.3 Analysis of experience B – executive coaching effective in the short-term (STE)

The data for this analysis came from 10 participants working in two organisations and drew on their experience of 17 EC interventions. Salient characteristics of sample B are outlined in table 5.1.

5.3.1 Open coding

The same steps, described in 4.2.1, were followed as for sample A: in vivo coding, translation of in vivo codes to conceptual codes and identification of categories based on properties of the conceptual codes.

Identification of relevant in vivo codes

In vivo codes relating to EC were identified in the transcripts of participants in the sample. Written comments from the participants about their coaching experiences were in vivo coded and added to the set. As in the earlier analyses, the in vivo codes were used as the first step in order to ground the analysis in terms used by participants. There was an average of 35 in vivo codes per transcript (± 15). Table 5.8 presents examples of the in vivo codes which define this sample.

Table 5.8: Examples of in vivo codes for sample B – EC with short-term effects
[EC was] "like a psychological counselling session." (P3) "What I learned is that I wasn't the only one facing these situations." (P38) "The coaching was down to earth, practical." (P36) "The coach made good suggestions." (P9) "Coaching was not like a life-changing experience, but it was useful." (P11)

Translation of in vivo into conceptual codes

The in vivo codes were translated into conceptual codes based on similarity. Following refinement there was a total of 30 conceptual codes. Table 5.9 presents examples to illustrate the translation of in vivo into conceptual codes.

Table 5.9: Examples of translation of in vivo codes to conceptual codes for sample B – EC with short-term effects

In vivo codes	Conceptual codes
"The coaching was down to earth, practical."(P36)	Practical advice
"I got good, some very good ideas for the content of my work." (P3)	
"The coach made good suggestions." (P9)	
"It [EC] functioned as a strengthening of self-confidence." (P32)	Getting reassurance
(The coach) "convinced me I am not a bad manager." (P9)	
"I learned that it wasn't my fault." (P16)	

Generation of categories

Conceptual codes were grouped based on conceptual similarity and merged into conceptual categories. This step involved moving to a higher level of abstraction, going beyond participants' words a descriptors (Carmichael & Cunningham, 2017). The emergence of two conceptual categories, *Being taught by a knowledgeable teacher* and *Coping with setbacks* are used to illustrate this phase of the analysis. The category *Being taught by a knowledgeable teacher builds principally on three codes, Practical advice, Preparing for coming challenges* and *Sensing the coach's rich experience*. The data reveal how participants embraced the role of pupil, reassured by the coach's substantive knowledge and experience of management: "I needed to know what to do" (P14); "I wanted tips and tricks" (P38); "I needed help with practical things" (P36); "I wanted the coach to teach me" (P32). "The coaching was down to earth, practical" (P36); "I got good, some very good ideas for the content of my work" (P3).

At the core of *Coping with setbacks* is the concept of repair and healing in the wake of workplace hurt. This category integrates data coded under three headings: *Getting reassurance, Help in digesting hard 360 feedback* and *Confronting difficult people.* Participants brought residual distress from past failures into the coaching and found solace in the coaching process. "I knew I was not a bad manager, I needed confirmation" (P9); "I wanted help in digesting hard 360° feedback" (P16). By attributing wisdom and practical experience to the coach, the coachee can be reassured directly by the words of the coach: "I learned that it [a difficult relationship with a junior manager] wasn't my fault" (P16); [the coach] "convinced me I am not a bad manager" (P9) after a series of setbacks and a deteriorating relationship with his line manager; [EC] "functioned as confirmation that I was doing OK, it was very useful" (P32), following failure to gain an expected promotion.

The work of merging conceptual codes involved several cycles of revision in order to arrive at a stable set of six conceptual categories. These are presented in table 5.10. Of the final set of consolidated categories, four were present in the first transcript and no new categories were identified from coding the last five transcripts, implying saturation of the category framework.

Table 5.10: Consolidated set of conceptual categories for sample B – EC with short-term effects

Conceptual categories	Definitions
Being taught by a knowledgeable teacher	Knowing that the coach was experienced, trusted and knowledgeable; feeling that the advice was good; even if the advice did not work, it was still the best available and the teacher-coach is still trusted.
Coping with setbacks	Digesting and metabolising unsavoury truths, difficult 360 appraisals, difficulties with line managers and staff members.

Preparing for challenges	Strategic planning, facing difficult challenges, seeking to avoid making the same mistakes again; preparing for higher management responsibility.
Being the centre of the coach's attention	Sense of importance, pleasure even, at being the focus of attention, however brief; feeling valued; feeling selfish.
Learning about myself	Discovering strengths and weaknesses; understanding past mistakes.
Learning to protect myself	Accepting that the organisation is not a caring place, learning the hard way; learning to set limits.

5.3.2 Axial coding and identification of the central category

A conditional relationship guide was again used to reassemble the fractured data meaningfully by identifying relationships across categories and linking them to a central, dominant category. This work followed the steps described in section 4.2.2. The central category was identified as *Feeling stronger*, a concept recurring frequently in the data from sample B and which links to all other categories which involve resourcing and resilience building: *Being taught by a knowledgeable teacher, Coping with setbacks, Preparing for challenges, Being the centre of the coach's attention, Learning about myself* and *Learning to protect myself*. An overview of the conditional relationship guide for sample B, including the identified central category, is presented in table 5.11.

Table 5.11: Overview of conditional relationship guide for sample B – EC with short-term effects

Categories	Cause, attribution (Why?)	Actions & interactions (How?)	Consequences (Participant perspective)
Feeling stronger (*central category*)	Because management, work, people, life can weaken you and you need to recover and build your strength	By facing the difficulties, thinking through the challenges, making plans and preparing	Ready to face the world and the challenges
Being taught by a knowledgeable teacher	Because of a felt need for guidance by someone who knows me and understands the challenges I face	By taking advice and trying to apply it; by respecting the knowledge and judgement of the coach	Feeling of having learned and being better prepared to deal with troublesome management challenges; comfort in having taken expert advice, even if it does not work (exoneration)
Coping with setbacks	Because aspects of the management job will bring you down, feedback, conflict, failures, fears for the future; managers need to bounce back	By working through issues, checking against reality and the experience of others; re-examining failures and unsolved problems	Reattributing blame, self-exoneration; gain in self-confidence
Preparing for challenges	Because of fear of failure, feeling vulnerable	By planning and preparing	Action plans, confidence, sense of control, less fear
Being the centre of the coach's attention	Because of a felt need to focus on self, needing space for myself	By enjoying the attention	Feeling important, feeling felt, self-awareness
Learning about myself	Because of the need to avoid making mistakes and a wish to have greater impact	By addressing strengths and weaknesses; getting, interpreting and using 360 feedback	Self-acceptance, recognition of strengths and weaknesses; learning and strategies to deal with weakness
Learning to protect myself	Because the work environment is threatening; fear of abuse by senior management or by subordinates	By becoming resilient, learning to communicate own wishes effectively and set limits	Feeling of personal strength, confidence in self

5.3.3 Mapping the social processes and theoretical integration

Social processes embedded in the data were mapped and theoretical integration was achieved with the help of the conditional relationship guide, again paying especial attention to the consequences of the different actions and to emotions in explaining the motivation to act. The main process elements identified in the data are *Deciding, Engaging, Role-taking, Working together, Feeling the immediate benefits* and *Filing the experience away*. These are presented in table 5.12.

Table 5.12: Process elements revealed by the data in the coaching experience of sample B – EC with short-term effects

Main process elements		Participant quotes
Deciding	As for sample A, the data suggest that people's first EC experience was serendipitous. The organisation offered EC and promoted it in various ways. Participants describe their initial decision as responding to exhortations from the HR department, with minimal intrinsic motivation or knowledge of EC before meeting the coach.	"I was asked to volunteer for a test program of coaching for managers."(P16) "We were all being offered the coaching, and encouraged to do it. There was money available and the bosses were encouraging us." (P25) "I got coached because it was on offer." (P36)
Engaging	As for sample A, the data describe the coach as quickly understanding important aspects of participants' emotional states, which the participants appreciated. The emotions on which the engagement took place involve distress, 'suffering' related to the management role, often undiscussed with anyone other than the coach.	"The coach listened to me." (P9) "It felt selfish, just for me." (P3) "You might not want to talk about your work at home and you might not want to talk about work with colleagues but you can talk to the coach." (P32)
Role-taking	Participants in sample B describe the coach an expert teacher on people and management. The data reveal instances of the coach attempting to take an overtly psychological role but being urged away from this by participants. The data suggest that, as coachees, the participants willingly adopted the role of pupil in relation to the coach as teacher.	"I wanted a coach to help me with specific challenges: dealing with difficult people, tips and tricks and literature references." (P38) "The [previous] coach was into psychology, not what I needed; I needed to know what to do, what's important." (P14) [The coach] "was the right person for me at the time and what I was expecting, she is a nice person … she was able to adapt to what I wanted." (P9)
Working together	The intervention is described as involving advice, cognitive learning, emotional reassurance and action-planning.	"I learned that it wasn't me but I didn't find a way to deal with the problem." (P16) "It helped me digest a difficult 360 feedback." (P16) "Coaching was very, very useful, down to earth; we focused on interactions in the unit." (P36) [The coach] "gave her own experience because she was quite experienced as a coach, without telling me, without using any

		names, she mentioned other cases, and how other people coped, how they organise things." (P38)
Feeling the immediate benefits	Participants describe the outcome as a belief that they were better equipped cognitively and emotionally to deal with pending challenges and that the EC confirmed them as good managers.	"It functioned as confirmation that I was doing OK, it was very useful." (P32) "In the end we decided, it wasn't about me, it was more about her" [problem team member]. (P16) "This helped me, more like managerial techniques, and what I needed to do in my unit." (P14) "It confirmed me in the way I am; there are many sorts / types of manager, and even if at a certain moment I doubted that I was the ideal type, now I'm fully convinced that I can do it and I think I'm not a bad manager, so it did help me." (P9)
Filing the experience away	Participants describe the learning from their EC as specific to the time and challenges they then faced. The data describe later management learning initiatives, including further EC to deal with specific challenges.	"It was useful then." [*Was it any use afterwards?*] "No, not really." (P36) "A good experience, I did it twice." (P9) "The coaching was very good at the time … It functioned as a strengthening of self-confidence." (P32) "It's always useful, the opportunity to put on the table to discuss something that you have in your head and because it's not part of your ordinary operational work, but it didn't change fundamental things." (P11)

Forming a theoretical model

Casting the elements in sequence results in a proposed process model of EC interventions described by participants as being effective in the short-term only (figure 5.2). Participants describe EC interventions which strengthened their ability to prevail in times of challenge but left their sense of self intact. The theoretical model is called *Reinforcement EC*. Suffering in the management role is an essential antecedent (box 1). The link from box 1 to 2 is initially temporal: managers undertake EC for reasons other than alleviation of executive suffering: "he [line manager] recommended that I do it, I think it was encouraged anyway by the human resource department and I thought why not?" (P36). Inherent in this theoretical model is that, once they meet, the coach and coachee engage on emotional content which is significant to the coachee (box 2), thereby deepening the working alliance: "The coach understood me" (P9); [the coach] "listened to me without judging" (P38). Participant 32 remembered that the coach "was someone I could talk to" (P32) about troubling issues which he felt he could not discuss with colleagues or line management. With emotional engagement achieved, roles are adopted (box 3), whereby the coach supplies reassurance and guidance which the coachee values by virtue of the status of the coach as wise and knowledgeable: "we got to understand each other very well and how we wanted to work together … her advice was precious at that time in my career" (P2); "the coach gives you tasks for your development, shows you what to do, shows you how to analyse your team performance or how to analyse your own role" (P32). The intervention itself (box 4) is focused on developing practical strategies and behaviours to confront specific, real challenges: "the coach gave me very wise advice" (P16). Participant 3 states that her EC comprised "helpful suggestions" and "very good ideas for the content of my work" (P3); "I got tips and tricks … readings … and learned about myself" (P38). The outcome at the end of the coaching (box 4) is positive. "It helped me cope with a difficult situation" (P16); "it was very useful at that time" (P30); "gave me confidence" (P32). Participants in sample B, however, insist that the learning from EC was not significantly formative of their management style or identity in the longer term. Participant 11 is a good exemplar for this model. She undertook EC twice and found it useful on both occasions: "it was useful, the coach is there to help you, I was helped a lot" (P11). The same participant comments that "coaching is not an experience that changes you" (P11).

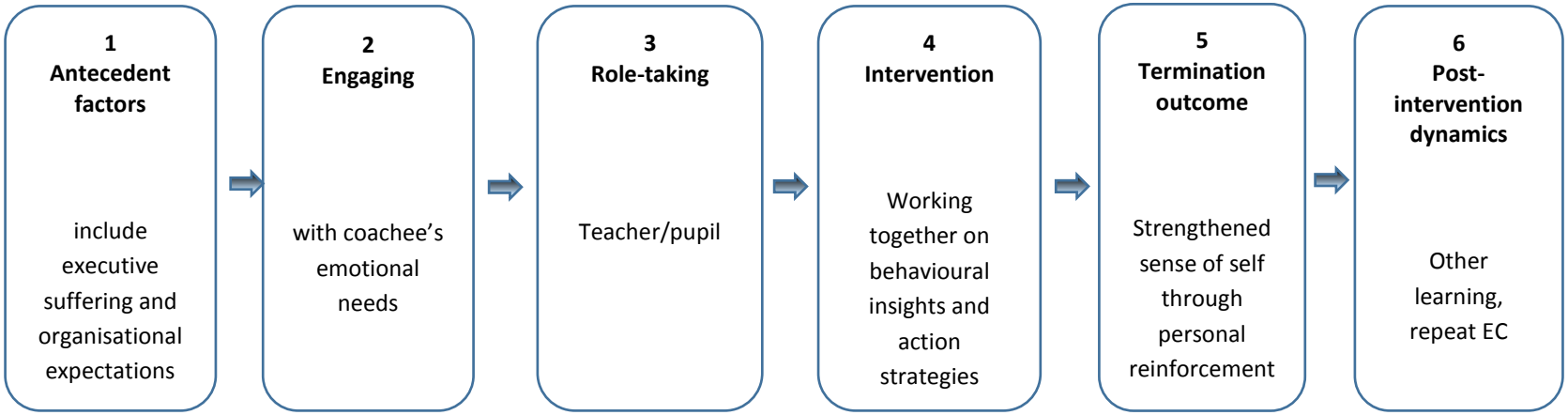


Figure 5.2: Process model for Reinforcement EC

Effects of EC embedded in the data of sample B

The conditional relationship guide for sample B (5.12) captures, from the participants' perspective, the consequences of the sub-processes of EC with effects, including being better prepared to face challenges, feeling of learning and competence, reattributing blame, self-exoneration, developing strategies to deal with problems, fearing less, feeling important, feeling felt, self-acceptance, recognition of strengths and weaknesses and confidence in the future. These fragmented consequences can be categorised to form a conceptual framework of effects described as short-term by participants. The result suggests that for sample B the effects were acquisition of action strategies, practical learning and gains in self-confidence. This categorisation is presented in table 5.13.

Table 5.13: Categories of effects embedded in the data of sample B

Outcomes of EC sub-processes identified in the data	**Conceptual categories**
Understanding own strengths and weaknesses Feeling more competent and confident Feeling of having learned and being better prepared to deal with troubling management challenges	Practical learning
Ready to face the world and the challenges Comfort in having taken expert advice Self-acceptance Feeling of personal strength Re-attributing blame, exoneration Feeling important, feeling noticed and felt Less fear	Strengthened sense of self
Strategies to deal with problems Action plans	Action strategies

5.4 Analysis of experience C – ineffective executive coaching (IEC)

The data for this analysis came from 12 participants working in three organisations and drew on experience of 13 EC interventions. Salient characteristics of sample C are outlined in table 5.1.

5.4.1 Open coding

The same steps, described in 4.2.1, were followed as for samples A and B: in vivo coding, translation of in vivo codes to conceptual codes and identification of categories based on properties of the conceptual codes.

Identification of relevant in vivo codes

In vivo codes relating to EC were identified in the transcripts of participants in the sample. Written comments from the participants about their coaching experiences were in vivo coded and added to the set. As in the earlier analyses, the in vivo codes were used as the first step in order to ground the analysis in terms used by participants. There was an average of 42 in vivo codes per transcript (+/- 18). Table 5.14 presents examples of in vivo codes from this sample.

Table 5.14 Examples of in vivo codes for sample C – Ineffective EC
"I learned a lot before the coaching." (P7)
"I learned to be myself but not in the coaching." (P26)
"I could have got more out of the coaching." (P19)
"I learned to work with people, but not in the coaching." (P22)
"The coach's advice was useless." (P7)
"Life in the organisation taught me to protect myself." (P23)
"He [coach] was into Transactional Analysis … but it was not relevant for my work." (P17)

Translation of in vivo into conceptual codes

The in vivo codes were translated into conceptual codes based on similarity of surface meaning. Following refinement there was a total of 33 conceptual codes. Table 5.15 presents examples to illustrate the translation of in vivo into conceptual codes for sample C.

Table 5.15: Examples of translation from in vivo codes to conceptual codes for sample C – Ineffective EC	
In vivo codes	**Conceptual codes**
"I have always discussed work problems at home." (P24)	Family support
"My wife is a coach." (P8)	
"We talk work at home every evening." (P25)	
"I had very good bosses." (P22)	Good managers
"I had a strong champion." (P7)	
"I checked the coach's suggestions with my former boss." (P26)	

Generation of categories

Conceptual codes were grouped based on conceptual similarity and merged into conceptual categories. The order of processing transcripts was random and coded transcripts were constantly revisited in the light of emergent categories. The emergence of two conceptual categories is used to illustrate this phase of the analysis. The category *Attributing failure of EC* builds principally on data coded conceptually as *Too soon, too late, Bad match* and *Doubts about own motivation.* The category is centred on participant theories about the failure of their coaching. "It was the wrong time for me" (P8); "We were not a good fit" (P17); "I didn't have the challenges" [at the time of the EC]; (P19); "it was not relevant for my work" (P7); "I didn't make enough effort" (P27). The conceptual category *Feeling fortunate to be surrounded by good people* emerged from data coded under *Family support, Having a friend-mentor* and *Good managers*. This category is built on participant theories about the failure of the coaching linked to participants' good fortune in not needing a coach for types of support which participants understand as the domain of the executive coach: "I could talk through problems at home" (P8). Participant 19 compares her coach unfavourably with her line managers: "I was lucky, I had many good bosses" (P19) and recalls that she sought the opinion of a former line manager on any learning from her coaching. Participant 24 reflected that his "very stable family situation" (P24) meant that he did not need what the coach offered, which he understood as moral support and help with decision-making. Of the final set of five consolidated categories (table 5.16), four were present in the first transcript and the list was stable based on coding the first four transcripts, implying saturation of the category framework.

Table 5.16: Consolidated set of conceptual categories for sample C – Ineffective EC	
Conceptual categories	**Definitions**
Realising the coach had nothing to offer	Judging the coach's suggestions too simple or inappropriate; dismissing approaches and techniques proposed by the coach; not valuing the coach as an expert advisor.
Attributing failure of EC	The coaching was too soon or too late; I do not know why I asked for it then; my motivation was not right; it was not a good match; the coach wanted to do psychology but I didn't.
Enjoying the coaching sessions	It was pleasant, the coach was friendly; the sessions were light, enjoyable moments.
Valuing the learning gained from life	I learned everything from real life; hard experience taught me a lot; anything the coach could teach me I learned elsewhere or I knew it already.
Feeling fortunate to be surrounded by good people	I am fortunate in having a good home life; I always discuss work problems with my partner; I have had great bosses and a great mentor; people in my team taught me a lot.

5.4.2 Axial coding and identification of the central category

A conditional relationship guide (table 5.17) was again used to put the data back together meaningfully by identifying relationships across categories and linking them to a central, dominant category. This work followed the steps described in section 4.2.2. The central category was identified as *Realising the coach had nothing to offer*. It was a frequently recurring code throughout the open coding process and has links directly to the other categories. Even if appreciated as an entertainer, the coach did not match the life experience of sample C participants and did not enjoy a relationship as close as participants had to colleagues, bosses, friend-mentors and family members.

Table 5.17: Overview of conditional relationship guide for sample C – Ineffective EC

Categories	Cause, attribution (Why?)	Actions & interactions (How?)	Consequences (Participant perspective)
Realising the coach had nothing to offer (*central category*)	Judging the knowledge and maturity of the coach inadequate	By dismissing suggestions, taking second opinions on coach's advice	Mental disengagement from the coaching
Attributing the failure of EC	Disappointment and dissonance (time invested; knowledge that others found EC valuable)	By attributing the failure to the timing, to own motivation, to coach-coachee match or to an inexperienced coach	Dissonance reduction (consonance)
Enjoying the coaching sessions	Because of the personality and style of coach; light moments away from work	By persisting with the intervention	Warm feelings for the coach and her/his efforts, reluctance to criticise
Valuing the learning gained from life	Because it has served well, better than coaching or training	By linking specific experiences with the learning gained; stating / implying that EC was not an "experience"	Self-confidence, general self-efficacy; acceptance of the coaching failure (nothing lost)
Feeling fortunate to be surrounded by good people	Because it is exceptional in the management world	By recognising debts to important people; feeling the absence of important people, absence of guide / protector	Sense of security; gratitude looking to the past; hint of vulnerability looking to the future

5.4.3 Mapping the social processes and theoretical integration

Social processes embedded in the data were mapped and theoretical integration was achieved with the help of the conditional relationship again paying attention to the consequences of actions described in the data and to emotions. The main process elements identified in the data are *Deciding, Engaging, Role-taking, Working together, Closing* and *Filing the experience away*. These are presented in table 5.18.

Table 5.18: Process elements revealed by the data in the coaching experience of sample C – Ineffective EC

Stage	Main process elements	Participant quotes
Antecedent factors	The data suggest that participants' motivation to undertake EC was mainly extrinsic and that they had little understanding of what to expect. Participants describe themselves as confident in their ability to succeed as managers and well supported by people around them, including family members.	"Somebody told me I had a right to have coaching. I was in a new environment and it was 10 years since I had become a manger so I thought, why not see what they can tell me, what I can learn." (P27) "It was an obligation, I think." (P26) "The reason why I had it, there was a budget available, and I could have coaching and … I thought why not?" (P22) "The coaching was on offer so that's why I did it." (P19) "There was budget left over, the head of resources asked me would I be interested in coaching." (P17) "I'm resilient … I have a thick skin. I can cut myself off from the content of my work." (P25) "Some basic principles you learn early on, even as a child, you want to live up to certain norms and standards, the kind of manager do you want to be, how you treat people." (P24)
Engaging without emotion	The data describe an agenda of issues and challenges. In contrast to samples A and B, the data do not suggest any emotional engagement between coach and coachee.	"It was not really helpful. Too schematic and not personal enough. More useful was going for a beer with a friend who was also a new [manager] and swapping tips about how to improve sleep, sharing stories of doubts and suffering." (P27) "I felt the coach was not really engaged with me, not really listening to me … it was not un-pleasant but I can't say it created a bond." (P7) "I probably needed a different type of support at that time. It could have been better if the person could empathise."(P33)
Role-taking	The data suggest that participants saw the coach as an advisor on behaviour and management and that they as coachees took the role of sceptical client. The data reveal instances of	"Unfortunately, with the coach, even though she was a very nice person, I didn't find her input useful she didn't seem to really understand the situation that I was describing. So I

	participants rejecting attempts by the coach to take a psychologist role.	changed it around, to get her to speak with my people and see what way I can improve, what can I do?" (P24) "I think I didn't make enough effort to think what did I want from coaching and what type of coach I wanted. It was not a good fit. She was on a superficial psychological level." (P27) "He was into Transactional Analysis, which I thought interesting … but not relevant for my work." (P17)
Working together	The intervention is described as comprising advice on management challenges.	"The tips he was giving me where things I was already using, so it was a bit useless." (P7) "I have a very solid private family life where I get support, so therefore for me it wasn't an issue, the private sphere didn't really come into the coaching." (P24) "I thought I needed to understand strategy and strategic motivation and that she would teach it to me. It was something I was looking for and I didn't get it." (P25)
Closing	The data suggest that disappointment was the primary emotion felt by participants at the end of the intervention.	"I did coaching, I didn't think much of that." (P27) "I was a bit disappointed. I had hoped I would get more instruction. I remember thinking, 'I'm not getting much out of this.'" (P25) "I mean, it was quite a big investment by the organisation, the time and money, but I had a feeling I didn't get as much out of it as I could have. I can't think of anything that I can link straight away that I learned and used after the coaching." (P8) "It was fun but not useful." (P17)
Filing the experience away	The data suggest that participants made attributions to explain the failure of the intervention in simple, meaningful terms, thereby reducing any residual dissonance.	"I'm not sure, that's the right time or the right way to offer coaching. I didn't have the challenges to tackle to allow me to get the most out of the coaching." (P19) "I think I didn't make enough effort." (P27) "It was too early on for me, I didn't have issues or things to solve." (P22)

		“I think the fact that when I came in the path to become a manager I had a very stable family situation with support to discuss to decide whether I would take a certain position or not, I knew I was supported but, also colleagues at a certain level, at a very senior level also tell you that you can do it and that you should do it.” (P24)

Forming a theoretical model

Casting the elements in sequence results in a proposed process model called *Ineffective EC*. The hypothesised stages are shown in figure 5.3. The antecedent factors to ineffective EC are personal and organisational (box 1). Participants in this sample describe themselves as personally confident and benefiting from rich relationships and an upbringing which enabled them to cope with distress in their management roles. “I had a wonderful mentor, the coach had nothing to offer” (P7); “I had a very stable family situation” (P24); “I’m resilient ... I have a thick skin” (P25), suggesting that his upbringing protected him from some of the distress inherent in the manager role. The coach-coachee engagement (box 2) is on work challenges, not emotions, and is described as superficial: [the coach] “was on a superficial psychological level … too schematic and not personal enough” (P27). Participant 25 recalled that he was looking only for techniques but was disappointed in this wish: “I had hoped I would get more instruction” (P25); “the coach had no impact on me personally” (P8). The data for sample C suggest that, when roles (box 3) are not agreed, coaches take the role of adviser but, in the absence of emotional engagement in the alliance, coachees are sceptical of the advice offered: [The coach] “didn't seem to really understand the situation that I was describing” (P24); “I felt the coach was not really engaged with me, not really listening to me” (P7). The intervention (box 4) comprises cycles of advice which do not serve to produce results or to deepen the relationship (alliance). “I didn’t have … some specific difficulty that I could work through with the coach so it went nowhere” (P19); “I had 10 sessions and I thought I could have got more out of it … [but] it was only about tips and tricks.” The intervention ends (box 5) with a sense of disappointment. Participant 7 is a strong exemplar for this sample; she persisted to the end of her EC programme, described as “advice” that was “useless” (P7). The disappointment can be tempered by kindness for the coach’s efforts: “she tried her best but it had no effect” (P10); “it wasn’t all useless” (P33), “some of it was fun” (P17). In the aftermath (box 6), participants have hypotheses to explain the failure. Participants 17 and 27 concluded that they did not ‘fit’ with their coaches; “it was the wrong time for me” (P8); “it was too early on for me (P22); “I think I didn’t make enough effort” (P27).

