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Essential Executive Coaching Competencies for Enhancing Executive On-the-Job Performance: A Modified Delphi Study

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This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

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Abstract

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Performance: A Modified Delphi Study

by

Arturo Small Maxwell

MA, Rochester Institute of Technology, 2002

BS, Andrews University, 1987

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Psychology

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Abstract

Approximately 93% of Fortune 1000 companies in the United States rely upon executive coaching to accelerate executive performance. However, there is a lack of empirical research identifying effective executive coaching competencies. In this modified Delphi study, a panel of 17 executive coaching experts was purposefully selected from the International Coach Federation and the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology. Participant selection criteria included training in executive coaching, executive coaching credentialing, and ≥3 years practicing executive coaching or purchasing executive coaching services. Participants used a 5 point Likert-type questionnaire to provide their expert opinion regarding essential executive coaching competencies for enhancing executive on-the-job performance. In an iterative 3-round process, a consensus between these experts was determined when the mean of respondent ratings reached 4.0 or higher. Data received from the panel of experts were calculated for means and standard deviations. This analysis showed key executive coaching competencies such as trustworthiness, adherence to a code of ethics, executive coaching certification, and 19 others. This list of competencies may be used to inform future research on coaching effectiveness, and may serve as criteria for HR managers when selecting coaches. Coach training entities could benefit by integrating these findings in their teaching curriculum. More effective executive coaching is important because of its potential to improve organizational efficiency, profitability, and work environment, positively impacting the lives of employees.

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Dedication

I dedicate this achievement to God in whom I trust and to whom I owe the greatest gratitude. I also dedicate this dissertation to my wife and to my son, who endured long periods of my absence, and whose love and support were instrumental in my achieving this academic milestone.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

There is a shortage of research in executive coaching (EC), specifically as it pertains to EC effectiveness and to competencies for effective EC. This quantitative modified Delphi study was designed to explore expert opinions regarding EC competencies that executive coaches should demonstrate to positively enhance executive on-the-job performance. This study was designed to achieve consensus among experts in EC regarding competencies executive coaches should attain to be proficient at enhancing executive on-the-job performance. In this study, I attempted to contribute to the body of research knowledge in leadership development and psychology pertaining to competencies that may contribute to EC effectiveness.

The competencies identified in this study are intended to be used to enhance the performance of executive coaches, making them more proficient and better able to better assist their clients. The competencies identified in the current study are also intended to be used by HR managers and other procurers of EC services as a metric for choosing an executive coach, potentially improving the executive coach selection process. The performance of executives who are coached by executive coaches that attain the competencies identified in this study could improve as they receive more effective EC. Furthermore, an executive who is coached by an executive coach who has adopted the competencies identified in this study is more likely to enhance the performance of his organization. Executive coaches help clients explore better options. The decisions of executives can positively impact- the lives of thousands of employees in the form of

better working conditions, fair compensation, and other factors. Also, vendor and customer relations could improve, culminating in significant positive social change.

This chapter is organized in seven sections: background, nature of the study, statement of the problem, appropriateness of research method, purpose of the study, conceptual framework, definition of terms, assumptions, limitations, scope, and delimitations, significance, and summary. In the background section, I provide an overview of EC including the rapid growth of the field, its potential impact on organizations, and the need for additional research in certain areas of EC.

Background

Organizations across the world often rely on EC to enhance the performance of executives and junior managers with the hopes of propelling the effectiveness of leaders to a higher plateau (De Meuse, Dai, & Lee, 2009). Approximately 93% of Fortune 1000 companies in the United States rely upon EC to accelerate executive performance (Bono, Purvanova, Towler, & Peterson, 2009). Some reports estimate the return on investment (ROI) for costs associated with procuring executive coaching at 600 to 700% (Anderson, 2005). However, these reports lack the scientific rigor needed to substantiate these claims. Most reports of EC effectiveness are anecdotal self-reports that lack empirical evidence to support their claims (Bowles, Cunningham, De La Rosa, & Picano, 2007).

Today's organizational leaders function in unpredictable dynamic environments (Galagan, 2011). The interdependence of global markets and the challenges these markets pose upon organizational decision makers are evident in the form of heightened business competition, advances in new media, and lightning-fast technological growth (Morris,

2010). In addition, organizational leaders often must contend with the challenges of globalization, outsourcing, and offshoring (Houseman, Kurz, Lengermann, Mandel, 2010). Furthermore, leaders must address increased energy needs and dwindling supplies, growing workforce diversification, environmental instability, and eroding psychological and physical safety (Lavelle, 2012; Wasylyshyn, Gronsky, & Haas, 2004). In order to better equip executives to more effectively address the above challenges, organizations often rely on highly compensated executive coaches to enhance the performance of their top leaders. These efforts to enhance the effectiveness of their top leaders have triggered significant growth in the coaching sector.

The business coaching field is a global enterprise with over 80% of businesses implementing some form of coaching (CIPD-DDI, 2008; Gray, 2010; Ridler, 2007). A Google search for "leadership coaching credentials" produced 4,670,000 search results. Additionally, a Google search for "leadership coaching services" yielded 27,200,000 search results. The coaching field is a global enterprise with over 80 percent of businesses implementing some form of coaching (CIPD-DDI, 2008; Gray, 2010; Ridler, 2007). The product life cycle of coaching (i.e., the period encompassing birth, growth, maturity, and decline of a business sector) shows maturity in the US, another indicator of the coaching field taking its place within business sectors (Bresser, 2009; Maher & Pomerantz, 2003). These factors suggest that EC is becoming ubiquitous among organizations and professionals in the United States and in other regions of the world. However, despite U.S. organizations and other procurers of EC services spending more

than $1.5 billion annually for EC services, there is little empirical evidence to substantiate the effectiveness of EC (Bono et al., 2009; De Meuse, Dai, & Lee, 2009).

Some studies show that executive coaching can equip executives with skills they can use to improve employee working conditions and job satisfaction, increase customer satisfaction, increase organizational productivity, and promote organizational citizenship (Anna, Chesley, & Davis, 2001; Bowles, Cunningham, De La Rosa, & Picano, 2007; Britton, 2008) but the evidence is limited. Executives can exert significant influence upon the organizations they lead. These organizations can greatly impact local, national, and global economies. Consequently, millions of lives can be impacted.

The importance of improving executive leadership is underscored the recent case in which the German auto maker Volkswagen™ was fined approximately $18 billion for circumventing emissions standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the United States (BBC, 2015). This incident shows that the decision and leadership influences of a single executive can result in a loss (or gain) of billions of dollars, creating the potential for significant negative or positive social change.

This research added to the body of knowledge in the EC field by identifying competencies that contribute to EC effectiveness for improving the on-the-job performance of company executives. The knowledge gained from this study is intended to be used to develop guidelines to aid procurers of EC services in evaluating the effectiveness of the services delivered

Statement of the Problem

Despite spending billions of dollars per year on executive coaching services, organizations do not have a common approach for evaluating whether these expenditures are justified, or if executive coaching contributes to improved organizational performance (Fillery-Travis & Lane, 2006; Ridler, 2007). The impact of executive coaching on executive on-the-job performance is complex; current methods of measuring and establishing financial returns on executive coaching are based on estimations (McGovern et al, 2001; Morgan, Harkins, & Goldsmith, 2005). The main issue is that, in the absence of an empirical approach to show why organizations believe executive coaching contributes to executive on-the-job performance, purchasers of executive coaching services may be oblivious to the real impact of executive performance improvement solutions or the value of investing in executive coaching (Addison & Haig, 2006; Ellis, 2005; McCormick, 2007).

The problem I addressed in this study is that the impact of EC on executive on-the-job performance has not been validated empirically. There is no clear identifiable methodology that purchasers of EC services use to determine whether, or if at all, executive coaching enhances organizational performance. To date there has been only a very small number of studies on how HR professionals measure the effectives of EC (Dagley, 2006). A lack of scientific evidence regarding the utility of EC may hinder the judgment of purchasers of executive coaching services. Consequently, the understanding of procurers of EC services may be adversely affected regarding the efficacy of EC for leadership development or as a driver of organizational performance.

In this study, I used a modified Delphi method to explore the EC-related competencies that executive coaches should have to positively impact executive on-the-job performance. The research sample consisted of a panel of experts who were experienced with EC. By identifying executive coaching competencies that are essential for enhancing executive on-the-job performance, this study is designed to improve the quality and effectiveness of executive coaching, allowing executives to receive more effective executive coaching services, and creating better-managed organizations. Organizations that are managed efficiently are more likely to have a positive impact on employees, and upon other individuals and institutions that rely on the organization (Levenson, 2009; Martone, 2003)). This study produced knowledge designed to be used to improve the performance of executives thereby enhancing organizational performance. Consequently, the results of this study could be catalysts for significant positive social change.

Purpose of the Study

One of the goals of this study was to extend the knowledge base regarding the efficacy of executive coaching for executive on-the-job performance. New themes and patterns were identified by exploring the perceptions and subjective opinions of professionals who have applied executive coaching within organizations. By identifying a list of EC competencies, this study has increased the body of knowledge regarding executive coaching competencies that can contribute to the enhancement of executive on-the-job performance. The research question I sought to answer with this study was: What

executive coaching competencies are essential for enhancing executive on-the-job performance?

Data generated from a panel of experts' responses were analyzed using Survey Monkey ™ to calculate means and *SD*, and to explore relationships and other significant patterns. Specifically, competencies whose ratings resulted in a mean of 4.0 or higher at the completion of the modified Delphi process were categorized as key competencies for executive coaches. By identifying competencies that are essential for effective EC, the results of this study may be used to improve EC services, thereby contributing to better executive on-the-job performance, and increasing the body of knowledge in the EC field.

Conceptual Framework

This research study drew from a variety of theories and scientific approaches that served to frame the arguments and conceptualizations presented. Executive coaching has borrowed ideas, strategies, and theories mainly from the fields of psychology and business. The EC field has benefited from many theoretical concepts in psychology. For instance, Bono, Purvanova, Towler, and Peterson (2009) noted that EC implements psychology ideas such as human development, learning behavior, psychological measurement, and many others to achieve predetermined goals. Executive coaching has also been influenced by conceptualizations from the field of business. Executive coaches need to develop a clear understanding of leadership theories and leadership roles at all levels of an organization (Foxhall, 2002). In addition, EC requires an understanding of global capitalism and global firms, the differences between regulated and nonregulated businesses, the differences between for-profit and not-for-profit businesses, the key

leadership roles of organizations, and other concepts in business and leadership (The Executive Coaching Forum, 2012).

Given the significant contributions that psychology and business have made to the field of EC, I chose psychology and business as the main components of the conceptual framework. The influences and conceptualizations of psychology and business upon the field of EC are discussed further in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

My rationale for choosing a modified Delphi research method for this study was driven by the dearth of scientific research in EC, and by the strength of the Delphi method in addressing research questions in areas where grounded theory is scarce or none extant. A survey of the literature showed that there is a shortage of empirical studies in EC (Grant, Curtayne & Burton, 2009; McGovern et al., 2001; Sherman & Freas, 2004). Also, there is no widely accepted regulating body for EC that could forge a consensus on competencies for effective EC. Furthermore, there is limited scientific evidence to substantiate the effectiveness of EC (Gebhardt, 2016; MacKie, 2007).

The Delphi technique is useful when there is disagreement on a subject or when knowledge is lacking regarding the nature of a problem and is appropriate for forecasting future events, and for when there is ambiguity about the elements that should be considered for the solution of a problem (Amos & Pearse, 2008). Some researchers have argued that when knowledge is lacking, the Delphi method can be used to forecast current or future events by relying upon the opinions of experts in a particular field of inquiry (Adler & Ziglio, 1996; Dalkey & Helmer, 1951; Delbeq et al., 1975; Fischer,

1978; Fletcher, & Marchildon, 2014; Pichlak, 2015). In this modified Delphi study, a competencies instrument was used to collect data from a panel of EC experts that comprised individuals purposively selected from the International Coach Federation (ICF) and from the Society of Industrial Organizational Psychologists (SIOP). Analysis of the data was performed in Survey Monkey™.

Definition of Terms

Coachee: An individual and or key contributor in an organization involved in a coaching relationship (Fahy, 2007; MacKie, 2007).

Coaching: "A systematic process designed to facilitate development (change), whether cognitive, emotional, or behavioral" (Ives, 2008, p.103). Coaching may be a systematic facilitation of results-oriented, solution-focused process (Greif, 2007) and may be used as an organizational consulting intervention (Stern, 2007).

Client: An organization or a representative of the company (De Haan, Culpin & Curd, 2008).

Executive coaching: Coaching that is usually implemented at the managerial level in organization, and is aimed at enhancing individual performance in business. An executive coach helps a client achieve identified goals to improve professional and personal performance and to contribute to the effectiveness of organization outcomes (Brooks & Wright, 2007; Ives, 2008). Executive coaching is a process that facilitates both learning and performance (Parsloe & Wray, 2000).

Mentoring: The transfer of professional knowledge, beliefs and sector-organizational specific experience, through the processes of advice and guidance, to

advance understanding, performance and learning (Clutterbuck, 2008; Hicks &

McCracken, 2009).

Organizational performance: The outcomes and or results required by employees

to achieve an overall business strategy that are measurable and observable (ICF, 2005;

Laske, 2004; Stober, Wildflower, & Drake, 2006).

Performance coaching. A term that is interchangeable with the definition of

executive coaching, describing the use of coaching strategies to improve employees'

performance. Performance coaching is "A process that enables people to find and act on

the solutions which are the most congruent and appropriate for them personally" (Wilson,

2007, p. 7).

Return on Investment (ROI): Tangible business or behavioral results that benefit

the organization (Gaskell, 2008; Hawkins, 2008).

Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations

Assumptions

This Delphi research study was based on several assumptions. It was assumed that

there is a relationship between executive coaching and executive on-the-job performance,

and that there is a core group of executive coaching competencies that can contribute to

enhance executive on-the-job performance. I also assumed that the approach to selecting

members of the panel of experts would produce a group of individuals who are

knowledgeable about executive coaching, and therefore will serve as co-researchers. I

assumed that the members of the panel of experts were a representative group of

coaching professionals and procurers of coaching services who could contribute valuable

insights on EC competencies necessary for executive on-the-job performance. I assumed that executive coaching is a socially constructed approach to leadership development based on varied perceptions and observations that can be imperfect; consequently, research conducted in such circumstances can be imperfect and complex.

Scope of the Study

The purpose of this modified Delphi study was to achieve and record a consensus among members of a panel of experts regarding the executive coaching competencies that are essential for executive coaches to positively impact executive on-the-job performance. To accomplish the above-mentioned consensus, I sent, in an iterative process, several Likert-scale type questionnaires (interspersed with feedback) to a panel of experts.

The questionnaires comprised a list of competencies that are potentially essential for effective EC. The list of competencies was developed drawing on a variety of sources examined during the literature review and was reported in Chapter 2. The panel evaluated the competencies identified, rated the degree to which each competency is critical for effective coaching, and provided qualitative feedback (comments) regarding their rating of each competency.

The panel of experts submitted the completed questionnaire to me and I computed the responses from the Likert scale portion of the questionnaire. The data gathered from the questionnaire was analyzed statistically using Survey Monkey™ software to calculate the mean and SD, which are measures of central tendency. The data calculations results were sent to the panel of EC experts in subsequent rounds. Panel members considered

this data (means and SD) together with the anonymous comments from other panel members, and could adjust their rating of competencies in subsequent rounds of the study. Once all data was gathered and computed, possible patterns were identified and inferences were drawn.

The findings from this study could be used to produce a list of EC competencies for enhancing executive on-the-job performance. By studying and recording the insights from panel of experts who are knowledgeable of executive coaching in organizations, the body of knowledge regarding competencies that may be essential for effective executive coaching may be increased. This study comprised two panels of experts who served as participants. The first panel was composed of four EC experts. Three experts were from the Society for Industrial Organizational Psychology (SIOP) and one from the International Coach Federation (ICF). Their role was to evaluate the competency instrument. The second panel was composed of 14-17 experts who participated in the multiround iterative process. Executive coaching experts on the second panel were members from the ICF. Members of the panel of experts had a minimum of three-years recent experience performing executive coaching and or purchasing executive coaching services.

In terms of time, the study was limited to the period required to complete the multiround iterative Delphi process and to process responses from the panel of experts. The minimum recommended period of time for conducting a Delphi study is 45 days (Delbeq, Van de Ven, and Gustafson, 1975; Ulschak, 1983). Also, a period of two weeks between iterations is recommended (Delbeq, Van de Ven, and Gustafson, 1975).

Limitations

It is possible that some limiting factors could have threatened the validity of this study. For instance, the competency statements in the instrument, derived from the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, might have been skewed by researcher bias thereby influencing responses of panel experts. Also, the way in which the competencies were formulated could have impacted the how the experts evaluated (rated) the competencies. To reduce the chances of this happening, I formed a small panel of experts whose sole responsibility was to evaluate the competency statements for researcher bias and other factors that could have threaten validity. The seemingly small size (14 to 17 experts) of the research sample in this study could cause some concerns when attempting to generalize the results. However, as noted in Chapter 3, the sample size used in this study was within the range recommended for Delphi studies (Delbecq, Van de Ven, & Gustafson, 1975; Donohoe & Needham, 2009; Linstone & Turloff, 1975). In addition, the experience that the panel of experts brought to the process likely impacted generalizability of the results of this study. I attempted to address this issue by including in the criteria for selecting the experts that panelists must have a minimum of three years of experience delivering or purchasing executive coaching services.

I sought to form a panel of experts that was diverse in terms of gender representation in the U. S. The results of this study were based on the opinions of members of the panel of experts. In Chapter 3, I listed the criteria that were used to select the panel of experts.

Delimitations

There were several researcher-controlled delimitations that may have restricted the generalization of results of this Delphi study. Despite the random selection process used to form the panel of experts, I recognize that there may be other expert insights regarding competencies for effective EC that is not be represented in this study. Also, in the literature review and elsewhere in this study, I have cited studies conducted by researchers from multiple geographical regions of the world; however, because the panel of EC participants were from the United States, it is likely that international perspectives and implications may not be reflected in the results of this study. Based on the results of the data analysis, the researcher may be able to draw inferences or generalizations (Skulmoski, Hartman, & Krahn, 2007).

Appropriateness of Research Method

The modified Delphi research method is an iterative process in which the opinions of experts in a given topic are collected anonymously. The researcher gathers data from panelists at the end of each round. The data received from panelists is organized and analyzed for consensus. The researcher provides feedback to the panel of experts at the beginning of the next phase or round. Panelists may use the feedback received from the researcher to shape their opinions about the remaining items. At the end of the last round, results are analyzed and inferences drawn (Skulmoski, Hartman, and Krahn, 2007).

Conventional quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research are all appropriate in different circumstance for given research problems and purposes (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2005). A given research practice may be influenced by the beliefs held

by the researcher (Creswell, 2007). The conventional mixed methods approach to research capitalizes on the strengths of quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Venkatesh, Brown, Bala, 2013), which are both research methods that are founded on grounded theory. Hence, the mixed method approach to research is not an appropriate framework for the study of a little-researched phenomenon where the body of knowledge is limited, as is the topic of EC for executive on-the-job performance. In addition, the phenomenological approach, which is a qualitative form of inquiry that facilitates description and interpretations of the nature of a subject (Finlay, 2009), was not appropriate for collecting the quantifiable data that was generated in this Delphi study.

In exploring the literature regarding the impact of executive coaching upon executive performance, I found that there is a lack of empirical support for the effectiveness of EC, and that there is not a well-defined system to substantiate the anecdotal claims made about the effectiveness of EC. Therefore, I drew insights from existing research and from the expert opinions of professionals in the EC field for this study. My choice of research design and methodology was informed by the purpose of the research, the body of empirical knowledge available, and the nature of the research question. Considering these factors, I chose to the Delphi technique for my research.

The Delphi Technique

The Delphi research method has been used effectively to explore many challenging issues. Delbeq, Van de Ven, and Gustafson (1975) noted that the Delphi technique has been implemented to assist in decision making and event forecasting. In addition, researchers (Czinkota & Ronkainen, 1997; Halal, Kull, & Leffmann, 1997;

Skulmoski & Hartman, 2002) found that the Delphi method can be effectively used to explore challenges that would likely be time-prohibitive or may be impractical or undoable using other forms of research. Also, Linstone and Turloff (1975) reported that the Delphi technique is useful for structuring group communication processes, to organize models, and for framing problem solving in a group setting.

The Delphi technique has also been used effectively for program planning and administration (Delbeq, Van de Ven, & Gustafson, 1975). Furthermore, the Delphi method has been found to be a useful tool for investigating issues where analytical precision may be impossible but the subjective opinions of a group of experts could lead investigators closer to a solution of the problem (Adler & Ziglio, 1996). Linstone and Turloff (1975) noted that the Delphi method may be implemented to concentrate the collective knowledge and efforts of a group of experts on a specific problem thereby increasing the chances of finding a solution. The Delphi method is a flexible research technique that is widely implemented by researchers to investigate a broad array of problems that could be very time consuming or impossible to study using other research methodologies.

The Delphi technique can be used to gather data for qualitative, quantitative, or mixed method research (Howell & Gambatese, 2010; Skulmoski et al., 2007). I chose to use the Delphi quantitative method for this study because it allows me to investigate a topic for which there is incomplete research, and it allows me to rely on expert opinion to address my research question. The information I gathered throughout the multiround process was quantifiable and required the use of statistical analysis to compute the data.

The Delphi method has typically been used to study complexities where there is not enough grounded theory to use conventional research methods (Amos & Pearse, 2008; Donohoe and Needham, 2009; Hallowell & Gambatese, 2010). Therefore, the modified Delphi method is appropriate for this study because EC is a relatively new field (Bowles, Cunningham, De La Rosa, & Picano, 2007; Judge & Cowell, 1997; O'Broin & Palmer, 2006) and there are not enough empirical studies (Baron & Morin, 2009; Bennett, 2006; Boyce, Jackson, & Neal, 2009; Bowles, Cunningham, De La Rosa, & Picano, 2007; O'Broin & Palmer, 2006) for conducting research on EC competencies using conventional research methods.

Significance

Organizations spend billions of dollars annually purchasing EC services. Ninety-three percent of executives at Fortune 1000 companies in the United States use EC services. If executive coaches adopt the EC competencies identified in this study, there is great potential for this study to be a catalyst for significant positive social change. Executives are often leaders of multinational corporations. The fate of thousands of employees and others who rely on those corporations is often dependent on decisions and actions of the executives. The competencies identified in this study could contribute to greater effectiveness of executive coaches.

Executive coaches are often hired by HR to enhance the performance of executives. When executives perform better the organizations they lead often improve, leading to greater productivity and profitability. Therefore, improvement in executive performance could, potentially, impact thousands of people and could even affect local,

national, and global economies. Hence, the results of this study could potentially set into motion significant positive social change.

Summary

Chapter 1 is an introduction to the modified Delphi study exploring executive coaching competencies that are essential for enhancing executive on-the-job performance. The reliance upon executive coaching to enhance executive on-the-job performance and organizational effectiveness is a relatively recent practice. Research shows that there is not a consensus among stakeholders in the EC field regarding executive coaching competencies that are essential for enhancing executive on-the-job performance. Significant consensus was achieved among the panel of experts of this study on 22 competencies. Therefore, those competencies may be instrumental for improving EC services. An effective delivery of EC services could lead to enhanced executive on-the-job performance, thereby contributing to improved organizational performance, and potentially leading to significant positive social change.

The purpose of this study was to achieve consensus among members of a panel of experts regarding the executive coaching competencies that can contribute to the on-the-job performance of executives. By gathering and analyzing the insights of experts who have experience with executive coaching, this research has increased the body of knowledge in the executive coaching arena. Consequently, the resulting knowledge could be used to enhance organizational performance through improved performance of company executives.

By conducting this modified Delphi study, I aimed to identify executive coaching competencies that are essential for the enhancement of executive on-the-job performance from the perspective of a panel of EC experts. The research question I sought to answer is: What executive coaching competencies are essential for enhancing executive on-the-job performance? There were potential limiting factors in this study such as: the level of experience of members of the panel of experts, the level of consensus achievable among experts evaluating the competencies, and the sample size of participants in the study. I made the effort to address these issues and to minimize their impact. The chapter that follows, Chapter 2, is a review of the literature pertaining to EC as a leadership development approach.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative modified Delphi study was to explore expert opinions on the competencies executive coaches should have to positively impact executive on-the-job performance. Specifically, this modified Delphi study was designed to achieve consensus among experts in executive coaching (EC) regarding competencies that executive coaches should possess to be appropriately equipped to enhance executive on-the-job performance. This area of research in EC has been largely overlooked in the scientific literature.

This chapter consists of a review of the literature pertaining to leadership and EC. Since EC draws on theoretical orientations and practitioner techniques, a broad view of the literature was taken. The literature review presents converging, contrasting, past, and current research illuminating concepts, definitions, methods, and procedures related to leadership development, executive coaching effectiveness, ROI, practitioner perspectives, scholastic perspectives, and others.

This chapter is organized in nine sections. Each of these describes research on one of the theoretical orientations to leadership that contribute to the coaching competencies evaluated in this study. The introduction section provides a synopsis of the chapter. The search strategy section depicts strategies used by the author for locating, reviewing, and organizing the literature used in the chapter. I also consider coaching within the broader context of leadership, noting some leadership development icons, strategies, and theories that were precursors and contributors to the formation of EC. The history of executive

coaching section serves as a backdrop illuminating historical and foundational aspects of leadership and coaching that served as anchors for the development of EC. In the *nature of executive* coaching section, I discuss the EC process and I address some elements that are common within most approaches to EC. Because of the significant role psychology has played in EC, I include a psychology-based approaches to EC section where I discuss cognitive, behavioral, psychodynamic, and other coaching facilitation frameworks. The executive coaching and executive performance section contains summaries of existing literature pertaining to EC and executive performance. In the Delphi research approach section, I survey the literature pertaining to the Delphi research process, considering its origins, implementation, benefits, and liabilities. In the section entitled *gaps in the executive coaching literature*, I identify areas where more research is needed within EC. The conclusion section of this chapter lays-out the principal findings resulting from the literature review.

In today's business environment organizations constantly seek to gain an advantage over the competition. This competitive edge is often achieved by enhancing the effectiveness of top leaders in the organization. EC is one of the tools utilized by organizations worldwide to bolster executive performance (De Meuse, Dai, & Lee, 2009; Fernandez, 2008; Kampa-Kokesch, & Anderson, 2001; & Kombarakaran, Yang, Baker). Executive coaching is a multimillion dollar enterprise (Coaching at Work, 2012; Dahl, 2010) with approximately 93% of Fortune 1000 companies in the United States relying upon EC to improve the effectiveness of executives (Bono, Purvanova, Towler, & Peterson, 2009).

There is some evidence showing that EC can positively impact executive on-boarding, potentially mitigating the challenges organizations face with high turnover (Business Week Online, 2007). EC has also been found to accelerate the transition of executives into the corporate culture of new organizations (Business Week Online, 2007). These benefits of EC contribute to organizational competitiveness by managing costs and accelerating the positive impact of top leaders. However, there is little empirical evidence demonstrating that EC enhances executive on-the-job performance (Grant, Curtayne & Burton, 2009; McGovern et al., 2001; Sherman & Freas, 2004).

Literature Review Search Strategy

My objective for this literature review was to explore empirical studies that have impacted the field of executive coaching. I also examined research works that shed light on the relationship between EC and executive on-the-job performance. The information presented in the literature review resulted from a search of multiple sources including: peer reviewed journal articles, magazines, books, Internet searches, dissertations, and E-books. The search process involved the use of the following databases and search engines: *PsycINFO*, *SocINDEX with Full Text*, *PsycARTICLES*, *PsycBOOKS*, *Psychology: A SAGE Full-Text Collection*, *ABI/INFORM Complete*, *Business Source Complete/Premiere*, *Google*, *Emerald Management Journals*, *Management and Organization Studies: A SAGE full-text collection*, *eBrary*, and *EBSCOhost.* The search results were generated by entering the following words and phrases in the search engines: *assessment of coaching services, business coaching, coaching*, *coaching and human resources*, *coaching effectiveness*, *coaching framework*, *coaching process*, *coaching*

strategies, *coaching performance to outcome*, *compensation for executive coaching*, *cost of coaching*, *evaluations of coaching*, *executive coaching and performance*, *history of coaching*, *history of leadership*, *HR and coaching*, *leadership coaching*, *leadership development*, *leadership history*, *leadership theories*, *performance coaching*, *return on investment in coaching*, *ROI*, *the coaching industry*, and others.

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The articles and other sources derived from the search of words and phrases listed above can be organized within four categorical groups:

1. the history and development of EC;

2. leadership, management, and organizational development;

3. psychology-based approaches to leadership; and

4. training and development or human capital management.

Among the scholarly publications that addressed the history and development of EC, I identified: *American Journal of Psychology*, *Ebrary, Human Relations*, *International Journal of Coaching in Organizations*, *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, *Management Learning*, *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, and others. The scholarly works addressed the historical context of coaching and the development of leadership from the perspectives of individuals and organizations. From the leadership, management, and organizational development literature my search produced publications such as *Harvard Review*, *Human Resource Planning*, *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, *Personnel Review*, *Journal of Management*, *Journal of Management and Development*,

Leadership and Organizational Development Journal, *Management Quarterly*, and the.
The scholarly works published in these journals approached executive coaching from a
strategic business and scholastic research perspective.

The field of psychology has made limited scientific contributions to the coaching
profession. Among empirical contributions deriving from the field of psychology, I found
articles from journals such as *Australian Psychologist*, *Consulting Psychology Journal:
Practice and Research*, *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, *International
Coaching Psychology Review*, the *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, and
Personality and Social Psychology Review to mention a few. These scholarly
contributions have greatly shaped the theoretical underpinnings upon which the coaching
profession is founded, and they have served to enrich discussions among stakeholders in
the coaching profession.

The human capital management or training and development field has also
contributed to the growth of EC and continues to influence the evolution of the EC
profession. My literature search within this grouping produced sources such as *Harvard
Business Review*, *Human Resource Development Review*, *Human Resource Planning*,
Industrial and Commercial Training, *International Journal of Coaching and Mentoring*,
Journal of Practical Consulting, *Leadership Excellence*, *Management and Learning*,
Training and Development, and *Training Journal*. and Scholarly publications in these
sources have served to mold, inform, and enhance coaching processes, the development
of coaches, and directions in executive coaching. A brief, nonexhaustive, historical
overview of leadership is used below to contextualize the emergence of EC, and to

inform readers of the place EC occupies within the larger field of leadership development and organizational effectiveness.

Leadership Contextualization of Coaching

The objective of executive coaching is to enhance leader effectiveness (Iverson, 2016). Executive coaches often rely on leadership theories when coaching clients (Bradt, 2006; Maher & Pomerantz, 2003). Also, an understanding of leadership theories is a component of the competencies instrument that was sent to participants in my study. The information that follows was instrumental for the development of the competencies instrument, which is a key component in this study. Therefore, a brief history of leadership will serve to contextualize the leadership component of EC.

Historical context of leadership. Executive coaching, as it is known today, is a relatively recent leader development approach implemented by organizations and individuals to enhance leader performance (Bresser, 2009; Gray, 2006; Joo, 2005; Maher, & Pomerantz, 2003; Smith, & Sandstrom, 1999). However, the debate and study of what constitutes effective leadership has been ongoing for millennia (Judge & Cowell, 1997; O'Broin & Palmer, 2006; Takala, 1998; Terry, Rao, Ashford, & Socolof, 2009; Stern, 2009). Historical evidence shows that from the beginning of human existence there has been leadership structures, hierarchies, and leader-follower relationships (Boyet, 2006; Hollander, 1990). For instance, evolutionary leadership theorists (Boehm, 1999; Couzin, Krause, Franks, & Levin, 2005; Lamprecht, 1996) argued that the collective tribal movements of early humans evidenced rudimentary forms of leadership in their search for new water sources, better feeding grounds, or improved shelter.

Anthropological studies have found evidence of leadership structures across many known human societies (Boehm, 1999; Diamond, 1998; Lewis, 1974). Studies in social psychology have found that even when a group starts out with the intention of functioning as a leaderless entity, invariably, a leader emerges (Bass, 1954). This fact has led many to believe that leadership is a universal phenomenon (Bass, 1990; Brown, 1991; Hollander, 1985).

During the fourth century B.C., Socrates, the great Athenian sculptor and philosopher rose to prominence as a leader of ideas. Socrates observed that in a time of crisis followers gravitate toward leaders who know what to do. Socrates noted that leaders with the right professional and technical training could rise to the occasion during those decisive crucial moments. Socrates advocated that good leadership is a product of learning, preparation, and practice (Adair, 2003, p. 8). Some of these ideas were evident in his words to a student aspiring to become an army general:

> He [the army general] must be resourceful, active, careful, hardy and quick-witted; he must be both gentle and brutal, at once straightforward and designing, capable of both caution and surprise, lavish and rapacious, generous and mean, skillful in defense and attack; and there are many other qualifications, some natural, some acquired, that are necessary to one as a general. (Adair, 2003, p. 8)

The impact of Socrates' leader development approach is still evident in the form of the Socratic method of questions and answers, encouraging individuals to critically evaluate their own thinking and the ideas of others (Maxwell, 2011).

Another influential leader and thinker in ancient Greek history was Xenophon, a Greek army general. Xenophon argued that in addition to the professional preparedness and skillfulness advocated by Socrates, an effective leader must possess the ability to win the hearts of his followers (Adair, 2003, p. 12). While Socrates and Xenophon promulgated training, skills, and the ability to influence followers as essential leadership qualities, Aristotle espoused that character was the foundation of leadership (; Grint, K, 2007). Plato, a student of Socrates and contemporary of Aristotle, proposed that in an ideal state the leader should be a sort of supreme educator who instructs the masses on how to become good citizens (Purshouse, 2010).

Alexander the Great, one of Aristotle's pupils, led his army troops by example. For example:

- he consumed the same ration of food and water as his troops;

- some said that he knew the names of 10,000 soldiers;

- he unified the Greek nation in less than two years; and

- he methodically planned his strategies during his expeditionary excursions.

These leadership characteristics helped Alexander the Great to conquer more than half of the world known to Ancient Greeks in only 12 years (Kurke, 2004).

A more recent description of great leaders of more recent times was given by Maslow, the architect of the theory of humanistic psychology. Maslow proposed a hierarchy of human needs in leadership that has greatly influenced modern leadership and management (DeCarvalho, 2009; Wahba & Bridwell, 1976). Another modern leadership icon is Drucker, who was called the "father of modern management gurus," and who

published 33 books on leadership over a period of 70 years (Kermally, 2005). The influence of Drucker's leadership ideas is evident in many classrooms and boardrooms across the United States and in other regions of the world. Bill Gates, the founder of Microsoft and a master visionary and innovator, made the Microsoft computer operating system a household name throughout the world. Gates is considered by some to be the greatest entrepreneur of all time (IIM, 2011).

Leadership has been a topic of contentious discourse among scholars, philosophers, and other thinkers since the times of the ancient Greek philosophers (Adair, 2003; Funder, 2002; Pervin, 1994; Purshouse, 2010; Vecchio, Bullis, & Brazil, 2006). However, the leadership debate became much more combative when philosophers, scholars, and practitioners of opposing persuasions argued whether leadership is an innate or acquired human characteristic. Most prominent early Greek philosophers and leadership advocates—Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, etc.—believed that leadership is acquired through training and practice (Adair, 2003), meaning that individuals with proper development can learn to be leaders. This premise is foundational to today's behavioral leadership theories, and is widely implemented in EC (Arneja, J. S., McInnes, C. W., Carr, N. J., e.al., 2014; MacKie, D., 2015; Smith, C. L., 2015).

Conversely, other scholars have advanced the notion that leadership is an innate quality that individuals possess at birth; hence, you either have leadership qualities or you do not (Doh, 2003). Based on this concept, theories such as the great man theory emerged, which proposed that leadership qualities are inherited (Cawthon, 1996; Embry, 2010; Woodard, 1930). Therefore, in accordance with these theories, great leaders

possess a special genetic-like heritage. For instance, Woodard (1930), an advocate of the

great man theory, argued that 5% of the population does the thinking for the other 95%.

Woodard asserted that 20% of the population succeeded at learning and rearranging

information and discoveries proposed by original thinkers (the 5% mentioned above).

Consequently, Woodard argued, the 20% of the population that succeeded at learning and

rearranging information only appeared to be more inventive than the remaining 80%,

when, in reality, they were only reflectors of ideas and conceptualizations generated by

the original 5% of great thinkers, who are biologically endowed with true leadership

qualities.

In contrast, other scholars have suggested that leadership is a result of biological

and environmental factors manifested in the form of human traits (Epstein, 2002; Kok-

Yee, Soon, & Kim-Yin, 2008; Mervielde, 1994; Mumford, 1906; Stagner, 1994).

Mumford (1906) argued that leadership is determined by both genetic heritage and

acquired traits, that individuals are born with leadership characteristics, and that they

develop additional leadership abilities through experience and exposure. Nye (2009)

stated that traits are the results of nature and nurture, noting that while biology and

genetics matter in leadership, these personal traits do not determine an individual's ability

to lead in such a significant way as depicted in the heroic leadership concepts espoused

by proponents of the great man theory. Nye argued that nurture and situational factors

have much more impact on leadership than some recognize.

The nature/nurture debate of the source of great leadership traits continues in the

literature, though support for this view has decreased. There is a growing consensus

supporting the idea that leadership can be learned. In a study involving 89 pairs of

identical twins and 54 pairs of fraternal twins, Zhang, Ilies, and Arvey (2009) found that

genetic influences on leadership roles were much more significant for those participants

raised in enriched environments—higher family socioeconomic status, higher perceived

parental support, and lower perceived conflict with parents. These findings demonstrated

the important impact that learning can exert upon leadership ability, and showed the

interrelation existing between genetic and environmental factors in leadership.

Zhang, Ilies, and Arvey's (2009) research suggests that some leadership traits that

may be perceived as being biologically inherited may be significantly associated with

environmental factors (enriched environments). Therefore, while leadership abilities may

appear to be inherited, in reality, learning may have a greater impact than genetics in

determining a person's ability to lead. McCall (2010) argued that experience is the most

effective way of learning how to lead. Two studies conducted by Arvey et al. found that

experience accounted for approximately 70% of participants' leadership roles. In

comparison, the same studies found that heredity was a factor in only 30% of

participants' leadership roles (Arvey, Rotundo, Johnson, Zhang, & McGue, 2006; Arvey,

Zhang, Krueger, & Avolio, 2007). Scholars and practitioners' increasing acceptance of

leadership being greatly a function of learning has led to the formulation of a number of

leadership theories which have been used to shape today's organizational leadership

strategies, including EC.

Leadership Theories

Executive coaching was preceded by a rich history of leadership theories. Many

of those theories are still implemented by organizations and leaders around the world

(MacKie, D., 2015; Smith, C. L., 2015). Some components of the competencies

instrument that were used in my study involved an understanding of leadership theories.

The information contained in this section prompted the inclusion of some elements that

form part of the competencies instrument.

I will now compare and contrast some of the theories that have had significant

influence upon organizational functioning and some impact on the development of EC.

The managerial grid theory proposed by Blake & Mouton (1964) consisted of a three-

dimensional grid upon which a leader's concern for the people being led and the leader's

drive to accomplish organizational tasks and responsibilities are plotted.

This grid is used to identify the leader's management style. The leader's

managerial style is identified based on five positions on the grid which represent

managerial behavioral patterns. Blake and Mouton named the behavioral patterns in

accordance with how effective a leader is likely to be when possessing that particular

style. The *Impoverished* leadership style is characterized by low interest for production

and low interest for workers.

The *Country Club* leadership style has high concern for workers and little concern

for production. The *Produce or Perish* style is characteristic of a manager that is solely

concerned about getting the work done and has little concern for workers. The *Middle of

the Road* managerial style represents managers who are partially concerned about

production and, also, partially concerned about workers. The Team Leader managerial style depicts managers who are highly concerned about people and equally concerned about production.

In contrast, situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Papworth, Milne, & Boak, 2009; Thompson & Vecchio, 2009; Vecchio, Bullis, & Brazil, 2006) placed greater emphasis on the circumstances surrounding the leader. The situational leadership theory contends that there is no single best way to lead. This theory argues that the right leadership depends on shifting employee factors, taking into consideration the leader's preparedness, the task and psychological maturity of the followers, and other variables.

The contingency theory of leadership (Fiedler, 1978; Fiedler, 197l; Korman, 1973; Peters, Hartke, & Poulman, 1985) is similar to situational leadership theory. It presupposes that the right type of leadership depends on environmental circumstances. Under the contingency theory of leadership leaders are categorized in terms of their natural tendency to be task-oriented or employee-oriented. Leaders are evaluated based on their scores on the "most preferred coworker" scale and the degree of favorableness of varying leadership situations.

Path-goal theory (Evans, 1970; Georgopoulos, Mahoney, & Jones, 1957; Indvik, 1985; Szilagyi, & Sims Jr., 1974), another contingency leadership approach, advocates that the leader is responsible for ensuring that followers attain their goals and to verify that those goals are congruent with organizational objectives. Developers of the path-goal theory of leadership argued that leader behaviors of a manager (directive, supportive,

participative, and achievement-oriented) could serve to predict the motivation, affect, and behavior of that leader's subordinates. In other words, the path-goal theory sustained that the leadership behaviors of a manager influenced that manager's subordinates to such extent that the motivation, affect, and behavior of subordinates could be predicted based on the behavior characteristics of the leader.

Transformational leadership theory (Bass, 1997; Bass and Avolio, 1993; Bass, 1990; McLaurin, Al Amri, 2008; Poutiatine, 2009; Waldman, Siegel, & Javidan, 2006) argued that a leader, by means of inspiration or charisma, is able to gain the trust of followers. This acquired trust, elicit desirable behaviors on the part of followers. Consequently, organizational goals can be achieved. Finally, Charismatic Leadership Theories (Raush, 2005; Zaccaro, Klimoski, 2001) which are really forms of transformational leadership theory, rely mostly on the personal qualities of the leader to elicit a certain emotional response from followers resulting in strong motivation, commitment, and performance on the part of those being led.