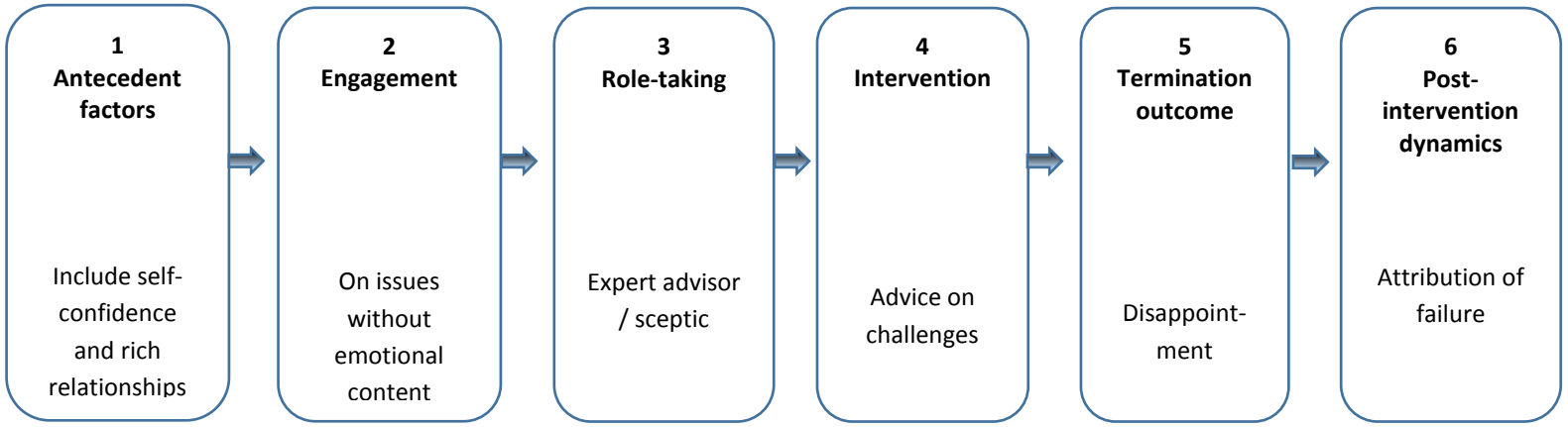


Figure 5.3: Process model for Ineffective EC

5.5 Findings

5.5.1 Long-term effects of EC

The long-term effects of EC revealed by the data involve 1) mental abilities, 2) attitudes and values and 3) affect. Participants describe improvements in their ability to understand themselves and others, ability to empathise with people and to take mental distance from problems, a more developed sense of proportion and priority, greater self-acceptance and sense of own potential, joy and pleasure at work and confidence in facing difficult situations. These enduring effects on mental functioning constitute transformative learning and development of coachees' identity as managers.

5.5.2 Short-term effects of EC

Outcomes which were effective in the short-term only comprised 1) practical learning, 2) strengthened sense of self and 3) action strategies to deal with current work challenges.

5.5.3 Ineffective EC

EC which was ineffective in the short and long terms comprised advice which was not valued by coachees.

5.5.4 Process model of variable EC outcomes

A process model, called the *Variable EC Outcome Model* (VECOM), is proposed to account for the different outcomes revealed by the data, involving long-term effects, short-term effects and no effects. Table 5.22 presents an overview of the model. The VECOM process begins with the question of engagement on the coachee's emotional state. EC held to be effective in the short or longer terms addressed aspects of the coachee's distress deriving from the management role, called 'executive suffering'. The data describe two dominant types of role agreement in coaching deemed effective, each associated with a different type of intervention and different outcomes. In "Transformation" EC, the coach took a role of 'eye-opener' to support the coachee in a process centred on self-awareness and identity development. This type of intervention led to enduring changes and the developmental processes continued after the end of the coaching. In "Reinforcement" EC, the coach took the role of teacher to build the coachee's confidence to confront current and foreseeable challenges. This type of intervention did not lead to enduring changes. Coaching interventions which proceeded without engagement on the coachee's emotional state comprised advice on challenges facing the coachee, advice which the coachee did not value, leading to "Ineffective EC".

5.5.5 Main theoretical assertions

- Emotion, and especially 'executive suffering' (chapter 4), is a factor in all effective EC. The suffering derives from the management role and has a private character. EC which does not address executive suffering is perceived to be ineffective by coachees.

- Executive suffering is an antecedent factor in explaining EC processes and outcomes but not a motivating factor in undertaking a first EC.
- When EC is effective, in the short or long term, the roles of coach and coachee are adopted in a micro-process which determines the nature of the intervention:
    - in *Transformation EC*, the coach supports the coachee in a process of inner personal discovery and change in response to ES;
    - in *Reinforcement EC*, the coach supports the coachee in a process of strengthening to prevail over the adversity causing ES.

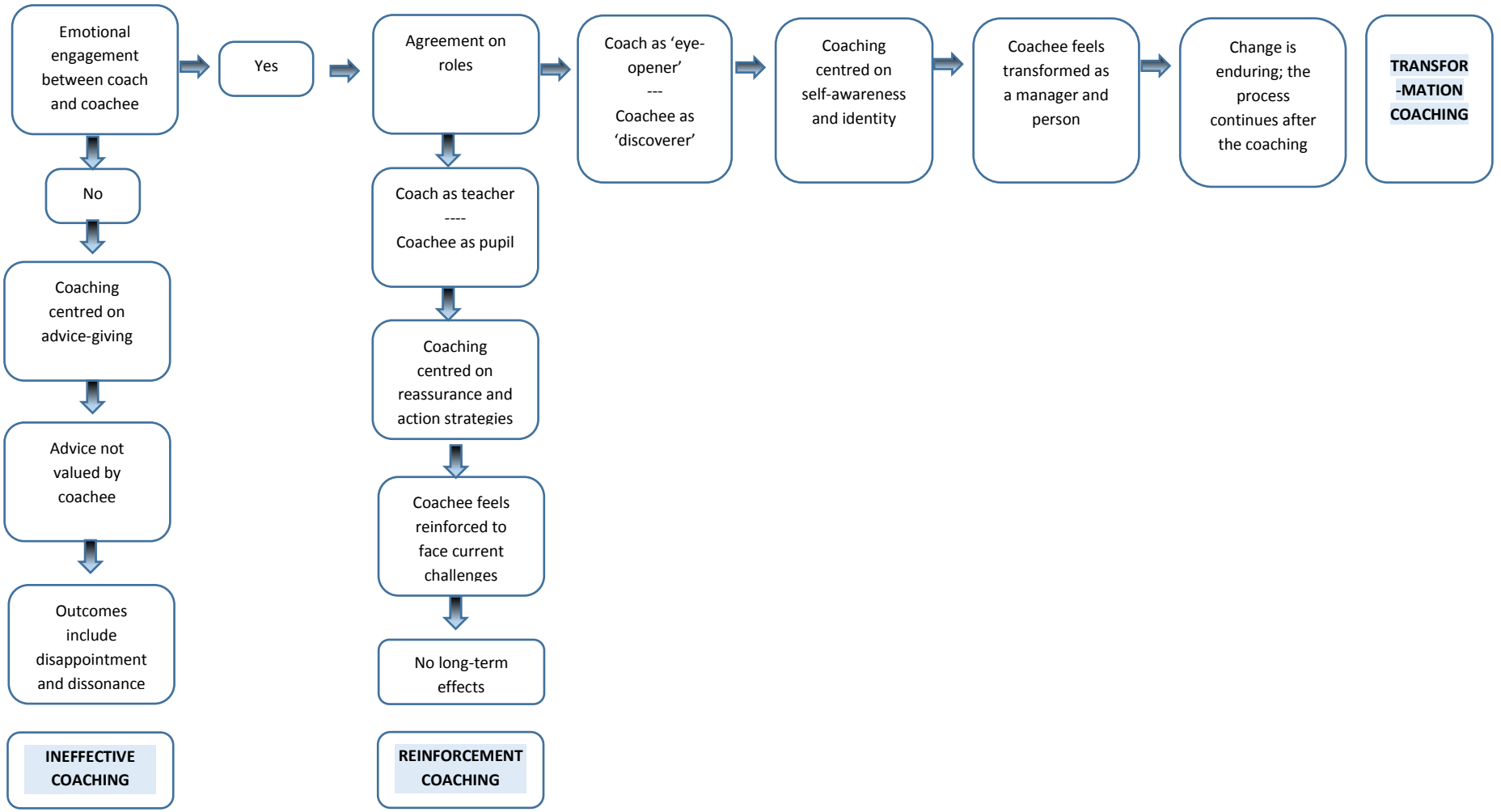


Figure 5.4: Process model of variable EC outcomes (VECOM)

5.6 Summary of analysis and transition to chapter 6

GT analysis of participants' management development accounts suggests that EC is one of several resources used to alleviate 'executive suffering', a process which participants associate with major management learning (chapter 4). Analysis of theoretical samples identified core processes leading to three distinct EC experiences, i.e. EC with long-term effects, EC with only short-term effects and ineffective EC (chapter 5). These processes are brought together in an overall process model which accounts for the three EC experiences sampled (table 5.22). The proposed processes and the theoretical assertions of chapters four and five are discussed in chapter six in relation to literatures on coaching, psychology and management.

Chapter 6 Discussion

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Recall of aim and objectives

The aim of this study was to develop theory, grounded in data, on the effectiveness of EC as an intervention to support the long-term development of managers.

The specific objectives were to:

- describe any long-term effects of executive coaching, and
- propose theoretical insights to explain how the effects of executive coaching unfold over time.

The research question was: *How do managers describe the place of executive coaching in the narrative of their overall development as managers?*

6.1.2 Summary of findings

The long-term effects of EC revealed by the data comprise transformational changes involving 1) improved mental abilities, 2) changed attitudes and values and 3) affective improvements. Participants describe improvements in their ability to understand themselves and others, ability to empathise with people and to take mental distance from problems, a more developed sense of proportion and priority, greater self-acceptance and sense of own potential, joy and pleasure at work and confidence in facing difficult situations. Process models grounded in the data (SAL and VECOM) situate EC relative to other resources used by managers to alleviate executive suffering and account for different EC effects. EC outcomes which were effective in the short-term only comprised 1) practical learning, 2) a strengthened sense of self, and 3) action strategies to deal with work challenges.

6.1.3 Findings in the light of the systematic literature review

The SR (chapter 2) found weak evidence in primary studies of EC effects persisting one month or longer from the end of the intervention. The effects reported in the retained studies involve changed behaviour, a strengthened sense of self, increased developmental readiness, improved self-reflective skills, insight and manager/leader identity formation. The SR did not identify any effects persisting beyond one year. Findings from the present empirical study (chapters 4 and 5) extend the SR findings significantly:

- Long-term EC effects (persisting beyond one year) are identified;
- Effects which were valued in the short-term but did not persist are identified;
- A process model is proposed to explain long-term and short-term EC effects.

This is the first empirical study to identify a coherent set of long-term and short-term EC effects, identify sub-processes of management learning to which EC contributes and offer a theoretical explanation of the observed phenomena grounded in participants' experiences. The discussion addresses the findings in relation to existing theory in the coaching, psychology and management literatures.

6.2 Findings in the light of the wider literature

6.2.1 The hypothesised construct of 'executive suffering' at the core of effective EC

The distress addressed in EC can be defined, following House and Rizzo (1972), as deeply private, negative feelings and physical symptoms contingent on exercise of management roles. Holding power and responsibility is inherently stressful (Boyatzis, Smith & Blaize, 2006). Change, which is central to managers' work, involves identity threat (Hoyer & Steyaert, 2015). Self-doubt, fear and confusion flow from identity threat (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Ibarra, Wittman, Petriglieri & Day, 2014) and the manager's lot also includes isolation and loneliness (De Vries, 1994), imposterism (Kuna, 2019) and stress (Grant et al., 2009). Executive suffering is not restricted to first-time managers and can arise from events such as conflict with a superior or shifting role expectations (Thomas & Linstead, 2002). The identification of executive suffering as a core component of effective EC challenges the view that EC is a positive intervention which can be neatly separated from therapeutic interventions (Seligman, 2007). The finding aligns with recent empirical investigations by Kirk, Richmond & Chaput's (2019) and Kuna (2019) which suggest that the most important benefits for coachees involved alleviation of negative emotions.

6.2.2 The variable EC outcome model (VECOM)

6.2.2.1 Antecedent factors

The findings make an important theoretical contribution by identifying a 'state' characteristic, executive suffering, as important factor in explaining EC outcomes. The extant literature has investigated personality traits as input factors but has failed to establish links to outcomes. Tee, Shearer & Roderique-Davies (2017), for example, studied coachees' core self-evaluations (Chang, Ferris, Johnson, Rosen & Tan, 2012) as predictors of EC outcomes but associations were not significant. De Haan, Grant, Burger et al. (2016) found that effectiveness of EC (as perceived by the coachee) was unrelated to coachee personality. Participants in the present study indicate antecedent factors including their upbringing, family situation, workplace relationships as well as distress related to exercise of the management role. Grant (2012) and Theeboom et al. (2017) propose motivation to change unwanted behaviour as an antecedent to EC, based on Prochaska and DiClemente's (1986) transtheoretical model of change. The present findings do not support this suggestion.

6.2.2.2 Engaging emotionally

The findings on emotional engagement challenge the literature which construes the early stage of EC as the coach constructing the coachee's motivation to undertake change (Theeboom et al., 2017). Theeboom et al. (2017) suggests that the coach deploys elements of self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2012) and intentional change theory (Boyatzis, 2006) at this stage in the process to reinforce the coachee's motivation for self-determination. Participants in the present study do not describe being motivated by the coach to pursue goals which they did not already embrace. The data instead suggest that coachee's motivation to benefit from the opportunity of EC is related to the emotional quality of the coaching alliance. The present findings are novel in suggesting that the coachee's *emotional* needs contingent on exercise of management roles are central to formation of the coaching alliance and the ultimate coaching outcomes. This suggestion is in line with the findings of de Haan et al. (2019) and Graßmann & Schermuly (2020) that the important factors driving the alliance reside in the coachee and extend these findings in suggesting a non-personality trait, 'executive suffering', as central to the process of alliance building.

6.2.2.3 Role-taking

The coaching literature generally presents coaches as versatile, adapting to the situation but is silent on the part of coachee in shaping the coaching process (de Haan & Nilsson, 2017). In identifying a limited set of coachee and coach roles and in describing the coachees' perceived part in shaping the process, the present findings challenge the extant literature and offer a theoretical lens, grounded in data, to understand the coach-coachee dynamic. 'Role' is a coherent set of behavioural expectations in a social system (Gecas, 1982). Katz and Kahn (1978) describe micro-processes of 'role-claiming', 'role-granting', 'role-sending' and 'role-taking' as part of the energy of a living, human system. Coultas and Salas (2015) describe role-claiming behaviours by coaches (introducing self as a coach, particular dress style, attitudes and confidence) but do not address the process of claiming and granting roles for different types of coaching. De Haan (2019) concluded, from a SR of qualitative research, that the coach-coachee relationship serves also to achieve agreement on goals. The present findings contribute to a knowledge gap identified by Graßmann and Schermuly (2020) by offering an original insight into the role specifically of coachees *who are managers* in shaping the coaching alliance.

6.2.2.4 The EC intervention: a two treatments hypothesis

The finding that the term EC masks two types of intervention challenges the validity of much EC outcome research to-date. The data revealed that each instance of effective EC could be categorised into one or other of two intervention types based on participants' recall of the content of the coaching and description of the role of the coach. In this finding the data support the prediction by Gray (2006) that two coaching approaches would lead to different effects over time but the present study appears

to be the first to supply evidence of this phenomenon. One approach, called 'psychotherapeutic coaching', would address underlying motivations; the other approach, called 'skill-building', would address specific competence deficits (Gray, 2006). The two-treatment hypothesis is further in line with Arnaud's (2003) prediction that psychanalytically oriented coaching would not mix with practical guidance as the practical help would merely delay the emergence for coachees of important truths about themselves.

6.2.2.5 Transformation EC – building managerial identity

Analysis of the data for sample A – enduring effects – elucidates the process of identity building within this type of EC and the findings align with accounts of transformation and identity work in the wider psychology literature. Transformative learning (Mezirow, 1978) involves identity development and the two constructs may refer to the same underlying phenomena of forming, reinforcing or repairing personal psychological constructions (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003; Winkler, 2018). Identity work is usually framed as repair and the motivating factors to undertake it include components akin to executive suffering, including frustration (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003; Sveningsson & Larsson, 2006), anxiety (Ibarra & Petriglieri, 2016), discomfort (Watson, 2008), insecurity (LaPointe, 2013) and loneliness (De Vries, 1994; Kuna, 2019). The present findings support the suggestion that EC may be particularly effective in supporting women in developing a manager identity (Debebe, 2011; Lackritz et al., 2019). There is evidence that women and men experience the formation of a leader identity differently on the basis that leadership is imbued with masculine norms and symbols (Bonneywell, 2017; Debebe, 2011; Ely, Ibarra & Kolb, 2011). Skinner (2014) invokes social identity theory to explain the specific contribution EC made to her female participants in embracing leader identities, offering a safe environment for transformation (Debebe, 2011; Hogg, 2016; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Looking beyond gender, the data and the literature suggest that EC may have major potential in supporting integration into management of non-prototypical groups (Ibarra et al., 2014). The implications for practice and research are developed in chapters 6 and 7. In specifying 'Transformation EC' the findings offer a theoretical framework for understanding conditions for use of techniques of psychoanalytic inquiry in EC. The coaching literature recognises overlap between EC and psychotherapy (De Vries, 2016; Grant & Green, 2018; Kilburg, 2016) and that the overlap can occasion concern (Berglas, Graf, 2012). Graf (2012) describes the processing of emotional distress in EC as "translation of the therapeutic habitus" into the organisational domain (p. 23). This may involve disingenuity or even deception, if the therapeutic reflection, of which managers are typically wary, is introduced covertly (Arnaud, 2003; Judge & Cowell, 1997). This finding has implications for the ethical framing of EC as well as for the qualification of executive coaches. These are addressed, with recommendations for practice, in chapter 7.

6.2.2.6 Reinforcement EC – learning and resourcing

Analysis of data for sample B (EC with short-term effects) supports the notion that coaching is a positive intervention into the coachee's cognitive appraisal of psychological resources (Folkman & Lazarus, 1984; Hobfoll, 2002) but the findings challenge the conventional framing of the coach as a facilitator rather than teacher (Cox et al., 2014; Passmore et al., 2013). A potentially important contribution is the finding that effective non-therapeutic coaching involves mental reinforcement in addtion to skill-building (Gray, 2006). Caution is required in interpreting these data as participants may have attributed solutions which emerged in the coaching dyad to the coach's 'teaching'. However, the present findings align with recent suggestions that EC in practice involves more information giving and behavioural prescription than coaches themselves realise (de Haan & Nilsson, 2017; Gessnitzer et al., 2016). In specifying 'Reinforcement EC' the findings offer a theoretical framework for understanding conditions for use of expert knowledge within EC, which in turn has important implications for the training of coaches. These implications are translated into recommendations, presented in chapter 7.

6.2.2.7 Outcomes on termination of the intervention

The data reveal that all effective EC interventions share one common outcome, a strengthened sense of self, described in terms of self-confidence, belief in self and confirmation of self, findings which align with the SR (chapter 2). The most robust finding in outcome studies is an increase in coachee self-efficacy at the end of the intervention (Baron & Morin, 2010; Bozer & Jones, 2018). The present findings offer a novel interpretation of the ubiquity in quantitative research of the self-efficacy finding, suggesting that it is a *momentarily* shared outcome of different coaching processes, each of which evolves differently following the intervention. The data thus challenge the practical value of self-efficacy as a short-term outcome measure on its own. In extremis increased general self-efficacy could reinforce attitudes and behaviours which are not in the interest of the organisation or the manager in the longer term. The findings suggest that measures at the end of EC should assess first whether the intervention had a transformational or a reinforcement character, second the specific self-efficacies changed by this coaching and, finally, the value of the improved self-efficacy in the context of the manager's longer-term development and the organisation's needs.

6.2.2.8 Post-intervention dynamics

The SR (chapter 2) showed that there has been little investigation of the period subsequent to EC. The findings support suggestions that skills of reflection, self-appraisal and insight acquired in coaching endure in the longer term and maintain changes brought about by EC (Gallimore et al., 2014; Theeboom et al., 2017; Spence, Stout-Roston et al., 2019). Data from sample A (Transformation EC) thus align with the notions of transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1978), double-loop learning (Argyris, 1976) and identity development (Illeris, 2014). The findings challenge the suggestion that self-

efficacy gains in EC endure in the period following the intervention. Possible explanations are that the gains were more specific than general (Bandura, 1977; Schwarzer, 2014) or that there were indeed continuing benefits mediated by improved self-efficacy which participants do not attribute to the coaching. These findings have implications for the strategic use of EC by organisations. These implications are elaborated, with recommendations, in chapter 7.

6.3 Quality and limitations

6.3.1 Trustworthiness of findings

Validity and reliability are the keys to robust design in all research but there is a long-running debate about how to apply these to qualitative inquiry and to GT in particular (Creswell et al., 2007; Parry, 1998). For many qualitative researchers, credibility is preferred to internal validity to signify that a 'true' picture of the phenomenon under scrutiny is being presented in the research (Shenton, 2004). In the social sciences, however, 'true' means the best approximation to the truth (Parry, 1998). In the present investigation internal validity was enhanced notably by the following measures and features:

- applying an established methodology, Straussian GT, and using constant comparison in the analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Glaser & Strauss, 1967);
- researcher familiarity with the organisational context (Creswell et al., 2007),
- seeking maximum internal variety in the participant sample (Saldaña, 2013),
- collecting data wider than the phenomenon of interest, inter alia to avoid biased accounts from participants (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018), and
- member-checking of key data (Shenton, 2004).

Reliability or dependability is problematic in qualitative research (Shenton, 2004; Parry, 1998). To mitigate the risks, the present study is described in detail such that a future researcher can repeat the process (Böhm, 2004; Lee et al., 1999). The analysis steps are made transparent in chapter 3; chapters 4 and 5 seek to present the steps towards abstraction as extensively as possible without compromising readability (Bowers & Schatzman, 2021; Böhm, 2004). Theory generated in the present study fits with the extant literature described in chapter 2, while refining and extending many aspects; this is suggested by Parry (1998) as an indicator of reliability in GT findings. The aim of the study was to gain theoretical insights which could be tested in other organisational settings, while recognising that the findings are not generalisable to other populations (Parry, 1998). The research account has been framed, therefore, to provide sufficient detail relating to the organisational context and the participants (appendix 2) for future readers to judge the utility of testing the emergent theory in their particular settings (Shenton, 2004).

6.3.2 Limitations

Limitations inherent in GT

The fragmentation and re-assembly of data on which GT is based is condemned by Denzin and Lincoln (2005) as antithetical to a core value of qualitative research, remaining true to holistic individual experience. This is a fine line to tread: the big picture of the study can get lost in the fracturing process of coding (Grbich, 2012). However, if the data are not fractured enough, important insights may be not be gained (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). GT can aim at generalisability beyond the population studied only at the level of theory (Bluhm, Harman, Lee & Mitchell, 2011). Straussian GT in particular is oriented towards the natural science paradigm of scientific inquiry but the practice of GT methods includes an element of 'art' (Scott, 2004), with researchers encouraged to use devices such as creativity (Böhm, 2004) and metaphors (Kempster & Parry, 2011) in both the analysis and presentation of findings.

Specific limitations in the present study

Adherence to 'Straussian' GT prescriptions in every aspect is not feasible for most individual researchers working under time constraints. Lee et al. (1999) report that none of the GT articles they studied in the area of work psychology met the purity standards of Strauss and Corbin's (1998) prescriptions. In purist GT, for example, data should be collected uncontaminated by existing theory, a situation scarcely possible in the case of university supervised research where admission requires a literature review (Carmichael & Cunningham, 2017). For the present study, pre-existing ideas were bracketed out in so far as possible. Researchers, however, are complex beings and may have theoretical and epistemological positions deeply internalised and difficult to access consciously (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Henwood & Pidgeon, 1992).

Sampling involved compromise. A choice had to be made between two factors, each of which is a source of credibility: random sampling or familiarity (Shenton, 2004). Familiarity was judged more important and purposive sampling was used in order to exploit pre-existing relationships with executives in the hope of obtaining rich data. The data were sufficiently rich for saturation to be achieved across all four analyses as demonstrated in chapters 5 and 6. All analyses showed strong inductive thematic saturation, the point from which further analysis produced no new codes (Saunders et al., 2018). The use of theoretical sampling was constrained by practical considerations, as new participants were not available and calling further on the time of existing, busy participants was not appropriate. Theoretical saturation was achieved for the insights and assertions presented in section 5.18 but further theoretical sampling could have added to the range of constructs identified (Saunders et al., 2018).

The study design was retrospective and relied entirely on coachee voices and memories. Perspectives which could challenge or support coachee accounts, such as coaches, line managers, colleagues or

team members, were not used (de Haan & Duckworth, 2013). Participants who abandoned EC before completing the full EC programme could probably offer different insights. The similarity of patterns embedded in the individual stories could reflect the operation of systematic recall biases; the almost universal recall of distress as part of a positive learning episode might, for example, reflect an optimism bias typical of successful managers (Bracha & Brown, 2012). The participants at the time of the interview were survivors in a difficult environment, where many of their colleague managers had stepped down, been removed or fallen ill. Derailed or burned-out managers might well recall their suffering differently. Scholars suggest that national and wider societal cultures shape managers' attitude to EC (Bozer & Delegach, 2019; Rosinski, 2010). All participants were European or British, all were educated to university level and all worked in organisations which were willing to invest in their long-term development.

6.4 Transition to chapter 7

The findings cast effective EC as an umbrella term covering two different experiences, one transformative of the self, the other fortifying of the self without transformation. The nature of each EC intervention is decided jointly by the coach and coachee in a micro-process of role-taking, with coachee emotions as the focal issue. These assertions challenge assumptions which underlie coaching practice, including selection and training of coaches and ethical marketing of EC to organisations and managers. The findings further suggest that the executive suffering addressed in EC can be mitigated by changes in organisational practices. These implications are addressed, with recommendations, in the following chapter.

Chapter 7 Implications for practice

7.1 Introduction

The findings indicate that EC can help managers to address the distress associated with performance of their management roles, called 'executive suffering' (ES), in two major ways, by helping them to change internally (Transformation EC) or to prevail over the adversity without themselves changing (Reinforcement EC). The findings also suggest that EC is but one of several resources available to managers in confronting ES, all of which generate learning. The findings have implications for the management of organisations and for the optimal use of EC. Recommendations are addressed, therefore, to people and bodies responsible for the strategic design of organisations as well as for the EC profession.

7.2 Organisational implications

7.2.1 EC and its analogues

The findings indicate that EC is a response to problems which are created, at least in part, by organisational functioning. The data suggest that EC meets needs which can also be served by practices embedded in the working of the organisation. These practices identified in the analysis of participant accounts are called 'analogues of EC'. The matrix in 4.9 suggests, for example, that the sub-process of EC *Discovering it's not just me* is served not only by EC but also by authentic conversations with peers and advice from friend-mentors. Likewise, *Self-discovery* is served by private reflection and positive feedback as well as by EC. Among the resources for handling executive suffering EC has the salient disadvantage of being only occasionally available, while the analogues of EC are for the main part embedded in the fabric of the organisation and continuously available. By way of illustration, participants in the overall sample had EC on average 1.42 times during 18 years in management, or once in twelve years. The benefits reported from EC, however, correspond to ongoing needs, such as taking mental distance from problems, maintaining a sense of own worth and developing strategies to deal with manor challenges. Only one of the identified EC outcomes has a character of being rare, perhaps only once in a career: development of a manager identity. The data describe alleviation of executive suffering within normal organisational functioning. "I knew I was supported, also by colleagues at a certain level, at a very senior level, who tell you that you can do it and that you should do it" (P24). "I was lucky, everybody helped me. I had good big bosses too. Very supportive. [Name] helped me; he was calm, strict, human; he was my right hand man until he retired and I still meet him for lunch" (P26). "Proximity to someone you admire" [alleviates distress] (P33). The findings suggest that the need for EC will be less if organisations operate in ways which create less executive suffering and/or enable it to be processed within the organisation's normal functioning. Measures could include

deployment of slack resources (Daniel, Lohrke, Fornaciari & Turner, 2004) to reduce work pressure and to promote occasions of connection between managers in order to process the effects of pressure, reinforcing thereby the organisation's sentient systems (Gregg, 2018; Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2010). At the time of writing there are suggestions that the Covid-19 pandemic may spur scientists and managers to see workplaces again in less individualistic terms and embrace the value of meaning and relationships for organisational performance as well as human well-being (Pérez-Nebra et al., 2021), with coaching models adapted to the challenges – and opportunities – consequent on the pandemic (Panchal, Palmer & O'Riordan, 2020).

7.2.2 Using EC strategically

Data from the present study indicate that coachees' organisations played little part in EC beyond encouraging uptake and paying. Calls for organisational considerations to shape the content of individual coaching interventions, through tripartite contracting, for example, are likely to systematically fall short of expectations, given that confidentiality within the coaching dyad is a defining characteristic of EC (Pliopas, 2018; Stevens, 2005). In distinguishing between Transformation and Reinforcement EC the findings offer a way for organisations use EC strategically while being remote from the process. The type of EC on offer (Transformation or Reinforcement or both) should be transparent to both potential coachees and to their organisations, so that informed choices can be made by both parties. Larsson et al. (2020) argue that transformative learning, with a character of liberation from conventional constraints, may not always be in the interest of either the organisation or individual managers, because of the risk of provoking disengagement. Similarly, a programme of Reinforcement EC may not be a cost-effective way to support managers in dealing with current challenges.

The findings challenge the categorisation of EC interventions as either remedial or developmental. Almost all the interventions described by participants were nominally developmental, yet their effectiveness was attributed to their addressing problems which were often deep and distressing. The data suggest that managers had *private* issues which needed remedy independently of the managers' organisational performance. By definition, these private concerns will not be easily shared with line management or HR colleagues as part of planning an EC intervention. Organisations can and should recognise that EC addresses executive suffering, without requiring the specific suffering be revealed. Such openness could be part of a wider recognition by organisations of the distress inherent in the manager role (Kuna, 2019).

The findings suggest that EC can help coachees overcome barriers to identification with the manager role. 'Not wanting to be like them' emerged from the analysis as a component of executive suffering, as did the assertion by women that becoming a manager was more difficult for them. The findings

suggest that EC helped participants to identify with the management group while remaining true to themselves: “I learned that you can remain human” (P39). Identity work is deeply personal and EC, thanks to its intense individual focus, may be particularly effective in supporting identity development (Brown, 2015; Coultas & Salas, 2015). The value of EC in helping women embrace management identities invites speculation that it could offer a safe space for individual identity work by managers from other historically excluded groups (Debebe, 2011).

7.3 Implications for the executive coaching profession

7.3.1 Selection and training of executive coaches

The findings contribute to the debate on professional formation of executive coaches. The professionalisation of the executive coach role over the past 20 years has led to coaches being qualified based on behavioural competencies rather than on professional belonging (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2015). There is an ongoing debate which confronts the ‘coaching psychologist’ with the non-psychologist coach, experienced in organisations, who has been trained in coaching skills and adheres to a voluntary ethical framework (Brotman, Liberi & Wasylyshyn, 1998; Palmer & Whybrow, 2006). The present findings suggest that both profiles are required – but in proportions which vary greatly depending on the intervention. It may even be that psychological techniques alone suffice when EC is essentially transformational. The findings indicate that effective coaching involved processes of deep reflection, including work on unconscious personality forces (Bono et al., 2009). There is an important ethical dimension concerning coaches without clinical expertise working at this level, even if the present data are silent on this concern (Berglas, 2002). Independent of formal qualification, the findings support the importance of key human qualities and human skills in selection of coaches for admission to training, such as empathy and compassion.

In Reinforcement EC, the data suggest that coaches possessed and used a rich knowledge of management and organisation. Participants in sample C, ineffective EC, describe the coach as deficient in this knowledge. Coach training currently involves acquisition of coaching techniques and some psychological knowledge but does not systematically include a knowledge component on management and organisation (Grant & O’Hara, 2008; Yanchus, Muhs & Osatuke, 2020). There may be an assumption that management knowledge was gained before becoming coaches. Overall, the findings suggest that EC is more than simply generic coaching given to managers. Providers of coach training and accreditation should recognise the coaching of managers as a distinct specialisation and ensure that people certified as *executive* coaches are competent in the content of management as well as in the techniques of coaching.

7.3.2 Ethics

The findings have relevance for the ongoing debate on the ethics of using techniques from psychoanalytic therapy in EC (Berglas, 2002; Gebhardt, 2016; Kilburg, 2004). Many EC approaches use therapeutic models (Harakas, 2013; Peltier, 2011) but their use is not always transparent to clients or to the paying organisations (Arnaud, 2003; Gebhardt, 2016). Data in the present investigation suggest that 'Transformation EC' (sample A) shares core features with therapeutic interventions. The proposed process model further casts doubt on the capacity of a contract drawn up before the intervention to determine the nature of an intervention which has not yet taken form. The model points to two stages where transparency can be reinforced: first, in the antecedent stage, when potential coachees understand little of what EC has to offer, the potential for deep, personal exploration, using techniques from psychoanalytic therapy, should be included in descriptions of the EC on offer; second, at the role-taking stage, the coach should clarify with the coachee the kinds of techniques which will be employed for the remainder of the intervention.

7.4 Summary of recommendations for practice and transition to chapter 8

Practice recommendations are addressed to people and bodies responsible for the design of organisations and management of the coaching profession.

1. Organisations should review operating processes with a view to identifying the causes of the executive suffering which managers describe as a preeminent factor in their developmental experience.
2. Whether offering EC or not, organisations should recognise the potential of the analogues of EC to reduce executive suffering and promote management development. The data point to the following analogues: authentic conversations with peers; family support; advice from friend-mentors; private reflection; lived experience; positive feedback; personalised leadership training; conventional training; reading, observing other managers.
3. In a context of limited resources, EC should be used primarily to address issues that have a once-only or rare character. In this context, the data and findings suggest that managers should have priority access Transformation EC when they are experiencing distress related to embracing the identity of manager.
4. In offering EC, organisations and EC suppliers should inform potential coachees of the range and natures of outcomes associated with the intervention (as opposed to marketing messages or maintaining mystique).
5. During an EC intervention, whether or not a coaching contract has been agreed, the coach should review outcome expectations with the coachee once role-taking has been accomplished and the nature of the remainder of the intervention is clear to the coach.

6. When an EC intervention is evolving to include elements of psychoanalytic therapy, this evolution should be recognised overtly in the coaching dyad.
7. Selection, training and governance arrangements should be reviewed to ensure that executive coaches are qualified to a high level in both coaching psychology and management practice as well as possessing the human qualities required to work with coachees (Berglas, 2002).

Chapter 8 is addressed primarily to the research community. It summarises the knowledge contribution of the present study and suggests directions for further investigation.

Chapter 8 Conclusions

8.1 Achievement of objectives

The objectives were to identify any long-lasting individual effects of executive coaching and to propose theoretical insights to explain how individual EC effects unfold over time. Long-lasting outcomes have been identified and a process model is proposed to account for the generation of EC effects that persist over time, effects that do not persist as well as ineffective EC.

8.2 Originality

To the knowledge of the author this is the first investigation grounded in data to:

- describe and analyse perceived long-term effects of executive coaching;
- associate perceived persistent effects systematically with factors within the coaching intervention;
- identify key factors driving the coaching alliance from data specific to coaching of managers,
- identify sub-processes of management learning to which EC contributes, and
- specify analogues of EC in organisational functioning.

The findings comprise the following novel assertions grounded in participant data:

1. All effective EC addresses difficult emotions which are contingent on exercise of the manager role.
2. Each EC intervention is co-constructed by the coach and the coachee in a process involving role-taking.
3. The term EC masks two distinct intervention types, each of which is effective in its context.
4. Only one type of EC is associated with long-term effects.
5. EC contributes to several learning processes but does not have a unique role in management development.

8.3 Fit with the literature

The systematic review (chapter 2) investigated the what, why and how of enduring EC effects in the extant literature. The SR identified primary studies with empirical evidence of EC effects persisting one month or longer from the end of the coaching. The enduring effects were synthesised as were the theoretical constructs invoked to explain the effects.

8.3.1 Which EC effects endure?

The empirical findings extend the SR findings significantly by specifying EC effects which endure in the long-term. These are summarised in table 8.1. The present investigation contributes further by identifying outcomes which were effective in the short-term only as acquisition of action strategies, practical learning and gains in self-confidence.

Table 8.1: Which EC effects endure?

Enduring effects of EC identified in the SR	Enduring effects of EC identified in the empirical research	Conceptual category
Changed behaviour Strengthened sense of self Increased developmental readiness Improved self-reflective skills Insight Manager/leader identity formation	Improved ability to understand self and others; reflex to be self-aware Ability to empathise with others Ability to take mental distance from problems	Mental abilities
	New perspectives, sense of proportion and priorities; mental distance from problems Self-acceptance, value of self and own potential Acceptance of others	Changed attitudes and values
	Confidence in self Joy in life and work; pride in role Consonance between self and role Less fearful	Affective outcomes

8.3.2 How and why do EC effects endure?

The SR (Chapter 2) synthesised 51 researcher insights involving explanation of EC outcomes which persisted five weeks or longer from the end of the intervention. Findings from the empirical investigation extend these insights and elucidate the processes leading to enduring effects from EC in terms of factors within the intervention. EC with perceived long-term effects is specified in terms of sub-processes and analogues of EC are identified. These findings represent a major advance in understanding contextual factors affecting EC outcomes.

8.4 Practical value

The insights and findings are translated into recommendations addressed to strategic organisational leaders and professional organisations active in the EC domain. The knowledge and insights should help EC to be deployed optimally in growing the next generation of managers.

8.5 Further research

8.5.1 Testing the present findings

The assertions from the present investigation can be tested using different research strategies. The following are proposed as priorities.

8.5.1.1 Coachee characteristics

The findings are further evidence that the most important success factors for EC reside within the coachee (de Haan, 2019), yet research in this matter has dwelt mainly on static coachee factors such as gender and personality and has not yielded useful explanations (de Haan et al., 2016; Graßmann & Schermuly, 2020). Framing coachee characteristics dynamically will embrace state as well as trait factors and explore their operation throughout the EC process, and beyond. Case-studies can capture many of the variables likely to be operating, in building the relationship with the coach, for example, and quantitative approaches using psychometric data can test emergent hypotheses.

8.5.1.2 Micro processes within EC

The proposed VECOM process suggests that important micro-processes occur at two points in an EC intervention, initial emotional engagement and role-taking by the coach. These micro-processes will be difficult to access in natural settings, i.e. during actual coaching sessions. Data should include audio and video recordings collected transparently, recognising the risk to the authenticity of the processes being observed. Intrusive investigation should be complemented by qualitative data from coaches and coachees on the effects of having the sessions recorded or observed.

8.5.1.3 Different interventions

The GT findings suggest that effective EC involves two distinct interventions, thereby implying that much extant quantitative outcome research is confounded. The proposed difference between the two

interventions should be investigated, using independent-measures designs in naturally occurring groups. The essential components of each intervention (internal exploration versus practical advice) constitute the important independent variables.

8.5.1.4 Practice analogues of EC within the organisation

The GT findings suggest that EC meets human and developmental goals which are also served by organisational practices, not necessarily HR-led. The analogues of EC suggest that strengthening the sentient systems of organisations could deliver for managers some of the benefits of EC on an ongoing basis (Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2010). The study has identified practice analogues such as having a friend-mentor and the opportunity for authentic conversations with peers. Case-studies can deepen understanding of these analogues and cross-sectional designs can identify correlations between features of the workplace, recourse to EC and outcomes of EC.

8.5.1.5 The place of suffering

The ubiquity of executive suffering in the data suggests that suffering is a driver of managers' development, with EC processes utilising this energy. However, the place of suffering in management life has received little scholarly attention (Kuna, 2019). This research area has potentially important implications wider than EC.

8.5.2 Persisting overall knowledge gaps

8.5.2.1 Role of the organisation in EC

The organisational voice is absent in EC research (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018). Finding the organisational voice, as distinct from the voice of executive coachees in their management role, may answer the fundamental question of who EC is for (Fillery-Travis & Cox, 2014). This work could also elucidate processual issues antecedent and subsequent to coaching interventions, such as incentives to undertake EC, evaluation by the organisation of its outcomes and the place of EC in modern corporate culture. Given the almost total absence of knowledge and theory in this field, these investigations call for exploratory qualitative approaches, primarily GT, open to unexpected discoveries (Böhm, 2004).

8.5.2.2 Formation of the coaching alliance

To date, quantitative analyses of factors such as personality, experience, attitudes and similarity have failed to explain formation of the coaching alliance (Graßmann & Schermuly, 2020). The present findings support the primacy of the coachee in shaping the alliance and extend the meta-analytic findings of Graßmann & Schermuly (2020) with data-based insights into alliance formation specifically where coachees are managers. The data describe manager-coachees consciously influencing the role of their coaches but these data are from coachees only. Further research should investigate alliance

building using data from coaches also and address the micro-processes of alliance building (Graßmann & Schermuly, 2020).

8.5.2.3 EC and acquisition of manager identity by historically and culturally excluded groups

The data support the assertion by Skinner (2014) and Lackritz et al., (2019) that EC has unique advantages in supporting women managers in contexts where leadership symbols and discourse are predominantly masculine. Qualitative and mixed methods of investigation can test this hypothesis and case-studies can elucidate the processes involved, including the value of EC in helping different, non-prototypical groups to overcome barriers to identification with management.

8.5.2.4 Long-term well-being outcomes

The SR found no primary research on long-term well-being outcomes of EC. Participant accounts in the present study echo empirical research findings linking EC to a range of well-being benefits in the short-term, such as resilience, positive affect and optimism (Grant et al., 2009; Green, Oades & Grant, 2006; Ladegård & Gjerde, 2014; Ladegård, 2011; Yu, Collins, Cavanagh, White & Fairbrother, 2008). Participants in sample A, not knowing that the research was about EC, asserted that well-being effects from their EC were still present at the time of the interview, several years after the intervention. If supported by longitudinal studies this finding alone will confirm *Transformation EC* as a precious contribution to a manager's lifelong development.

References

Adams, M. (2016). Coaching psychology: An approach to practice for educational psychologists. Educational Psychology in Practice, 32(3), 231-244.

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes, 50*(2), 179-211.

Alge, B. J., Ballinger, G. A., Tangirala, S., & Oakley, J. L. (2006). Information privacy in organizations: Empowering creative and extrarole performance. *Journal of applied psychology, 91*(1), 221.

Alvesson, M., & Willmott, H. (2002). Identity regulation as organizational control: Producing the appropriate individual. *Journal of management studies, 39*(5), 619-644.

Anthony, E. L. (2017). The impact of leadership coaching on leadership behaviors. *The Journal of Management Development, 36*(7), 930-939. doi:10.1108/JMD-06-2016-0092

Argyris, C. (1977). Double loop learning in organizations. *Harvard Business Review, 55*(5), 115-125.

Arnaud, G. (2003). A coach or a couch? A Lacanian perspective on executive coaching and consulting. *Human relations, 56*(9), 1131-1154.

Arnold, K. A., & Loughlin, C. (2010). Individually considerate transformational leadership behaviour and self sacrifice. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*.

Athanasopoulou, A., & Dopson, S. (2015). *Developing leaders by executive coaching: Practice and evidence*: OUP Oxford.

Athanasopoulou, A., & Dopson, S. (2018). A systematic review of executive coaching outcomes: Is it the journey or the destination that matters the most?(Report). *The Leadership Quarterly, 29*(1), 70. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2017.11.004

Avolio, B., & Bass, B. (2004). Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. Redwood City. *CA: Mind Garden*.

Avolio, B. J. (2010). *Full range leadership development*: Sage Publications.

Avolio, B. J., & Gardner, W. L. (2005). Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership. *The leadership quarterly, 16*(3), 315-338.

Axelrod, S. D. (2012). "Self-Awareness": At the Interface of Executive Development and Psychoanalytic Therapy. *Psychoanal. Inq., 32*(4), 340-357. doi:10.1080/07351690.2011.609364

Baer, D. M., & Stolz, S. B. (1978). A description of the Erhard seminars training (est) in the terms of behavior analysis. *Behaviorism, 6*(1), 45-70.

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological review, 84*(2), 191.

Bandura, A. (2001). SOCIAL COGNITIVE THEORY: An Agentic Perspective. *Annu. Rev. Psychol., 52*(1), 1-26. doi:10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.1

Bandura, A. (2005). The evolution of social cognitive theory. *Great minds in management*, 9-35.

Bandura, A., & Cervone, D. (1983). Self-evaluative and self-efficacy mechanisms governing the motivational effects of goal systems. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 45*(5), 1017.

Baron, L., & Morin, L. (2009). The coach-coachee relationship in executive coaching: A field study. *Human Resource Development Quarterly, 20*(1), 85-106.

Baron, L., & Morin, L. (2010). The impact of executive coaching on self-efficacy related to management soft-skills. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 31*(1), 18-38. doi:10.1108/01437731011010362

Baron, L., Morin, L., & Morin, D. (2011). Executive coaching: The effect of working alliance discrepancy on the development of coachees' self-efficacy. *Journal of Management Development*.

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*: Collier Macmillan.

Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1997). Full range leadership development. *Manual for the multifactor leadership questionnaire. California: Mind Garden*.

Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational leadership*: Psychology press.

Bates, R., & Chen, H.-C. (2004). Human resource development value orientations: a construct validation study. *Human Resource Development International, 7*(3), 351-370. doi:10.1080/1367886042000218031

Bennett, J. L., & Bush, M. W. (2013). *Coaching for change*: Routledge.

Berger, J. G. (2011). *Changing on the job: Developing leaders for a complex world*: Stanford University Press.

Berglas, S. (2002). The very real dangers of executive coaching. *Harvard business review, 80*(6), 86-92, 153.

Blackman, A., Moscardo, G., & Gray, D. E. (2016). Challenges for the theory and practice of business coaching: A systematic review of empirical evidence. *Human Resource Development Review, 15*(4), 459-486.

Blau, P. M. (1968). Social exchange. International encyclopedia of the social sciences, 7(4), 452-457.

Bluckert, P. (2005). Critical factors in executive coaching–the coaching relationship. *Industrial and Commercial Training*.

Bluhm, D. J., Harman, W., Lee, T. W., & Mitchell, T. R. (2011). Qualitative research in management: A decade of progress. *Journal of Management Studies, 48*(8), 1866-1891.

Boddy, C. R. (2016). Sample size for qualitative research. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*.

Bonneywell, S. (2017). How a coaching intervention supports the development of female leaders in a global organisation. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*(S11), 57-69.

Bono, J. E., Purvanova, R. K., Towler, A. J., & Peterson, D. B. (2009). A survey of executive coaching practices. *Personnel Psychology, 62*(2), 361-404.

Boudrias, J.-S., Desrumaux, P., Gaudreau, P., Nelson, K., Brunet, L., & Savoie, A. (2011). Modeling the experience of psychological health at work: The role of personal resources, social-organizational resources, and job demands. *International Journal of Stress Management, 18*(4), 372-395. doi:10.1037/a0025353

Bowers, B. J., & Schatzman, L. (2021). Dimensional analysis. In *Developing grounded theory* (pp. 111-129): Routledge.

Boyatzis, R. E. (2006). An overview of intentional change from a complexity perspective. *Journal of management development*.

Boyatzis, R. E., Smith, M. L., & Blaize, N. (2006). Developing Sustainable Leaders Through Coaching and Compassion. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 5*(1), 8-24. doi:10.5465/AMLE.2006.20388381

Bozer, G., & Baek-Kyoo, J. (2015). The Effects of Coachee Characteristics and Coaching Relationships on Feedback Receptivity and Self-Awareness in Executive Coaching. *International Leadership Journal, 7*(3), 36-58.

Bozer, G., & Delegach, M. (2019). Bringing Context to Workplace Coaching: A Theoretical Framework Based on Uncertainty Avoidance and Regulatory Focus. *Human Resource Development Review, 18*(3), 376-402. doi:10.1177/1534484319853098

Bozer, G., & Jones, R. J. (2018). Understanding the factors that determine workplace coaching effectiveness: a systematic literature review. *European Journal of Work & Organizational Psychology, 27*(3), 342-361. doi:10.1080/1359432X.2018.1446946

Bracha, A., & Brown, D. J. (2012). Affective decision making: A theory of optimism bias. *Games and Economic Behavior, 75*(1), 67-80.

Brand, H., & Coetzee, M. (2013). An Explorative Study of the Experiences of the Coach and Coachee during Executive Coaching. *Journal of Social Sciences, 34*(3), 247-256. doi:10.1080/09718923.2013.11893136

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology, 3*(2), 77-101.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: A practical guide for beginners*: sage.

Brewer, M. B., & Gardner, W. (1996). Who is this" We"? Levels of collective identity and self representations. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 71*(1), 83.

Brief, A. P., & Motowidlo, S. J. (1986). Prosocial organizational behaviors. *Academy of management Review, 11*(4), 710-725.

Brock, V. G. (2018). The Roots and Evolution of Coaching. *Professional Coaching: Principles and Practice*.

Brotman, L. E., Liberi, W. P., & Wasylyshyn, K. M. (1998). Executive Coaching: The Need for Standards of Competence. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 50*(1), 40-46. doi:10.1037/1061-4087.50.1.40

Brown, A. D. (2015). Identities and identity work in organizations. *International journal of management reviews, 17*(1), 20-40.

Burke, P. J. (1996). Social identities and psychosocial stress. *Psychosocial stress: Perspectives on structure, theory, life course, and methods*, 141-174.