Goal setting is considered an integral element in most EC programs (Moen & Allgood, 2009; Morris, Ely, & Frei, 2011; Wofford & Liska, 1993). The use of goal setting to provide direction for coachees shows the influence of Path Goal Theory. Charismatic leadership has also had some impact on EC. Vanbrabant (2011), an international executive coach, implements charismatic leadership with her executive coaching clients. These leadership theories and other leader development conceptualizations have been foundational in driving the metamorphic formation of modern leadership development strategies, of which EC is a more recent iteration.

Leadership theories have significantly impacted the field of EC. A brief search of databases and other Internet sites revealed the influence that leadership theories have had on EC. A Google search for "Transformational leadership and Executive Coaching" returned 210,000 results. A Google search for the phrase "transformational coaching" returned 992,000 results. There are also a number of articles which link transformational leadership with coaching (Abrell, et al., 2011; Cashman, 2003).

History of Executive Coaching

The term executive coaching has more recently been used to describe a leadership development process for enhancing the performance of top organizational leaders (Baron & Morin 2009; Bennett, 2006; Bluckert, 2005; Hooijberg & Lane, 2009; Hoyle, 2011; Judge & Cowell, 1997; Nicholson, 2009). However, coaching as a means for individuals to maximize their potential and to attain personal and organizational goals has been used for centuries. Socrates is credited by some as being the first coach because of his saying that people cannot be taught anything, they can only be made to think (Bennett, 2006; Wilson, 2010). Also, the meaning of the word coach has evolved over time.

During the 1500s and 1600s the term coach was used to denote a carriage used to transport individuals from one place to another (Gray, 2006; Stern, 2009; Witherspoon & White, 1996). By the 1830s coach was a slang used at Oxford University to describe a tutor who assisted "carried" another through an exam (Harper, 2011). From their very beginning the terms coach and coaching implied guiding or leading someone to a desired destination, goal, or level of performance. This precisely is the objective of executive coaching, a goal and results-oriented learning relationship where the coach assists the

person or persons being coached (coachee) to achieve personal and organizational goals. (Agarwal, Angst, & Magni, 2009; Grant & Cavanagh, 2007; Joo, 2005; Stewart, Palmer, Wilkin, & Kerrin, 2008).

Before the 1980s and 1990s when EC was in an embryonic stage, EC was rarely mentioned in business circles and the term executive coaching was often ill defined. The concept of coaching was limited to sports coaching and mental health (Wilson, 2010). Executive coaching began surging in popularity during the 1980s when the failure rate of executives reached 50% (Feldman & Lankau, 2005). This alarming trend led to the development of remedial executive coaching, which had the goal of retaining and training leaders who were technically savvy but deficient in leadership skills (Anna, Chesley & Davis, 2001). The 1980s was an active period when executive coaches planned and implemented outdoor retreats, which included rafting adventures, bungee jumping, and survivor-like activities designed to foster team spirit and to motivate corporate staff to achieve organizational goals (Arnaud, 2003).

In my review of the literature depicting the history of EC, I found that the foundational underpinnings of EC derived from three main areas: A psychological or psychotherapeutic component (Brotman, Liberi, &Wasylyshyn, 1998; Gray, 2006; Joo, 2005) which relied heavily on theories in psychology; a personal growth and training emphasis drawing from theories in education (Clegg, Rhodes, Kornberger & Stilin, 2006); and a business management element which draws experiences from the world of business to enhance leader performance (Agarwal, Angst, & Magni, 2009; Barner & Higgins, 2007; Feldman & Lankau, 2005; Gray, 2006).

The late 20th century was a fertile period for the EC field. Advances were made in areas such as developing a definition of coaching, articulating a rationale for coaching, and advancing coaching methodologies (Kilburg, 1996; Smith & Sandstrom, 1999). During the 20th century psychologists made some contributions in the form of practitioner-based research that advanced the field of EC. Industrial-organizational psychology was instrumental in the formation of EC, and practitioners began focusing on individual leadership development and other leadership strategic initiatives (Schein, 1997).

Many company consultants from 1940 to 1979 were psychologists, industrial-organizational psychologists, and other professionals who practiced coaching, though it was then called consulting (Kilburg & Diedrich, 2007). Positive psychology, the study of positive emotion, of engagement, and of meaning, is also a key component of most EC training (Seligman, 2007). Seligman noted that positive psychology can contribute an evidence-based framework and a variety of valid measures to EC. Humanistic psychology, based on the premise that individuals are agentic beings capable of achieving self-realization, also made pivotal contributions to EC. The goal of the humanistic psychology approach—to pursue the positive growth of individuals rather than remediation—figures prominently in most EC today and is an integral element of the empowering nature of EC.

The Nature of Executive Coaching

Definition of Executive Coaching

Despite its popularity in the business world, executive coaching is still undergoing a process of self-definition (Bennett, 2006; Bono, Purvanova, Towler, & Peterson, 2009; Feldman, & Lankau, 2005). It is probably impossible to develop competencies for EC unless it can be defined. An overview of definitions of EC coaching can identify key components that are generally accepted as being characteristic of EC. The key defining elements of EC discussed in this section form part of the competencies instrument used in my study. There is no universally accepted definition for executive coaching, but most definitions emphasize the development of leadership skills for the purpose of enhancing performance of executives as well as assisting executives in achieving personal or organizational goals (Bowles, Cunningham, De La Rosa, & Picano, 2007; Gray, 2006; Joo, 2005; Kutzhanova, Lyons, & Lichtenstein, 2009). The following definition of executive coaching is provided by Stern (2007):

> Executive coaching is an experiential, individualized, leadership development process that builds a leader's capability to achieve short and long-term organizational goals. It is conducted through one-on-one interactions, driven by data from multiple perspectives, and based on mutual trust and respect. The organization, an executive, and the executive coach work in partnership to achieve maximum learning and impact. (p. 154)

Bluckert (2005) proposed that executive coaching can be defined as a facilitation of learning and development for improving performance. In addition, Bluckert proposed

that EC focuses on enhancing effective action and attitudinal or behavioral change for the

attainment of personal goals. The International Coach Federation defined coaching as the

engagement of coach and client in a creative learning process aimed at enhancing the

client's professional and personal development (ICF, 2011). Executive coaching is a tool

used to improve managerial skills, and to assist individuals by combining personal and

career development with organizational objectives (Anna, Chesley, & Davis, 2001).

Coaching in organizations is also understood as a nondirective development

process centered on performance and skill development, with a focus mostly on job

performance, though personal issues may be addressed as well. In the coaching process,

individual strengths and blind spots are explored and individual and organizational goals

are established and pursued (CIPD-DDI, 2010). Because EC is relatively new, procurers

of these services may not know what to expect in the coaching process, or they may

confuse EC services with services offered by other helping professions; therefore, it is

incumbent upon the coach to ensure that the coachee understands how EC differs and

may be similar to other helping processes.

Coaching Versus Other Professional Development Services

It is important that consumers of EC services understand what to expect before

they engage in the coaching relationship. The EC literature addresses differences and

similarities between coaching and other service professions (Abbott, Stening, Atkins, &

Grant, 2006; Feldman, 2001; ICF, 2009b). In an effort to prevent confusion the

International Coach Federation listed on its website ways in which EC differs from

therapy, mentoring, traditional consulting, and training. The ICF noted that while therapy

focuses on mental illness and facilitating remediation, and devotes attention to past issues in a client's life history, coaching is mainly concerned with the present. By directing the attention of the client to current issues, the coach seeks to create an environment conducive to maximizing the coachee's potential, seeking to improve personal performance for the attainment of specific goals.

In addition, the International Coach Federation (ICF, 2011b) lists other ways in which coaching differs from therapy. For example, the IFC noted that in therapy the psychologist sets the direction and agenda for treatment, where as in coaching the coachee usually sets the direction of the coaching process. Also, Right Management (2012) noted that, in most EC cases, the client is an organization and the working alliance or relationship comprises several individuals, for instance: the coachee, director of HR, immediate supervisor, subordinates of the coachee, and the coach. The International Coach Federation (ICF, 2011b) asserted that with professional services such as mentoring and therapy the working alliance is usually comprised of the facilitator and one client. Furthermore, the ICF noted that in these relationships (therapy and mentoring) the facilitator tends to be prescriptive, which is usually avoided in EC.

In contrasting EC and training, Abbott, Stening, Atkins, and Grant (2006) noted that training often pursues a predetermined agenda, whereas EC tends to be a much more individualized process where the executive (the coachee) has significant influence on the coaching agenda and upon the direction of coaching. Also, Abbott, et al. (2006) reported that coaching tends to be much more holistic than training. Coaching clients may also be unclear of the differences between coaching, mentoring, and traditional consulting. With

mentoring, sports coaching, or traditional consulting, pupils are guided to success based on the experience of an authoritative figure (Feldman, 2001). On the other hand, EC is often predicated upon the assumption that coachees are the greatest authority in their own circumstances, and that the coachee possesses all that is needed to achieve desired goals. The coach skillfully resorts to positive reinforcement, confrontation, effective questioning, and other resources and techniques to create a fertile environment where the coachee can better access inner resources, which are implemented to attain predetermined personal goals (ICF, 2009b). The manner in which coaches guide coachees to attain personal goals can differ significantly. Next, I will discuss EC facilitation approaches.

Executive Coaching Facilitation Approaches

Despite the ubiquity of EC in organizations there is a lack of standardization and professional cohesion among providers and procurers of EC services (CIPD, 2011; Fielden, 2008). Executive coaching facilitations are often custom-tailored for specific clients and situations, and usually reflect the background and training of the coach (Bono, Purvanova, Towler, & Peterson, 2009). Because of the lack of standardization in the coaching profession currently anyone can declare themselves to be an executive coach (Natale & Diamante, 2005). Therefore, executive coaches can come from a wide array of professional backgrounds such as psychology, business, education, marketing, sports, military, human resource, social work, training and development, and others (Cannon & Cannon, 2002l De Meuse, Dai, and Lee, 2009).

A discussion of some widely-implemented EC facilitation approaches could serve to contextualize techniques and strategies that are used in EC. The discussions that follow

are included to give the reader a sense of how the coach-coachee alliance is formed, and how the benefits of this alliance are harnessed and used to achieve the objectives of EC. The information contained in this section was used in the development of the competencies instrument used in my study.

Coaching can be used to address a wide range of issues from an executive's inability to get along with others, career and succession planning, executive onboarding, to preparing a promising employee to perform in new roles and with greater responsibilities, and much more (Bono, Purvanova, Towler, & Peterson, 2009). Coaching, as it is practiced today, uses a seemingly endless list of techniques such as goal-setting, affirmations, visualization, massage, assertive training, cognitive congruence, aroma, Feng Shui, meditating, counting your blessings, and the list goes on (Seligman, 2007). It should not be surprising, given these variances in the field, that there is a wide variety of coaching approaches and differing opinions on which is best, thus creating an environment for lively and contentious debates among stakeholders in EC.

The Role of Psychology, Business, and Education in Coaching

As mentioned in the section above "Literature Review Search Strategy," executive coaching has implemented ideas, strategies, and theories from the fields of psychology, business, and education. The discussions that follow were key catalysts in the confection of the competencies instrument that was used in my study. The field of Psychology has contributed significantly to the development of EC. Smith II, E. (2012) noted that *developmental counseling,* a service that was provided primarily by psychologists in the form of apprenticeships, was the first form of business coaching.

Smith II argued that *developmental counseling* was a precursor to EC. Harris (1999) contended that, even before the term executive coaching became a part of the lexicon in business and other circles, professional consultants implemented a blend of organizational development strategies and psychological approaches to enhance the performance of executives. Bono, Purvanova, Towler, and Peterson (2009) reported that the field of psychology has contributed much to EC in the form of human development, learning behavior, psychological measurement, addressing relationship boundaries, and respecting client confidentiality.

Executive coaches need to be familiar with many concepts in psychology such as personality theories, models of human motivation, adult development theories, including moral, intellectual, emotional, relational, and spiritual development, models of adult learning, models of career development, and models of personal and behavioral change. Furthermore, executive coaches should understand and be able to apply research in psychology regarding work/life balance, stress management techniques, social psychology and how social factors impact individual and group behavior, and how to identify individuals in need of psychological or medical referral (The Executive Coaching Forum, 2012).

Given the influence of psychology on EC, some researchers even suggested that psychologists are uniquely equipped to deliver on the imperatives of EC. For example, (Brotman, Liberi, & Wasylyshyn, 1998; Feldman, 2001) argued that because most desired EC outcomes require sustained behavioral change, psychologists are especially equipped to develop standards for EC. Kilburg (2000) argued that events, emotions,

thoughts, and habits that are outside of the conscious awareness of executives can significantly influence what they decide and how they act. Therefore, Kilburg proposed that psychoanalysis is uniquely suited for training and development in EC.

On the other hand, Berman and Bradt (2006) claimed that in terms of values, rules, cultures, and systems in corporate settings psychologists have very limited experience, and that mastering the nuances and protocols of the corporate environment requires actual experience in business.

Stern (2009) noted that despite the seminal role of psychology in shaping the field of EC, psychologists may have much to unlearn when engaging in the practice of EC. Specifically, Stern noted that psychologists need to abandon the notion of client remediation and focus upon the key components of EC in order to be effective in it. According to Stern (2009), the key components of EC include: having multiple clients per EC project; focusing on results that produce benefits for the organization; and expanding the scope of coaching intervention and confidentiality to include the ability to advise leaders and potential leaders on issues deemed to be important to stakeholders in the organization.

Bono, Purvanova, Towler, and Peterson (2009) bluntly rejected the notion of psychologists being uniquely equipped for EC. These researchers argued that even proponents of psychological training for EC recognize that coaching is no place for psychologists who are not interested in business. On the other hand, Berglas (2002) expressed his belief that in a majority of coaching interventions coaching practitioners who lack extensive training in psychology "do more harm than good" (p. 87). In

addition, Dean and Meyer (2002) suggested that psychological education provides the foundational knowledge and clinical abilities required for coaches to obtain desired goals and objectives in coaching, which generally includes some type of sustained behavior change. It is evident that psychology has influenced the field of EC. However, the field of business has also been instrumental in the formation of EC.

Berman and Bradt (2006) noted that knowledge and experience in business are essential for effective EC and consulting in a majority of executive coaching interventions. Maher and Pomerantz (2003) proposed that executive coaches should have experience in business and an understanding of the boardroom. Furthermore, they contend that coaches who provide EC services while lacking crucial business skills do harm to the EC profession. Foxhall (2002) reported that executive coaches need to be passionate about business and organizations. In addition, Foxhall noted that executive coaches need to have a clear grasp of leadership roles at all levels of an organization.

The Executive Coaching Forum (2012) listed, what it suggests should be the *Core Competencies of the Executive Coach*. Among the competencies is a long list of business knowledge expectations for an executive coach. These business knowledge competencies include: an understanding of global capitalism and global firms, the differences between regulated and nonregulated businesses, the differences between for-profit and not-for-profit businesses, the key leadership roles of organizations (e.g. COO, CFO, CTO, CEO, Executive Director, Board Chair, etc.), knowledge of current business events, issues and trends, management principles and processes, and human resource management.

It is possible that standardization of the coaching profession could lead to greater consensus among coaching professionals from differing academic and experiential persuasions. Despite the strong opinions that are reported in this section, the literature shows that the business, psychology, and education fields have contributed significantly to the development of EC. The influences from these fields are likely to enhance coachee growth in the EC coaching process.

The Executive Coaching Process

Attempting to describe the EC process can be challenging considering that executive coaching processes tend to be highly individualized. There is no agreed-upon definition for EC, and a consensus has not been reached among professional coaches on what constitutes effective EC coaching. In some coaching situations, the process involves solely the coach and one coachee. In other cases, the coaching process can incorporate the coachee and some of her superiors and subordinates (Kochanowski, Seifert, & Yukl, 2009; Viser, 2010). Still, in other situations the coachee assumes the characteristics of a team (for instance: a sales team, customer service team, or a project team). However, there are some elements that are common to most EC processes and I will discuss those commonalities next.

Feldman and Lankau (2005) divided the coaching process into four phases: data gathering, feedback, implementation of the intervention, and evaluation of the coaching intervention. The executive coaching process often begins with a contract stipulating the services to be rendered and outcomes that can be expected. Feldman and Lankau (2005) place this element of coaching within the "data gathering" phase. The coaching contract

should specify the costs of the services, the length of service, the duration of coaching

sessions, and the rules of disclosure and confidentiality. During the first phase, it is

important that the executive coach ensure that the prospective coachee understands the

nature of coaching and how it differs from other helping processes such as counseling

and mentoring (Judge, & Cowell, 1997; Payne, 2007).

Once the contract is agreed into, the coach often proceeds to gather data from the

coachee, which is often essential for establishing the initial coaching direction. Feldman

and Lankau (2005) include within the "data gathering" phase personality assessments,

360-degree evaluations, and the acquisition of other information that may be beneficial

for the process. The second phase is labeled by Feldman and Lankau as the "feedback"

phase. At some point in the second phase the coach presents to the coachee the

information compiled during the data gathering phase, and assists the coachee in

assimilating the feedback. In many cases where the organization finances the coaching

the feedback may be shared with the coachee's superiors as well. At this juncture, the

coach and coachee should cooperate together with the intent of identifying the coachee's

strengths and growth areas and identifying specific behavior objectives that will be the

primary focus in the coaching process (Feldman & Lankau, 2005).

Following the feedback phase the coaching process moves to the structured

periodic coaching sessions phase. The coach and coachee work together to accomplish

the previously agreed-upon objectives, to modify the coaching plan if necessary, and to

work on strategies for overcoming barriers that hinder change (Feldman & Lankau,

2005). Once the structured periodic coaching sessions are completed some coaches enter

the final phase (evaluation) where the coach assesses the change achieved, gathers information from the coachee and others involved in the process, and provides ongoing support to ensure that the progress made is permanent (Feldman & Lankau, 2005).

A key element in the coaching process not addressed by Feldman and Lankau (2005) is the importance of the coach/coachee working alliance. This alliance is where the coach begins to establish the coaching relationship with the coachee. Natale and Diamante (2005) call this stage the alliance check. Many argue that the coaching relationship is the most essential stage for ensuring success in the coaching process (Asay & Lambert, 1999; Baron, & Morin, 2009; Boyce, Jackson, & Neal, 2009; Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001; O'Broin & Palmer, 2006). A successful coaching relationship requires the development of trust, rapport, and commitment (Boyce, Jackson, & Neal, 2009).

One executive coach characteristic that can contributes to a strong coaching alliance is good interpersonal skills. Morgan (2002) noted that executive coaches seek to change the behaviors of coachees by fostering one-on-one interactions at crucial instances in the career of executives. In addition, Morgan argued that the most successful executive coaches are proficient at engaging in "focused talk." Morgan reported that through conversations, also known as interventions, executive coaches aim to produce lasting changes in the behaviors of executives. Furthermore, Morgan asserted, that the form of interpersonal connection needed for successful coaching is not dependent upon 'chemistry,' instead it relies on "openness, communication, appreciation, fairness, and shared commitment." Quick and Macik-Frey (2004) reported that in "deep interpersonal

communication" a coach/coachee interaction develops, which leads to improved health for executives and produces greater authenticity in the coaching relationship. And, Zaskun and Landeta (2015) reported that competency in management communications skills is essential for effective EC.

Self-confidence is also essential in the EC process. Lee and Frisch (2015) noted that executive coaches should be confident but at the same time they should remain humble. Lee and Frisch warned that not seeking validation, credit, or even acknowledgment is a difficult part of being a coach. Frisch asserted, "As I think back on when I have done well or poorly as a coach, it often comes down to whether I had enough confidence to be truly humble and did not need to feed my ego." Furthermore, Frisch noted that embracing confidence and humility is an element of producing a personal coaching model.

The field of psychology can be instrumental in generating scientific support for the EC profession. Psychology has a long history of investigating human cognition (Lewandowsky, 2011; Van der Maas, Molenaar, Maris, Kievit, & Borsboom, 2011). In addition, psychology has made significant contributions to the understanding of motivation (Cummings & Elsalmi, 1968; Diefendorff & Mehta, 2007; Notz, 1975; Probst, & Brubaker, 2001; Tremblay, Blanchard, Taylor, Pelletier, & Villeneuve, 2009; Vallerand, 2012). Furthermore, the field of psychology has contributed extensively to the study of human behavior (Dearborn, Reis, Collins, & Bescheid, 2000; Larkin, 2012; Rogerson, Gottlieb, Handelsman, Knapp, & Younggren, 2011; Turkheimer & Gottesman, 1991; Turkheimer & Gottesman, 1913). The scientific contributions made by

psychologists that are mentioned above, can be of value in enhancing the effectiveness of EC.

Psychology-Based Approaches to Executive Coaching

As mentioned above, the field of psychology has a wealth of scientifically based research that executive coaches can use and are implementing in the development of coaching frameworks. However, there is little evidence that substantiates the effectiveness of these psychologically-based approaches in specifically EC settings (Ducharme, 2007). Hence, by claiming to use psychologically-based findings in their coaching practice, coaches may be superficially increasing popular confidence in EC without having scientific evidence that these psychological approaches actually work in EC settings.

I will now, briefly, discuss five of the EC approaches that are based on findings in the following five fields of psychology: cognitive behavioral coaching, integrative coaching, psychodynamic coaching, rational-emotive behavioral coaching, and self-determination coaching. The ability to facilitate EC processes involves essential knowledge and skills that executive coaches should master. The literature reviewed in this section led to the formulation of items in the competencies instrument used in this study.

When implementing the cognitive-behavioral coaching approach, coaches use elements of cognitive-behavioral psychology to empower coachees to access their cognitions and to achieve congruence in their thought processes, resulting in the formation and enforcement of desired behaviors (Ducharme, 2007). This approach to EC

is premised upon three assertions: a) a coachee's perception of an event can affect the coachee's response to that event, b) cognitions can be accessed, tracked, and altered, and c) changes in cognitions can impact behavioral change. The results-oriented approach of cognitive-behavioral coaching can be well suited for executives who tend to be goal-oriented high achievers.

Because of the issue-focused nature of cognitive-behavioral coaching, the changes in behavior can readily be measured, thus providing actionable data which is highly valued by many executives (Ducharme, 2007). On the other hand, Ducharme noted that this approach to executive coaching has its flaws, namely that highly achieving executives could consider cognitive-behavioral coaching to be overly simplistic and that the narrow focus of cognitive-behavior coaching lacks the breadth to address coaching issues from a holistic perspective. Also, Ducharme (2007) reported that cognitive-behavioral coaching has been used to help coachees manage daily challenges by analyzing the coachee's behaviors and developing problem-solving strategies to address the issues. However, Ducharme has acknowledged that there is, to date, no empirical evidence that this approach works with EC.

The integrative model of EC (Passmore, 2007) comprises six pathways or phases which Passmore calls "streams" for addressing executive performance. The six streams are: developing the coaching partnership, maintaining the coaching partnership, behavioral focus, conscious cognition, unconscious cognition, and environment and culture. During the coaching process, the coach seamlessly navigates back and forth between these streams, incorporating strategies and methods from cognitive psychology,

behavioral psychology, positive psychology, humanistic psychology, psychodynamic therapy, organizational culture, and emotional intelligence. Regarding emotional intelligence, Passmore noted that coaches need to be aware of their own emotions while monitoring the emotions of the coachee. Additionally, coaches need to ensure that they remain detached while strengthening emotional intimacy with the coachee.

The focus of the first two streams (developing the coaching partnership and maintaining the coaching partnership) serves to establish the coaching alliance or partnership between the coachee and the coach. During the third stream (behavioral focus) the coach and coachee pursue behavioral change by addressing the coachee's internal behaviors. This stage or stream serves to strengthen the coachee's planning and problem solving abilities. The fourth and fifth streams in the integrative coaching model (conscious and unconscious cognitions) address the coachee's cognitions–overt and covert–which drive the coachee's behaviors. During the sixth and last stream (environment and culture) the coach focuses on assisting the coachee to become aware of the broader system within which the coachee functions. Passmore (2007) noted that the ultimate goal of the integrative coaching model is to enhance the executive's performance in the workplace.

The psychodynamic approach to executive coaching is based on the premise that subconscious events, feelings, thoughts, and patterns of behavior of executives can significantly impact their decision-making abilities and their performance. Proponents of psychodynamics (Burrow, 1912; Curtis, 2012; Eisold, 2002; Klein, 2007; Summers, 2011; Wallerstein, 2004) argue that maladaptive thought patterns are subconsciously

triggered thereby setting into action behaviors that are counterproductive to maximal performance. These thought patterns (which have their origin in past experiences) can be observed in the form of defensive reactions, emotional responses, unresolved conflicts, and dysfunctional ways of thinking and behaving. What's more, psychoanalysts sustain that because executives are generally oblivious to most of these thought patterns and behavioral triggers, they require psychoanalytic intervention (Kilburg, 2004). For coaches deciding whether to use the psychodynamic EC approach, Kilburg suggests that, if the use of conventional methods do not produce the desired results, executive coaches should look for patterns of dysfunctional behavior in individuals, groups, or entire organizations.

Wurmser (2000) identified six types of developmental conflicts that have psychodynamic implications. Those conflicts are: struggles over emotions and their management, the desire to see the world clearly and creatively through the exercise of curiosity, basic identity issues, control over oneself and one's environment, competition and triangular relationships, and the complexities involved in addressing various loyalties that people have in their lives. Kilburg (2004) noted that everyone faces the conflicts mentioned above at some point in their lives. He recommended that executive coaches identify and address those conflicts in the leaders they coach. However, while Kilburg argue that it would be foolish for executive coaches to ignore conflicts with which their clients may be struggling, he does not recommend using extensive psychodynamic strategies in coaching. And he warns that this approach is best implemented by psychologists.

Another psychology-based approach to executive coaching derives from rational-emotive behavioral therapy (REBT). Essentially REBT proposes that emotional and behavioral reactions result only from a person's interpretation of environmental stimuli, and that those interpretations are driven by a person's core beliefs (Ellis (1993). Therefore, rational emotive behavioral coaching (REBC) is predicated upon the assumption that an executive's behaviors and emotional responses are not a result of experienced events. Instead, it's a result of the executive's interpretation of those events. In addition, REBC sustains that the way the executive coachees interpret events in their day-to-day lives is directly influenced by the executive's core convictions. In turn, those core convictions are shaped by social influences and by the executive's internal mental processing during early development as he attempts to handle rational and irrational motivations (Sherin & Caiger, 2004).

The successful implementation of REBC increases the capacity of executives for rational, critical, and psychologically sophisticated reasoning, thereby, helping executives to confront unrealistic assumptions and expectations that could adversely impact their performance (Ellis, 1994). A powerful benefit of REBC is that it can assist leaders of organizations to develop thought processes that are more flexible, thereby equipping them to consider ideas and approaches that they might not have thought of before participating in REBC (Ellis, 1972).

Spence and Oades (2011) conducted a study showing self-determination theory (SDT) as a useful framework for EC. SDT is a motivation theory that espouses supporting the natural or intrinsic tendencies of individuals to help them perform in more

effective and healthy ways (Deci, Eghrari, Patrick, & Leone, 1994). Spence and Oades suggested that coaches can implement SDT techniques to assist clients who are experiencing interpersonal tensions, resulting in improved psychological wellbeing for coachees. The approaches to EC described above vary significantly in methodology and it is unlikely that any one approach will work for every EC client. In the segment that follows, I will address some differences and commonalities of these approaches.

Differences and Similarities in Executive Coaching Approaches

There are some similarities and differences between the four psychology-based coaching approaches described above. For instance, both cognitive-behavioral coaching and rational emotive behavioral coaching seek to help the coachee to become cognizant of the relationship that exists between coachees' perception of events and their response to those events. Cognitive-behavioral coaching and rational emotive behavioral coaching are also similar in that there is a behavioral component to both, and both seek to assist the coachee to achieve congruence between the reality of events and the coachee's perception of them. On the other hand, there is a significant contrast between psychodynamic coaching and cognitive behavioral coaching. The psychodynamic approach to coaching is concerned with the interplay that exists between the conscious and the subconscious and seeks to bring maladaptive thought patterns from the subconscious into the conscious where the coachee, in cooperation with the coach, can formulate a resolution. The goal of the psychodynamic approach to coaching is to address subconscious thoughts that imperceptibly and adversely can affect the executive's performance. Conversely, cognitive behavioral coaching and rational emotive behavioral coaching directly address

the coachee's behaviors. Furthermore, cognitive behavioral coaching focuses on conscious cognitions.

The integrative approach to coaching borrows from cognitive behavioral coaching by addressing the interrelatedness of conscious thoughts and behaviors. The integrative coaching approach also implements elements from psychodynamic psychology, namely the role of the subconscious as it relates to the coachee's performance. Also, by integrating elements of environmental influences and perceptions, the integrative approach implements elements from rational emotive behavioral coaching. It is evident, based on the discussion above, that psychology has had, and is having, a significant impact on EC. However, the fields of business and education have also greatly shaped the EC profession. While acknowledging the significant contributions psychology, business, and education have made to the EC profession, it is essential to ascertain whether they are effective in enhancing executive performance.

Executive Coaching and Executive Performance

One of the main goals of EC is to enhance the performance of organizational leaders. If they are going to remain relevant to the clients they serve, executive coaches must be able to demonstrate the value of their services. Executive coaches that ignore this reality are likely to become extinct. The literature reviewed in this section was instrumental for the crafting of competencies in the instrument I sent to participants in this study.

Most of the studies addressing the effectiveness of EC do not implement a control group and are anecdotal self-reports from a coach or coachee perspective (Bowles,

Cunningham, De La Rosa, & Picano, De Meuse, Dai, & Lee, 2009; Ely, Nelson, Zaccaro,

Hernez-Broome, & Whyman, 2010; 2007; Wasylyshyn, Gronsky, & Haas, 2004;

Orenstein, 2002). The environments in which organizational leaders perform and the

challenges they face often demand evidence-based services. Though the executive

coaching field may be currently getting by with anecdotal evidence and self-reports,

organizations are increasingly demanding empirical evidence to support the ROI claimed

by EC (Bennett, 2006). Also, there is not a broad consensus on criteria for assessing the

impact of EC on executive performance (Mackee, 2007).

The rapid surge in the practice of EC and the lack of standardization in EC has

produced a research challenge for the field of EC. Empirical studies on coaching

effectiveness are significantly lagging-behind research pertaining to practitioner methods

and techniques (Fielden, 2008, Kombarakaran, Yang, Baker, & Fernandes, 2008). The

accelerated growth of executive coaching may be understood by some as evidence of

coaching effectiveness however research reviews (Armstrong, Melser, & Tooth, 2007;

De Meuse, Dai, & Lee, 2009; MacKie, 2007) suggests that the high demand of EC

services does not necessarily constitute evidence that EC is effective at enhancing

executive on-the-job performance.

Executive coaching is often described in the literature as an individualized or

group leadership development process. However, there is little empirical evidence

demonstrating tangible benefits (Bennett, 2006; Boyce, Jackson, & Neal, 2009; Bowles,

Cunningham, De La Rosa, & Picano, 2007; MacKie, 2007). There is an abundance of

coach and coachee self-report studies (Freedman, & Perry 2010; Parker-Wilkins, 2006;

Stewart, Palmer, Wilkin, & Kerrin, 2008; Terry, Rao, Ashford, & Socolof, 2009)

claiming that EC is an effective approach for developing executive performance.

However, when subjected to scientific scrutiny most of these studies are found lacking in

empirical rigor. Many of the studies relied on small samples, they were conducted in

uncontrolled environments, were often based on coach and coachee self-report, and often

those reporting the effectiveness of EC stood to benefit from the findings they reported.

For example, in a study assessing the impact of coaching upon middle

management buy-in, Bowles, Cunningham, De La Rosa, & Picano (2007) conducted

research involving 30 middle managers and 29 executive managers. The contact time

between the coach and the participant was approximately 4 to 6 hours over a 12-month

period. It would be difficult to rule-out other variables that could have impacted the

results of the study over such a long period of time. Furthermore, the researcher reported

that the participants received 8 to 10 hours of leadership training at the beginning of the

study, and the study did not include a control group. Therefore, it would be difficult for

the researcher to determine whether the positive results (preset goals achieved) reported

in the study was due to the leadership training participants received at the beginning of

the study or if the positive results were attributed to the 4-6 hours of coaching.

Also, on average, most EC is done over a period of 6 months in 48 one-hour

sessions. By the admission of the researcher, the sample size was atypical and small. The

factors mentioned above suggest that this study may not be empirically strong. In another

article listed under competence coaching, Anderson (2005) reported that the ROI for

executive coaching is 700%. However, he provided no empirical evidence in the article to

substantiate these claims. It is imperative for human resource managers and other procurers of EC services to be able to quantify the benefits gained from EC otherwise it may become increasingly difficult to justify the cost of these services.

On the other hand, there is an increasing effort by researchers and practitioners to produce studies that explore measurable benefits of EC that can withstand the scrutiny of science (Abbott, Stening, Atkins, & Grant, 2006; Bowles, Cunningham, De La Rosa, & Picano, 2007; CIPD 2011; Hoyle, 2011; Kampa-Kokesch, & Anderson, 2001; MacKie, 2007). But such studies are in a minority. Another issue that is being rigorously debated in EC circles is the topic of accreditation and credentialing (Bennett, 2006; Brotman, Liberi, & Wasylyshyn, 1998; De Meuse, Dai, & Lee, 2009; MacKie, 2007; Orenstein, 2006). As mentioned before, currently practically anyone can claim the title of executive coach, and many individuals from a variety of backgrounds—psychology, business, education, marketing, human resource, social work, training and development—self-describe as executive coach (De Meuse, Dai, & Lee, 2009).

It is imperative for Human Resource managers, who are often responsible for hiring executive coaches, to be certain that these services are effective for maximizing executive on-the-job performance; and to ensure demonstrable ROI from the EC services they purchase. I believe that a modified Delphi study investigating EC competencies that are essential for enhancing executive on-the-job performance could contribute to the body of empirical research on EC.

Gaps in the Literature

The relative ubiquity of EC in the US, Great Britain, Australia, and other regions of the world indicate that EC is highly valued by organizations. Executive coaches generate approximately 2 billion dollars per year (Armstrong, Melser, & Tooth, 2007). However, there is little scientific evidence to substantiate these huge investments of resources (Bono et al., 2009; De Meuse, Dai, & Lee, 2009; Feldman & Lankau, 2005; Gray & Goregaokar, 2010; MacKie, 2007). Hoyle (2011) conducted a survey which showed that approximately 80% of organizations do not have in place a formal plan for assessing the effectiveness of EC services. Grant and Cavanagh (2007) noted that coaching skills are rarely measured, and when measured invalid assessment tools are used. Brotman, Liberi, and Wasylyshyn (1998) noted that EC continues to be an unregulated field with no widely-accepted licensing, credentialing, or professional designation for executive coaches to achieve or maintain.

In the process of reviewing the literature in EC, I found substantial reasons to believe that procurers of EC services, who are often charged with monitoring the performance of executives, may not have empirically based rationales for the expenditures they are investing in executive coaching services. The literature review showed that there is a substantial number of practitioner research that is mostly based on self-reports from coaches and coachees. Furthermore, the literature review showed that scientifically based research is significantly lagging-behind practitioner research. There is also a need for assessment tools to measure executive coaching effectiveness. The literature review showed also that the lack of regulation in the coaching profession has

exacerbated the challenges of defining executive coaching and of ensuring the delivery of services that are empirically supported. Therefore, more research is needed to address these significant gaps in the EC literature.

Conclusion

The demand for executive coaching services has increased exponentially in the United States and in other regions of the world. There are thousands of coaches from different professional backgrounds and with varying levels of competence. Organizations spend billions of dollars annually acquiring executive coaching services, but there is little empirical evidence to substantiate these expenditures. In conceptual form, coaching may have been in existence from the time of the ancient Greek philosophers. Over the years and throughout its development the coaching profession has been influenced by many business and leadership theories. Despite its popularity, the coaching profession continues to be in a state of flux; it is unregulated, ill defined, and in need of greater empirical support. In terms of EC research, anecdotal practitioner research far-outnumbers empirical studies. There is a need for increased empirical research in the EC field so that the coaching profession can be driven and supported by scientific research. The field of psychology is greatly impacting the coaching profession and is arguably the biggest contributor of empirical research in EC however more research is needed to demonstrate empirically that theories in psychology are also effective for maximizing executive on-the-job performance through EC intervention.

Given the gaps in EC research identified by this research review, I believe that this modified Delphi study investigating executive coaching competencies that are

essential for enhancing executive on-the-job performance has increased research in the

EC field, and could contribute to the advancement of positive social change.

Furthermore, by adopting the competencies identified in this study as criteria for

selecting executive coaching, this modified Delphi study could benefit individuals and

organizations that purchase executive coaching services. The following chapter, Chapter

3, describes methodologies to be implemented in this study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this modified Delphi study was to obtain consensus among a panel of experts regarding EC competencies that are essential for enhancing executive on-the-job performance. This chapter describes the specific research methods that I used when conducting the study. Chapter 3 comprises six main sections. The research design section describes the research approach I followed when conducting the study. In the population and sampling section, I explain the criteria and methodology I used when choosing participants for the study. In the instrumentation section, I describe the tool I used to gather information from participants. In the data collection segment, I specify how data was gathered for the study. The data analysis section addressed tools and approaches I used for examining the data that were collected. I conclude the chapter with a summary.

Research Design

The research question that I explored in this study was: What executive coaching competencies are essential for enhancing executive on-the-job performance? I used a quantitative modified Delphi technique to answer this question. The following section is a discussion of the origins, applications, rationale, benefits, and limitations of the Delphi research approach.

The Delphi Research Technique

The Delphi technique was developed at the RAND Corporation in the early 1950s by mathematicians Dalke and Helmer to forecast future developments (Skulmoski, Hartman, & Krahn, 2007). When conducting a Delphi study, researchers can use

quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods approaches (Hallowell & Gambatese, 2010; Skulmoski & Hartman, 2002). The Delphi technique was formulated as a group interaction process with the purpose of discussing and investigating issues such as goal setting, prediction of future events, or for studying policy (Hsu & Sandford, 2007). Amos and Pearse (2008) suggested that the Delphi technique is useful when there is disagreement on a subject or when knowledge is lacking regarding the nature of a problem. Additionally, Amos and Pearse noted that the Delphi technique is appropriate for forecasting future events, and when there is ambiguity about the elements that should be considered for the solution of a problem. This was evident in the current study. The EC field is not regulated and, as noted in chapter two, there is ambiguity among stakeholders. The Delphi technique was instrumental in reducing the ambiguity in EC. Consensus was achieved among executive coaches regarding essential competencies for enhancing executive on-the-job performance.

Dalkey and Helmer (1951) proposed three sources of forecasting: knowledge, opinion, and speculation. They further argued that knowledge is founded on strong evidence, that speculation is void of evidence, and that opinion may be supported by some evidence. Additionally, they argued that when knowledge is lacking the Delphi method can be used to forecast current or future events by relying upon the opinions of experts in a particular field (Adler & Ziglio, 1996; Dalkey & Helmer, 1951; Delbeq et al., 1975; Fischer, 1978). The basic characteristics of the Delphi method are anonymity of participants, controlled feedback, iterations, and statistical group response (Fischer, 1978; Skulmoski et al., 2007).

The Classical Delphi Technique

The classical or conventional Delphi method is an iterative process that begins with an open-ended question that is distributed to participants on a panel of experts (Donohoe & Needham, 2009). In turn, participants respond to the researcher by providing their opinion about one or several aspects of the open-ended question. The responses that the researcher receives from the panel are used by the researcher to generate a questionnaire. The questionnaire is later distributed to the panel of experts in an iterative process. The experts respond to the questionnaire and they could provide additional comments. The researcher receives responses and comments from the panel and compiles and analyses the data.

The compiled and analyzed information is sent to the panel of experts. Upon reviewing the compiled and analyzed information the experts can choose to revise or maintain their initial position or rating on questionnaire items. The process described above is repeated several times until consensus among panel members is achieved. Once the iterative process is completed, a final data analysis is conducted. Based the results of the data analysis, the researcher can draw inferences or generalizations (Skulmoski et al., 2007).

The Modified Delphi Technique

Some researchers recommended using a modified Delphi Technique if essential information is available (Fischer, 1978; Linstone & Turoff, 1975). Ludwig (1994) used a

modified Delphi method where the researcher designed the first-round statements based on a thorough review of the literature in conjunction with input from experts on the topic. Linstone and Turoff (1975) and Kerlinger (1973) explained that, with the modified Delphi approach, a structured survey developed by the researcher and refined by a small panel of experts may be used during the first round in lieu of the open-ended questionnaire used with the classical Delphi technique. The use of a structured instrument during the first round is what, in this study, differentiated a modified Delphi from the classical Delphi. Linstone and Turoff (1975) noted that by using a modified Delphi approach, researchers can reduce the expense and time associated with using an open-ended questionnaire during the first round. With the modified Delphi technique, the researcher collects information from a purposive sample of experts/panel of experts from various locations. A group may provide more reliable information than an individual when appropriate group process procedures are followed (Bell, 1997; Ziglio, 1996). I chose to use the modified Delphi technique for this study.

Benefits of the Delphi Technique

There are benefits and liabilities associated with the Delphi research approach. One benefit of this approach is that the Delphi technique is simple to use when compared to other research approaches (Yousuf, 2007). Yousuf noted that advanced statistical skills are not necessary for designing, implementing, and analyzing a Delphi study, and asserted that the anonymity of experts participating in a Delphi study provides confidentiality, thereby overcoming many barriers of communication. Some communication barriers may be resolved when using the Delphi technique, including a

reluctance of panelists to state unpopular views, panelists' concerns about disagreeing with associates, and panelists' willingness to change previously stated opinions (Yousuf, 2007).

One of the most significant benefits of the Delphi technique is the high level of participant motivation (Sandrey, 2008). Sandrey noted that, when a Delphi study is properly conducted, participants develop a sense of personal ownership in the process. In addition, participants assume responsibility for the solution of a particular problem. This sense of ownership, Sandrey argued, leads to a more effective and efficient resolution of the question that prompted the study. Furthermore, Sandrey listed additional benefits of using the Delphi method:

> Improvement in the accuracy of the decision-making process due to the use of controlled-feedback and anonymity; elimination of the geographical and logistical impediments inherent to face-to-face group meetings; establishment of consensus based on the group's systematic evaluation, reflection, and reevaluation of the pertinent issues, and statistical description of the group responses (p. 136).