Böhm, A. (2004). 5.13 Theoretical Coding: Text Analysis in Grounded Theory. *A Companion to*, 270.

Carmichael, T., & Cunningham, N. (2017). Theoretical Data Collection and Data Analysis with Gerunds in a Constructivist Grounded Theory Study. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods, 15*(2).

Carver, C. S., & Scheier, M. F. (1982). Control theory: A useful conceptual framework for personality–social, clinical, and health psychology. *Psychological bulletin, 92*(1), 111.

Carver, C. S., & Scheier, M. F. (2012). A model of behavioral self-regulation.

Chang, C.-H., Ferris, D. L., Johnson, R. E., Rosen, C. C., & Tan, J. A. (2012). Core self-evaluations: A review and evaluation of the literature. *Journal of management, 38*(1), 81-128.

Charmaz, K. (2008). Grounded theory as an emergent method. *Handbook of emergent methods, 155*, 172.

Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory*: sage.

Charmaz, K., & Henwood, K. (2017). Grounded theory methods for qualitative psychology. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology, 2*, 238e256.

Charmaz, K., & Keller, R. (2016). *A personal journey with grounded theory methodology. Kathy Charmaz in conversation with Reiner Keller.* Paper presented at the Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research.

Chemers, M. M., Watson, C. B., & May, S. T. (2000). Dispositional affect and leadership effectiveness: A comparison of self-esteem, optimism, and efficacy. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 26*(3), 267-277.

Cho, J., & Dansereau, F. (2010). Are transformational leaders fair? A multi-level study of transformational leadership, justice perceptions, and organizational citizenship behaviors. *The Leadership Quarterly, 21*(3), 409-421.

Chulef, A. S., Read, S. J., & Walsh, D. A. (2001). A hierarchical taxonomy of human goals. *Motivation and Emotion, 25*(3), 191-232.

Clarke, A. E. (2021). From grounded theory to situational analysis: What's new? Why? How? In *Developing Grounded Theory* (pp. 223-266): Routledge.

Collier, A. (1994). Critical realism: an introduction to Roy Bhaskar's philosophy.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (1990). Grounded theory research: Procedures, canons, and evaluative criteria. *Qualitative sociology, 13*(1), 3-21.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). Strategies for qualitative data analysis. *Basics of Qualitative Research. Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory, 3*.

Coultas, C. W., & Salas, E. (2015). Identity construction in coaching: Schemas, information processing, and goal commitment. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 67*(4), 298-325. doi:10.1037/cpb0000046

Coutu, D., Kauffman, C., Charan, R., Peterson, D., Maccoby, M., & Scoular, P. (2009). What can coaches do for you. *harvard business review, 87*(1), 91-97.

Cox, E., Bachkirova, T., & Clutterbuck, D. A. (2014). *The Complete Handbook of Coaching*: Sage.

Creswell, J. W., Hanson, W. E., Clark Plano, V. L., & Morales, A. (2007). Qualitative research designs: Selection and implementation. *The counseling psychologist, 35*(2), 236-264.

Dagley, G. (2006). Human resources professionals' perceptions of executive coaching: Efficacy, benefits and return on investment. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 1*(2), 34-45.

Dalton, M., & Hollenbeck, G. (2001). After feedback: How to facilitate change in behavior. *The Handbook of Multisource Feedback*, 352-367.

Daniel, F., Lohrke, F. T., Fornaciari, C. J., & Turner Jr, R. A. (2004). Slack resources and firm performance: a meta-analysis. *Journal of Business Research, 57*(6), 565-574.

Davoudi, N., Dehghan Nayeri, N., Raiesifar, A., Poortaghi, S., & Ahmadian, S. (2017). Issues of theoretical sampling: A narrative review. *Nurse Midwifery Studies, 6*(2), e38284.

Day, D. V., & Sin, H.-P. (2011). Longitudinal tests of an integrative model of leader development: Charting and understanding developmental trajectories. *The Leadership Quarterly, 22*(3), 545-560.

de Haan, E. (2008). Becoming simultaneously thicker and thinner skinned. *Personnel Review, 37*(5), 526-542. doi:10.1108/00483480810891664

de Haan, E. (2019). A Systematic Review of Qualitative Studies in Workplace and Executive Coaching: The Emergence of a Body of Research. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 71*(4), 227-248. doi:10.1037/cpb0000144

de Haan, E., & Duckworth, A. (2013). Signalling a new trend in executive coaching outcome research. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 8*(1), 6-19.

de Haan, E., Duckworth, A., Birch, D., & Jones, C. (2013). Executive coaching outcome research: The contribution of common factors such as relationship, personality match, and self-efficacy. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 65*(1), 40.

de Haan, E., Grant, A. M., Burger, Y., & Eriksson, P.-O. (2016). A large-scale study of executive and workplace coaching: The relative contributions of relationship, personality match, and self-efficacy. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 68*(3), 189-207. doi:10.1037/cpb0000058

de Haan, E., & Nilsson, V. O. (2017). Evaluating coaching behavior in managers, consultants, and coaches: A model, questionnaire, and initial findings. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 69*(4), 315-333. doi:10.1037/cpb0000099

De Meuse, K. P., Dai, G., & Lee, R. J. (2009). Evaluating the effectiveness of executive coaching: beyond ROI? *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 2*(2), 117-134. doi:10.1080/17521880902882413

De Vries, M. (1994). The leadership mystique. Academy of Management Perspectives, 8(3), 73-89.

De Vries, M. (2016). The Shaman, the Therapist, and the Coach. *Organisational and Social Dynamics, 16*(1), 1-18,175-176.

De Vries, M., & Korotov, K. (2007). Creating Transformational Executive Education Programs. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 6*(3), 375-387. doi:10.5465/AMLE.2007.26361627

Dean, M. L., & Meyer, A. A. (2002). Executive Coaching: In Search of a Model. *Journal of Leadership Education, 1*(2), 3. doi:10.12806/V1/I2/RF1

Debebe, G. (2011). Creating a safe environment for women's leadership transformation. *Journal of Management Education, 35*(5), 679-712.

Deci, E. L., Eghrari, H., Patrick, B. C., & Leone, D. R. (1994). Facilitating internalization: The self-determination theory perspective. *Journal of personality, 62*(1), 119-142.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2012). Self-determination theory.

DeNisi, A. S., & Kluger, A. N. (2000). Feedback effectiveness: Can 360-degree appraisals be improved? *Academy of Management Perspectives, 14*(1), 129-139.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research.

DeRue, D. S., & Ashford, S. J. (2010). Who will lead and who will follow? A social process of leadership identity construction in organizations. *The Academy of Management Review, 35*(4), 627-647. doi:10.5465/AMR.2010.53503267

DeRue, D. S., Ashford, S. J., & Cotton, N. C. (2009). Assuming the mantle: Unpacking the process by which individuals internalize a leader identity. *Exploring positive identities and organizations: Building a theoretical and research foundation, 213232*.

DiClemente, C., Norcross, J., & Prochaska, J. (1995). Changing for good. In: New York Avon Books.

Diefendorff, J., & Lord, R. G. (2008). Self-regulation and goal striving processes. *Work motivation: Past, present, and future*, 151-196.

Dutton, J. E., Roberts, L. M., & Bednar, J. (2010). Pathways for positive identity construction at work: Four types of positive identity and the building of social resources. *Academy of Management Review, 35*(2), 265-293.

Dweck, C., Tenney, Y., & Dinces, N. (1982). Implicit theories of intelligence as determinants of achievement goal choice. *Unpublished manuscript, Cambridge, MA*.

Dweck, C. S., & Leggett, E. L. (1988). A social-cognitive approach to motivation and personality. *Psychological review, 95*(2), 256.

Ebner, K., Schulte, E.-M., & Kauffeld, S. (2016). Coaching as Stress-Management Intervention: A Framework of Coaching, Self-Leadership, and Coping. *Academy of Management Annual Meeting Proceedings, 2016*(1), 1-1. doi:10.5465/AMBPP.2016.16100abstract

Ebner, K., Schulte, E.-M., Soucek, R., & Kauffeld, S. (2017). Coaching as Stress-Management Intervention: The Mediating Role of Self-Efficacy in a Framework of Self-Management and Coping. *International Journal of Stress Management*. doi:10.1037/str0000058

Ellam-Dyson, V., & Palmer, S. (2008). The challenges of researching executive coaching. *The Coaching Psychologist, 4*(2), 79-84.

Ely, K., & Zaccaro, S. J. (2011). Evaluating the effectiveness of coaching. *Advancing executive coaching: Setting the course for successful leadership coaching*, 319-349.

Ely, R. J., Ibarra, H., & Kolb, D. M. (2011). Taking gender into account: Theory and design for women's leadership development programs. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 10*(3), 474-493.

Ely, R. J., & Rhode, D. L. (2010). Women and leadership. *Handbook of leadership theory and practice*, 377-410.

Evans, G. L. (2013). A novice researcher's first walk through the maze of grounded theory: Rationalization for classical grounded theory. *Grounded Theory Review, 12*(1).

Evers, W. J. G., Brouwers, A., & Tomic, W. (2006). A quasi-experimental study on management coaching effectiveness. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 58*(3), 174-182. doi:10.1037/1065-9293.58.3.174

Festinger, L. (1957). *A theory of cognitive dissonance* (Vol. 2): Stanford university press.

Filipczak, B. (1998). Old Dogs, New Tricks. *Training, 35*(5).

Fillery-Travis, A., & Cox, E. (2014). Researching coaching. *The complete handbook of coaching*, 445-459.

Fischer, T., Dietz, J., & Antonakis, J. (2017). Leadership process models: A review and synthesis. *Journal of Management, 43*(6), 1726-1753.

Folkman, S., & Lazarus, R. S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*: New York: Springer Publishing Company.

Franklin, J. (2005). Change readiness in coaching: potentiating client change. *Evidence-based coaching, 1*, 193-200.

Freischlag, J. A. (2019). Put me in, coach: Reflections of one female physician turned academic leader on the transition of another. *71*(3), 170-174. doi:10.1037/cpb0000132

Gaab, J., Locher, C., & Blease, C. (2018). Placebo and psychotherapy: differences, similarities, and implications. *International Review of Neurobiology, 138*, 241-255.

Gebhardt, J. A. (2016). Quagmires for clinical psychology and executive coaching? Ethical considerations and practice challenges. *The American Psychologist, 71*(3), 216. doi:10.1037/a0039806

Gecas, V. (1982). The self-concept. *Annual Review of Sociology, 8*(1), 1-33.

Gecas, V., & Schwalbe, M. L. (1983). Beyond the looking-glass self: Social structure and efficacy-based self-esteem. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 77-88.

George, J. M., & Zhou, J. (2001). When openness to experience and conscientiousness are related to creative behavior: an interactional approach. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*(3), 513.

Gersick, C. J. (1991). Revolutionary change theories: A multilevel exploration of the punctuated equilibrium paradigm. *Academy of Management Review, 16*(1), 10-36.

Gessnitzer, S., Schulte, E.-M., & Kauffeld, S. (2016). 'I am going to succeed': The power of self-efficient language in coaching and how coaches can use it. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 68*(4), 294-312. doi:10.1037/cpb0000064

Gibbons, A. M., Rupp, D. E., Snyder, L. A., Holub, A. S., & Woo, S. E. (2006). A Preliminary Investigation of Developable Dimensions. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal, 9*(2), 99-123. doi:10.1207/s15503461tpmj0902_4

Gibby, B. A., Casline, E. P., & Ginsburg, G. S. (2017). Long-term outcomes of youth treated for an anxiety disorder: A critical review. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, 20*(2), 201-225.

Gigerenzer, G. (2000). *Adaptive thinking: Rationality in the real world*: Oxford University Press, USA.

Gist, M. E. (1987). Self-efficacy: Implications for organizational behavior and human resource management. *Academy of Management Review, 12*(3), 472-485.

Gist, M. E., & Mitchell, T. B. (1992). Self-efficacy: a theoretical analysis of its determinants and malleability. *Academy of Management Review, 17*(2), 183-211. doi:10.5465/AMR.1992.4279530

Glaser, B. G. (1992). *Emergence vs forcing: Basics of grounded theory analysis*: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B. G., & Holton, J. (2007). Remodeling grounded theory. *Historical Social Research/Historische Sozialforschung. Supplement*, 47-68.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. (1967). L.(1967). The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research. *Chi cago: Aldine*.

Gollwitzer, P. M. (1999). Implementation intentions: strong effects of simple plans. *American Psychologist, 54*(7), 493.

Goodstone, M. S., & Diamante, T. (1998). Organizational use of therapeutic change: Strengthening multisource feedback systems through interdisciplinary coaching. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 50*(3), 152.

Gould, N. E.-S. J., & Eldredge, N. (1972). Punctuated equilibria: an alternative to phyletic gradualism. *Essential Readings in Evolutionary Biology*, 82-115.

Graf, E.-M. (2012). Narratives of illness and emotional distress in executive coaching: An initial analysis into their forms and functions. *Poznan Studies in Contemporary Linguistics, 48*(1), 23-54. doi:10.1515/psicl-2012-0003

Grant, A. M., Curtayne, L., & Burton, G. (2009). Executive coaching enhances goal attainment, resilience and workplace well-being: a randomised controlled study. *Journal of Positive Psychology, 4*(5), 396-407. doi:10.1080/17439760902992456

Grant, A. M. (2010). It Takes Time: A Stages of Change Perspective on the Adoption of Workplace Coaching Skills. *Journal of Change Management, 10*(1), 61-77. doi:10.1080/14697010903549440

Grant, A. M. (2012). An integrated model of goal-focused coaching: An evidence-based framework for teaching and practice. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 7*(2), 146-165.

Grant, A. M. (2017a). Solution-Focused Cognitive–Behavioral Coaching for Sustainable High Performance and Circumventing Stress, Fatigue, and Burnout. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 69*(2), 98-111. doi:10.1037/cpb0000086

Grant, A. M. (2017b). The third 'generation'of workplace coaching: Creating a culture of quality conversations. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 10*(1), 37-53.

Grant, A. M. (2020). An integrated model of goal-focused coaching: an evidence-based framework for teaching and practice. *Coaching Researched: A Coaching Psychology Reader*, 115-139.

Grant, A. M., Curtayne, L., & Burton, G. (2009). Executive coaching enhances goal attainment, resilience and workplace well-being: a randomised controlled study. *Journal of Positive Psychology, 4*(5), 396-407. doi:10.1080/17439760902992456

Grant, A. M., Green, L. S., & Rynsaardt, J. (2010). Developmental coaching for high school teachers: Executive coaching goes to school. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 62*(3), 151-168. doi:10.1037/a0019212

Grant, A. M., & Green, R. M. (2018). Developing clarity on the coaching-counselling conundrum: Implications for counsellors and psychotherapists. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, 18*(4), 347-355.

Grant, A. M., & O'Hara, B. (2008). Key characteristics of the commercial Australian executive coach training industry. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 3*(1), 57.

Graßmann, C., & Schermuly, C. C. (2020). Understanding what drives the coaching working alliance: A systematic literature review and meta-analytic examination. *International Coaching Psychology Review*.

Graßmann, C., Schölmerich, F., & Schermuly, C. C. (2020). The relationship between working alliance and client outcomes in coaching: A meta-analysis. *Human relations*, 73(1), 35-58.

Gray, B., Stensaker, I. G., & Jansen, K. J. (2012). Qualitative challenges for complexifying organizational change research: Context, voice, and time. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 48*(2), 121-134.

Gray, D. E. (2006). Executive Coaching: Towards a Dynamic Alliance of Psychotherapy and Transformative Learning Processes. *Management Learning, 37*(4), 475-497. doi:10.1177/1350507606070221

Grbich, C. (2012). *Qualitative data analysis: An introduction*: Sage.

Green, L., Oades, L., & Grant, A. (2006). Cognitive-behavioral, solution-focused life coaching: Enhancing goal striving, well-being, and hope. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 1*(3), 142-149.

Green, S., Grant, A., & Rynsaardt, J. (2007). Evidence-based life coaching for senior high school students: Building hardiness and hope. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 2*(1), 24-32.

Gregg, M. (2018). *Counterproductive: Time management in the knowledge economy*: Duke University Press.

Gregory, J. B., Beck, J. W., & Carr, A. E. (2011). Goals, feedback, and self-regulation: Control theory as a natural framework for executive coaching. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 63*(1), 26-38. doi:10.1037/a0023398

Grover, S., & Furnham, A. (2016). Coaching as a Developmental Intervention in Organisations: A Systematic Review of Its Effectiveness and the Mechanisms Underlying It. *PLoS One, 11*(7), e0159137. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0159137

Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods, 18*(1), 59-82.

Gyllensten, K., & Palmer, S. e. (2005). Can Coaching Reduce Workplace Stress? A Quasi-Experimental Study. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring, 3*(2), 75-85.

Habermas, J. (1984). *The theory of communicative action*: Heinemann.

Hannah, S. T., & Lester, P. B. (2009). A multilevel approach to building and leading learning organizations. *The Leadership Quarterly, 20*(1), 34-48.

Harakas, P. (2013). Resistance, motivational interviewing, and executive coaching. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 65*(2), 108-127. doi:10.1037/a0033196

Hargrove, R. A. (2003). *Masterful coaching: Inspire an "impossible future" while producing extraordinary leaders and extraordinary results*: Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer.

Harmon-Jones, E., & Harmon-Jones, C. (2007). Cognitive dissonance theory after 50 years of development. *Zeitschrift für Sozialpsychologie, 38*(1), 7-16.

Haslam, S. A., & Ellemers, N. (2011). Identity processes in organizations. In *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 715-744): Springer.

Hatch, J. A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in education settings*: Suny Press.

Henwood, K. L., & Pidgeon, N. F. (1992). Qualitative research and psychological theorizing. *British Journal of Psychology, 83*(1), 97-111.

Heron, A. (1956). The effects of real-life motivation on questionnaire response. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 40*(2), 65-68. doi:10.1037/h0047260

Hobfoll, S. E. (2002). Social and Psychological Resources and Adaptation. *Review of General Psychology, 6*(4), 307-324. doi:10.1037/1089-2680.6.4.307

Hobfoll, S. E. (2011). Conservation of resource caravans and engaged settings. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 84*(1), 116-122.

Hogg, M. A. (2016). Social identity theory. In *Understanding peace and conflict through social identity theory* (pp. 3-17): Springer.

Hoon, C. (2013). Meta-Synthesis of Qualitative Case Studies: An Approach to Theory Building. *Organizational Research Methods, 16*(4), 522-556. doi:10.1177/1094428113484969

Horvath, A. O., & Greenberg, L. S. (1989). Development and validation of the Working Alliance Inventory. Journal of counseling psychology, 36(2), 223.

Hoyer, P., & Steyaert, C. (2015). Narrative identity construction in times of career change: Taking note of unconscious desires. *Human Relations, 68*(12), 1837-1863.

Hunt, J. G. J., & Ropo, A. (1995). Multi-level leadership: Grounded theory and mainstream theory applied to the case of General Motors. *The Leadership Quarterly, 6*(3), 379-412.

Ianiro, P. M., & Kauffeld, S. (2014). Take care what you bring with you: How coaches' mood and interpersonal behavior affect coaching success. Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 66(3), 231.

Ibarra, H. (1999). Provisional selves: Experimenting with image and identity in professional adaptation. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 44*(4), 764-791.

Ibarra, H., Wittman, S., Petriglieri, G., & Day, D. (2014). 14 Leadership and Identity: An Examination of Three Theories and New Research Directions. The Oxford Handbook of Leadership and Organizations, 285.

ICF. (2020). 2020 ICF Global Coaching Study.

Ilies, R., & Judge, T. A. (2005). Goal regulation across time: the effects of feedback and affect. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 90*(3), 453.

Illeris, K. (2014). *Transformative learning and identity*: Routledge.

Johnson, R. E., Rosen, C. C., & Levy, P. E. (2008). Getting to the core of core self-evaluation: a review and recommendations. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 29*(3), 391-413. doi:10.1002/job.514

Jones, R. J., Woods, S. A., & Guillaume, Y. R. F. (2016). The effectiveness of workplace coaching: A meta-analysis of learning and performance outcomes from coaching. *Journal of Occupational & Organizational Psychology, 89*(2), 249-277. doi:10.1111/joop.12119

Joo, B.-K. (2005). Executive Coaching: A Conceptual Framework From an Integrative Review of Practice and Research. *Human Resource Development Review, 4*(4), 462-488. doi:10.1177/1534484305280866

Jowett, S., Kanakoglou, K., & Passmore, J. (2012). The application of the 3+ 1Cs relationship model in executive coaching. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 64*(3), 183.

Judge, T. A., Erez, A., Bono, J. E., & Thoresen, C. J. (2003). The core self-evaluations scale: Development of a measure. *Personnel Psychology, 56*(2), 303-331.

Judge, T. A., & Kammeyer-Mueller, J. D. (2011). Implications of core self-evaluations for a changing organizational context. *Human Resource Management Review, 21*(4), 331-341.

Judge, W. Q., & Cowell, J. (1997). The brave new world of executive coaching. *Business Horizons, 40*(4), 71. doi:10.1016/S0007-6813(97)90042-2

Kahneman, D., & Tversky, A. (2013). Prospect theory: An analysis of decision under risk. In *Handbook of the Fundamentals of Financial Decision Making: Part I* (pp. 99-127): World Scientific.

Kampa-Kokesch, S., & Anderson, M. Z. (2001). Executive coaching: A comprehensive review of the literature. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 53*(4), 205-228. doi:10.1037/1061-4087.53.4.205

Katz, D., & Kahn, R. L. (1978). *The social psychology of organizations* (Vol. 2): Wiley New York.

Kauffman, C., & Hodgetts, W. H. (2016). Model agility: Coaching effectiveness and four perspectives on a case study. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 68*(2), 157-176. doi:10.1037/cpb0000062

Kilburg, R. R. (1996). Toward a Conceptual Understanding and Definition of Executive Coaching. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 48*(2), 134-144. doi:10.1037/1061-4087.48.2.134

Kilburg, R. R. (2000). *Executive coaching: Developing managerial wisdom in a world of chaos*: American Psychological Association.

Kilburg, R. R. (2001). Facilitating Intervention Adherence in Executive Coaching: A Model and Methods. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 53*(4), 251-267. doi:10.1037/1061-4087.53.4.251

Kilburg, R. R. (2004). When Shadows Fall: Using Psychodynamic Approaches in Executive Coaching. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice & Research, 56*(4), 246-268. doi:10.1037/1065-9293.56.4.246

Kilburg, R. R. (2016). The development of human expertise: toward a model for the 21st-century practice of coaching, consulting, and general applied psychology. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 68*(2), 177-187. doi:10.1037/cpb0000054

Kirk, V. G., Kania-Richmond, A., & Chaput, K. (2019). Executive Coaching for Leadership Development: Experience of Academic Physician Leaders. *Healthcare Quarterly (Toronto, Ont.), 22*(1), 54. doi:10.12927/hcq.2019.25835

Kluger, A. N., & DeNisi, A. (1996). The effects of feedback interventions on performance: A historical review, a meta-analysis, and a preliminary feedback intervention theory. *Psychological Bulletin, 119*(2), 254.

Knowles, M. (1977). Adult learning processes: Pedagogy and andragogy. *Religious Education, 72*(2), 202-211.

Kolb, D. (1984). 1984 Experiential learning Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2003). *The Jossey-Bass academic administrator's guide to exemplary leadership* (Vol. 131): John Wiley & Sons.

Kuna, S. (2019). All by Myself? Executives' Impostor Phenomenon and Loneliness as Catalysts for Executive Coaching With Management Consultants. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 55*(3), 306-326. doi:10.1177/0021886319832009

Lackritz, A. D., Cseh, M., & Wise, D. (2019). Leadership Coaching: A Multiple-Case Study of Urban Public Charter School Principals' Experiences. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, 27*(1), 5. doi:10.1080/13611267.2019.1583404

Ladegård, G., & Gjerde, S. (2014). Leadership coaching, leader role-efficacy, and trust in subordinates. A mixed methods study assessing leadership coaching as a leadership development tool. *The Leadership Quarterly, 25*(4), 631-646.

Ladegård, G. (2011). Stress management through workplace coaching: The impact of learning experiences. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching & Mentoring, 9*(1), 29-43.

Lal, S., Suto, M., & Ungar, M. (2012). Examining the Potential of Combining the Methods of Grounded Theory and Narrative Inquiry: A Comparative Analysis. *Qualitative Report, 17*, 41.

Langdridge, D. (2008). Phenomenology and critical social psychology: Directions and debates in theory and research. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 2*(3), 1126-1142.

LaPointe, K. (2013). Heroic career changers? Gendered identity work in career transitions. *Gender, Work & Organization, 20*(2), 133-146.

Larsson, M., Holmberg, R., & Kempster, S. (2020). 'It's the organization that is wrong': Exploring disengagement from organizations through leadership development. *Leadership, 16*(2), 141-162.

Latham, G. P., & Locke, E. A. (2007). New developments in and directions for goal-setting research. *European Psychologist, 12*(4), 290-300. doi:10.1027/1016-9040.12.4.290

Lee, T. W., Mitchell, T. R., & Sablynski, C. J. (1999). Qualitative research in organizational and vocational psychology, 1979–1999. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 55*(2), 161-187.

Leedham, M. (2004). *The coaching scorecard: A holistic approach to evaluating the benefits of business coaching.* Oxford Brookes University,

Llorens, S., Schaufeli, W., Bakker, A., & Salanova, M. (2007). Does a positive gain spiral of resources, efficacy beliefs and engagement exist? *Computers in Human Behavior, 23*(1), 825-841.

Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (2002). Building a practically useful theory of goal setting and task motivation: A 35-year odyssey. *American Psychologist, 57*(9), 705.

Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (2013). *Goal setting theory*.

Lord, R., & Brown, D. (2004). Organization and management series. *Leadership processes and follower self-identity. Mahwah, NJ, US: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers*.

Lord, R. G., Gatti, P., & Chui, S. L. M. (2016). Social-cognitive, relational, and identity-based approaches to leadership. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 136*, 119-134. doi:10.1016/j.obhdp.2016.03.001

MacKie, D. (2014). The effectiveness of strength-based executive coaching in enhancing full range leadership development: a controlled study. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 66*(2), 118-137. doi:10.1037/cpb0000005

MacKie, D. (2015). The effects of coachee readiness and core self-evaluations on leadership coaching outcomes: A controlled trial. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 8*(2), 120-136. doi:10.1080/17521882.2015.1019532

Markus, H., & Wurf, E. (1987). The dynamic self-concept: A social psychological perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology, 38*(1), 299-337.

McCaslin, M. L., & Scott, K. W. (2003). The five-question method for framing a qualitative research study. *The Qualitative Report, 8*(3), 447-461.

McDowall, A., & Millward, L. (2010). Feeding back, feeding forward and setting goals. In *The Coaching Relationship* (pp. 73-96): Routledge.

McKenna, D. D., & Davis, S. (2009). Hidden in Plain Sight: The Active Ingredients of Executive Coaching. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 2*(3), 244-260. doi:10.1111/j.1754-9434.2009.01143.x

Mezirow, J. (1978). Perspective transformation. *Adult Education, 28*(2), 100-110.

Mezirow, J. (2000). *Learning as Transformation: Critical Perspectives on a Theory in Progress. The Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series*: ERIC.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (2002). Reflections and advice. *The qualitative researcher's companion*, 393-397.

Mink, O., Owen, K., & Mink, B. (1993). *Developing high performance people: The art of coaching*: Basic Books.

Mintzberg, H. (1993). *Structure in fives: Designing effective organizations*: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Moen, F., & Allgood, E. (2009). Coaching and the Effect on Self-efficacy. *Organization Development Journal, 27*(4), 69-82.

Moen, F., & Federici, R. A. (2012). The effect from external executive coaching. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 5*(2), 113-131. doi:10.1080/17521882.2012.708355

Moen, F., & Skaalvik, E. (2009). The Effect from Executive Coaching on Performance Psychology. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching & Mentoring, 7*(2), 31-49.

Moghaddam, A. (2006). Coding issues in grounded theory. *Issues in Educational Research, 16*(1), 52-66.

Moher, D., Liberati, A., Tetzlaff, J., Altman, D. G., Altman, D., Antes, G., . . . Berlin, J. A. (2009). Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: The PRISMA statement (Chinese edition). *Journal of Chinese Integrative Medicine, 7*(9), 889-896.

Moons, J. (2016). A shift in the room-myth or magic? How do coaches create transformational shifts in a short period of time? *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching & Mentoring*.

Mouton, A. R. (2016). Performance coaching in sport, music, and business: From Gallwey to Grant, and the promise of positive psychology. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 11*(2), 129-141.

Myers, A. C., & Bachkirova, T. (2018). Towards a process-based typology of workplace coaching: An empirical investigation. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 70*(4), 297.

Nieminen, L., Smerek, R., Kotrba, L., & Denison, D. (2013). What Does an Executive Coaching Intervention Add Beyond Facilitated Multisource Feedback? Effects on Leader Self-Ratings and Perceived Effectiveness. *Human Resource Development Quarterly, 24*(2), 145-176. doi:10.1002/hrdq.21152

O'Broin AO & Palmer S (2007) Reappraising the coach-client relationship: The unassuming change agent in coaching. In: Palmer S and Whybrow A (eds) *Handbook of Coaching Psychology: A Guide for Practitioners*. Hove: Routledge, 295–324.

O'Riordan, S., & Palmer, S. (Eds.). (2021). Introduction to Coaching Psychology. Routledge.

Osatuke, K., Yanovsky, B., & Ramsel, D. (2017). Executive coaching: New framework for evaluation. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 69*(3), 172-186. doi:10.1037/cpb0000073

Palmer, S., & Whybrow, A. (2006). The coaching psychology movement and its development within the British Psychological Society. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 1*(1), 5-11.

Palmer, S., & Whybrow, A. (Eds.). (2018). Handbook of coaching psychology: A guide for practitioners. Routledge.

Panchal, S., Palmer, S., & O'Riordan, S. (2020). Enhancing Transition Resilience: Using the INSIGHT coaching and counselling model to assist in coping with COVID-19. *International Journal of Stress Prevention and Wellbeing*, 4(3), 1-6.

Parry, K. W. (1998). Grounded theory and social process: A new direction for leadership research. *The Leadership Quarterly, 9*(1), 85-105.

Passmore, J., Brown, H., Wall, T., & Stokes, P. (2018). *Executive Report 2018–The State of Play in Coaching in the United Kingdom*: EMCC/Henley.

Passmore, J., Peterson, D., & Freire, T. (2013). The psychology of coaching and mentoring. *The Wiley-Blackwell handbook of the psychology of coaching and mentoring*, 1-11.

Passmore, J., & Tee, D. (2020). Insights from Qualitative Coaching Psychology Research. *Coaching Researched: A Coaching Psychology Reader for Practitioners and Researchers*, 141.

Pavur, E. J., Jr. (2013). Why do organizations want their leaders to be coached? *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 65*(4), 289-293. doi:10.1037/a0035414

Peltier, B. (2011). *The psychology of executive coaching: Theory and application*: Taylor & Francis.

Peterson, D. B. (1996). Executive coaching at work: The art of one-on-one change. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 48*(2), 78.

Petriglieri, G., & Petriglieri, J. L. (2010). Identity workspaces: The case of business schools. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 9*(1), 44-60.

Piccolo, R. F., & Colquitt, J. A. (2006). Transformational leadership and job behaviors: the mediating role of core job characteristics. *Academy of Management Journal, 49*(2), 327-340. doi:10.5465/AMJ.2006.20786079

Pliopas, A. (2018). Drawing the triangle: How coaches manage ambiguities inherited in executive coaching. *BAR-Brazilian Administration Review, 14*.

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2012). Sources of method bias in social science research and recommendations on how to control it. *Annual Review of Psychology, 63*, 539-569.

Popay, J., Roberts, H., Sowden, A., Petticrew, M., Arai, L., Rodgers, M., . . . Duffy, S. (2006). Guidance on the conduct of narrative synthesis in systematic reviews. *A product from the ESRC methods programme Version, 1*, b92.

Priebe, S., Omer, S., Giacco, D., & Slade, M. (2014). Resource-oriented therapeutic models in psychiatry: conceptual review. *The British Journal of Psychiatry, 204*(4), 256-261.

Prochaska, J. O., & DiClemente, C. C. (1983). Stages and processes of self-change of smoking: toward an integrative model of change. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 51*(3), 390.

Prochaska, J. O., & DiClemente, C. C. (1986). Toward a comprehensive model of change. In *Treating Addictive Behaviors* (pp. 3-27): Springer.

Pérez-Nebra, A., Sklaveniti, C., Islam, G., Petrovic, I., Pickett, J., Alija, M., . . . Bazana, S. (2021). COVID-19 and the future of work and organisational psychology. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology, 47*, a1854.

Rafferty, A. E., & Griffin, M. A. (2004). Dimensions of transformational leadership: Conceptual and empirical extensions. *The Leadership Quarterly, 15*(3), 329-354.

Rafferty, A. E., & Griffin, M. A. (2006). Perceptions of organizational change: A stress and coping perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 91*(5), 1154.

Ralph, N., Birks, M., & Chapman, Y. (2015). The methodological dynamism of grounded theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 14*(4), 1609406915611576.

Rathmell, W. K., Brown, N. J., & Kilburg, R. R. (2019). Transformation to academic leadership: the role of mentorship and executive coaching. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 71*(3), 141-160. doi:10.1037/cpb0000124

Rekalde, I., Landeta, J., Albizu, E., & Fernandez-Ferrin, P. (2017). Is executive coaching more effective than other management training and development methods? *Management Decision, 55*(10), 2149-2162. doi:10.1108/MD-10-2016-0688

Rieger, K. L. (2019). Discriminating among grounded theory approaches. *Nursing Inquiry, 26*(1), e12261.

Rogers, C. (1961). On Becoming a person,(rev. ed.) Boston. In: Houghton Mifflin.

Rosinski, P. (2010). *Coaching across cultures: New tools for leveraging national, corporate and professional differences*: Hachette UK.

Rozenzweig, S. (1936). Some implicit common factors in diverse methods of psychotherapy. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 6, 421-425.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary educational psychology*, 25(1), 54-67.

Ryan, G. W., & Bernard, H. R. (2000). Techniques to identify themes in qualitative data. *Handbook of Qualitative Research. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications*.

Salanova, M., Llorens, S., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2011). "Yes, I can, I feel good, and I just do it!" On gain cycles and spirals of efficacy beliefs, affect, and engagement. *Applied Psychology, 60*(2), 255-285.

Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers+ qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*: Sage Publications.

Saunders, B., Sim, J., Kingstone, T., Baker, S., Waterfield, J., Bartlam, B., . . . Jinks, C. (2018). Saturation in qualitative research: exploring its conceptualization and operationalization. *Quality & quantity, 52*(4), 1893-1907.

Schatzman, L. (1991). Dimensional analysis: Notes on an alternative approach to the grounding of theory in qualitative research. *Social organization and social process: Essays in honor of Anselm Strauss*, 303-314.

Schriesheim, C. A., Neider, L. L., & Scandura, T. A. (1998). Delegation and leader-member exchange: Main effects, moderators, and measurement issues. *Academy of Management Journal, 41*(3), 298-318.

Schwarzer, R. (2014). *Self-efficacy: Thought control of action*: Taylor & Francis.

Scott, K. W., & Howell, D. (2008). Clarifying analysis and interpretation in grounded theory: Using a conditional relationship guide and reflective coding matrix. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 7*(2), 1-15.

Seligman, M. E., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2014). Positive psychology: An introduction. In *Flow and the foundations of positive psychology* (pp. 279-298): Springer.

Seligman, M. E. P. (2007). Coaching and Positive Psychology. *Australian Psychologist, 42*(4), 266-267. doi:10.1080/00050060701648233

Shapiro, E., & Carr, A. (2012). An introduction to Tavistock-style group relations conference learning. *Organisational and Social Dynamics, 12*(1), 70-80.

Sheeran, P., & Orbell, S. (1999). Augmenting the theory of planned behavior: roles for anticipated regret and descriptive norms 1. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 29*(10), 2107-2142.

Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information, 22*(2), 63-75.

Shepherd, D. A., & Suddaby, R. (2017). Theory building: A review and integration. *Journal of Management, 43*(1), 59-86.

Siegel, D. J. (2020). *The developing mind: How relationships and the brain interact to shape who we are*: Guilford Publications.

Skinner, S. (2014). Understanding the importance of gender and leader identity formation in executive coaching for senior women. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 7*(2), 102-114. doi:10.1080/17521882.2014.915864

Smith, I. M., & Brummel, B. J. (2013). Investigating the role of the active ingredients in executive coaching. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 6*(1), 57-71. doi:10.1080/17521882.2012.758649

Smith, S., & Kempster, S. (2019). In whose interest? Exploring care ethics within transformative learning. *Management Learning, 50*(3), 302-318.

Smither, J. W. (2011). Can Psychotherapy Research Serve as a Guide for Research About Executive Coaching? An Agenda for the Next Decade. *Journal of Business Psychology, 26*(2), 135-145. doi:10.1007/s10869-011-9216-7

Smither, J. W., London, M., Flautt, R., Vargas, Y., & Kucine, I. (2003). Can working with an executive coach improve multisource feedback ratings over time? A quasi-experimental field study. *Personnel Psychology, 56*(1), 23-44. doi:10.1111/j.1744-6570.2003.tb00142.x

Smither, J. W., London, M., & Reilly, R. R. (2005). Does performance improve following multisource feedback? A theoretical model, meta-analysis, and review of empirical findings. *Personnel Psychology, 58*(1), 33-66.

Sonesh, S. C., Coultas, C. W., Lacerenza, C. N., Marlow, S. L., Benishek, L. E., & Salas, E. (2015). The power of coaching: a meta-analytic investigation. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 8*(2), 73-95. doi:10.1080/17521882.2015.1071418

Sonesh, S. C., Coultas, C. W., Marlow, S. L., Lacerenza, C. N., Reyes, D., & Salas, E. (2015). Coaching in the wild: Identifying factors that lead to success. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 67*(3), 189-217. doi:10.1037/cpb0000042

Spence, G. (2008). *New directions in evidence-based coaching: Investigations into the impact of mindfulness training on goal attainment and well-being*: VDM Publishing.

Spence, G. B., Stout-Rostron, S., Reenen, M. V., & Glashoff, B. (2019). Exploring the delayed effects of leadership coaching: a pilot study. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 12*(2), 125-146. doi:10.1080/17521882.2019.1574308

Stajkovic, A. D., & Luthans, F. (1997). A meta-analysis of the effects of organizational behavior modification on task performance, 1975–95. *Academy of Management journal, 40*(5), 1122-1149.

Starks, H., & Brown Trinidad, S. (2007). Choose your method: A comparison of phenomenology, discourse analysis, and grounded theory. *Qualitative Health Research, 17*(10), 1372-1380.

Stets, J. E., & Burke, P. J. (2005). New directions in identity control theory. *Advances in Group Processes, 22*(1), 43-64.

Stevens Jr, J. H. (2005). Executive coaching from the executive's perspective. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 57*(4), 274.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research techniques*: Citeseer.

Sue-Chan, C., Wood, R. E., & Latham, G. P. (2012). Effect of a coach's regulatory focus and an individual's implicit person theory on individual performance. *Journal of Management, 38*(3), 809-835.

Sveningsson, S., & Alvesson, M. (2003). Managing managerial identities: Organizational fragmentation, discourse and identity struggle. *Human Relations, 56*(10), 1163-1193.

Sveningsson, S., & Larsson, M. (2006). Fantasies of leadership: Identity work. *Leadership, 2*(2), 203-224.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). The social identity theory of group behavior. *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, 33-47.

Taylor, E. K., & Wherry, R. J. (1951). A study of leniency in two rating systems. *Personnel Psychology, 4*(1), 39-47.

Tee, D., Shearer, D., & Roderique-Davies, G. (2017). The client as active ingredient: 'Core self-evaluations' as predictors of coaching outcome variance. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 12*(2), 125-132.

Tengblad, S. (2006). Is there a 'new managerial work'? A comparison with Henry Mintzberg's classic study 30 years later. *Journal of Management Studies, 43*(7), 1437-1461.

Tengblad, S. (2012). *The work of managers: Towards a practice theory of management*: Oxford University Press.

Theeboom, T., Beersma, B., & Van Vianen, A. E. M. (2013). Coaching in Organizations – A Meta-Analytic Review of Individual Level Effects. *Academy of Management Proceedings, 2013*(1), 11881. doi:10.5465/ambpp.2013.11881abstract

Theeboom, T., Van Vianen, A. E. M., & Beersma, B. (2017). A temporal map of coaching. *Frontiers in Psychology, 8*. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01352

Thomas, R., & Linstead, A. (2002). Losing the plot? Middle managers and identity. *Organization, 9*(1), 71-93.

Tooth, J.-A., Nielsen, S., & Armstrong, H. (2013). Coaching effectiveness survey instruments: Taking stock of measuring the immeasurable. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 6*(2), 137-151. doi:10.1080/17521882.2013.802365

Trevillion, F. (2018). Executive Coaching Outcomes: An investigation into leadership development using five dyadic case studies illustrating the impact of executive coaching. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*(S12), 21-40. doi:10.24384/000542

Van Dick, R., Hirst, G., Grojean, M. W., & Wieseke, J. (2007). Relationships between leader and follower organizational identification and implications for follower attitudes and behaviour. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 80*(1), 133-150.

Vähäsantanen, K., Paloniemi, S., Hökkä, P., & Eteläpelto, A. (2017). Agentic Perspective on Fostering Work-Related Learning. *Studies in Continuing Education, 39*(3), 251. doi:10.1080/0158037X.2017.1310097

Wales, S. (2002). Why coaching? *Journal of Change Management, 3*(3), 275-282. doi:10.1080/714042542

Wasylyshyn, K. M. (2003). Executive Coaching: An Outcome Study. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 55*(2), 94-106. doi:10.1037/1061-4087.55.2.94

Watson, T. J. (2008). Managing identity: Identity work, personal predicaments and structural circumstances. *Organization, 15*(1), 121-143.

Webb, J. (2004). Organizations, self-identities and the new economy. *Sociology, 38*(4), 719-738.

Webb, T. L., & Sheeran, P. (2004). Identifying good opportunities to act: Implementation intentions and cue discrimination. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 34*(4), 407-419.

Weiner, B. (1985). Attribution theory. In *Human motivation* (pp. 275-326): Springer.

Weiner, B. (2018). Attribution theory in organizational behavior: A relationship of mutual benefit. In *Attribution Theory* (pp. 3-6): Routledge.

Whitmore, J. (2010). *Coaching for performance: growing human potential and purpose: the principles and practice of coaching and leadership*: Hachette UK.

Williams, J. S., & Lowman, R. L. (2018). The Efficacy of Executive Coaching: An Empirical Investigation of Two Approaches Using Random Assignment and a Switching-Replications Design. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 70*(3), 227-249. doi:10.1037/cpb0000115

Winkler, I. (2018). Identity work and emotions: A review. *International Journal of Management Reviews, 20*(1), 120-133.

Witherspoon, R., & White, R. P. (1996). Executive coaching: A continuum of roles. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 48*(2), 124.

Yanchus, N. J., Muhs, S., & Osatuke, K. (2020). Academic Background and Executive Coach Training. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*. doi:10.1037/pro0000297

Yin, R. K. (1981). The case study crisis: Some answers. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 26*(1), 58-65.

Yin, R. K. (2009). How to do better case studies. *The SAGE handbook of applied social research methods, 2*, 254-282.

Yu, N., Collins, C. G., Cavanagh, M., White, K., & Fairbrother, G. (2008). Positive coaching with frontline managers: Enhancing their effectiveness and understanding why. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 3*(2), 110-122.

Persistence of Perceived Effects of Executive Coaching on Managers:

A Grounded Theory Exploration

APPENDICES

List of appendices

Appendix 1 Memos noting risks to objectivity

These illustrative examples have been typed up from manuscript notes made at various stages in the analyses.

EC as process consulting?

This is a note on something I got excited about and abandoned in mid-2020, that some of the "coaching" in my sample was really "process consulting", à la Schein's "Doctor/Patient" model. Mgt challenges, questioning, processing, facts (not much emotion), clarity, help with implementation. Repeat when a new challenge comes up. I went through all the recordings but this pattern is found in only two accounts and then only as part of what coaching meant. Still, the two participants are "important" to me in many ways. In the end I just dropped the idea.

27.09.2020

Thoughts on "Private suffering in the management role" (PSMR)

It is hard for me not to give this "discovery" great importance. Clearly, it resonates with me. In the data I find it big (salient) and likely to be very meaningful in the rest of the analysis and findings. It is a surprise. I had no expectation of this. Doing the devil's advocate, I have to wonder if it is more in my head than in the data and it isn't. It is in the data. But why? One possibility is that the context created it and that I was part of the context. The participants are people I know and they know me as the listener (in the HR dept) to whom they could come in times of trouble. Added to this is the purposive sampling criterion, whereby I chose the participants precisely because they were expected to talk freely. Why should they not talk freely about their emotions? Part of me thinks (ego) that they would have told more superman/superwoman stories to other interviewers. What does this mean for the validity of the data? There is something else at play too, surely, that each story is not "about suffering" but about "suffering-turned-to-triumph".

09.12.2020 (PSMR was later renamed as "executive suffering".)

Forcing the data into models

I am noting here the models that have appealed to me only to be discarded afterwards. A bit like the note above on "process consulting".

From career guidance (my job for many years), I notice the tendency in me to look for “turning points” in participants’ stories. A turning point following EC would be very exciting. The reality is that participants tell their management development stories as very “linear”. Few participants tell of an experience, EC or other, that made them change career trajectory. There are intense moments but not major changes of direction.

It is hard to keep basic psych models at bay when reading or listening to participants’ stories. I think (believe) that the memory systems used by participants could be meaningful for the different EC experiences. For most sample A people EC is probably in autobiographical memory. I was alert (in suspense) in every conversation to hear if EC would get mentioned spontaneously in the development story. It was, and I felt EC for them had that autobiographical quality while, for others, it was accessed in episodic memory. When asked, they paused to think but could then recall much. (Contrast this with training, where most found it hard to recall anything, even with effort.)
08.01.2021

It is not easy to leave things messy. I look for a ‘concept’ that will capture neatly what people say. In the categories for mgt development I am leaving “Discovering it’s "not just me", “Confirmation that I am OK” and “Self-discovery” in the list, in any old order. They are different concepts but can be grouped under a more abstract heading. After some to and fro I am deciding to leave them as they are.

08.04.2021

Knowing the participants

A constant problem is the reflex to “explain” things that stand out in terms of the concerned participant’s character or “personality”, along the lines of “that is exactly what they would say because they are like that”. Take the willingness to put their “self” into question, in the EC or anywhere. Some do and some don’t. In this context the surprises are precious. Also the realisation that the “personality” I would have assigned to someone 10+ years ago can be very different from the one I would give today. Quid “personality ☺ then?

I keep remembering that the most “successful” of the participants (most promoted, most admired) seem to be big fans of coaching. They definitely spoke most eloquently about how important it is to them. This might be because they are “successful” – and they know it – they can afford to tell about the times when coaching helped them a lot. Maybe it’s the same for others – less secure – and they don’t say it? Note as limitation.

There is a “cluster” of participants sharing certain obvious demographic characteristics (…..) whose developmental stories are remarkably similar. I cannot cannot accept a superficial stereotype reason for this but I see it.

20-22.12.2020

The fading of self-efficacy

I am remembering how sure I was that SE would be at the centre of any findings. Until a conversation with Sue Cartwright and Sabir in 2018 (?) I was designing empirical research around an assumption that the core of EC was building SE. It will surely be in the findings but not as centrally as once thought! I realise – only now – how firmly I was “within” an understanding of EC outcomes as “learning” and “change” and, like the training follow-up of old, I expected the stories of EC to be “*At the end of the coaching I was full of good intentions and I tried to implement what I learned but life got in the way and I slipped back into old ways*.” There is NO trace of this in what participants say!

Jumping to conclusions: EC is not about “change” nor about” learning to change”, at all. I think that no participant said “I wanted to change.” (?)

Is it about learning? I think the occasions when participants said they went to the coach for “learning” was when getting ready to apply for senior management jobs, ie “learning” as something you flaunt. The rest of the time they needed “advice”. Is advice learning?

I am bothered by the idea of coaching as an occasion for feeding narcissistic needs. I don’t want to pursue this now, eg by theoretical sampling. No time, not nice and I haven’t thought out how to handle it. What I hear again and again is that the coach reassured the coachee that they were great when they were troubled by something. What is clear though is the alchemy of the coach in helping managers to digest the results of 360 appraisals. Stajkovic, maybe, or Cervone? Moments of cog appraisal (Lazarus) and psych resources.

10-12.02.2021

Appendix 2 Information on management development and EC in participants' organisations

A single agency provides basic training (collective) for managers in all the organisations from which participants were drawn. Participants' organisations also share a framework for coaching, where general policy lines are set centrally and coaches are accredited but operational decisions on coaching are taken locally. The following information is extracted from descriptions of the services offered on the websites of the organisations.

I – Training and other collective learning activities

(The coaching sessions included in some training programmes do not constitute 'executive coaching' for the purposes of this investigation.)

Leadership Lab

Behaviour, talents and blind spots as a leader; work-life balance; resilience; authentic leadership: management and emotions. 3 workshops + 2 coaching sessions

Leadership Walk

A one-day walk exclusively designed for managers, to reflect on your leadership journey in a complex and ever-changing environment. Be prepared to be inspired by nature, stimulated by your peers, and skilfully guided by experienced facilitators. 1 day

Lead your Team

Team leadership basics for team leaders; team roles; situational leadership; communication; delegation; assertiveness; handling awkward situations assertively. 3 day workshop (consecutive)

Sustainable Team Management

Build and maintain a healthy working climate in the team, allowing each member to perform well under pressure. Building resilience for you and for your team. 3x 1 day workshop + 1 individual coaching

Advanced Feedback for Managers

How to receive and give feedback effectively for a maximum impact, starting from observing people's personal preferences; understanding the need of psychological safety for the team and how to create it; when to use feedback or feedforward. 3x 1 day workshop + 1 individual coaching 2x non-consecutive half days

To be or not to be a Manager

Online learning. To enable administrators to explore their interest in becoming a manager and to get greater clarity on whether or not they want to become a manager; and if not, looking at possible alternatives. 2 day workshop

The Essentials of Management

This foundational management course aims at giving participants a comprehensive overview of what the realities of a management function involve. 3 day workshop (consecutive)

Next step: Head of Unit

Online learning. Administrators as from XX level, who know they want to become a Head of unit (including those who may not have succeeded so far). 2 day workshop

The New Head of Unit: Licence to Lead

Online learning. Mapping your unit's "cartography"; the role of the Head of Unit; challenging situations for a new Head of Unit; leadership styles; vision and action plan for your unit. 2 day workshop + 0.5 day coaching + 1 day workshop

To be or not to be a Director - Women only

Online learning. This course will allow participants to understand better what the job of director entails and explore their interest for applying for it. 3 zoom sessions

To be or not to be a Director - Mixed

Online learning. To assist new Directors in mastering their new role by examining a number of themes highly relevant to someone taking up a senior management position. The central theme is: What is my added value and contribution as a Director? 3 zoom sessions

My first 100 Days as a Director

Individual and peer-group support to new Directors during their critical and challenging first 100 days after being appointed. The programme is delivered on 'a roll on roll off' basis so "roll on" to the programme and benefit from the training and support as soon as they commence their new role as director and "roll off" when their first 100 days are finished or they have the possibility to join the NAD programme. 3 zoom sessions

Programme for Newly Appointed Directors

The aim of the programme is to take participants on a journey to help them to develop at their best in the role of senior managers: developing their own presence and confidence, trust and a collaborative mindset within and across their teams, being able to navigate complexity and drive change in a collaborative way, to (constantly bring and maintain) enable their directorates to adapt, continue to create value and to meet the challenges required to build (where it needs to be for) a better future for Europe. 2 hours (monthly) 5 modules + 4 lunchtime conferences

Senior Leadership Walk - Navigating complexity in times of transition

Half-day walk exclusively designed for Senior Managers, to reflect on your leadership journey in a complex and ever changing environment. Be prepared to be inspired by nature, stimulated by your peers and skilfully guided by experienced facilitators. Half day

Unconscious Bias in Management

How unconscious biases may alter judgements managers make about people in their staff and the empathy they have for them. Focusing on those 2 areas (empathy and fair judgement) will help us to develop as managers, as lack of those are two of the biggest triggers of stress and disengagement in people, while on the contrary high empathy and fairness can make people more confident in their ability to handle new, challenging situations and be more creative and will also help managers to make better recruitments Half day

Burnout Prevention and Building Resilience for Senior Managers

In this moment of anxiety and stress, building workplaces that are dynamic and full of vitality will be critical. Although supporting individuals through typical mental health support is critical, this must be complemented by support to teams and managers, which form the backbone of our workplace experiences. The intervention attempts to empower and tool-up managers, in order to ensure that they are well equipped to protect themselves and their teams from burnout, and to build resilience and vitality. 2 workshops + 1 follow-up WS + 1 individual coaching

II – Coaching

The following information is extracted from documentation made available to future coachees. The target audience is wider than managers.