Hollowel and Gambatese (1998) noted that the Delphi research approach is beneficial when objective data is not available or when there is a lack of scientific evidence to support the use of conventional research methods. Additionally, Hollowel and Gambatese found that the Delphi technique is a good alternative when conducting an experimental study would violate the rules of research ethics, or when said study would be unrealistic. This was not the case with my study, however, the limited number of empirical studies in

EC made it necessary to conduct a Delphi study, instead of implementing traditional quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods research designs.

Liabilities of the Delphi Technique

Despite its many benefits, the Delphi method also has disadvantages. During the iterative feedback process, the researcher is heavily involved gathering and processing information, and analyzing data. In the process of communicating with panelists, the researcher could unduly influence participant responses, by virtue of the feedback given to participants (Donohoe & Needham, 2009; Sandrey, 2008; Skulmoski et al., 2007). The time commitments required of participants in the Delphi multifeedback process can result in low participant response rates (Hsu & Sandford, 2007). Also, gathering and processing information during the iterative and sequential feedback process requires significant time commitment on the part of the researcher (Bowles, 1999; Sandrey, 2008; Skulmoski et al., 2007). Hsu and Sandford noted that if a significant number of participants choose not to respond, the quality of the data gathered could be suspected, and results of the study could be scrutinized by stakeholders, because there would be fewer data points to rely upon when doing the analysis, and the research on Delphi studies showed that results are more reliable when the panel of experts consists of 12 to 20 participants. Moreover, Hsu and Sandford argued that one of the greatest disadvantages of the Delphi process is the pressure on individual participants to conform to group ratings.

Rationale for Using the Delphi Technique

The literature review conducted in Chapter 2 and the description of the Delphi technique given above provide ample rationale for using the modified Delphi technique

to investigate my research question. The literature review showed that there is a shortage of empirical studies in EC. Also, there is no widely accepted regulating body for EC that could forge a consensus on competencies for effective EC. Furthermore, there is limited scientific evidence to substantiate the effectiveness of EC.

These gaps in the EC literature can cause significant problems if a researcher attempts to investigate EC using conventional quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods approaches. This is because conventional research has relied on grounded theory, which, based on the literature review, is insufficient in the EC field. I chose to use the Delphi technique because it has been used effectively for forecasting purposes. Also, the Delphi technique was designed for investigating challenges where there is not enough knowledge to draw a conclusion or where a consensus is sought. The literature review conducted in Chapter 2 showed that this is the case with EC.

Population and Sampling

Sample Selection

When implementing the Delphi technique, it is crucial to identify qualifications criteria for selecting experts who will participate in the study (Hsu & Sandford, 2007; Jones & Twiss, 1978). The Delphi technique requires a purposive sampling approach for selecting participants. The results of the study were based on the consensus of these expert participants (Sandrey, 2008; Skulmoski et al., 2007). A desirable selection option is to nominate, from the targeted population, individuals who are well-known and respected in the field (Hallowell & Gambatese, 2010; Linstone & Turoff, 1975; Sandrey, 2008).

This study relied on two panels of experts selected by the researcher purposively. One panel of four experts used to validate the initial competencies instrument containing the researcher-generated competency items. A second panel of 17 subject matter experts participated in the three-round iterative process. The numbers of participants that I used in this study are consistent with recommendations in the literature presented above in this section. When selecting the four-member and the 20-member panels of experts I used the following criteria: a) knowledge of and experience in EC, b) the ability to remain objective, c) a high level of interest in the advancement of EC research, and d) at least three years of experience practicing EC or purchasing EC services.

Selection Criteria for the Panel of Four Experts

The panel of four members that were used to validate the competencies instrument was selected from the membership list of the Society for Industrial Organizational Psychology, Inc (SIOP) and from the International Coaches Federation (ICF). The members of this panel of four were considered for participation on the panel of 17 members (described below) if they desire. A letter of participation from SIOP was not necessary for this study because SIOP was not involved with the study in any way, and I communicated with participants directly. Also, on their website, SIOP stated that individuals on their member list can be solicited to participate in research studies. To ensure that participants met the criteria listed above, potential panelists had to:

1. Have completed training in executive coaching and obtained executive coaching credentialing.

2. Commit to remain objective for the duration of the study.

3. Be highly interested in executive coaching and desire to contribute to the advancement of research in the executive coaching field.

4. Have been practicing executive coaching or purchasing executive coaching services for three years or more.

Prospective participants were selected from the SIOP membership list based on information in their professional profile. If the prospective participant's profile listed coaching as an interest, they were selected to receive an invitation to participate in the study. Prospective experts were selected from the ICF based on their membership in the ICF and based on residency in the United States. It is reasonable to believe that membership in a coaching federation reflect a likelihood that an individual has high interest in coaching.

Prospective participants were screened for U.S. residency. The membership lists in both SIOP and ICF websites allowed for this type of categorization and other screening. Potential participants were selected from the ICF membership list in alphabetic order as their names appeared in the membership list. Figure 1 below shows the procedure that I followed when selecting participants for the four-member panel.
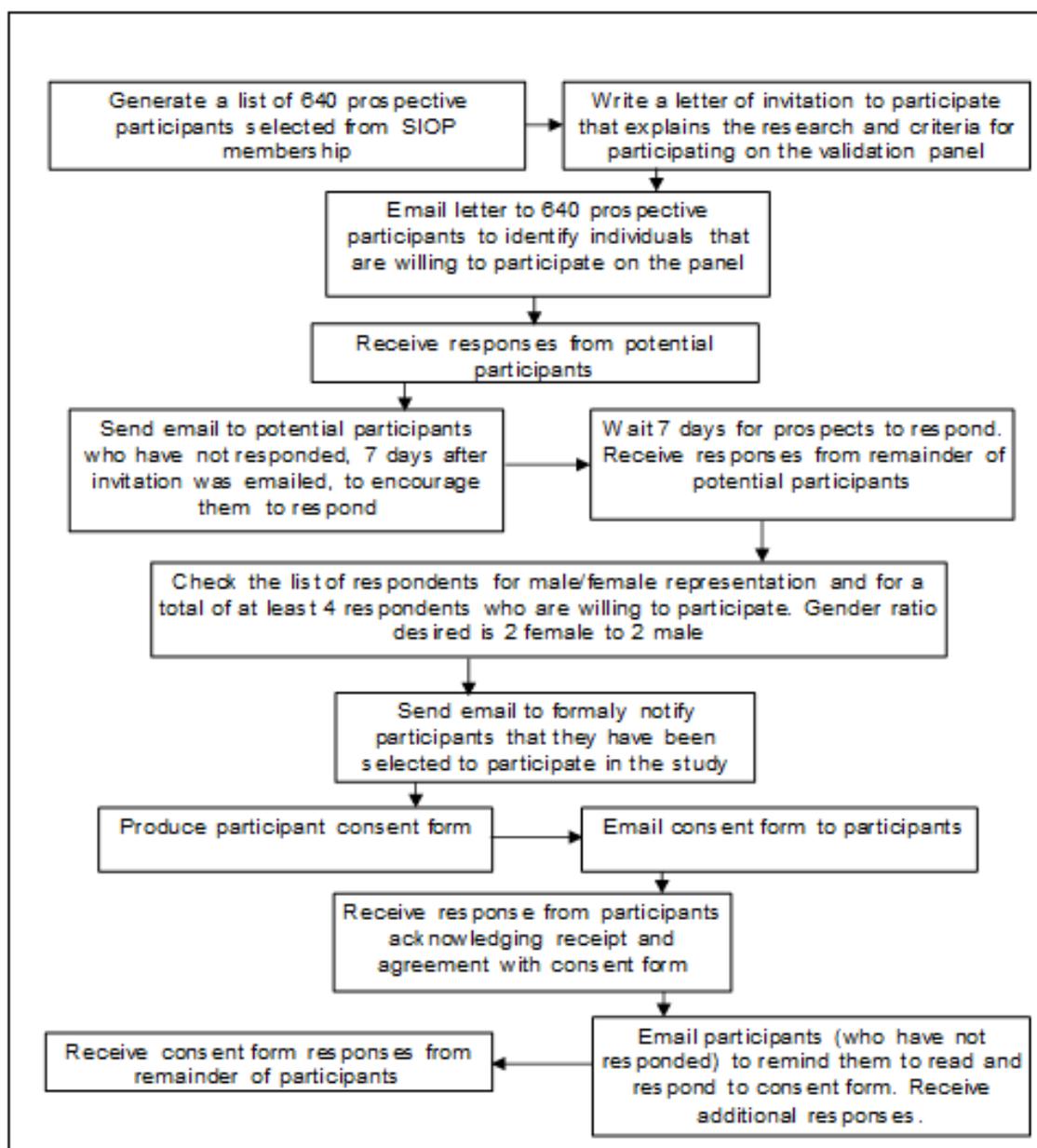
Figure 1. A flowchart showing the participant selection process to select a four-member panel.

I emailed a letter to 640 potential participants. The letter invited individuals to participate on the panel of experts. The letter conveyed the following information: purpose of participation, a summary of the modified Delphi technique, participation

criteria, time commitment required, why the invitee was nominated, and how vital it is for the individual to participate in the study. I waited for seven days for responses from the 640 potential participants. After seven days, I sent an email to emphasize the purpose of the Delphi study and to help potential participants grasp the importance of their participation.

Selection of Participants for Multiround Delphi Study

For the multiround iterative stage of this modified Delphi study, I contacted 1,380 members from the membership list of the ICF. As mentioned above, a letter of participation from ICF was not necessary for this study because ICF was not involved with the study in any way, and I communicated with participants directly. To ensure that participants met the criteria listed above, potential panelists had to:

1. Have completed training in executive coaching and obtained executive coaching credentialing.

2. Commit to remain objective for the duration of the study.

3. Be highly interested in EC and desire to contribute to the advancement of research in the EC field.

4. Have been practicing EC or purchasing EC services for three years or more.

Figure 2 below shows the process that was followed when selecting participants for the multiround Delphi study.
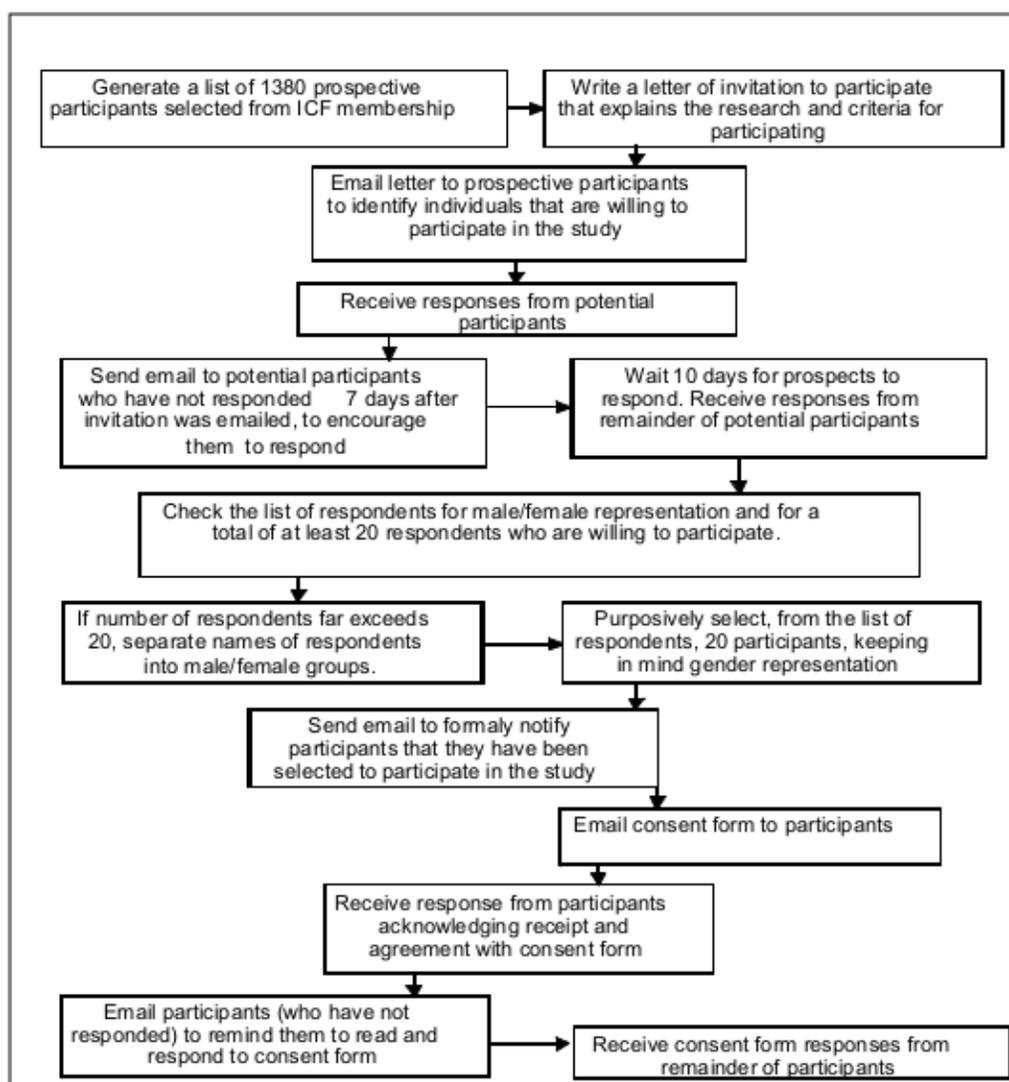
Figure 2. A flowchart showing the participant selection process to select a 20-member panel.

I emailed a letter to the 1,380 potential participants. The letter invited individuals

to participate on the panel of experts. The letter conveyed the following information:

purpose of the study, a summary of the modified Delphi technique, participation criteria,

time commitment required, why the invitee was nominated, and how vital it was for the

individual to participate in the study. I waited for seven days for responses from the 1,380

potential participants. After seven days, I sent an email to emphasize the purpose of the modified Delphi study and to help potential participants grasp the importance of participation. In the unlikely event that the desired number of participants is not achieved through email communication, researchers (Altschuld, 1993; Altschuld, et al., 1992; Delbecq et al., 1975) recommended contacting potential participants by telephone. A total of 24 executive coaches agreed to participate in the study. Therefore, for this stage of the study, there was no need to resort to phone calls. I communicated with participants only via email.

In summary, the study used two panels of experts. One panel of three experts was used to validate the initial competencies instrument containing the researcher-generated competency items. A second panel of 24 subject matter experts participated in the three-round iterative Delphi study.

Sample Size

I chose to use a panel of 24 executive experts for this study. This number of participants is consistent with samples recommended in the literature for the Delphi research method. Regarding the number of experts who will participate in a Delphi study, some researchers noted that a panel of at least seven to 10 participants is necessary (Donohoe & Needham, 2009; Linstone & Turloff, 1975). On the other hand, Rowe and Wright (1999) found that, in peer-reviewed studies, the panel size in Delphi studies varied from three participants to 80 participants. Delbecq, Van de Ven, & Gustafson (1975) recommended that the size of the panel that will participate in a three-round Delphi study be in the range of 15 to 20 subject matter experts. Delbecq, Van de Ven, &

Gustafson reasoned that, usually, consensus is achievable with 15 to 20 experts. They

further reasoned that a larger panel of subject matter experts is likely to generate an

unmanageable number of data, resulting in an unnecessarily tedious data categorization

and analysis process.

Hallowell and Gambatese (2010) recommended that researchers keep in mind that

it is common for some panel members to stop participating before the Delphi study is

completed, which was the case in our study. Hence, starting the study with a small

number of panelists could result in an even smaller sample size by the time the study is

concluded, which could produce insufficient or unreliable data. Skulmoski, Hartman, and

Krahn (DATE) suggested that a larger sample size (number of panelist) could give more

credence to the results of a Delphi study. However, some studies (e.g., Brockhoff, 1975;

Murnighan, 1982) found no correlation between the number of panel member and the

effectiveness of the Delphi studies reviewed. Also, Hsu and Sandford (2007) noted that

using a large number of participants in a Delphi study could produce low participant

response rates, and conducting the study will likely require large blocks of time and

greater resources. In this study, I began with 24 executive coaches. Five participants

chose not to continue after the first round, and two participants chose to drop out at the

end of the second round.

Ethical Protection of Participants

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Walden University ensures that research

is conducted in accordance with the university's standards of ethics and ensures that

federal regulations are followed (Walden University, 2013). I secured approval from the

IRB at Walden University before conducting this research (IRB approval #:10-14-14-0110408, expiration October 13, 2015)). I believe that the anonymity of participants in this study was protected because participants were only asked to provide expert opinion and demographic information. Participant identity was not revealed in the study. Great effort was taken to remove all personally identifiable information from correspondence sent to the panel of experts. Email addresses were hidden for all group email communications. I did abide by the American Psychological Association code of ethics (APA, 2013) regarding research.

Number of Delphi Rounds

In accordance with Linstone and Turoff (1975), three rounds are typically sufficient to attain stability in participant responses. Furthermore, Linstone and Turoff noted that additional rounds tended to show very little change, and excessive repetitions were unacceptable to participants. Other researchers have reported that three iterations are usually sufficient to gather enough data and to reach consensus (Brooks, 1979; Custer, Scarcella, & Stewart, 1999; Cyphert & Gant, 1971; Ludwig, 1997; Ludwig, 1994). However, Hsu and Sandford (2007) stated that sometimes a fourth round is sometimes necessary in order to achieve consensus among participants. Additionally, Delbecq, Van de Ven, and Gustafson (1975), and Ludwig (1994) noted that the number of iterations in a Delphi study can range from three to five rounds depending on the level of consensus sought by the researcher. For this study, I engaged participants in the iterative process for three rounds.

Data Analysis

When tabulating responses from questionnaires in a quantitative Delphi Study, researchers recommend that the mean or median be adopted as the "score" (Ulschak, 1983). The median of individual responses has been found to be most valuable when tabulating the score for questionnaires used in Delphi Studies (Dalkey, 1967). Additionally, Hsu and Sandford (2007) noted that the main statistic implemented in Delphi studies are concerned with measures of central tendency, such as the mean, median, and mode. Furthermore, Hsu and Sandford noted that levels of dispersion such as standard deviation and inter-quartile range may be used as well to communicate information about the collective opinion of respondents.

In this study, I chose to use the mean and *SD* of responses I received from participants as a determinant of consensus among participants. This information was sent to participants in subsequent rounds together with a list of participant comments gathered during the previous round. Participants re-considered their rating of competencies in light of the list of comments submitted by their peers. Also, they considered the means and *SD* of scores assigned to competencies by the collective group of participants. Equipped with this information, each participant could re-think and adjust his or her response in the next round. This process contributed to the attainment of consensus among panel members on competencies that may be essential for effective EC.

To determine consensus among participants on a topic in a Delphi Study, a researcher may rely on the percentage of participant votes that fall within a predetermined range (Miller, 2006; Sandrey, 2008; Schiebe et al., 1975). Ulschak (1983)

proposed that researchers consider consensus to be attained when 80% of participant responses fall within two categories on a seven -point scale. Donohoe and Needham (2009) reported that 60% agreement among participants is deemed a sufficient measure of consensus. Other researchers (Green, 1982; Miller, 2006; Rath & Stoyanoff, 1983) considered that consensus was attained when 60-80% of participants agreed. However, there is no accord among researchers regarding the percentage of participant agreement necessary to determine consensus among experts on the panel (Sandrey, 2008).

Skulmoski, Hartman, and Krahn (2007) noted that generalization of results from a Delphi study should be handled with caution. That is because the results of a Delphi study are based on expert opinion, which is subjective. For example, replicating a Delphi study using a different panel of experts could produce results that differ from the original study. This is because expert opinion can vary from one expert panel to another. However, Dalkey (1969) argued that it is highly likely for two panels of experts, with similar expertise, to concur when addressing the same subject matter. In this study, I determined that a consensus among panelists was reached when the mean of participant scores of a given competency on the instrument was 4.0 or higher.

Instrument Design and Development

I developed an instrument that consisted of 39 competency items. The instrument that I used in the study was designed and administered in Survey Monkey™. This approach allowed me to streamline the distribution of the instrument to participants and statistical calculations. When developing the Likert scale competency items I was informed and guided by the thorough literature review completed in Chapter 2.

Participants responded to items on the instrument using a Likert type scale. The ratings on the scale ranged from 1 to 5, where *1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree*. Figure 3 below illustrates the process used when developing and validating the competencies instrument.

```
  ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
  │  Develop preliminary instrument based on literature │
  │              review in Chapter 2                   │
  └──────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                        │
                        ▼
┌──────────────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────────────┐
│   Select panel of 4 members │───▶│  Send instrument to 4-member │
│   who will validate instrument │    │     panel for validation   │
└──────────────────────────┘      └──────────────────────────┘
                                              │
                                              ▼
                          ┌──────────────────────────┐
                          │   Revise instrument based on │
                          │     feedback from panel    │
                          └──────────────────────────┘
```
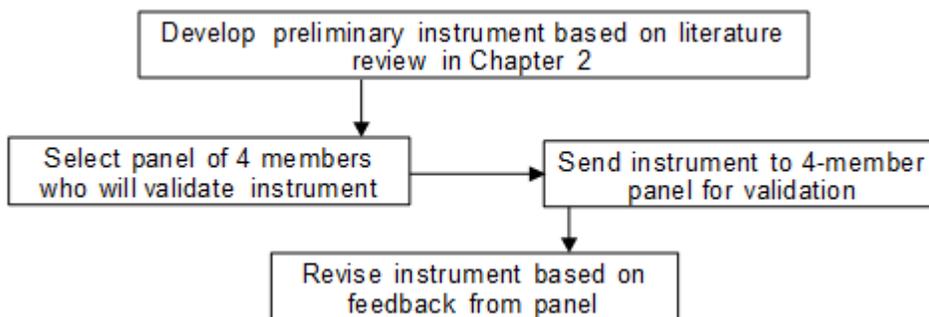
Figure 3. A flowchart showing the instrument development process.