Principles and purpose

Coaching is a vehicle/structured development process by which we can bring about the change we desire. It is thus about transformation. For it to be successful both the coach and coachee need to be active partners in the coaching relationship. We are co-responsible. Results are not guaranteed but rather are worked towards. I (coach) am responsible for the process and you are responsible for your engagement towards results (change/transformation/action). This document seeks to establish the basis upon which the coaching relationship will unfold, with a view to bringing about the change you are seeking.

Confidentiality

Coaching conversations are by their very nature treated in strict confidence. Exceptions to this rule would be linked to the professional and ethical standards of the service, as follows: where there is an indication of risk of harm to self or others, any indication of contravention of the obligations & responsibilities under the Staff Regulations or any other legal obligations. Other reasons will be agreed by common consent. This might be for procedural reasons or collecting statistical data. Coaches may also bring cases to the supervision they undertake as part of maintaining their professional standards. In the latter case, the identity of the coachee is not revealed as the supervision also respects the principle of confidentiality. It is coaching techniques and methods that are under scrutiny and not the specifics of the coaching.

Commitment

You are undertaking a coaching process because you want to make a change/grow/develop. As change normally occurs over time and requires commitment, a coaching relationship within the Commission customarily involves 3 to 6 sessions held over a period of 4-6 months.

Sessions

Sessions last between 45-60 minutes and ideally take place every 2-3 weeks. Prior to the first coaching session, you will be asked to fill in the pre-coaching questionnaire helping you to deepen your reflection and define your coaching objective.

Problems

If something doesn't feel right or upsets you, please bring it to the session. I will do the same. It is important that we both feel free to design and re-design our agreements between us in order to allow the coaching relationship to truly deliver. This also includes ending the coaching relationship.

Completing the coaching process

As indicated earlier, coaching processes generally amount to 3 to 6 sessions. Following our penultimate session, you will receive an email asking you to complete an online evaluation, which we will discuss at the final, wrap-up session. This is intended to capture your learning and examine what is next. Approximately 6 months later, you will also be contacted to conduct a brief interview to assess the impact the coaching has had.

Coaching types

Internal and/or external coaches provide the following types of coaching:

- Individual coaching to support you in managing your performance and talent, your resilience and development, as well as your relationships at work.
- Team coaching (for people who work together) to help to improve teamwork by exploring team dynamics, team processes and quality of relationships.
- Group coaching (for people from different services sharing similar challenges) to use the power of the group for reflection and exchange between peers to support each other's success and development.

Why coaching?

- You want to use your strengths in a more focused way
- You want to manage your workload
- You want to lead your team in a way which leads to well-being as well as performance
- You want to contribute in a way which is more fulfilling and which uses and expand your talent and leadership
- You would like to develop your capacity to manage challenges and change
- You would like to reflect on your relationship with your work, your colleagues and your managers
- You would like to be able to set limits
- You would like to be better understood by others.

Purpose of coaching in the organisation

To develop staff potential in order to help the organisation better achieve its results and strategic goals.

Typical individual coaching issues/objectives are:

- Self-development, including emotional intelligence
- Performance
- Leadership
- Personal transition: changing type of responsibility or work environment
- Organisational change: leading and integrating
- Communication patterns and the ability to give feedback
- Conflict: avoidance, resolution
- Workload and prioritisation
- Effective relationships (interpersonal relations, managing upwards, etc.)
- Engagement
- Major decisions (from disempowered-overwhelmed to a sense of control)

Quality standards and ethics

All coaches have followed a coaching accreditation path, and practice according to the ethical and professional standards of the European Coaching and Mentoring Council (EMCC), the International Coaching Federation (ICF), or equivalent. All coaching must be clearly and explicitly contracted between the coach and the client. This means that any person who coaches others is qualified to do so, the client has agreed to be coached and where the work falls under the remit of another service, the coach will indicate this clearly and refer the client to the appropriate service. Any ethical issues, difficulties or complaints relating to coaching practice or requests should be addressed to ….

Responsibility and accountability – coaches, coachees, the organisation

- Coaches: must have regular supervision (at least 5 times per year) with an accredited coach supervisor; coach at least one hour per week; and have at least 4 days of continuous professional development per year.
- Coachee: To have the desire to change; be ready to grow more self-awareness; to be committed; to be accountable to take action.
- The organisation: To support both the coach and the coachee in their learning and development process.

Getting off to a good start

In order to develop and embed an optimal coaching culture in the organisation, these elements are important:

- All coaching processes specify both organisational and personal goal(s), in line with the objectives of the organisation.
- A personal goal is about developing individual potential and capacity to contribute.
- An organisational goal defines a benefit for the organisation.
- Key stakeholders in the coachee's environment support and empower them in applying what they learn. This ensures that the outcome of the coaching intervention benefits the individual and the organisation.

Appendix 3 Invitation to participate

SENT FROM UNIVERSITY EMAIL ADDRESS TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS BETWEEN AUGUST AND OCTOBER 2019

Dear [first name]

As you may know, I am studying towards a PhD in "Organisational Health and Wellbeing" at Lancaster University in the United Kingdom. I would like to invite you to take part in research which is part of my PhD programme, about factors which influence the learning and development of middle and senior managers in the kind of international public organisations and institutions in which we work here in Brussels.

My plan is to collect a set of "management development narratives" from people I know personally who have:

- at least five years' experience in management,
- attended different management training courses, and
- undertaken a one-to-one coaching programme which finished two or more years ago.

Please tell me if I am mistaken in any of the above!

I am attaching two documents:

- the **Participant Information Sheet** explains what the study is about and what is involved if you accept to take part in it, and
- the **Consent Form** is a document which I will ask you to sign if you decide to take part in the study: this is a formal requirement. We can do the initialling and signing if/when we meet for the interview.

I have plenty potential participants for this study and will not be in the least inconvenienced if, for whatever reason, you prefer not to take part.

If you do accept to be included, I propose to conduct the interview in your office, unless you prefer otherwise.

Best wishes

Éamon

Appendix 4 Participant information sheet

Faculty of Health and Medicine Research Ethics Committee (FHMREC)

Lancaster University

Participant Information Sheet

Study on "Management Development Narratives"

I am studying towards a PhD in "Organisational Health and Wellbeing" at Lancaster University and I would like to invite you to take part in research about factors which influence the learning and development of middle and senior managers. Please take time to read the following information carefully before you decide whether or not to take part.

What is the study about?
This study aims to shed light on how managers have learned the job of "management". To do this I plan to collect about 30 individual "management development narratives" and see if they contain common or recurring themes.

Why have I been approached?
I am approaching you and other managers whom I know personally because you have:

- at least five years' experience in management,
- attended different management training courses, and
- undertaken a one-to-one coaching programme which finished two or more years ago.

Please tell me now if I am mistaken in any of the above!

Do I have to take part?
Absolutely not! It's completely up to you whether or not you take part, ie participation is totally voluntary. I am pursuing this study in a private capacity and nobody – other than you and I – inside or outside your organisation, will know who participated in it and I will not be inconvenienced if, for whatever reason, you decide not take part in this study. If you do participate and change your mind afterwards, I will be able to remove your contribution from the data up to four weeks after your interview. Later than this the analysis will have progressed to an extent where it will not be possible to sort out individual contributions.

What will I be asked to do if I take part?

If you decide to take part, this will involve a one-to-one interview with you, which I will record, audio only. The interview will last some 60 to 90 minutes and will be in English. The format is "semi-structured" around the following kinds of questions:

- how you first learned to "be a manager",
- individuals who helped you to become the manager you are today,
- events that were important moments of learning about being a manager.

Will my data be Identifiable?
After the interview, only I, the researcher conducting this study, will have access to the ideas you share with me. The only other person who will have access to what you contributed is a transcriber who will listen to the recordings and produce a written record of what you have said. The transcriber will sign a confidentiality agreement but will not know your name: on the recording I will identify you only with a participant number.

The data collected for this study will be stored securely on an encrypted USB memory stick ie if I lose the stick and someone finds it, they will not be able to open it without the password that only I will have. In any event, I will keep all personal information about you (e.g. your name and other information that could identify you) separate from your contribution and I will remove any personal information from the written record of your contribution.

- The audio recording will be deleted once the PhD has been awarded, failing this, within three years at most.
- Hard copies of questionnaires will be kept in a locked cabinet in my home.
- The files on the USB memory stick will be encrypted (that is no-one other than the researcher will be able to access them) and the computer I use, my own private laptop, is password protected.
- At the end of the study, hard copies of questionnaires will be kept securely in a locked cabinet in my home for ten years. At the end of this period, they will be destroyed.
- The typed version of your interview will be made anonymous by removing any identifying information including your name. Anonymised direct quotations from your interview may be used in the reports or publications from the study, so your name will not be attached to them.
- All your personal data will be confidential and will be kept separately from your interview responses.

There are some limits to confidentiality: if what is said in the interview makes me think that you, or someone else, is at significant risk of harm, I will have to break confidentiality and speak to my supervisors, named below, and / or a member of staff. If possible, I will tell you if I have to do this.

What will happen to the results?
The results will be summarised and reported in my thesis and may be submitted for publication in an academic or professional journal. I would also hope to be invited to talk about this research at meetings of HR people in our institutions, especially people who are responsible for designing learning paths for future managers. Please note that any results I present will be aggregated based on my analysis your and about 29 other contributions. Nothing in any results I present will be traceable back to you.

Are there any risks?
I can see no risks with participating in this study. However, if you experience any distress following participation you are encouraged to inform the researcher and contact any of the people mentioned at the end of this sheet.

Are there any benefits to taking part?
Although you may find participating interesting, there are no direct benefits in taking part.

Who has reviewed the project?
This study has been reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Health and Medicine Research Ethics Committee at Lancaster University.

Where can I obtain further information about the study if I need it?
If you have any questions about the study, you are welcome to contact any of the following:
Researcher (me): Éamon McInerney: e.mcinerney@lancaster.ac.uk

My supervisors:

Professor Susan Cartwright Tel: +44 1524 592430
Professor of Organisational Psychology and Wellbeing Email: s.cartwright@lancaster.ac.uk
Division of Health Research
Lancaster University
UK-Lancaster LA1 4YG

Dr Sabir Giga Tel: +44 1524 594033
Senior Lecturer Email : s.giga@lancaster.ac.uk
Division of Health Research
Lancaster University
UK-Lancaster LA1 4YG

Resources in the event of distress

Should you feel distressed either as a result of taking part in this study, now or in the future, you may contact Ms Alena Skrbková, psychologist in the Psychosocial Support Team of the European Commission. She and her colleagues provide a confidential support service to managers and staff. Alena is aware of this study and that she is being mentioned as a resource in case of distress. Any contact you have will her is fully confidential: I will not be informed. Alena can be contacted at +32 2 298 4484 or alena.skrbkova@ec.europa.eu.

Complaints
If you wish to make a complaint or raise concerns about any aspect of this study and do not want to speak to the researcher or anyone directly involved in the research, you can contact:

Professor Catherine Walshe Tel: +44 1524 510124
Head of Division of Health Research Email: c.walshe@lancaster.ac.uk
Division of Health Research
Lancaster University
UK-Lancaster LA1 4YG

If you wish to speak to someone outside the Organisational Health and Wellbeing Doctorate Programme, you may also contact:

Professor Roger Pickup Tel: +44 1524 593746
Associate Dean for Research Email: r.pickup@lancaster.ac.uk
Faculty of Health and Medicine
Division of Biomedical and Life Sciences
Lancaster University
UK-Lancaster LA1 4YG

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet. For information on how Lancaster University processes personal data for research purposes and your data rights please visit the university's webpage: www.lancaster.ac.uk/research/data-protection

Appendix 5 Interview question guide

1 Opening formalities: context, rules, consent form, recording devices

2 Draw **timeline** for management role: my research interest is in how you "became" the manager that you are today.

3 Were there periods when you **learned more intensely** about being a manager?
When? Why then?

4 Was there a time (job/moment/role) when you felt **"now I really am a manager"?**
(no longer an imposter) **When? Why then?**

5 Were you able to **"bring the learning with you"** from one job to the next? Up to **today**?

6 What about difficult moments along the way? Did you ever feel you wanted to **give up** the management role? Why didn't you?

7 Can you say that you learned to be **resilient**? When? How?

8 Do any **individuals** stand out in your memory as people who helped you a lot along the way to become the manager you are today? Bosses? Colleagues? Mentors? Family? Friends?

9 The **training** you followed: how much do you feel it contributed overall to your management development? I am interested particularly in three aspects:

- things you **liked**?
- things you **learned**? and
- things you **used**?

10 Did you have individual **coaching?**

- **Why** did you undertake the coaching?
- **Why then?**
- What was your work **context** at that time?

11 What do you **remember** of the actual coaching sessions? And the three aspects:

- things you **liked**?
- things you **learned**? and
- things you **used**?

Any things you learned but **could not put into use**?

12 Looking for any **lasting effects** from the coaching:

- Is there any part of the **manager you are today** that you can attribute to the coaching?
- Did the coaching have any **effects beyond work** or on your work/life interface?

13 Are there **other management competencies** (important knowledge, skills, ways of thinking or feeling) which you have acquired but have not been mentioned so far? If you were to tell young colleagues starting out on a management career the **main management lessons** you have learned, what would they be?

14 Some **details** I'd like to note:

- Your age today?
- Nationality (if not already known)
- How many years in management?
- How long since your coaching ended?

15 Closing formalities: information on analysis, search for recurring themes, confidentiality

Appendix 6 Worked transcript

This transcript, as all others, was coded initially in manuscript using a highlight pen. The markings have been typed and written material from the participant added up so that the text can serve as an illustrative example of this stage in the analysis. Some details have been changed and some information has been removed in order to protect the identity of the participant.

.

P [redacted] Interviewed on [redacted]09.2019; recorded interview lasted 27 minutes.

IN VIVO CODES	CONCEPTUAL CODES	CONCEPTUAL CATEGORIES
I'm going to draw a timeline like this, and this is today, 2019. And we are looking back in everything we're talking about. The topic of interest is your learning to be a manager: you have learned to be lots of other things as well ... Sometime at work you had a first management role. Looking back now when do you think that was? Not necessarily when you became a [redacted].		
I wonder if actually I don't know. I mean, arguably, even in my first position in … I was just a policy officer but I coordinated a key team. I was doing the [redacted] report and was coordinating the reorganisation. You know what I mean, I suppose in some sense there you are trying to, you know, those skills around trying to get people to deliver work on time and keep a good ... in some ways as a policy officer, it's quite difficult. You have no authority over people in the different units where you're trying to bring them together and deliver products and outcomes.	*Managing early in career* *Coordinating as part management* *Trying to get people to deliver* *Feeling powerless*	Always a manager, inside People are work Feeling powerless
But it's interesting that, looking at it from today, with what you now know about management, that you can see that as management.		
Yeah, yeah.	*Defining management*	
And then, if we move on from that, when was the next big step in terms of becoming a manager?	*Controlling, planning*	Good learning environment

Then, when I became [redacted], where you have to do a lot of coordination and quality control, be proactive in terms of planning to help the CEO plan. So this kind of organisational skills, quality control, human relations, where you've got to be very diplomatic, you're dealing with people, Directors, more senior than you, politicians, diplomacy, one day they might be your boss. So … *And then we go along the timeline looking again for the management development ...* And then I jumped. Basically that was [redacted] years and then it was straight into a management job in (date) Yeah, straight to (management job) *And that was your first big management job.* This now is my third. I was doing [redacted] for a while. But that was … then I came here. *You say you were learning about being a manager all the way along?* Absolutely, you keep learning all the time, keep learning all the time. *Looking at that timeline, is there some time there that was more rich in learning, more intense?* Well I'd say the initial, the first middle manager job, where it was really jumping into the deep end, because it was [redacted] I didn't go [redacted], I didn't transit by a [redacted] position. And it was just after a reorganisation, various posts needed filling ... because the unit had been split. I came back from [redacted]. So it was a unit that got split, the one part of the unit had a manager present and I was, I came to the new position. So I'd say it was a steep learning curve, because ... umm. It brought me a lot, but it was hard.	*Dealing diplomatically with people* *Remembering power issues* *Rising fast into management* *Learning all the time*	Learning was gradual, with time

Yeah. So there was learning there. And you brought that with you? Yeah, yeah I think already here I had to be super-organised. If you're organising something like calls for proposals and [redacted] you've got all the planning stuff. And I'd say, in some ways, I mean, there was actually quite [redacted] in some ways it was a bit daunting, arriving as a Desk Officer and then having to ... when you have to get people to act as evaluators from other units, where you've no authority and you kind of feel that, it's part of their job description, you kind of feel you've got to try and trade and develop goodwill really to get the results on time. But here ... there and, that was challenging in a different way. But here we were, here in a way with the [redacted] job, I suppose it was a good preparation in the sense of the overview it gives you both within the department and then with the political level, the kind of [redacted] but also the sheer number of dossiers you're having to jump between. And that's quite tough in the Agency, where you just ... your brain is so solicited. I suppose it all depends on the unit but it can be so solicited on so many different files and so many diverse tasks. *Very good. This thing of saying "now I'm a manager, really I'm a manager, no longer an imposter or a part time manager, I am a real manager". Do you think was there that moment?* Well that is what I always feel, like an imposter. I sometimes ... feel continuously like an imposter and on the other hand I don't. So you know it's ... No I'm just joking. No I think I felt it from the beginning, really. Well you realise umm, you realise it's ... but it's a difficult question. Perhaps I will phrase it differently. Just, just how tough it is really in the Agency, how much there is to learn. And to juggle. Which you have to accept to some extent. It's very interesting on the other hand to ... I suppose I always felt I had, I did feel I had, I was confident that I had some of the attributes that were needed but it was always just the sheer workload and diversity and ... and limited tools, which are a strain.	*First big learning* *Recalling a gender aspect* *Learning fast and hard* *Being organised to cope* *Feeling low power* *Developing goodwill to cope* *Learning from difficulty* *Dealing with quantity and variety* *Recalling pressure*	Feeling powerless People are work Good learning environment Feeling challenged, burdened

Very good. Thank you! Were there moments along this line when you said "I don't want to be a manager anymore"?		Always a manager, inside
Yeah, yeah. With a ... when you have excessive ... when you feel you have excessive workload and the staff ... I think of the challenges. I think this, this I felt consistently, even today, although you get more distance on things ... with experience but I'd say that continuous tension in the organisation between ... having, you know, to deliver the work and not always ... having a suboptimal human resource system. So, and everything being so slow to, you know, to get new resources, it's just such a [redacted] you know, so ... I think the middle management level is particularly, it's focused particularly on them, less so the senior management, I think. So I think it's just that, it's not managing per se.	*Joking about being an imposter* *Recalling how tough the learning was* *Accepting* *Feeling confidence in own attributes*	Feeling challenged, burdened Accepting it cannot all be good External attribution of difficulty
And I would call this the dysfunctionality of our human resource system and how we move resources around. I understand the constraints of being a public service. But it's, it's yes it's a headache for Heads of Unit, all that constant, you know, you are always trying to anticipate when will the next colleague who's crucial leave and having to ... in some files there are very long learning curves, in others less so. And sometimes just in the sense in that fragility of too, much too much, and some files where too much is on the shoulders of a handful of people and if … if they feel, you know, you have a big problem in terms of delivery.		Feeling challenged, burdened Learning to step back (with time) External attribution of difficulty Senior management unhelpful
And you're telling me that this is all stuff that you carry on your shoulders or in your heart, the pressure, the work, the worry?	*Recalling workload* *Getting distance with time* *Recalling continuous tension* *Blaming the system*	External attribution of difficulty Feeling anxious
Yeah. I think with experience it gets easier. But I think at the beginning when you're more of a perfectionist and you feel you've got to prove more things, you ... That's the hardest, the beginning, then over time you think, life in general, you relax a bit more.	*Seeing senior management as less focused on resources*	

Next question is about resilience and becoming resilient. Do you think that, in becoming the manager you are today, you became more resilient? Did you learn to be resilient?		Work environment unfair, unhelpful, uncaring
Yeah. And I think also through the difficult times. I think it's helped me to see difficulties other people are having and hopefully to try to prevent them from falling into the same tiredness trap I fell into. And, I think, I think I'm able to help people sometimes when they start just getting, you see, they're just so tired they can't see clearly anymore.	*Blaming the system* *Feeling the pain* *Worrying about the future*	
Do you have the feeling that you learned resilience?	*Feeling people's fragility* *Feeling the injustice in the system*	Learning was gradual, with time
Yeah, yeah resilience. Yeah. But I think I try to look back sometimes and I think objectively, though it was tricky at times, because, you know, I say when I arrived in the second agency, I had a much more amenable Director than I had perhaps at times or a much more relaxed Director and pragmatic and reasonable than I had at other times. But my first one, I mean my first Director, it was you know ... not to criticise, not wishing to over-criticise them, but they weren't the easiest person to work for. And when they are over-demanding and don't understand the constraints staff are under it can be ... when you're in the buffer between additional workload for things that are not relevant and you're trying to protect your staff who you feel are ... they just can't take anymore. So, so I think objectively ... and I look at people around me ... the person who you work for is incredibly important. Of course it gets easier to stand up to that kind of stuff with experience ... but then also when you do see bullying situations it can be very .. that can be very difficult.	*Getting easier with experience* *Beginning is hardest* *Relaxing a bit with time*	Discovering people Feeling exhausted, fearing for own health
You didn't give up, you stayed going?	*Learning to see others' difficulties* *Trying to help others*	
Yeah and I thought about it sometimes ... I thought about it. Yeah I'm glad I didn't.	*Recalling tiredness*	Senior management unhelpful

But you found the way, you found the strength, you found whatever. And then the next question: are there individuals along the way of whom, looking back, you think "she helped me", "he helped me"? I have a few prompts: bosses, colleagues, mentors, friends, family ... just people who helped you to be the manager that you are today?		People as work
	Recalling impact of boss	Work environment unfair, unhelpful, uncaring
	Criticising the boss	Learning was gradual, time works
	Feeling that the boss did not understand	
	Trying to protect staff	Being a manager is good
	Standing up to boss getting easier with experience	
	Glad not to have given up management	

Ummm ... to be honest, the senior managers I had, didn't help. You evolve despite them rather than thanks to them, even though I can say some of them are perfectly nice individuals, just ... I think that may change but there's been a certain emotional intelligence obtuseness in senior management. To be honest, I still see them recruiting people with no ... I'm sure that, I think, there are some excellent senior managers but I still think of the way they are still recruited means a lot of them lack emotional intelligence. So umm ... I think that there are actually very few people who understand the exhaustion trap. I don't think the mechanisms are really there and I think, if the senior manager isn't sensitive to it, who is responsible for you, well your staff that's not their job is it? Then you might have, you know ... I had some friends who were kind of worried. But yeah no one's really looking out for you particularly. Okay, well, you know in your case you did, you were around but that's quite rare. There was no ... I think it's quite a brutal system really. I think it may be improving. I tried to develop a network of other female colleagues who ... we could kind of rant about work stuff, you know go for drinks afterwards and, because women have fewer, perhaps ... I'm not sure men actually let off steam about this within their male networks but it gets quite lonely I think. When I had some coaching for applying for the directorship, I was [redacted] for a while, the guy, the coach said it's very lonely at the top and I think the higher up you go it kind of is lonely. Yeah. So I don't think there's ... Yeah I thought the system was quite brutal and if you don't look after yourself it's very few people will be looking out for you. The senior managers, on the one hand you don't want to reveal too much, on the other hand, even if they see the signs, they just want the work to be delivered and don't really care. So I think there's perhaps a growing awareness of burnout and stuff and tired and I think it's important not to want to fixate on burnout because I think some people could just be exhausted and need a rest and ... it's not the same. Yeah, but I do think we're in a way ... although you know I wish I hadn't sunk so tired. I think I learned something through it in that, I try to identify it in my colleagues when I see it. I try as far as I can to pick up on the signals which ... and hopefully to avoid them reaching that point but I think it's a problem in the Commission and I know that the rates of burnout are way too high, and depression and suicide, I have heard.	*Evolving despite senior management* *Judging senior management lacking in emotional intelligence… not understanding* *Feeling uncared for* *Feeling the system brutal* *Building friendships to cope* *Recalling a gender difference* *Recalling the loneliness* *Not trusting senior management, senior levels uncaring* *Differentiating between burnout and needing a rest* *Learning to identify the problem in others; trying to help*	Senior management unhelpful Work environment unfair, unhelpful, uncaring It is different for women Feeling alone Work environment unfair, unhelpful, uncaring Feeling exhausted, fearing for own health