Participants were also encouraged to provide brief (100 characters maximum) rationales for the way they rated each competency. These brief comments were compiled and sent to participants in subsequent rounds. Participants who wrote the comment were not identified. This was intended to reduce the possibility of any participant having undue influence on the panel, and to encourage participants to share their opinions freely. Participants referred to these brief comments, together with the overall means and SD of participant ratings of competencies when deciding how to rate the competencies during the following rounds.

As noted previously, the competencies instrument was generated based on the literature review conducted in Chapter 2. I initially intended for competencies to be modified or eliminated based on the consensus of the panel of four experts who were responsible for validating the competencies instrument. However, during the instrument

development stage, participants completed only the first round (or iteration of the

competencies instrument) in the validation process and, despite repeated efforts to

encourage them to complete the process three participants chose not to participate any

further. Consequently, I used the entire original competencies instrument for the

multiround Delphi stage.

The items contained in the competencies instrument reflected several areas of

knowledge, skill, and experience that were reported in the literature review as being

potentially important for effective EC. Among the subject areas reflected in the

competencies instrument were psychology, business and management, leadership,

education, and EC certification. In the following subsections, I will, briefly, show items

in the instrument that were associated to the psychology, business and management,

leadership, education, and EC certification subject areas. I will also provide some of the

research cited in Chapter 2 that support the inclusion of items in the instrument.

Psychology Items in the Instrument

As reported in Chapter 2, the field of psychology has influenced EC significantly.

Researchers (Berglas, 2002; Brotman, Liberi, & Wasylyshyn, 1998; Dean and Meyer,

2002; Feldman, 2001; Kilburg, 2000; Stern, 2009; The Executive Coaching Forum, 2012)

have argued that training in psychology is essential for effective executive coaching.

There are 13 psychology-related items (1, 15, 19, 21, 22, 28, 29, 30, 31, 35, 36, 38, 39) in

the competencies instrument.

There are a few reasons for including psychology items in the instrument. Item

one, *formal training in psychology,* was included in the instrument to reflect the influence

of Industrial Organizational Psychology on the early development of EC. *Informed*

consent, item 15 on the instrument, is a key intake element of psychology and other

service fields, which is noted in the literature as necessary for EC. Item 19,

understanding of psychological theories, is relevant for the instrument because EC

implements elements of many psychological theories. *Knowledge of personality theories,*

item 21, is included in the instrument because of the important role of personality in

leadership and EC. It is evident that motivation plays a key role in leadership, and has

been studied extensively in psychology, hence the inclusion of *ability to apply models of*

human motivation in the instrument.

Business and Management Items in the Instrument

A number of researchers (Berman and Bradt, 2006; Bono, Purvanova, Towler,

and Peterson, 2009; Foxhall, 2002; Maher, and Pomerantz, 2003; The Executive

Coaching Forum, 2012) have indicated that knowledge in business and management is

essential for effective EC. There are six business and management-related items (2, 4, 7,

12, 14, 33, 34, 37) listed in the competencies instrument. The literature review revealed

that goal setting is a crucial element in EC. That is my rationale for including item 12,

knowledge of goal setting strategies, in the instrument. *Ability to conduct 360-degree*

review, item 33, was included in the instrument because it was reported in the literature

review as an essential tool in EC.

Leadership Items in the Instrument

The leadership field was also reported in the literature review of Chapter 2 as

being foundational for EC. In fact, EC is considered by some researchers as a leadership

development approach (Bresser, 2009; Gray, 2006; Joo, 2005; Maher, & Pomerantz, 2003; Smith, & Sandstrom, 1999). Also, as noted in Chapter 2, many approaches to EC are based on leadership theories. There is only one item (item 10), *understanding of leadership theories,* in the instrument that, specifically, addresses the leadership component of the instrument.

Education Items in the Instrument

There are four items (6, 24, 23, and 25) in the competencies instrument which address the importance of research in education for EC. There are a number of scholarly works in the field of education and adult learning that are beneficial for executive coaching (Gray, 2006; Freiberg, 1994; Rogers & Freiberg, 1994; Taylor, 2001; Taylor, 1997). For instance, item 6, understanding of the Socratic teaching method, is included in the instrument because EC uses this method extensively.

Executive Coaching Certification Items in the Instrument

Multiple authors have argued for a standardized training of executive coaches (Bennett, 2006; Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001; Ridler & Co., 2008; Wasylyshyn, Gronsky, & Haas, 2004). These scholars also noted that coaching certification is often one of the criteria that purchasers of EC look for when choosing an executive coach. The competencies instrument contains eight items (3, 2, 8, 9, 10, 16, 18, 33) related to EC training and certification. The instrument was implemented in the instrument development stage and the multiround stage of this study.

Data Collection: The Delphi Iterative Process

I collected data from two panels of participants. Initially, I received feedback from the panel of four subject matter experts during the first round of the instrument development phase. Subsequently, I collected data from a panel of 24 experts when I directed the multiround iterative Delphi process. During Delphi Round 1, I emailed the list of competencies to each member of the panel of 24 EC experts. I instructed participants to indicate whether the competency is essential for effective EC by expressing their level of agreement or disagreement for each competency in the Likert scale area of the instrument.

Participants indicated their rating regarding each item's importance for effective EC. Executives rated each competency using a five point Likert-type scale: *1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree*. During Delphi Round 1 only, participants were encouraged to suggest competencies they believed should be added to the instrument. However, only one participant submitted a competency (listening). Upon completion of the first round the competencies ratings and comments were emailed to participants. If 70% of participants supported the newly submitted competency it would be added to the competencies instrument during the second round. The suggested competency (listening) did not meet the criteria, and was therefore not added to the instrument.

Participants also provided brief (100 characters maximum) rationales for the way they rated each competency. Participants were given two weeks to complete the

competencies instrument. During the two-week period allotted for participants to submit the completed competencies instrument, I sent three email reminders to participants.

I developed the Delphi Round 2 instrument based on responses received from participants during Delphi Round 1. Competencies that achieved consensus during Delphi Round 1 (mean of scores = of 4.0) appeared on the Delphi Round 2 instrument with the word "consensus" written next to the competency. Two portable document files (PDF) were produced using data gathered from the Delphi Round 1 competencies. The first PDF contained comments submitted by participants during Delphi Round 1. The second PDF consisted of the list of competencies together with means and *SD* of scores of each competency, submitted by participants during Delphi Round 1. The two PDF documents and a web ink to the Delphi Round 2 competencies were sent to the panel of experts.

During Delphi Round 2, participants were instructed to consider comments made by other EC experts in Delphi Round 1. Participants were also asked to consider the PDF document listing the means and *SD* calculated from data collected during Delphi Round 1. They were also instructed to re-think the ratings they assigned to competencies that did not reach consensus during Delphi Round 1, then complete the Delphi Round 2 competencies. Participants were also encouraged to provide brief (100 characters maximum) rationales for the way they rated each competency on the Delphi Two competencies. Participants were given two weeks to complete the Delphi Round 2 competencies. During the two-week period allotted for participants to complete the Delphi Round 2 competencies I sent three email reminders to participants.

I developed the Delphi Round 3 instrument based on responses received from participants during Delphi Round 2. Competencies that achieved consensus during Delphi Round 2 (mean of scores = of 4.0) would have appeared on the Delphi Round 3 instrument with the word "consensus" written next to the competency. However, there were no competencies that achieved consensus during Delphi Round 2. Two portable document files (PDF) were produced using data gathered from the Delphi Round 2 competencies. The first PDF contained comments submitted by participants during Delphi Round 2. The second PDF consisted of the list of competencies together with means and *SD* of scores of each competency, submitted by participants during Delphi Round 2. The two PDF documents and a web link to the Delphi Round 3 competencies were sent to the panel of experts.

During Delphi Round 3, participants were instructed to consider comments made by other EC experts in Round 2. Participants were also asked to consider the PDF document listing the means and *SD* calculated from data collected during Delphi Round 2. They were also instructed to re-think the ratings they assigned to competencies that did not reach consensus during Delphi Round 2, then complete the Delphi Round 3 competencies. Participants were also encouraged to provide brief (100 characters maximum) rationales for the way they rated each competency on the Delphi Round 3 competencies. Participants were given two weeks to complete the Delphi Round 3 competencies. During the two-week period allotted for participants to complete the Delphi Round 3 competencies I sent three email reminders to participants. As part of the

research exit process, a two-page summary of the research results was sent to

participants. The Delphi multiround process is illustrated in Figure 4 below.
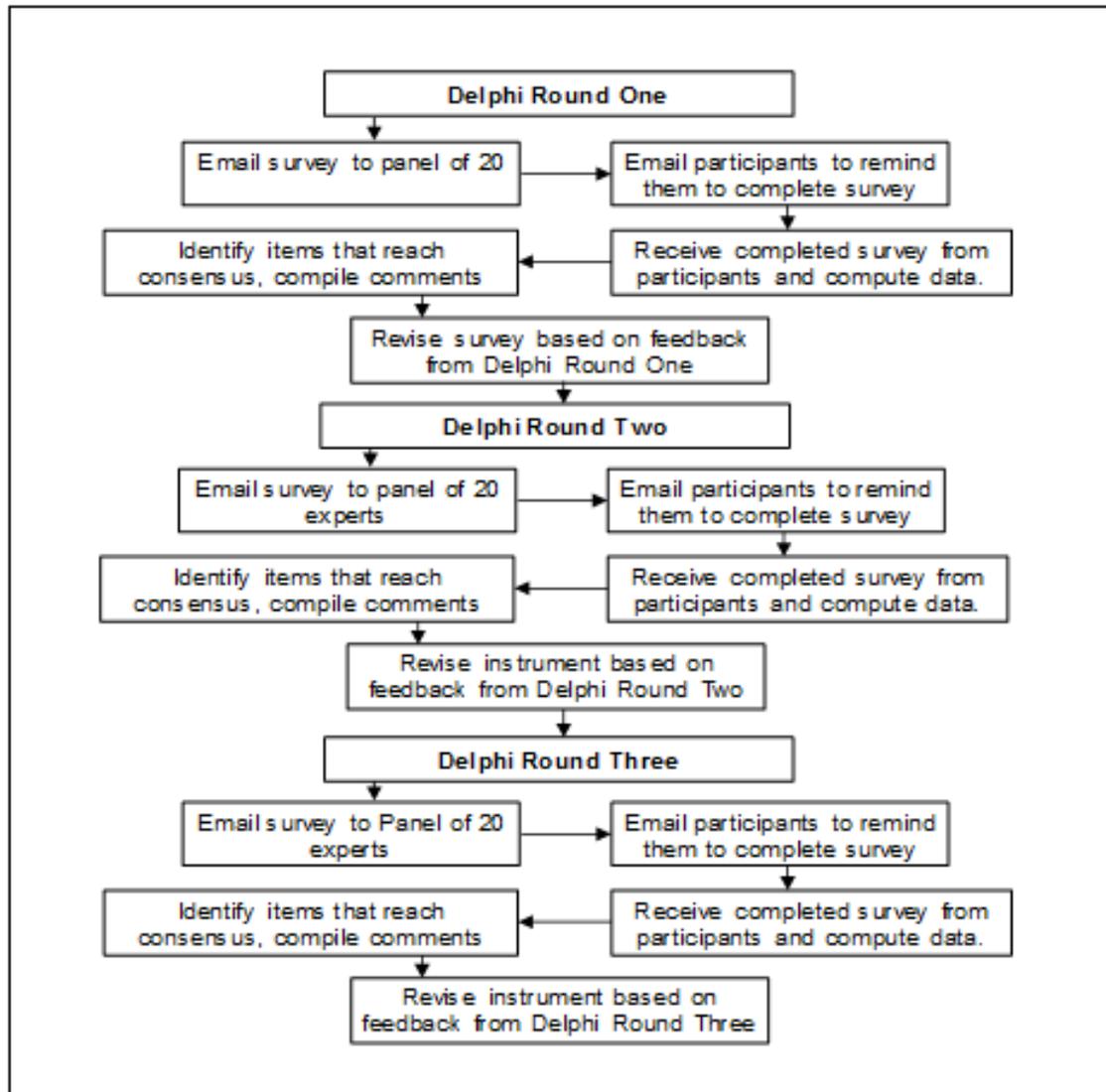
Figure 4. A flowchart showing the Delphi multiround process.

Validity

      The most common approach used with Delphi research to increase the validity of

items in a survey is to pilot test the instrument during the first round of a study (Clibbens,

Walters, & Baird, 2012). Content and face validity of items in the competency instrument

will be achieved by requesting a panel of four subject matter experts (considered to be

knowledgeable about executive coaching) to evaluate the instrument. The panel reviewed

the instrument for clarity, relevance, and content. The panel also provided feedback for

improving the list of competencies. Neither construct validity nor criterion related

validity is necessary with the Delphi Technique. Construct and criterion-related validity

are not concerned with the predictive relationship of items to external criterion (Ary,

Jacobs & Razavieh, 1996).

Reliability

Reliability is defined as the degree to which scores obtained with an instrument

are consistent measures of whatever the instrument is measuring. This measure of

internal consistency cannot be determined using conventional means in Delphi studies

(Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). The Delphi technique assumes that responses will change

with each round as the panel moves towards consensus. Also, the instrument was

modified in each round. When establishing reliability in studies where expert opinion is

used, Dalkey (1969) stated:

> For the analyst using expert opinion within a study, reliability can be considered
>
> to play somewhat the same role as reproducibility in experimental investigations.
>
> It is clearly desirable for a study that another analyst using the same approach
>
> (and different experts) arrive at similar results.... In general, one would expect in
>
> that area of opinion, group responses would be more reliable than individual
>
> opinions, in the simple sense that two groups (of equally competent experts)

would be more likely to evidence similar answers to a set of related questions than would two individuals. This "similarity" can be measured by the correlation between the answers of the two groups over a set of questions (p. 6).

Data Analysis

Once the Delphi Round 1 competencies instrument was completed, I collected the data and feedback from participants and produced a table containing the means and SDs of competency scores submitted by EC experts during Delphi Round 1. The means and SD calculations were produced in Survey Monkey™, a web based survey design software. I created a second PDF Document containing the feedback comments submitted by EC experts during Delphi Round 1. These two PDF documents were emailed to the panel of EC experts, together with the Delphi Round 2 competencies.

Once the Delphi Round 2 competencies instrument was completed, I collected the data and feedback from participants and produced a table containing the means and SD of competency scores submitted by EC experts during Delphi Round 2. The means and SD calculations were produced in Survey Monkey™. I created a second PDF Document containing the feedback comments submitted by EC experts during Delphi Round 2. These two PDF documents were emailed to the panel of EC experts, together with the Delphi Round 3 competencies.

Once the Delphi Round 3 competencies instrument was completed, I collected the data and feedback from participants and produced a table containing the means and SD of competency scores submitted by EC experts during Delphi Round 3. The means and SD

calculations were produced in Survey Monkey™. I created a second PDF Document containing the feedback comments submitted by EC experts during Delphi Round 3.

The statistical data compiled from all three Delphi rounds were analyzed to identify patterns and possible inferences that may be drawn regarding essential competencies for effective EC. Additionally the feedback comments submitted by EC experts during all three Delphi rounds were studied for insight into the reasoning patterns and motivations of the EC experts that served as catalysts for the way competencies were scored. These data analysis findings served to support inferences drawn and recommendations made, and to support suggestions for additional research studies.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to identify competencies that executive coaches should have in order to enhance executive on-the-job performance. Chapter 3 provides a blueprint for conducting the study, including the research question and detailed descriptions of methods followed when conducting the research. Institutional research approval and ethical treatment of participants were addressed. I discussed population, sampling, selection process, and data collection and analysis procedures. I also provided rationale for choosing the modified Delphi research method; and I discussed advantages and liabilities associated with the Delphi technique. Furthermore, I described the main competencies instrument that was used to collect data and other information from participants, and I explained instrument development attempts. Finally, I discussed criteria followed when analyzing the data collected from participants. In the following chapter, Chapter 4, I present the results of the study.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

This chapter presents statistical and other competencies-related data gathered during the modified Delphi study. This research was designed to identify executive coaching competencies that may be essential for effective on-the-job performance of executives. The specific research question I sought to answer with this study was: What executive coaching competencies are essential for enhancing executive on-the-job performance? In order to answer the research question, I used a modified Delphi research design to collect the opinions of executive coaching (EC) experts. The main avenue toward achieving the goals of the modified Delphi study was to develop consensus among members of a panel of experts regarding EC competencies that may be essential for enhancing executive on-the-job performance. I developed a competencies instrument that was validated by a panel of four executive professionals. The competencies instrument was used to gather response data from two panels of EC experts.

The results presented in this chapter derived from the statistical analyses of responses submitted by EC experts. Participants also submitted short written statements as rationale for the rating they assigned to competencies on the instrument. The research study involved EC experts grouped into two panels. A panel consisting of four EC experts was used to develop the competencies instrument. The competencies instrument was later implemented with a second panel of 17 EC experts who participated in the Delphi multiround study. Participants on both panels were chosen based on the selection criteria stipulated in Chapter 3. This chapter presents the results of the study and is

organized in three main sections: Instrument Development, Delphi multiround Study, and Chapter Summary.

Instrument Development

Selection of the Panel of Experts

The participant selection process for the instrument development phase consisted of selecting a purposive sample of prospective EC experts from the membership list of the Society of Industrial Organizational Psychology (SIOP), and from the membership list of the International Coach Federation (ICF). A recommended participant selection option is to nominate, from the targeted population, individuals who are well-known and respected in the field (Hallowell & Gambatese, 2010; Linstone & Turoff, 1975; Sandrey, 2008). Prospective participants were therefore selected from the SIOP membership list based on information in their professional profile. If the prospective participant's profile listed coaching as an interest, they were selected to receive an invitation to participate in the study. Prospective experts were selected from the ICF based on their membership in the ICF and based on residency in the United States. I assumed that membership in a coaching federation reflected a likelihood that an individual has high interest in coaching.

All prospective participants were prescreened for U.S. residency based on demographic information listed on the respective website. The membership lists in both SIOP and ICF websites allowed for this and other categorical screening. Prospective participants were selected from the ICF membership list in alphabetic order as their names appeared in the membership list.

Two invitation letters were emailed to a total of 640 potential participants. Of these participants, 440 were selected from SIOP and 200 from ICF (Appendix A; Appendix B). The invitation letters explained the study and criteria for participation. Approximately 80% of respondents were deemed ineligible to participate in the study because they did not have the required minimum 3 years of experience practicing EC or purchasing EC services. Of the prospective participants who responded to the email invitation, 12 said that they met the criteria for participating on the first panel for the instrument development stage of the study.

A research participation consent form (Appendix C) was emailed to the 12 potential participants. The consent form provided information such as the nature and duration of the study, criteria for participation, potential risks, possible rewards, and other pertinent information. Participants were instructed to read the consent form carefully and respond by email with the words "I Consent" in the subject line of the email. Four prospective participants agreed to participate in the study; three were from the Society for Industrial Organizational Psychology (SIOP), and one was from the International Coach Federation (ICF).

Instrument Development Process

A competencies instrument was developed in Microsoft® Word, informed by the literature review reported in Chapter 2 (see Appendix D). The competencies consisted of 39 competencies that were potentially essential for effective EC. Participants evaluated each competency using a five-choice Likert Scale process. The competencies instrument was designed and administered in Instrument Monkey™, a web-based survey design

software. A web link to the competencies instrument was emailed to the panel of four experts (Appendix E).

Participant demographic information from the instrument development phase was compiled. Three of the four experts were female and one was male. The experts' age ranged from 40 to 60 years or older. All EC experts reported residing in the USA and attaining graduate degrees. The four experts each reported having more than six years of experience practicing EC. Participants also reported having moderate to very high interest in the advancement of research in executive coaching. All competencies instrument respondents reported receiving training in coaching and two held coaching certification from a coaching federation. Experts' interest in the advancement of EC research ranged from moderate to very high.

Panel members were instructed to anonymously provide their expert opinion on whether competencies in the instrument were essential for effective EC. Panel members were also instructed to submit a short (100 characters maximum) comment, as their rationale for their evaluation of each competency. In addition, participants provided basic demographic information in the instrument. Three email reminders (Appendix F) were sent to participants over a period of two weeks to encourage the completion of the instrument.

Instrument Development Results

Competencies instrument results from the panel of four EC experts were compiled and statistical analyses were computed in Survey Monkey. Means and *SD* of responses were organized in a table format. A higher mean of scores reflects greater consensus

among participants, and, the lower the *SD*, the higher the level of agreement among the

panel of experts. Therefore, competencies with higher mean of scores and lower *SD* are

likely to be the most essential EC competencies for enhancing executive on-the-job

performance. The statistical analyses of competencies instrument responses from the

panel of four experts are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Statistical Result: Instrument Development

Competency	*M*	*SD*
1. Formal training in psychology	4.25	0.43
2. Business Experience	4.25	0.83
3. Professional coaching certification	3.25	1.30
4. Experience as a business executive	2.25	0.43
5. Working knowledge of coaching frameworks	3.50	0.87
6. Understanding of the Socratic teaching method	3.00	1.00
7. Experience in specific organizational/business areas	3.50	0.50
8. Self-confidence of the coach	3.25	1.30
9. Executive coaching experience	4.75	0.43
10. Knowledge of leadership theories	4.50	0.50
11. Good Interpersonal skills	4.50	0.87
12. Knowledge of goal setting strategies	4.00	0.00
13. Trustworthiness	4.75	0.43
14. Knowledge of organizational development	3.50	0.50
15. Adherence to informed consent	4.00	1.22
16. Adherence to code of ethics from a coaching federation	3.50	1.12
17. Experience in the facilitation of organizational change	3.00	0.71
18. Ability to quickly develop a good coach/client working alliance	4.50	0.87
19. Understanding of psychological theories	3.75	0.43

20. Demonstrable Return On Investment for cost of coaching service	3.75	0.43
21. Knowledge of personality theories	3.75	0.43
22. Ability to apply models of human motivation	4.00	0.00
23. Knowledge of adult development theories	3.75	0.83
24. Knowledge of adult learning theories	4.00	0.71
25. Knowledge of career development models	3.25	0.83
26. Understanding of models of behavioral change	4.75	0.43
27. Knowledge of work/life balance strategies	3.75	1.09
28. Stress management techniques	3.25	1.48
29. Understanding of how social factors impact individual behavior	3.25	0.83
30. Ability to identify clients who may need psychological intervention	3.50	0.50
31. Ability to apply models of emotional intelligence	4.25	0.83
32. Understanding of gender differences in adulthood	3.00	1.22
33. Ability to conduct 360-degree review	4.75	0.43
34. Experience facilitating strategic planning	2.50	0.87
35. Understanding of how clinical diagnoses (e.g. narcissism) can impact workplace dynamics	2.50	1.12
36. Ability to facilitate conflict resolution strategies	3.00	1.00
37. Working knowledge of Family systems theory	1.75	1.30
38. Working knowledge of abnormal psychology	1.75	0.83
39. Ability to administer and interpret psychological assessments (e.g., 16PF, Strong Interest Inventory, Firo B, etc.)	4.00	1.22

The statistical analysis showed that 15 competencies of the instrument reached consensus and 24 competencies did not reach consensus. Competencies were deemed to have reached consensus if the mean of responses was 4.0 or higher. This meant that, based on the criteria of this study, the four experts on the panel agreed that 15 of the competencies were essential for effective EC. The 15 competencies that reached consensus during the instrument development phase are listed in Table 2.

Table 2

Competences That Reached Consensus: Instrument Development

Competency	M	SD
1. Formal training in psychology	4.25	0.43
2. Business Experience	4.25	0.83
3. Executive coaching experience	4.75	0.43
4. Knowledge of leadership theories	4.50	0.50
5. Good Interpersonal skills	4.50	0.87
6. Knowledge of goal setting strategies	4.00	0.00
7. Trustworthiness	4.75	0.43
8. Adherence to informed consent	4.00	1.22
9. Ability to quickly develop a good coach/client working alliance	4.50	0.87
10. Ability to apply models of human motivation	4.00	0.00
11. Knowledge of adult learning theories	4.00	0.71
12. Understanding of models of behavioral change	4.75	0.43
13. Ability to apply models of emotional intelligence	4.25	0.83
14. Ability to conduct 360 degree review	4.75	0.43
15. Ability to administer and interpret psychological assessments (e.g., 16PF, Strong Interest Inventory, Firo B, etc.)	4.00	1.22

In addition to the Likert scale competencies responses, short written participant

comments (Appendix G) were collected on the instrument. Participants submitted

comments for 12 of the 40 competencies. Comments consisted of phrases such as *not relevant, I don't see this as coaching, absolutely critical for corporate work,* and *this is a growing need.* These short comments were meant to provide rationale for the expert's evaluation of competencies on the instrument. Participant comments were compiled in a PDF document based on the competency to which they referred.

After the experts completed the first round of the competencies instrument for the instrument development phase, five emails (Appendix H) were sent to participants to encourage them to participate in subsequent rounds but those efforts were unfruitful. Attempts were also made by telephone. The EC experts communicated that they were very busy. Two respondents said that the competencies instrument was too long, and one said that it was overwhelming to have to provide a short comment for each of the 39 competencies. In light of these reactions, the instrument development phase was based on a single completion of the competencies instrument by the panel of four experts. Since we were only able to complete one round of the competencies instrument during the instrument development phase, in my pursuit of greater accuracy, I opted to use the entire competencies instrument for the modified Delphi multiround study.

Modified Delphi Multiround Study

   Selection of the panel of experts: Delphi multiround study. Once the instrument development phase was completed, a panel of EC experts was formed to participate in the modified Delphi multiround study. All members of this second panel of experts were selected from the ICF. An email invitation (Appendix I) was sent to 1,380 prospective participants requesting their participation in the study. The email outlined the

criteria for participation, duration of the study, potential benefits and liabilities, and other pertinent information. Twenty executive coaches responded and acknowledged having the qualifications to meet the criteria for participating in the study. In their reply, they communicated interest in being members on the panel of experts.

An email (Appendix J) was sent to the 24 EC experts with a research consent form (Appendix K) attached to the email. The consent form informed potential participants of the nature and duration of the study, potential risks and benefits, IRB approval and contact information, and other relevant details. Recipients of the consent form were instructed to read the consent form carefully and to respond by email with the words "I Consent" in the subject line of the email. Emails with "I Consent" were received from 17 individuals. These individuals formed the panel of experts who participated in the iterative modified Delphi study.

The modified Delphi study consisted of gathering opinions from members of the panel of 17 EC experts, and to encourage consensus among these experts regarding competencies that are essential for executive coaching. Once the panel of experts was formed, the Modified Delphi multiround study began with an email inviting the experts to complete the online instrument.

Results: Modified Delphi Study Round 1

For the first round of the Delphi study an email (Appendix L) was sent to the 17 EC experts who returned the consent form. The email contained instructions for accessing and completing the competencies instrument in Survey Monkey. Once they accessed the competencies instrument, participants were asked to read carefully the

instructions for completing the instrument. In addition, participants were encouraged to write a brief rationale for their evaluation of each competency in the instrument. Participants were instructed to complete their rating of the competencies within a two-week period of time. Three email reminders (Appendix M) were sent to participants to encourage them to complete the instrument. At the end of the two-week period allotted for completing the Competencies, a final email reminder was sent to participants, informing them that the allotted time for rating the competencies was almost reached and the instrument would be closed shortly.

Once the competencies instrument was closed, participant responses were compiled. Statistical analyses were computed in Survey Monkey and the resulting means and standard deviations were organized in a table format. Participant-reported demographic information from the Delphi Round 1 competencies was compiled. Competencies instrument responses showed that 14 participants were female and three were male. The age of five experts ranged from 40 to 49, and another five experts ranged in age from 50 to 59. The remaining seven experts reported being 60 years of age or older. All participants reported residing in the USA. In terms of formal education, 12 experts reported attaining graduate degrees, four reported completing a bachelor degree, and one reported having completed some college courses but did not graduate. Regarding the ethnicity of participants, 13 reported being White, two reported being multiracial, and two reported being Latino or Hispanic.

Eleven participants reported having six or more years of experience in EC. Three participants reported four years of experience performing EC. Two experts reported

having three years of EC experience, and one reported having two years of EC experience. Fifteen experts reported having attained coaching certification and two reported not having coaching certification. Fifteen experts reported having completed coach training other than coach certification, and two experts reported having coaching certification, but not completing coach training outside of coaching certification. In terms of their interest in the advancement of research in EC, 10 participants reported having very high interest in the advancement of research in executive coaching, five reported having high interest in the advancement of research in EC, and two reported having moderate interest in the advancement of research in EC.

The means and standard deviations derived from Round 1 are presented below in Table 3. The data in Table 3 shows that, based on the criteria of a mean of 4.0 or higher, 17 competencies reached consensus and 22 did not reach consensus. Competencies that show a mean of 4.0 and higher and a lower *SD* are likely to be key indicators of greater agreement among the experts regarding essential EC proficiency. The mean and the *SD* are measures of central tendency. They are often used in Delphi studies to measure agreement among members of a group. The mean is an indicator of how high a majority of EC experts scored a particular competency. The standard deviation *SD*, which is a measure of how close respondent selections are to the mean, is a strong indicator of the level of consensus among raters on that competency.

Table 3

Statistical Results of Responses: Delphi Study Round

Competency	*M*	*SD*
1. Formal training in psychology	3.13	1.17
2. Business Experience	4.06	1.09
3. Professional coaching certification	4.56	0.86
4. Experience as a business executive	3.25	0.90
5. Working knowledge of coaching frameworks	4.50	0.61
6. Understanding of the Socratic teaching method	2.81	1.13
7. Experience in specific organizational/business areas	3.19	0.95
8. Self-confidence of the coach	4.63	0.60
9. Executive coaching experience	4.13	0.86
10. Knowledge of leadership theories	4.38	0.60
11. Good Interpersonal skills	4.63	0.78
12. Knowledge of goal setting strategies	4.31	0.85
13. Trustworthiness	5.00	0.00
14. Knowledge of organizational development	3.44	0.79
15. Adherence to informed consent	4.38	0.78
16. Adherence to code of ethics from a coaching federation	4.69	0.46
17. Experience in the facilitation of organizational change	3.38	1.11
18. Ability to quickly develop a good coach/client working alliance	4.63	0.60

19. Understanding of psychological theories	3.06	0.97
20. Demonstrable Return On Investment for cost of coaching service	3.44	0.79
21. Knowledge of personality theories	3.50	0.71
22. Ability to apply models of human motivation	3.63	0.86
23. Knowledge of adult development theories	4.00	0.71
24. Knowledge of adult learning theories	3.88	0.70
25. Knowledge of career development models	3.50	0.61
26. Understanding of models of behavioral change	3.81	0.63
27. Knowledge of work/life balance strategies	3.81	0.73
28. Stress management techniques	4.06	0.75
29. Understanding of how social factors impact individual behavior	3.88	0.70
30. Ability to identify clients who may need psychological intervention	4.31	1.16
31. Ability to apply models of emotional intelligence	4.50	0.61
32. Understanding of gender differences in adulthood	3.25	0.75
33. Ability to conduct 360-degree review	4.19	0.95
34. Experience facilitating strategic planning	3.44	1.27
35. Understanding of how clinical diagnoses (e.g. narcissism) can impact workplace dynamics	2.88	0.86
36. Ability to facilitate conflict resolution strategies	3.56	0.70
37. Working knowledge of Family systems theory	2.44	0.86
38. Working knowledge of abnormal psychology	2.38	0.93
39. Ability to administer and interpret psychological assessments (e.g., 16PF, Strong Interest Inventory, Firo B, etc.)	3.19	1.24

The statistical computation of competencies ratings for Delphi Round 1 was analyzed for consensus among participants. A mean of 4.0 or higher was the criterion for determining consensus among participants. Competencies with a mean of 4.0 or higher were labeled "consensus" in the document (Appendix N) containing the statistical analyses of Delphi Round 1. Competencies with a mean of 4.0 or higher (Table 4) were removed from the instrument. Those competencies had reached consensus and no longer needed to be evaluated by participants. The EC experts agreed, based on the criteria for consensus, that those competencies were essential for effective EC.

Table 4

Competencies That Reached Consensus: Delphi Study Round 1

Competency	*M*	*SD*
1. Business Experience	4.06	1.09
2. Professional coaching certification	4.56	0.86
3. Working knowledge of coaching frameworks	4.50	0.61
4. Self-confidence of the coach	4.63	0.60
5. Executive coaching experience	4.13	0.86
6. Knowledge of leadership theories	4.38	0.60
7. Good Interpersonal skills	4.63	0.78
8. Knowledge of goal setting strategies	4.31	0.85
9. Trustworthiness	5.00	0.00
10. Adherence to informed consent	4.38	0.78
11. Adherence to code of ethics from a coaching federation	4.69	0.46
12. Ability to quickly develop a good coach/client working alliance	4.63	0.60
13. Knowledge of adult development theories	4.00	0.71
14. Stress management techniques	4.06	0.75
15. Ability to identify clients who may need psychological intervention	4.31	1.16
16. Ability to apply models of emotional intelligence	4.50	0.61
17. Ability to conduct 360-degree review	4.19	0.95

Of the 17 competencies listed in Table 4, the seven with the highest mean of scores and *SD* are listed in Table 5.

Table 5

Competencies From Delphi Round 1 With the Highest Mean of Scores

Competency	*M*	*SD*
1. Trustworthiness	5.0	0.00
2. Adherence to code of ethics from a coaching federation	4.69	0.64
3. Ability to quickly develop a good coach/client working alliance	4.63	0.60
4. Self-confidence of the coach	4.63	0.60
5. Good interpersonal skills	4.63	0.60
6. Professional coaching certification	4.56	0.86
7. Working knowledge of coaching frameworks	4.50	0.61

Participant written rationale for each competency in Round 1 of the modified Delphi study were also compiled in a PDF document. These comments (Appendix O) were grouped based on the competency the comments were associated with. Participant comments consisted of statements such as: *It can be an incredible asset; not necessary to be effective; a must if one is coaching executives;* and *not essential but it could help.*

Data Analysis: Delphi Round 1 and Instrument Development Phase

When I combined competencies that reached consensus during the Instrument Development Phase and competencies that reached consensus during Delphi Round 1, the result is 22 competencies that reached consensus. Those competencies are presented in

Table 6. Of the competencies that reached consensus in the Instrument Development

Phase, five (competency 2, 14, 15, 16, and 22 from table 6) were different from those that

reached consensus in Delphi Round 1. And six competencies that reached consensus in

Delphi Round 1 did not reach consensus during the Instrument development phase. So,

there were 11 competencies that reached consensus both in the Instrument development

phase and Delphi Round 1.

Table 6

Competencies that Reached Consensus: Instrument Development and Delphi Round 1

Competency	Mean ID	Mean DRO
1. Business Experience	4.25	4.06
2. Formal training in psychology	4.25	--
3. Professional coaching certification	--	4.56
4. Working knowledge of coaching frameworks – IVO/DRO	--	4.50
5. Self-confidence of the coach -	--	4.63
6. Executive coaching experience - IVO	4.75	4.13
7. Knowledge of leadership theories – IV/DRO	4.50	4.38
8. Good Interpersonal skills – IV/DRO	4.50	4.63
9. Knowledge of goal setting strategies – IV/DRO	4.00	4.31
10. Trustworthiness – IV/DRO	4.75	5.00
11. Adherence to informed consent	4.00	4.38
12. Adherence to code of ethics from a coaching federation	--	4.69
13. Ability to quickly develop a good coach/client working alliance	4.50	4.63
14. Ability to apply models of human motivation	4.00	--
15. Knowledge of adult learning theories	4.00	--
16. Understanding of models of behavioral change	4.75	--
17. Knowledge of adult development theories	4.00	4.00
18. Stress management techniques	--	4.06
19. Ability to identify clients who may need psychological intervention	--	1.16

20. Ability to apply models of emotional intelligence	4.25	4.31
21. Ability to conduct 360-degree review	4.75	4.19
22. Ability to administer and interpret psychological assessments (e.g., 16PF, Strong Interest Inventory, Firo B, etc.)	4.00	--

ID: Consensus reached during instrument development only
DRO: Consensus reached Delphi Round 1
--: No consensus reached for this competency

Results: Modified Delphi Study Round 2

A new competencies instrument (Appendix P) was produced for Delphi Round 2 which consisted of the 22 competencies that did not reach consensus during Delphi Round 1. An email (Appendix Q) was sent to the panel of experts with three PDF attachments: a) the new modified instrument; b) a table showing means and standard deviations of scores obtained during Delphi Round 1; and c) a document listing short written comments submitted by participants (during Delphi Round 1) as rationale for their ratings on the instrument. Several email reminders (Appendix R) were sent to participants to encourage them to complete the instrument. A total of 13 participants rated the Delphi Round 2 competencies. The means and standard deviation of participant responses for Delphi Round 2 were computed in Survey Monkey. The results are listed in Table 7.

Table 7 shows that all of the competencies evaluated in the Delphi Round 2 instrument had a mean of scores below 4.0. Hence, based on the criteria we adopted for this study, none of the competencies reached consensus. The three competencies (11, 19, and 22) that were rated the highest by the panel of EC experts during Delphi Round 2 had

a mean of 3.69. The panel also submitted short written comments as rationale for their ratings of the competencies. These comments were compiled in a PDF document (Appendix S) with each comment under the competency associated with it. The panel submitted comments such as: *it can help a lot, but it is not essential; coaching is not psychology; it is clearer if we keep the professions distinct; coaching is distinct from counseling, however understanding human behavior and being able to address issues such as anxiety, recognize when they need more than you can provide; this may not be relevant; could be useful;* and many other comments.

Table 7

Statistical Results of Responses: Delphi Round 2

Competency that Did Not Reach Consensus	*M*	*SD*
1. Formal training in psychology	2.69	1.07
2. Experience as a business executive	3.31	1.07
3. Understanding of the Socratic teaching method	2.85	1.46
4. Experience in specific organizational/business areas	2.85	1.10
5. Knowledge of organizational development	2.85	1.23
6. Experience in the facilitation of organizational change	3.08	0.73
7. Understanding of psychological theories	3.00	1.04
8. Demonstrable Return On Investment for cost of coaching service	3.00	1.24
9. Knowledge of personality theories	3.46	1.22
10. Ability to apply models of human motivation	3.46	0.93
11. Knowledge of adult learning theories	3.69	1.07
12. Knowledge of career development models	2.92	1.07
13. Understanding of models of behavioral change	3.38	1.08
14. Knowledge of work/life balance strategies	3.77	0.97
15. Understanding of how social factors impact individual behavior	3.00	1.11
16. Understanding of gender differences in adulthood	3.08	1.14
17. Experience facilitating strategic planning	2.69	1.20
18. Understanding of how clinical diagnoses (e.g. narcissism) can impact workplace dynamics	2.77	1.12

19. Ability to facilitate conflict resolution strategies	3.69	0.99
20. Working knowledge of Family systems theory	2.54	0.63
21. Working knowledge of abnormal psychology	2.31	0.91
22. Ability to administer and interpret psychological assessments (e.g., 16PF, Strong Interest)	3.69	1.14

A document (Table 8) was developed, showing the 22 competencies that did not reach consensus in Delphi Round 1 and Delphi Round 2. The means of responses generated in Delphi Round 1 and Delphi Round 2 were next to each other in the table for comparison. Table 8 below shows the means of responses from Delphi Round 1 and Delphi Round 2. The comparison reveals that, of the 22 competencies evaluated during Delphi Round 2, the mean of responses for 18 competencies evaluated in Round 2 actually decreased. Also, further comparison of the means of Delphi Round 1 and Delphi Round 2 presented in Table 8 shows that, in Delphi Round 2, the panel of experts rated five competencies (2, 3, 19, 20, and 22) higher than they did in Delphi Round 1. However, based on the criteria for consensus used in this study (a mean of 4.0 or higher), the panel of experts did not reach consensus on any of the competencies. The information shown in Table 8 was sent to participants at the beginning of the third and final round, Delphi Round 3.

Table 8

Means of Responses: Delphi Round 1 and Delphi Round 2

Competencies that did not reach consensus	*M*: Round 1	*M*: Round 2
1. Formal training in psychology	3.13	2.69
2. Experience as a business executive	3.25	3.31
3. Understanding of the Socratic teaching method	2.81	2.85
4. Experience in specific organizational/business areas	3.19	2.85
5. Knowledge of organizational development	3.44	2.85
6. Experience in the facilitation of organizational change	3.38	3.08
7. Understanding of psychological theories	3.06	3.00
8. Demonstrable Return On Investment for cost of coaching service	3.44	3.00
9. Knowledge of personality theories	3.50	3.46
10. Ability to apply models of human motivation	3.63	3.46
11. Knowledge of adult learning theories	3.88	3.69
12. Knowledge of career development models	3.50	2.92
13. Understanding of models of behavioral change	3.81	3.38
14. Knowledge of work/life balance strategies	3.81	3.77
15. Understanding of how social factors impact individual behavior	3.88	3.00
16. Understanding of gender differences in adulthood	3.25	3.08
17. Experience facilitating strategic planning	3.44	2.69
18. Understanding of how clinical diagnoses (e.g. narcissism) can impact workplace dynamics	2.88	2.77

19. Ability to facilitate conflict resolution strategies	3.56	3.69
20. Working knowledge of Family systems theory	2.44	2.54
21. Working knowledge of abnormal psychology	2.38	2.31
22. Ability to administer and interpret psychological assessments (e.g., 16PF, Strong Interest)	3.19	3.69

Results: Delphi Study Round 3

An email (Appendix T) was sent to the panel of experts with instructions on accessing and completing the third and final round of the modified Delphi study. The email contained a web link that, when clicked, directed participants to the third competencies instrument. Attached to the email were three PDF documents: 1) A document (Table 7) showing the 22 competencies that did not reach consensus in Round 2 with the means and SD of Delphi Round 2 responses; 2) A document with means, side by side, of responses from the panel of experts for Delphi Round 1 and Delphi Round 2 (Table 8); and 3) A document listing comments submitted by the panel of experts during Delphi Round 2 (Appendix S). Participants were instructed to look at the documents with the statistical information and to read the comments before completing the Delphi Round 3 instrument. Participants were given Two weeks to rate the Delphi Round 3 competencies.