You mentioned coaching. Had you just that one time? No, I've had it 3 times. *Is it OK if we mark them on the line? And I'll ask you "why then?"* One was straight after I became a Head of Unit. Yeah, I don't think she was the best actually for me. Then there was one, it was [redacted] after I had done ... after [redacted]. I thought, it might be nice to go back and I had a bit of coaching then. And then during the whole application process, I guess, I paid for privately, I paid for a coach, just to help with the interview process. I didn't get the job but it was useful, it was interesting. I paid for it myself. *If OK may we just look a little at each, maybe? One of the things that's not understood from research is the "why?", what is the motivation for a manager to have coaching? Can I bring you back to the moment of decision to look for coaching?* Here, it was I was a new manager and it seemed an obvious thing to have some support, you know. I was very open to that kind of thing anyway so it seemed obvious. Here it was with a specific job application in mind. *Can we stick with the first one for a moment? The Kirkpatrick model I'm using has some very simple questions. Did you like it? Did you learn anything? Did you use anything from it?*	*Recalling a bad coach match* *Recalling a coaching context* *Recalling coaching in own personal interest* *Judging coaching useful* *Welcoming support*	Finding purpose Bad coaching experience Good coaching experience

I think ... I liked the person and [redacted] but I felt that with hindsight she got too much into this kind of psychotherapy mode as opposed to staying a bit more focused on professional tasks. So for me it was the first time coaching so I just thought perhaps this is what it's like but I don't know. So I think looking back it would have been ... anyway ... *So not a lot of learning I think?* No. it wasn't really what I what I needed. I mean, what in a sense ... it was at that ... Yeah, I mean I needed. Yeah I don't know. I mean it's ... It just didn't really end up ... In some ways I knew what I needed to do ... but it was helpful to have a sounding board, I guess. Perhaps, perhaps it was helpful at the time but I think looking back I was looking ... I feel, if the new coach tries that kind of pressure I don't want them, I want something else. *Then we come to the second coaching, when you did it privately.* Yeah. *Different coach of course. And yet the circumstances were clear. You were looking for something you want? That was your trigger?* Yeah. Yeah. I wasn't desperate for it but it was kind of ... I was doing the acting job so ... it's kind of you know you should apply. I knew it was for someone else but still it was interesting because ... to see what are we looking for a senior management level. You know it's useful anyway for another application or for just, just my job in general. *So I think the "like" we can tick - you liked it better?*	*Explaining why coaching did not work* *Recalling needs and expectations from coaching* *Contrasting needs with coaching experience*	

Yeah. *Learning from it?* Yeah, a lot. More about, you know, just to think more explicitly about what was being looked for at senior management level and it is also useful for what you are doing as a manager, the more strategic picture things like this. So, yeah, it was more interesting. *Do you think is there any of that informing the kind of a manager you are today?* Yeah, I think so yeah. Yes. *Very good. And then we come to the last one.* Yeah. That was the thinking there was, myself, I thought, well I haven't had any kind of training in a long time. Perhaps it would be a good time now that this whole doing [redacted] was over. Which was quite a long time. perhaps it would be nice to have a more ... I didn't feel like I particularly needed coaching, coaching I've been a manager for [redacted] years and you know a lot of things by that stage but you thought well you never know. Perhaps it's good to have a fresh look and so, basically, we did like a 360 degree evaluation with staff and it was interesting. I think it kind of confirmed a few things that I suspected and it's been useful to ... I felt like, if I hadn't done the 360 degree evaluation, I don't think I'd got much out of it. But I thought that was to use the coaching process to perhaps get peer feedback, that was good. *You did training as well?*	*Recalling context of coaching* *Judging coaching about "doing" useful and interesting* *Recalling context of coaching* *Recalling expectations* *Linking coaching to peer feedback* *Valuing peer feedback*	I learned practical techniques I got feedback on myself

Bits and pieces, I'm trying to remember. I mean I've done not an enormous amount because the workloads have been crazy but, of course, at the beginning you have the obligatory ones and then there are things like participatory leadership. I don't know. Yeah, I mean the different … different trainings for managing. I don't remember to be honest, not so many but I've done a few. Now I'm going to do one at [redacted] [redacted] *We are almost there. I'm thinking maybe one last thing on the coaching, the training, maybe, but the coaching especially: did it have any effects outside of work or on the work life balance, the work life boundary, any of those coachings?* Well this was very much about me trying to wrestle with the work life balance and bearing in mind I came to that job with a [redacted] child.	*Not able to recall training* *Recalling work-life and family aspects of management development* *Recalling coaching that was not helpful* *Recalling how hard the job was* *Gender issue* *Learning from the pressure* *Learning from experience* *Valuing practical management techniques*	Fearing damage to family life It's different for women Feeling challenged, burdened, anxious Discovering people (important, trustable) Learning was gradual, with time

And it didn't really help! ... my conclusion is that, when the kids are that age and you've got a managerial job, it's just hell. Basically, I mean it's great in other ways but it's just really, really tough. And yeah. Here. Did they did help so much? I think, I think actually the combined, this one here combined with actually doing the two jobs in a way was good because it's just crazy [redacted] jobs. I didn't have a [redacted] who I could really ... I could just delegate the running of the unit to. So basically you're forced to just delegate ruthlessly. I mean it had already been, I'd say, easier in the previous agency to delegate but I'd say that in a way you ... just it was quite an interesting lesson because it's just so crazy. You just got to let go. And not care and trust people and so but I would say you know already, by the time I came to this agency, I had a quite different approach. Also I think it was just a more normal situation, you know, than what I've seen in the previous place, for so long. But so, I think, I'd already done quite a lot of learning by then. So I don't think that it was because of the coaching but … but I think still, yeah, I think this helped me, more like managerial techniques, and what I need to do in my unit. And this was more just about strategic thinking and things ... but also in the sense that you it helps you to look at what's important, where should I focus. I'd say there is more just that informal learning by yourself which is probably more important in the work-life balance. *Very good. One last kind of catch-all question. Things that you have learned about being a manager that you haven't mentioned: some big learning, if you had to tell people "what I have learned from my [redacted] years of management", especially things that we haven't mentioned so far?*	*Learning to see what is important* *Valuing informal learning alone*	I learned practical techniques Learning to step back (with time)

I think on the positive side I mean it's a ... great opportunity, as well, I think. Perhaps not if you're working on something very routine and procedural. Well that's some people's thing but if you're interested in policy and trying to make a difference, then if you're in charge of a policy unit or a fun programme unit or something you've got an incredible opportunity to try to develop new things and to steer and create things. I look back on the years when I was in Culture and, you know, there are legacies, things that you created that still exist. There are things you changed. In this job too it has the scope for being very creative and we've created new things and social finance, which stakeholders recognise made a difference and that's very nice, to feel that you can actually do something with a purpose and, although you've got the downsides, some of the bureaucracy anatomy and dysfunctional HR stuff, that's the thing that kind of kept me going, in a way it's just ... this is a great opportunity. To suddenly have to ... it's easy to think the grass is greener, isn't it? No job is perfect, whichever job you have in this organisation. But now, I think it's a great opportunity. *Very nice. Thank you. I am going to ask in your present age, is that okay?* Yeah! [redacted] this year. *And ... years in management ...?* [redacted] years in management. *And since the different coachings? It's* [redacted] *years since the first one and it's* [redacted] *years since the second coaching and* [redacted] *since the third?* Yeah! *Thank you!*	*Valuing the management role* *Feeling the purpose in management* *Feeling recognised by stakeholders (not senior management)* *Staying going despite the system* *Accepting imperfections*	Being a manager is good Finding purpose Having, finding, feeling a helpful environment (Good learning environment) Feeling valued Finding purpose Accepting it cannot all be good

REPLY TO MEMBER CHECK N° 1 Dear Eamon, Thanks for your email. I would agree that I fit in category 2. However I just underwent the [redacted] (learning experience) and that was really valuable. I only wish I had been able to do it [redacted]years ago.... It included a 360 degree assessment with a group coaching facilitated by an experienced coach (a highly experienced ex business leader) and an individual session. The mix of a course with a clear focus on leadership strategies, accompanied with coaching, was very effective in my view and will have a deeper impact. I don't know if that's useful ... But best wishes and hope to hear from you again.	*Appreciating learning* *Appreciating "coaching"* *Finding the coach credible*	Discovering?

Appendix 7 Member-checking messages

MEMBER-CHECK MESSAGE SENT TO PARTICIPANTS INDIVIDUALLY ON 17 MARCH 2020

Subject: Update on research

Dear [first name]

This message is in follow-up to the interview which you kindly gave me in the autumn of 2019 for my PhD research. It is mainly for information but any reaction on your part will be very welcome. As you may remember, the idea was to collect the personal stories of middle and senior managers about "how I became the manager I am today".

As could be expected from people who are not just surviving but thriving after many years in management, the interviews are full of rich and positive experiences: people report learning from setbacks as well as successes, from bad bosses as well as good ones, from their staff (strongly reported), from reading and thinking was well as from training other structured learning interventions.

I am interested in every part of every story but, for the present, I have a specific research interest in the place which you and other managers give to coaching (one-to-one coaching with a professional coach) in your stories.

A first analysis of the interviews suggests that coaching occupies quite different places in people's narratives. Trying to group just the coaching experiences together in a few big categories, this is what I come up with:

I "Coaching had an enduring effect on me and is still present in the manager I am today."

II "I remember the coaching as useful at the time but it has not left a significant lasting trace."

III "The coaching did not have a significant effect on me, even at the time."

After listening and re-listening to your "story", I feel that you fit best in category **III** above, in so far as coaching is concerned. I hope this feels reasonable to you. Please tell if I have got it wrong!

Next I will try to draw on literature from a range of disciplines to make some theoretical sense of the material and see if there are practical lessons from your experience for the next generation of managers.

Again, I am grateful for your precious contribution to this project. This message needs no reply but, if you do have further thoughts to offer on learning or coaching, I will be very happy to hear them.

Wishing you and everyone close to you an abundance of health and hope throughout this troubled period,

Éamon

Éamon McInerney

eamon.mcinerney86@gmail.com

+32 477 690402

MEMBER-CHECK [INFORMANT FEEDBACK] SENT TO PARTICIPANTS INDIVIDUALLY ON 28 NOVEMBER 2020

Subject: Update on research

Dear [first name]

This is an update on my PhD research project, to which you contributed last year. In the normal course I would write to you only when the analysis of all participant stories is complete. I have been asked, however, to use some of the emergent findings in an online talk I will give for EuSA next week and I feel that you and the other participants who gave so generously of your time should get the key points before anyone else.

By way of reminder, my research question is in two parts:

a) How do middle and senior managers describe the development process that made them into the managers they are today?

b) What part did "executive coaching" play in that process?

For the analysis I am using an approach called "grounded theory". Put simply, the idea is to see if your 40 stories contain a "theory of coaching" without referring to any existing theories. In fact, there is currently no overarching theory of executive coaching. There are bits of theory that explain aspects of coaching but nothing which situates it in the context of people's lifelong development as managers.

As mentioned in an earlier message, the first review of the interviews suggested three broad outcome categories:

1. Some coaching, even from long ago, is described as important in shaping the manager identity people still have today.

2. Other coaching is recalled as a learning episode which had value at the time but did not lead to deep learning or lasting change.

3. Some coaching is described as of little or no value, at the time of the coaching or afterwards.

If an emergent theory is to be useful it should offer some explanation of the above differences. Going back over the interview data one possible explanatory factor involves a construct I am provisionally calling "Private suffering in the management role": more on this below and, if you have time, I will be glad to hear what you think of it.

When the study participants describe effective coaching (scenarios 1 and 2 above) and, more generally, important learning moments throughout their management career, these occasions often involve dealing with "suffering in the management role". On the other hand, where coaching is deemed a waste of time (scenario n° 3), the interview data suggest that, whatever challenges were addressed in that coaching, "suffering in the management role" was not among them.

I am currently trying to define an (emergent) construct of "<u>private</u> suffering in the management role". Many participants, looking back, describe difficult times, which then led to major developmental breakthroughs: learning and new insights, re-assessing priorities, taking distance from problems and more. The "suffering" described includes exhaustion, stress, dealing with difficult people, bad systems, etc.

Listening to what participants said, I sense a difference between “easily shareable” suffering (bad bosses, misallocation of resources, short deadlines, long hours) and private suffering, not readily shared, to do with very personal fears and doubts. One indicator for the existence of this kind of private suffering is how often managers remember the relief of discovering that others had the same feelings.

Looking at patterns across the interview data, where “private suffering” was addressed successfully in coaching, the evidence suggests that the coaching is filed in the manager’s memory as a very good experience. This might not look like a great scientific discovery but there is almost no extant research linking coaching success to handling this kind of management distress. The only one I found is a recent study describing how executive coaching was successfully used to address “imposter syndrome” in new managers.

The managers I interviewed did not report any significant feelings of imposter syndrome, nor did they report significant doubt about own abilities to do the manager job. The “private” suffering described by the participants – with an ease that comes, I believe, from looking back – arises from something like a disconnect between what it should feel like to be a manager (joy, flow?) and what it does feel like in reality on bad days (tired, lonely).

I could go on but this message is already longer than intended and thanks for reading this far! No reply is needed but, if you do have time to react to any of the above, I will be very grateful to have your thoughts. I will send you the link to Tuesday’s talk with no suggestion that you should join in: for my part of the session you have everything already in the above paragraphs.

I hope you and all your people, colleagues as well as family, are keeping well at this time.

Éamon

Appendix 8 Ethics approval

Lancaster University

Applicant: Éamon McInerney
Supervisor: Susan Cartwright, Sabir Giga
Department: Health Research
FHMREC Reference: FHMREC18087

21 August 2019

Dear Éamon

Re: "Lasting effects? The place of executive coaching in managers' development narratives"

Thank you for submitting your research ethics application for the above project for review by the **Faculty of Health and Medicine Research Ethics Committee (FHMREC)**. The application was recommended for approval by FHMREC, and on behalf of the Chair of the Committee, I can confirm that approval has been granted for this research project.

As principal investigator your responsibilities include:

- ensuring that (where applicable) all the necessary legal and regulatory requirements in order to conduct the research are met, and the necessary licenses and approvals have been obtained;
- reporting any ethics-related issues that occur during the course of the research or arising from the research to the Research Ethics Officer at the email address below (e.g. unforeseen ethical issues, complaints about the conduct of the research, adverse reactions such as extreme distress);
- submitting details of proposed substantive amendments to the protocol to the Research Ethics Officer for approval.

Please contact me if you have any queries or require further information.

Tel:- 01542 593987
Email:- fhmresearchsupport@lancaster.ac.uk

Yours sincerely,

R E Case

Becky Case
Research Ethics Officer, Secretary to FHMREC.

Appendix 9 Coding and theoretical integration for management development

Snapshot of the evolution of categories based on the first 12 transcripts

(Colours were used to track additions)

Category	Notes
Behaviour training	Learning how to "act" in important situations; what will you do next time this happens? Coaching helped with the little things; tips and techniques; suggested reading;
Good coach, bad coach	Important characteristics of the coach and her/his approach, style and ideology
Growing	Feeling the need and the potential to grow, develop, change; "plastic"; I was starting to think about developing further;
~~Some things don't change~~ Self-agency ?	You learn to act but deep down the trait persists; resilience is not something you learn; how much agency do I have over my management style? traits and character as limits on self-agency;
Strange starts	"Alibi", curious, job application; instrument to get promoted; coaching a surprise when started; trainee coach needed practice;
Expected challenge	Fear of new job, recurrence of a problem I cannot handle
Transience / time for learning	Moving on, new beginnings, new opportunities; the passage of time helps reduce the suffering, relative the importance
Learning episodes	Admitting errors, learning in cycles, repeating; learning all the time; you have to be well in order to learn; I learned in every job;
The organisation / environment	External forces, being moved, the Organisation (machine); people with more power than you; the system doesn't help the manager; the manager must realise this; the org can even be hostile, toxic; immediate env can be helpful, populated by good role-models and supportive people; some environments are bad, some good; you have to avoid or leave bad ones; people around you can encourage you; the environment shapes the manager you are; the difficult environment led to a valued insight on own management style;
Gratitude	Feeling lucky, feeling helped (?)
Insight; self-awareness	Seeing a problem from a new angle, stepping back, self-awareness; separate from who I am (?); becoming aware of my own strengths and weaknesses
~~One Me~~ Positive leader identity ?	Me-the-person v Me-the-manager, holistic; same as confirmation of who I am? Feeling allowed to be myself, a kind of liberation from what I thought the job required; I knew I was a leader; I always wanted to be the boss; feeling the responsibility;
Inner v outer	Changed inside, not yet outside; *** thinking now: is there a Q of direction and locus? P33 says that the env determines

	the kind of manager one is; merge this category with "Self-agency"!
Existential	One life, relative importance of work, fears; coaching bringing an awareness of precious time;
Toll	Management good, the toll too heavy; constant pressure; I am more stressed now than ever; ways needed to limit damage;
~~Feeling vulnerable~~ ~~Self-doubt~~ ? Internal attribution	Admitting own needs, expressing own needs, recognising own limits; fear that I will mess up again; this is different from sense of challenge; includes internal attribution of failure and difficulty;
Caring suffering	Caring, agonising, trying to please; caring for people associated with suffering; caring for own people as an act of proud defiance of a bad system; the manager is responsible for people's whole lives;
Accepting own limits	Not responsible for everyone's life and happiness; I'm more at ease now (after coaching and experience) with not being able to manage people well; coaching as dissonance reduction, eg "it's not my fault" or "I cannot change";
Not just me	My (difficult) situation is not unique, others have these problems also, there are patterns
(Un)inspired by people	Calling on trusted friends, mentors, recalling role-models; link to "The Organisation"? Negative role-models
Renewed	Feeling regenerated, saved, no longer an imposter; merge this with Leader identity development?
Self-interested	It was for me, I paid some of the cost myself; it was valuable in my private life also;
Still using	Coaching still informs the manager I am today (I)
Powerlessness of manager bad or good?	You need skills of persuasion as you don't have enough power; I have confidence from being able to lead even without formal power (this is more "Affirmation", I think)
Gender (do better than this)	Especially hard for a mother; importance of female role models;
Wanting to give back	Especially to help other women
Loneliness / (suffering?)	Lonely at the top, nobody cares for you, women can rant together; pressure 24/7; nobody called or came to talk; people left; being excluded;
Affirmation	Feedback, confirmation of who I am; doubts resolved; same as "not just me"? People tell me I'm a great boss, it's nice; restoring lost confidence; regaining confidence from being like valued role-models; proud of my resilience in not burning out: is this different? The coaching brought a kind of final confirmation that I am a good manager, setting aside all doubts; the coaching helped me deal with harsh feedback;
Finding meaning	Why I put up with the suffering of being a manager; I learned (in training) to find purpose; our motivation can be idealistic;
Then only	Coaching was useful then but has left no lasting trace (II)
~~Task before people~~ Discovering people	I learned to deliver results before discovering the importance of people; ~~link to "feeling for others", above?~~ Discovered before coaching, or as an outcome; discovering

	the complexity of people, not in a negative way; neutral or even a joy;
Coaching for coping	Coaching gave me space to think and see priorities; coaching was a break in the constant pressure; it led me see my role; not get rolled over by small things;
Coaching digested	Coaching helped me to digest a difficult experience; it went into me; is this the same as mental strengthening? Metabolised? Spilling over into the me at home;
External attribution of difficulty (Ext att)	Attribution upwards: let down by bad bosses: attribution outwards: the system, bureaucracy, org culture; downwards: weak staff; ext attribution of shortcomings of coaching ("coach didn't understand");
C as joy, revelation, wow	Good experience, great, interesting; revelation, breakthrough moment;
Coach's regard	Neutral, knowing (like Affirming feedback?); the external view and confidentiality were precious, I could not get the same in a training course or from colleagues;
P are the problem	It's the people you have to manage that make management easy or difficult; with sufficient managerial power there is little problem; when I'm fed up, it is with them; task management is easier than people management; coaching helped me see that the problem was her, not me (~~this could become "C as dissonance reduction~~"); managing people is the part that brings most pain;
Joy of management	Sense of joy, fulfilment, pride in *being* a manager, and formally recognised as such;
Transformation non-C	Deep personal transformation moments other than in coaching;
Coaching as mental strengthening	It helped me prepare for difficult moments; a prepared mindset; BUT … is this the same as "Coaching digested"?
Born leader / Early success	In most stories but probably an artefact of the opening question
Memory	What is remembered and what is forgotten? All training, for example, except for the transformative courses.
Process issue: coaching petering out	A wow start, then fading

Overview of conditional relationship guide for all conceptual categories identified in the data

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	CONCEPTUAL CATEGORIES	WHAT	WHEN	WHERE	WHY	HOW	CONSEQUENCES
2			*Time, not condition*	*Locus*	*Cause? Attribution?*	*Actions & interactions*	*"Participants' true meaning"*
3	*ased closely on Wilson Scott & Howell (200*	*Emic definitions*	**When, Where and**	**Why *give contextual conditions and boundaries***		*Process over time; helps us understand the consequences from participants' perspective*	
4	Feeling alone	Lonely at the top, nobody cares for you, pressure 24/7; nobody called or came to talk; people left me; I felt excluded.	Time of trouble	In my office, inside my head	Because of being the boss, having lost previous relationships, LM not close or caring	By distrusting some people, withdrawing	Becoming fearful
5	Feeling uninspired / depressed by own bosses	Not wanting to be like them	Daily work	Interactions / meetings with senior management	"Because I'm not like that"	By judging and criticising them	Feeling alone, non-identification, self-reflection, determination to do better
6	Feeling work environment unfair, unhelpful, uncaring	External forces, being moved, the organisation is a machine; there are people with more power than you; the system doesn't help the manager; the manager must realise this; the org can even be hostile, toxic; some environments are bad, some good; you have to avoid or leave bad ones; people around you can encourage you; the environment shapes the manager you are.	Time of trouble	Mangement settings	Because of a bad org culture	By not having anyone in the org to turn to	Feeling vulnerable, building defences, getting angry
7	Feeling powerless	You need skills of persuasion as you don't have enough power to get things done	When challenged from below	In team settings	Because of bad org structure and rules	By not being able to resolve issues "managerially"	Dissonance (dissonant with image of "manager")
8	Expecting difficult challenges, feeling high expectations	Fearing to repeat mistakes, feeling challenged, burdened, anxious that expectations are unfair and cannot be met	New work challenges, managing change	In management settings	Because of not being confident on ways or of eventual good outcome	By worrying	Fear of failure, repeating mistakes
9	Feeling different inside versus outside, person versus manager	Me-the-person v Me-the-manager, should be holistic; should be allowed to be myself; I changed inside but couldn't show it outside	When new, when changing (inside)	Inside own head	Because of changing (inside first)	By learning (inside) but not feeling confident to apply it (outside)	Dissonance, doubt
10	It is more difficult for a woman	I feel it is more difficult for a woman; especially hard for a mother; importance of female role models; the team was all male and older	When new, especially	In team settings, where the culture / team is mostly male	Because of factors in the wider culture	By not feeling respected, seeing authority challenged	Becoming quickly aware of self and others; feeling need for support
11	Being exhausted	I was always exhausted, fearing for own health; I liked the management job but hated the toll it was taking; sleep problems	Constantly	At home, inside own head and body	Because of dysfunctions and deficits in the org; underperforming people; some self-blame	By working long hours, not sleeping well	Becoming fearful, turning to medication
12	Fearing damage to family life	Work-life balance impossible; sleep problems	In times of high work pressure	At home, on my way home	Dysfunctions and deficits in the org; some self-blame	By giving too much time and energy to work and not being happy	Bringing fears and worries home
13	I blamed myself	Internal attribution of everything, not admitting or expressing own needs or limits; fear that I will mess up again	When I didn't feel well, in times of failure	Internally, in my head / heart	Because I felt I should have been able to manage better	By recalling my own shortcomings	Losing self-esteem and confidence
14	I suffered from over-caring, wanting to solve people's problems	Caring, agonising, trying to please; caring for own people as an act of proud defiance of a bad system; the manager is responsible for people's	When faced with suffering in staff	Within own team	Because of a sense of responsibility in being the manager	By feeling the colleagues' distress personally and strongly	Feeling of personal failure
15	I saw people as problems	I saw people as problems, I feared people's reactions; it's the people you have to manage that make management easy or difficult; with sufficient managerial power there is little problem; when I'm fed up, it is with them; task management is easier than people management; managing people is the part that	In times of conflict	One-to-one, with staff, in meetings	Because of not understnding their attidudes or behaviour	By fearing their reactions	Becoming isolated, losing confidence
16	Knowing I could cope, get through, survive	I was born a manager; I was a leader in school; I am naturally resilient	In times of trouble	In my head	Because of my DNA, parents, upbringing	By relying on own resilience, support from others, including mentors, family and coach; by surviving different	Gaining self-confidence, belief in the future
17	Accepting it cannot all be good	Discovering that I am not responsible for everyone's life and happiness; I'm more at ease now (after coaching and experience) with not being able to manage people well; "it's not my fault". "some things I cannot change"	In times of trouble	I learned this in conversation with peers and in coaching	Life is like that; the organisation is like that	By listening to others and thinking it through	Finding internal calm
18	Learning was gradual, time works wonders	I was always growing; I was thinking about developing further; moving on to new beginnings and new opportunities; the passage of time helps reduce the suffering, time; I admitted errors and learned all the time; you have to be well in order to learn: I learned in every job	Continuous	At the workplace	Life is like that; the organisation is like that	By management life happening in episodes	Resigned waiting
19	I learned to "act" / I got tips & tricks	I learned to "act"; I got tips & tricks; "what will you do next time this happens?" in coaching; the coach suggested readings; you learn to act but deep down the trait persists	In repeating scenarios	In routine meetings, tricky one-to-one discussions	Because there were new behaviours I needed to learn	By observing good models, from mentors and buddies, from coaches, by reading	Learning practically to cope with situations, techniques
20	I was becoming the manager / person I wanted to be	I felt allowed to be myself, a kind of liberation from what I thought the job required	When growing, changing	At the workplace	Because I learned and changed	By applying learning successfully	Consonance; self-esteem
21	Having, finding, feeling a helpful environment	I was lucky, I had a great boss, the environment was very good for learning, I left and went to a better place	Following a change of job or line manager	At the workplace	Because individuals make a big difference	By taking action, by being lucky, by being inspired by people above me	Joy, safety, learning, belonging
	Discovering I'm OK, that it is "not just me"	The feedback was confirmation of who I am; doubts resolved; people tell me I'm a great boss, it's nice; restoring lost confidence; regaining confidence from being like valued role-models; proud of my resilience in not burning out; the	When I'm down and something nice happens	Coaching, coffee breaks in courses, 360 exercises and other feedback	Because I felt the need for feedback or for a morale boost	By listening to what people say, by discovering I'm not alone, by the coach's regard	Relief
22		confidentiality were precious); I could not get the same in a training course or from colleagues					
23	Finding purpose	Why I put up with the suffering of being a manager; I learned in the training to find purpose; we are lucky here because our motivation can be idealistic	Special, rare occasions	Coaching, leadership training	Because I had not thought about my sense of personal purpose	By introspection and conversation	Belief in self; consonance
24	Discovering people (as important, trustable)	I learned that people are important and trustable; I learned to deliver results before discovering the importance of people; discovering the complexity of people, not in a negative way	Continuous and / or intense learning	Many loci	Because task management was much more important than people management in my life until then	Through marking experiences, engagement with people, guidance from colleagues, reading, coaching, self-awareness	Relief, sense of power in the collective
25	Re-appraising problems	Coaching gave me space to think and see priorities; coaching was a break in the constant pressure; it led me see my role; not get rolled over by small things	In times of crisis	Coaching; guidance from a mentor	Because of being overwhelmed	By stepping back, taking psychological distance	Relief
26	Remembering the joy of being a manager, feeling fortunate	Purpose, making a difference; seeing what I / we have achieved	Private moments, on reflection, in times of achievement	Inside own head	Personal satisfaction, alignment with personal values	By "making a difference"	Purpose, self-esteem, confidence, consonance

Mapping categories with emotional consequences

CATEGORIES	CONSEQUENCES
Feeling alone	Becoming fearful
Feeling uninspired by own bosses	Feeling alone, non-identification, self-reflection, determination to do better
Feeling the work environment cold and uncaring	Feeling vulnerable, building defences
Feeling powerless	Dissonance
Fearing difficult challenges, fearing to repeat mistakes	Looking for support
Feeling different inside versus outside, person versus manager, changing inside	Dissonance, doubt, learning, growing
I feel it is more difficult for a woman	Becoming aware of self and others; looking for support
Being exhausted	Becoming fearful, turning to medication
Fearing damage to family life	Bringing fears and worries home
I blamed myself	Losing self-esteem and confidence
I blamed others, the system	Getting angry
I suffered from over-caring, wanting to solve people's problems	Feeling of failure
I saw people as problems, fearing reactions	Becoming isolated, losing confidence
Getting through, coping, surviving	Gaining self-confidence
Accepting it cannot all be good	Finding internal calm
Learning was gradual, time works	Resignation to waiting
I learned to "act" / got tips & tricks	Learning practically to cope with situations
Becoming the manager / person I want to be	Consonance; self-esteem
Having, finding, feeling a helpful environment	Joy, safety
Discovering I'm OK (incl regard of coach)	Feeling relieved, happy
Finding purpose	Belief in self; consonance
Discovering people (important, trustable)	Relief
Stepping back, re-appraising problems	Relief
Feeling fortunate	Joy
Attributing problems externally	Relief
Being inspired by people	Learning
Sensing my personal power	Belief in self
Believing in the future	Feeling hope, joy
Feeling accompanied (mentor, buddy, coach)	Safety, not-alone, learning
Discovering it was not just me	Relief
I digested the coaching	Being more competent and feeling it
Remembering the joy of coaching	Making associations between good things and coaching

Remembering the joy of being a manager	Gaining in self-esteem, confidence, strength to go on

Attempt (Nov 2020) to work with dimensions in the data

N°	Conceptual category	Description	Possible dimensions
1.	**Feeling alone**	Lonely at the top, nobody cares for you, women can rant together; pressure 24/7; nobody called or came to talk; people left; being excluded.	MY WORLD I was alone – I wasn't alone
2.	**Feeling work environment unfair, unhelpful, uncaring**	Incl "Senior management unhelpful" Feeling the work environment cold and uncaring Feeling uninspired by own bosses External forces, being moved, the Organisation (machine); people with more power than you; the system doesn't help the manager; the manager must realise this; the org can even be hostile, toxic; immediate env can be helpful, populated by good role-models and supportive people; some environments are bad, some good; you have to avoid or leave bad ones; people around you can encourage you; the environment shapes the manager you are; the difficult environment led to a valued insight on own management style. Link to ext attribution? I blamed others, the system Attribution upwards: let down by bad bosses: attribution outwards: the system, bureaucracy, org culture; downwards: weak staff; ext attribution of shortcomings of coaching ("coach didn't understand");	WORK ENVIRONMENT Helpful – Unhelpful
3.	**Feeling powerless**	You need skills of persuasion as you don't have enough power; I have confidence from being able to lead even without formal power (this is more "Affirmation", I think)	MY POWER Personal – Organisational
4.	**Worried about the future**	Fearing difficult challenges, fearing to repeat mistakes / Feeling challenged, burdened, anxious One life, relative importance of work, fears; coaching bringing an awareness of precious time	THE FUTURE Fear – Confidence

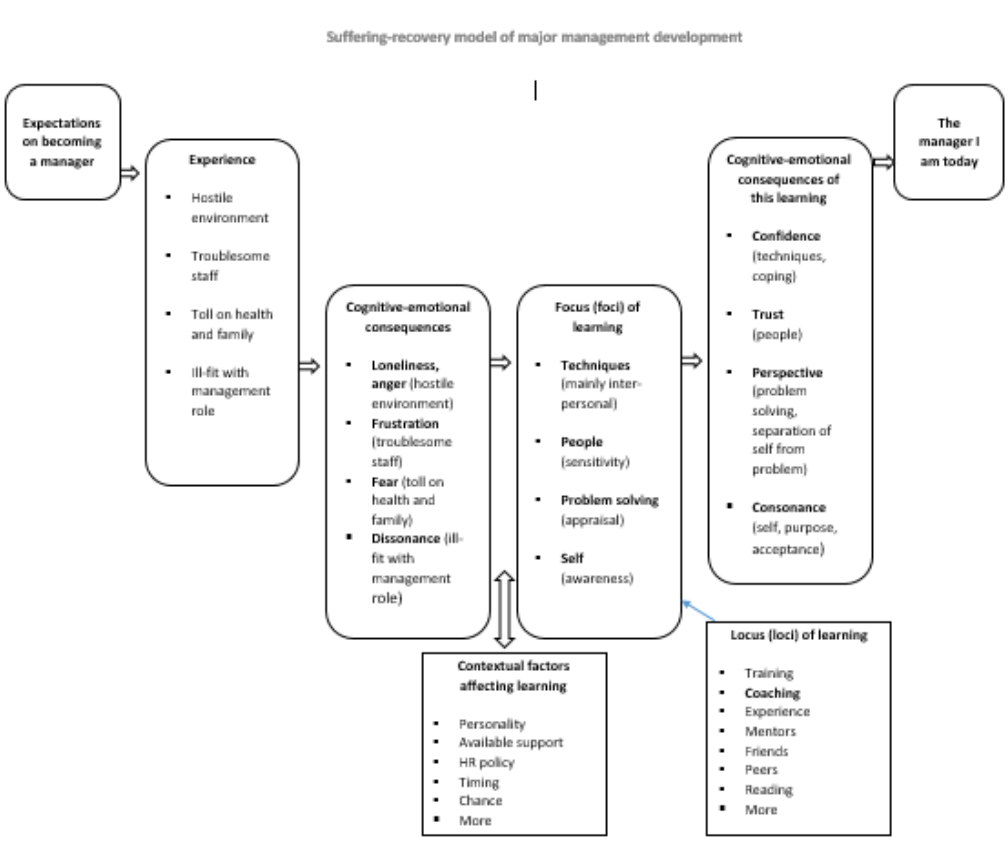
		Expanding this to include: - Feeling exhausted, fearing for own health - Fearing damage to family life	
5.	**Feeling different inside versus outside**	Me-the-person v Me-the-manager, holistic; same as confirmation of who I am? Feeling allowed to be myself, a kind of liberation from what I thought the job required; I knew I was a leader; I always wanted to be the boss; feeling the responsibility; Changed inside, not yet outside; *** thinking now: is there a Q of direction and locus? P33 says that the env determines the kind of manager one is; merge this category with "Self-agency"! Person versus manager, changing inside. The manager I want to be.	ROLE FIT Good fit – Bad fit
6.	**It is different for women**	I feel it is more difficult for a woman. Especially hard for a mother; importance of female role models.	GENDER Same – Different for women
7.	**I blamed myself**	Internal attribution, admitting own needs, expressing own needs, recognising own limits; fear that I will mess up again; this is different from sense of challenge; includes internal attribution of failure and difficulty	PROBLEM ATTRIBUTION Internal – External
8.	**People are work**	Caring, agonising, trying to please; caring for people associated with suffering; caring for own people as an act of proud defiance of a bad system; the manager is responsible for people's whole lives I saw people as problems, fearing reactions. I suffered from over-caring, wanting to solve people's problems It's the people you have to manage that make management easy or difficult; with sufficient managerial power there is little problem; when I'm fed up, it is with them; task management is easier than people management; coaching helped me see that the problem was her, not me (~~this could become "C as dissonance reduction~~"); managing people is the part that brings most pain;	PEOPLE People are work – Thank God for people
9.	Getting through, coping, surviving		?

10.	**Accepting it cannot all be good**	Not responsible for everyone's life and happiness; I'm more at ease now (after coaching and experience) with not being able to manage people well; coaching as dissonance reduction, eg "it's not my fault" or "I cannot change" Link to self-awareness?	?
11.	**Learning was gradual, driven by time**	Feeling the need and the potential to grow, develop, change; "plastic"; I was starting to think about developing further. Moving on, new beginnings, new opportunities; the passage of time helps reduce the suffering, relative the importance. Admitting errors, learning in cycles, repeating; learning all the time; you have to be well in order to learn; I learned in every job;	LEARNING CURVE Gradual – Punctuated
12.	**I learned practical techniques**	I learned to "act" / got tips & tricks. Learning how to "act" in important situations; what will you do next time this happens? Coaching helped with the little things; tips and techniques; suggested reading. You learn to act but deep down the trait persists; resilience is not something you learn; how much agency do I have over my management style? traits and character as limits on self-agency;	PERSONAL PERFORMANCE Being – Acting
	Good learning environment	Having, finding, feeling a helpful environment	Dimension of ENVIRONMENT? Hospitable - Inhospitable
13.	**Feeling valued**	Discovering I'm OK (incl regard of coach). Feedback, affirmation, confirmation of who I am; doubts resolved; same as "not just me"? People tell me I'm a great boss, it's nice; restoring lost confidence; regaining confidence from being like valued role-models; proud of my resilience in not burning out: is this different? The coaching brought a kind of final confirmation that I am a good manager, setting aside all	SELF-REGARD / VALUE High – Low

		doubts; the coaching helped me deal with harsh feedback; Neutral, knowing (like Affirming feedback?); the external view and confidentiality were precious, I could not get the same in a training course or from colleagues; I got feedback on myself self-awareness; separate from who I am (?); becoming aware of my own strengths and weaknesses Not responsible for everyone's life and happiness; I'm more at ease now (after coaching and experience) with not being able to manage people well; coaching as dissonance reduction, eg "it's not my fault" or "I cannot change".	
14.	Finding purpose	Why I put up with the suffering of being a manager; I learned (in training) to find purpose; our motivation can be idealistic.	MOTIVATION?
	Discovering people	People as important, trustable. I learned to deliver results before discovering the importance of people; ~~link to "feeling for others", above?~~ Discovered before coaching, or as an outcome; discovering the complexity of people, not in a negative way; neutral or even a joy.	?
15.	Learning to step back	Stepping back, re-appraising problems / I got feedback on myself / I gained perspective With time OR? quickly. Are these two different categories or the same category with different loci? Link to next category? Seeing a problem from a new angle, stepping back, Coaching gave me space to think and see priorities; coaching was a break in the constant pressure; it led me see my role; not get rolled over by small things;	DISTANCE TO PROBLEM Inside me – I stepped back
16.	Strengthening the mind		
17.	Feeling fortunate; being inspired by people		

18.	Bad coaching experience	I had a bad coach / match	
	Believing in the future		
19.	Feeling accompanied (mentor, buddy, coach)	Feeling lucky, feeling helped; gratitude; can this be an "Ext att of success" category?	
	Discovering it was not just me	My (difficult) situation is not unique, others have these problems also, there are patterns	
20.	Good coaching experience	I digested the coaching Coaching helped me to digest a difficult experience; it went into me; is this the same as mental strengthening? Metabolised? Spilling over into the me at home; Good experience, great, interesting; revelation, breakthrough moment; remembering the joy of coaching Coaching gave me space to think and see priorities; coaching was a break in the constant pressure; it led me see my role; not get rolled over by small things;	
21.	Being a manager is good	Remembering the joy of being a manager Sense of joy, fulfilment, pride in *being* a manager, and formally recognised as such;	
22.	Always a manager, inside	The manager was in me but the circumstances stopped me from being it fully (same as attributing problems externally?) I have confidence from being able to lead even without formal power (this is more "Affirmation", I think) Sensing my personal power	
23.			MANAGEMENT Hell – Gratitude / joy
24.			COACH MATCH Good – Bad

Attempt (abandoned) at a process model of overall management development from the data



Appendix 10 Coding and theoretical integration for sample A – EC with long-term effects

FIRST CAPTURE FROM TRANSCRIPTS OF CONCEPTUAL CATEGORIES FOR WHAT SAMPLE A SAID ABOUT EC	CONCEPTUAL CATEGORIES AFTER FIRST REWORKING	LATEST SET OF CONCEPTUAL CATEGORIES (June 2021)
Practical preparation for a difficult job	Distance, space, perspective	Discovering *(central category)*
A better mindset for action	The coach was not from the organisation (common humanity)	Experiencing the coach as a free, neutral person
That people do not know what is in your head	Coach listened, echoed, was deep, saw, understood, was intelligent, brought me inside myself	Experiencing the coach as deep and insightful
Practical ways to get through difficult times	People, understand them and myself with people	Eyes opening
How to deal with specific cases	Looking inside, me, accept	Using the space
Look inside	360 good, helped with digestion, I learned about myself, sight, mirror, it helped me get to know myself	Looking inside
Accept my way	Dealing with trouble, problems, stress / to be happy / to bring less stress home, better mindset	Digesting and metabolising unsavoury truths
Be myself	Gaining confidence, believing in myself, to feel the influence I have	Embracing my authentic self
Be confident in myself	I digested the learning and it became part of my persona, it had effects beyond the workplace	Feeling shared humanity
That my problems were normal	Taking distance, using the space to gain new perspectives	Finding and bringing joy
The coach was both deep and practical	Seeing afresh	Taking control
The coach was intelligent	The coach was a person, not from the organisation (common humanity)	
Not to take full responsibility for my staff's happiness	Coach listened, echoed, was deep, saw, understood, was intelligent	
To take distance	People, understand them and myself with people	
To deal with concrete challenges	Learning about my deeper self	
The coach was a sounding board not from the organisation	Accepting self, helping digest difficult feedback	
To find my role	Dealing with trouble, problems, stress	
To deal with stress		
To work on myself		
Confidence in myself		
To relax		
To be happier		
To bring less stress home		
To benefit fully from 360 FB		
To take some distance		
To be more confident in myself		
To work on my weak points		
To stop and think		
To be more assertive		
To feel the influence I can have		
Coaching was a revelation		
I got to know a deeper me		
I learned a different way of looking at things		

The coaching brought me confidence from the outside I got tools to manage expectations The coaching was a mirror I digested the learning from coaching and it became part of my persona The coach accompanied my for all big transitions The coaching brought me inside to see what was happening to me I learned that it wasn't all my fault It had effects beyond the workplace The coaching was a support It opened my eyes It had effects at home and at work, it was holistic It unleashed potential in me It got me to reflect, especially on what is important It brought me distance I learned to search inside myself for solutions The coaching got me through It gave me useful mantras The coach encouraged me to be open-minded It was an eye-opener The coaching made me conscious of how I react The coaching was all about ME The coaching was space for ME I learned not to be rolled over by small things It helped me to digest a difficult experience The coaching helped me recognise myself Helped me become resilient It confirmed me as a person It helped me tangibly with difficult management questions It was a mirror for me	Learning to be happy, to bring less stress home, to have a better mindset Gaining confidence, believing in myself, feeling true to myself, feeling the influence I can have	

Attempts at identifying the core category

- Moving
- Mental shifting
- Finding my place

Appendix 11 Coding and theoretical integration for sample B – EC with short-term effects

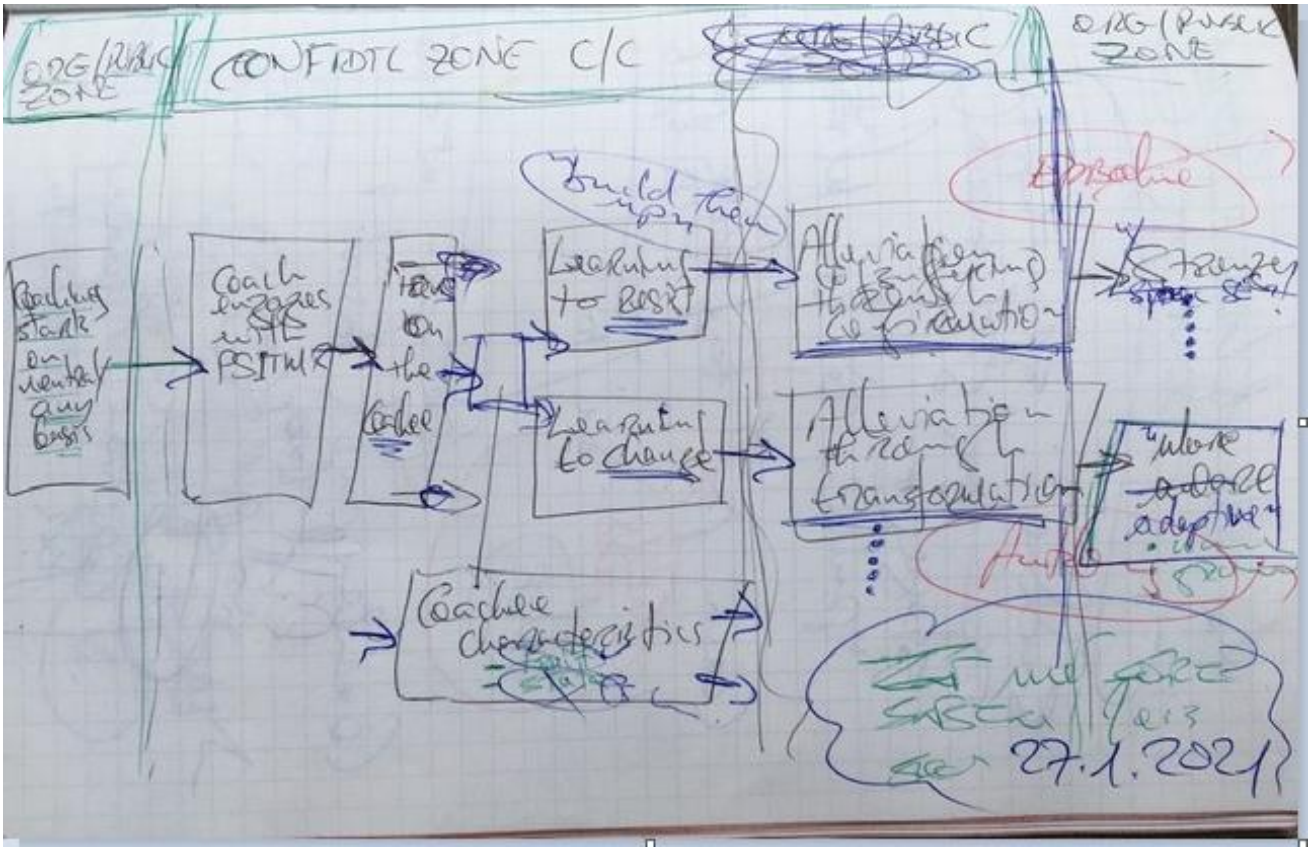
FIRST CAPTURE FROM TRANSCRIPTS OF CONCEPTUAL CATEGORIES FOR WHAT SAMPLE B SAID ABOUT EC	AFTER FIRST REWORKING	LATEST (June 2021)
Good suggestions Practical insights Convinced me I am not a bad manager Tips and tricks Useful in helping me prepare for a higher level job The 360 was useful Help in digesting a hard 360 FB Help in coping with a difficult situation It made me think The coach was a good teacher The coach gave me confirmation and confidence The coach was someone to talk to The coach taught me useful, practical things The coach gave me good tips and tricks … and readings I learned about myself Self-awareness: look, style, image; people are watching To get satisfaction from the job To stay healthy and protect myself, not get hurt by bad deadlines "Never again" and to protect myself in time How hierarchical (cold) the org can be; you have to play the system, manage upwards To avoid problems and move away; place barriers To be assertive To take what I get; it cannot all be good To trust people and trust yourself	Being taught by a wise teacher Digesting and metabolising unsavoury truths Gaining in self-confidence Preparing for challenges Being the centre of (the coach's) attention Learning about myself Learning to protect myself Protect my staff Communicate clearly Accept it cannot all be good Re-appraise problems	Feeling stronger (central category) Being taught by a knowledgeable teacher Coping with setbacks Preparing for challenges Being the centre of the coach's attention Learning about myself Learning to protect myself

To address problems early To communicate clearly, to sell To protect people, to have the courage to do it … and proportion; know what is important		

Attempts at identifying the core category

- Tips and tricks
- Strengthening self
- Resisting
- Winning

First attempt at a process model integrating the different experiences of samples A and B



Appendix 12 Coding and theoretical integration for sample C – Ineffective EC

FIRST CAPTURE FROM TRANSCRIPTS OF CONCEPTUAL CATEGORIES FOR WHAT SAMPLE C SAID ABOUT EC	**AFTER FIRST REWORKING**	**LATEST (June 2021)**
Useless tips Dismissing advice from the coach Rejecting psychology based coaching Attributing failure to the timing of the coaching Attributing the failure to my own motivation Feeling disappointed Enjoying the coaching sessions Feeling proud of my learning from life Feeling fortunate to be surrounded by good people My LM sent a C instead of talking to me directly I didn't think much of the coaching I was 10 years a manager before the C Not a good fit C left no trace C helped me discover things in myself but this had no impact on me I didn't think about why C or why I wanted it A nice memory; the coach was nice Limited in learning bec I didn't yet know what I needed I learned one thing (monkeys) There was no ah-ha moment in the C I could have got more out of it I feel I missed out on something I was disappointed; I was looking for instructions and IP techniques C was an obligation C didn't leave a sign Coach suggested that I do something – she was completely wrong; I didn't do it	Disappointment Suggestions that did not work Bad match / timing 360 OK (only good part, incidental) Fun The coach wanted to (but I didn't) Wrong time for me (too soon, too late) Wrong reason for undertaking coaching then Missed opportunity Light, fun, pleasant I learned a lot but not in coaching I was lucky to have good people around me when I needed support Dismissing advice from the coach Rejecting psychology based coaching Attributing the failure to my own motivation Feeling proud of my learning from life	Realising the coach had nothing to offer *(central category)* Attributing the failure of EC Enjoying the coaching sessions Valuing the learning gained from life Feeling fortunate to be surrounded by good people

I checked the C's suggestions with my mentor The coaching could have been helpful; some moments were good I learned to be self-aware from peers and bosses (not EC) I learned more from people in my team Coaching is not a substitute for talking with your staff I was disappointed that the coaching brought me no insights I learned to accept things as they are but not in coaching I learned from a very good boss-mentor I learned everything from very good bosses, nothing from the coach I learned to trust people and trust myself, but not in coaching The most important thing I learned was dealing with people; this was not in coaching The only good thing about the coaching was the 360° where I learned from staff I was looking for instructions from the coach on dealing with people and was disappointed not to get any Coach gave me tips and tricks (for W/L balance) that didn't work Coach helped me to understand things about myself but this had no impact I probably did not see myself yet enough as a manager to benefit from the coaching; I feel I could have got more out of it I never suffered in the manager role The coach was on a superficial, psychological level The coaching left no trace Management training was useful, especially the participant group The coaching was fun but useless It came 7 years after my big learning crisis		

The coach was into heavy (TA) stuff but I wanted something light and short I learned important things (none from coaching)		

Attempts at identifying the core category

- It could have been great
- I expected more / more than my mentor
- Thriving without coaching