Three email reminders (Appendix U) were sent to participants during Delphi Round 3 to encourage participants to rate the competencies. On the last day of the period allotted for the completion of the competencies instrument, another email (Appendix V) was sent to the panel of experts to notify participants that the competencies instrument would be closing by 6pm. Once the competencies instrument was closed the rating data

were collected. A total of 14 participants completed the Delphi Round 3 instrument.

Participants evaluated all of the competencies in Delphi Round 3 and all participants

responded to all of the demography questions.

Means and standard deviations were calculated in Survey Monkey, and organized

in Table 9. The *SD* of Delphi Round 3 ratings ranged between 0.63 and 1.5. The average

of standard deviations presented in Table 9 is 1.12. The means that appear in Table 9

show that the means of scores for all of the competencies evaluated in Delphi Round 3

were below 4.0. Therefore, based on the consensus criteria adopted in this study (a mean

of 4.0 or higher), none of the competencies evaluated in Delphi Round 3 reached

consensus.

Table 9

Statistical Results of Responses: Delphi Round 3

Competency	*M*	*SD*
1. Formal training in psychology	2.07	0.88
2. Experience as a business executive	3.36	1.04
3. Understanding of the Socratic teaching method	3.14	1.36
4. Experience in specific organizational/business areas	2.86	0.91
5. Knowledge of organizational development	3.29	1.10
6. Experience in the facilitation of organizational change	3.00	1.20
7. Understanding of psychological theories	2.79	1.26
8. Demonstrable Return On Investment for cost of coaching service	3.36	0.89
9. Knowledge of personality theories	3.21	1.37
10. Ability to apply models of human motivation	3.29	0.96
11. Knowledge of adult learning theories	3.36	1.17
12. Knowledge of career development models	3.00	1.41
13. Understanding of models of behavioral change	3.36	1.29
14. Knowledge of work/life balance strategies	3.43	1.18
15. Understanding of how social factors impact individual behavior	2.79	1.26
16. Understanding of gender differences in adulthood	2.86	1.25
17. Experience facilitating strategic planning	2.29	1.53
18. Understanding of how clinical diagnoses (e.g. narcissism) can impact workplace dynamics	2.07	0.96

19. Ability to facilitate conflict resolution strategies	2.93	1.33
20. Working knowledge of Family systems theory	2.00	1.00
21. Working knowledge of abnormal psychology	1.50	0.63
22. Ability to administer and interpret psychological assessments (e.g., 16PF, Strong Interest	2.64	1.59

None of the competencies rated during Delphi Round 2 and Delphi Round 3 reached consensus. Based on participant ratings of competencies during these rounds, it was clear that a majority of participants thought that they had selected all the competencies they believed were essential for effective EC. Therefore, based on the ratings of the panel of experts in this study, the competencies that reached consensus during Delphi Round 1 were determined to be the most essential for effective EC.

Summary

This study implemented a modified Delphi method to develop consensus among a panel of EC experts regarding competencies that are essential for effective EC. Two panels of EC experts participated in the study. A panel of four EC experts assessed the face and content validity of the competencies instrument. And a second panel of 17 executive coaching experts participated in the multiround Delphi study. To participate in the study, members of the panel needed to have a minimum of three years practicing executive coaching or purchasing executive coaching services. Also, the EC experts had to reside in the US. In addition, participants needed to have a high interest in the advancement of executive coaching research. Another criterion for participating in the

study was a commitment on the part of the panel to remain objective for the duration of the study. Participants were chosen from SIOP and from the ICF.

The data collection was performed using a Delphi three-round process. Participants completed three competencies instruments, one instrument for each round. Data were collected at the end of each round and measures of central tendency (means and SD) of respondent scores were computed. Participants provided short written rational for their evaluation of competencies in the instrument. Participants also provided demographic information. At the beginning of Delphi Round 2 and Delphi Round 3 participants received feedback from the researcher in the form of a PDF document listing the means and SD of responses collected from the previous round. Participants also received a PDF list of short comments submitted by experts during the competencies rating process, and were asked to consider the feedback information before completing the next instrument.

Fourteen EC experts reached consensus (during Delphi Round 1) on 17 of the initial 39 competencies. As we advanced through the study there were strong indications that the panel of experts had drawn close to a consensus on specific competencies. The data analysis revealed several interesting patterns. For instance, there were ratings fluctuations for the same competency item. Also, a comparison of the results of the three rounds showed an increase and decrease in ratings for specific item. These and other observations are explored in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify competencies that are essential for effective executive coaching (EC) based on the ratings of a panel of EC experts. With this Modified Delphi study, I aimed to contribute to the body of knowledge in EC research. A majority of U.S. organizations rely upon EC to enhance executive on-the-job performance. However, there is limited empirical evidence to prove the effectiveness of EC. In addition, because EC is an unregulated field, anyone could claim the title of executive coach; therefore, EC competencies can vary widely. Based on the ratings of two panels of EC experts totaling 21 EC experts, this study identified a total of 22 competencies that are essential for effective EC. Participant ratings also revealed several patterns and beliefs that are discussed below.

In this chapter, I explore inferences that may be drawn from the data collected, and discuss possible applicable lessons for executive coaches, the recipients of EC services, and the organizations that purchase those EC services. Chapter 5 consists of five sections: a summary of the research study, the findings of the Delphi multiround study, inferences from the study, implications of the study, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

Synopsis of the Study

Today's executives must perform in unpredictable and unforgiving global environments (Industry Week, 2011; McDonnell, King, & Soule, 2015)). One executive decision can result in a loss (or gain) of billions of dollars (BBC, 2015). Enterprises in

many nations around the world rely on Executive Coaching (EC) to improve executive

performance and to accelerate productivity among junior managers. These organizations

claim to use EC to drive the effectiveness of their leaders to higher levels (De Meuse,

Dai, & Lee, 2009).

This research aimed to contribute to the body of knowledge in EC by exploring

EC competencies that can contribute to EC effectiveness for improving on-the-job

performance of top organizational leaders. The results produced and the conclusions

drawn from this research study are intended to be implemented by executive coaching

professionals to enhance the services they provide. Also, the findings in this research

study could be used to produce guidelines to aid human resource personnel and other

procurers of EC services when selecting an executive coach and to evaluate the

effectiveness of EC services received.

Discussion: Delphi Multiround Study

Delphi Study Round 1

The results of the Delphi Round 1 instrument (Table 4 in Chapter 4) yielded 17

competencies that reached consensus. To facilitate our discussion of these competencies,

and for organizational purposes I chose to group the 17 competencies in four

representative categories based on common characteristics of the competencies. The

categories are: 1) Coaching Knowledge/Skills, 2) Psychology Knowledge, 3) Business

and Leadership knowledge, and 4) Personal Attributes. In the following discussions, I

explore insights that may be gained based on the mean and *SD* of scores provided by the

EC experts who participated in Delphi Round 1. I also refer to comments submitted by participants.

Coaching Knowledge/Skills Category.

. *Coaching knowledge/skills* was the category with the greatest number of competencies that reached consensus. There were eight competencies in this category. The fact that EC experts assigned high scores to so many competencies in this category is likely indicative of the high importance they ascribe to professional training in EC.

Adherence to code of ethics from a coaching federation (competency 11 in Table 4 of Chapter 4) was the competency with the highest mean in this category and the second highest among all other competencies that reached consensus in our study. Additionally, the low *SD* suggests that most of the EC experts were agreed on the importance of adherence to a code of ethics for effective EC. This outcome is significant, given that, as reported in the literature review in Chapter 2 (CIPD, 2011; Fielden, 2008; Natale & Diamante, 2005), EC is an unregulated field where anyone could claim the title of executive coach. Regarding the importance of adhering to a code of ethics from a coaching federation, one EC expert commented in the instrument "this is a must," another wrote "because the profession isn't licensed this is very important," and another wrote "Imperative." These comments and the data indicate that EC professionals are committed to be ethical with their clients.

It is noteworthy that the EC experts valued highly the item which addressed *Ability to quickly develop a good coach/client working alliance* (competency 12 in Table 4). This competency received the second highest mean score in the *Coaching*

Knowledge/Skills category and, along with three other competencies. The literature

review in Chapter 2 revealed that a good coach/coachee working alliance is essential for

effective coaching (Feldman & Lankau, 2005). Also, it is important to note that the panel

of EC experts assigned the lowest score in this category to *Executive Coaching*

Experience, the fifth competency in Table 4 of Chapter 4, suggesting that participants in

this study believe that experience as an executive is not necessary for someone to be an

effective executive coach.

      ***Psychology Knowledge* category.** The *Psychology Knowledge* category

comprised four competencies that reached consensus. The ratings and comments on this

competency present an interesting revelation. Many of the EC experts repeatedly stated in

the comments section of the instrument that "coaching is not psychology." The four

competencies in the *Psychology Knowledge* category in order (from highest to lowest)

according to the mean of scores assigned by the EC experts are: Ability to apply models

of emotional intelligence, Ability to identify clients who may need psychological

intervention, Stress management techniques, and Knowledge of adult development

theories.

      The literature review in Chapter 2 revealed that the field of psychology has made

significant contributions to EC (Dearborn, Reis, Collins, & Bescheid, 2000; Larkin, 2012;

Rogerson, Gottlieb, Handelsman, Knapp, & Younggren, 2011; Turkheimer & Gottesman,

1991; Turkheimer & Gottesman, 1913). However, reported also in Chapter 2, there is an

ongoing heated debate among EC scholars and practitioners regarding the role of

psychology in EC (Berman & Bradt, 2006; Bono, Purvanova, Towler, and Peterson,

2009; Kilburg, 2000; Stern, 2009). The comments of participants in this Delphi study corroborate the contrasting opinions of scholars the field of EC, regarding the role of psychology in EC.

The first competency, emotional intelligence is a fairly new personal attribute of interest in the coaching field relative to other psychological and leadership theories. In the literature review in Chapter 2, I reported on Passmore (2007) Integrative *Model for Executive Coaching*. In this model, Passmore noted that it is important for executive coaches to manage well their emotions so that they can maintain detachment while cultivating intimacy. Furthermore, Passmore argued that executive coaches need to be skilled at assessing the emotional level of coachees, and help them to develop the emotional intelligence. The ratings EC experts assigned to this competency in our instrument reflect Passmore's findings on the value of emotional intelligence as an essential competency for effective EC.

The rating participants assigned to the second competency, *Ability to identify clients who may need psychological intervention*, is intriguing. Though the item ratings for this competency resulted in a high mean, the high SD of this competency indicate that the competencies ratings on this competency were not as concentrated around the mean as other competencies in this category. Hence, there was greater variation in the level of agreement among the EC experts on this competency than with the other competencies that reached consensus. In fact, this competency had the highest SD of all competencies that reached consensus in *Delphi Round 1*. This indicates that EC experts were in less agreement on the importance of this competency for effective EC.

The disparate comments submitted by EC experts on the instrument reflected the high SD in ratings the EC experts assigned to this competency. Some EC experts commented "coaching is not based on psychology theory," and "a great coach relies on coaching principles, not psychology" while others commented that knowledge of psychology principles "enables the coach to coach more effectively," and still others wrote that "some psychology training could be helpful" for EC. Furthermore, the disagreement among EC experts on the role of psychology in EC on our competencies instrument was also reported in the literature review in Chapter 2. For instance, as presented in Chapter 2, Bono, Purvanova, Towler, and Peterson (2009) noted that the field of psychology has contributed much to EC in the form of human development, learning behavior, psychological measurement, addressing relationship boundaries, and respecting client confidentiality.

Berman and Bradt (2006) claimed that psychologists have very limited experience in terms of values, rules, cultures, and systems in corporate settings, and that mastering the nuances and protocols of the corporate environment requires actual experience in business. Conversely, Kilburg (2000), as reported in the literature review in Chapter 2, argued that events, emotions, thoughts, and habits that are within the realm of the unconscious awareness of executives can significantly influence their decisions and actions. Therefore, Kilburg asserted that psychoanalysis is especially suited for training and development in EC. It is evident that, in both the review of the literature presented in Chapter 2 and based on the ratings assigned to psychology-based competencies in this

Delphi study, there are supporters and detractors of psychology competencies in terms of how vital they may be for effective EC.

  ***Business and Leadership* category.** There were two competencies in the *Business and Leadership* category: *Knowledge of leadership theories* and *Business experience*. It is interesting that *Knowledge of leadership theories* was scored so highly (Mean of 4.38) by the EC experts as an essential competency, since many leadership theories originated from the field of psychology. In Chapter 2, I described several leadership theories that are based on psychology. For instance: Transformational leadership theory (Bass, 1997; Bass and Avolio, 1993; Bass, 1990); situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977); contingency theory of leadership (Fiedler, 1978; Fiedler, 197l; Korman, 1973; Peters, Hartke, & Poulman, 1985) and others. It is important to note also that this competency (*Knowledge of leadership theories* and *Business experience*) had a low *SD* of .06, indicating a high level of agreement among EC experts on the importance of this competency for EC. Perhaps this underscores either ambivalence among EC experts regarding the role of psychology in EC. Also, there may be a lack of knowledge on the part of some participants in this study regarding the psychology-based origins of some theories. On the one hand, many experts on the panel of participants in my study argued, in the comments section of the instrument, that EC is not psychology. But, on the other hand, they rated leadership theories, of which many are rooted in psychology, as highly important for effective EC.

  Perhaps, based on the comments above, the EC experts maybe attempting to differentiate EC from psychology while acknowledging the value of some psychological

theories for EC. It is also possible that some of the participants may not have known that many leadership theories are based on psychology. Furthermore, there is an apparent distancing from psychology by some executive coaches that participated in Delphi Round 1 of this study. This is evident in the comments and in the scoring associated with psychology competencies that did not reach consensus. Several respondents commented, sometimes in capital letters, "coaching is not psychology." The distancing of executive coaches from psychology may be an attempt by some executive coaches to protect the professional turf of EC and to reduce competition by keeping psychologists out. One EC expert commented on the instrument that the effort to make psychology essential for EC is an attempt by psychologists to enter the lucrative EC field.

The second competency in this category, *Business Experience*, revealed possible disagreement among the EC experts regarding the importance of having business experience in order to be an effective executive coach. The relatively high SD on this competency indicates that there was a great deal of variability in EC expert's ratings on how essential it is for executive coaches to have business experience for effective EC. On the other hand, in all comments submitted on the *Business Experience* competency (see Appendix O) in the instrument, EC experts commented that having business experience was very important for effective executive coaching. Thirteen of the 17 EC experts who rated the competencies in Delphi One submitted comments on this competency. And all 13 seemed to agree (based on their comments) on the importance of business for effective EC.

The importance of business knowledge for effective EC was also reported by researchers (Berglas, 2002; Berman & Bradt, 2006; Bono, Purvanova, Towler, & Peterson, 2009; Executive Coaching Forum, 2012; Maher & Pomerantz, 2003). Executive Coaching Forum (2012) published a list of competencies that they suggested are essential for EC. Some of the business–related competencies listed were: an understanding of global capitalism and global firms, the differences between regulated and nonregulated businesses, the differences between for-profit and not-for-profit businesses, the key leadership roles of organizations, knowledge of current business events, issues and trends, management principles and processes, and others. The comments and ratings that EC experts in my study assigned to the business knowledge competency seem to support the views of researchers reported in the literature review of Chapter 2 of this study.

Regarding the importance of business experience for effective EC, one expert participant commented on this competency "A must if coaching executives;" another wrote "As a CEO, I learned everything I need to know to be an executive coach." On the other hand, one EC expert commented, "Though the coach does not need to have had personal experience as an executive, an understanding of the corporate environment and strategic planning helps." Still another EC expert commented "it is impossible to provide effective coaching for behavior change if you don't understand the business context…" With such strong opinions and almost unanimous agreement among respondents on the importance of business experience for effective EC, I expected the *SD* of scores for this competency to be lower.

An analysis of the distribution of individual ratings on the *Business Experience* competency may explains the relatively low mean (4.06) and high *SD* (1.09) associated with the *business knowledge* competency. On the competencies instrument, four experts chose for their response *neither agree nor disagree*, five experts chose *Agree*, and eight of the EC experts selected *strongly agree*. So, while (based on their comments) the EC experts appeared to have strong convictions on the importance of business experience for effective EC, the disparate ratings they assigned to this competency revealed that the comments of most of participants were incongruent with the ratings they assigned to this competency in the instrument.

It is possible that the participants' comments reflect their ideal in terms of business experience for EC, but the relative low ratings some participants assigned to this competency may have been influenced by how they perceived their own level of knowledge and/or experience in business. Those participants who perceived themselves as being more business savvy may have assigned a higher rating to this competency, and those participants who view themselves as less adept in business could have assigned a lower rating to this competency. Additional research is necessary to clarify this apparent contradiction.

Personal Attributes category. The *Personal Attributes* category comprised three competencies: *Self-confidence of the Coach, Good Interpersonal Skills,* and *Trustworthiness*. Of the 17 competencies evaluated by the EC experts that reached consensus *Trustworthiness* was scored the highest. All of the respondents in Delphi One scored this competency as "strongly agree," the highest rating possible on the instrument.

The importance of trustworthiness for effective EC was also implicit in the review of the literature presented in Chapter 2, specifically pertaining to the coach/coachee alliance. Boyce, Jackson, and Neal (2009) noted that a successful coaching alliance necessitates the development of trust, rapport, and commitment.

Empirical evidence presented in Chapter 2 proposed that the coaching relationship is the most important stage for ensuring success in the coaching process (Asay & Lambert, 1999; Baron & Morin, 2009; Boyce, Jackson, & Neal, 2009; Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001; O'Broin & Palmer, 2006). The importance participants ascribed to *Trustworthiness,* based on the ratings they assigned to this competency, is supported by the literature review presented in Chapter 2 of this study.

The comments from the participants also reflected the idea in the review of the literature, that trustworthiness was important for a successful EC. One respondent wrote referring to this competency, "If the executive client does not trust his coach, there is no possible coaching relationship." "Establishing trust is a must," commented another respondent. Another EC expert wrote "no comment required."

Self Confidence of the Coach is another competency of the personal attributes category that was rated by EC experts as essential for effective EC. This competency, along with two others, was the second highest scored in the instrument, indicating that the EC experts considered this competency a "must have" for effective executive coaching.

The importance of self-confidence was also reported in the literature review in Chapter 2. Lee, & Frisch, (2015) stated that executive coaches need to convey confidence while being humble. They noted that not seeking validation, credit, or even

acknowledgment is a challenging part of being a coach. One of the authors noted, "As I think back on when I have done well or poorly as a coach, it often comes down to whether I had enough confidence to be truly humble and did not need to feed my ego." Ten of the 17 respondents in Delphi Round 1 submitted comments on this competency. The comments include "A must," "Imperative," and "this really helps a lot."

In their comments on the *Self Confidence of the Coach* competency, several EC experts who participated in Delphi Round 1 emphasized the importance of making a distinction between self-confidence and arrogance in EC. One EC expert commented "The balance between confidence and humility and unattachment to each is the charm." Another EC expert wrote "…self-confidence means being vulnerable and transparent as well." "The coach needs to know what they know, can and cannot do, and convey assurance, not arrogance," wrote another. In an attempt to qualify the scoring of the *Self-confidence of the Coach* competency, an EC expert wrote "Confident, but not knowing better than the client and/or being too prescriptive." The fact that 7 of the 10 EC experts who submitted comments on the *Self-confidence of the Coach* competency felt the need to qualify their responses in the comment section of the instrument suggests attempts to emphasize the delicate balance necessary between humility and assertiveness inherent in the Self Confidence of the Coach competency.

The third competency in the *Personal Attributes* category is *Good Interpersonal Skills*. This is one of three competencies, *Ability to Develop a Good Coach/Client Working Alliance, Self Confidence of the Coach,* and *Good Interpersonal Skills,* to which EC experts assigned the third highest score in the instrument, resulting in an identical

mean of scores for all three competencies. Of these three competencies, *Good Interpersonal Skills* had a slightly higher SD, indicating a lower consensus among EC experts on this competency.

As an EC competency, *Good Interpersonal Skills* was reported (in the literature review presented in Chapter 2) to be essential. Morgan (2002) noted that executive coaches are focused on transforming the behaviors of clients through one-on-one interactions at crucial instances in the career of those clients. Also, Morgan argued that the most successful executive coaches are experts of "focused talk" by means of conversations, also known as interventions, executive coaches attempt to produce long-term behavior changes in their clients. Furthermore, Morgan asserted that the form of interpersonal connection needed for successful coaching is not dependent upon chemistry, and is instead dependent on "openness, communication, appreciation, fairness, and shared commitment."

Quick and Macik-Frey (2004) reported that in "deep interpersonal communication" a coach/coachee interaction develops, which leads to improved health for executives and produces greater authenticity in the coaching relationship. And, Zaskun and Landeta (2015) reported that competency in management communications skills is essential for effective EC. As reported in Chapter 2, an effective coaching relationship calls for the development of trust, rapport, and commitment (Boyce, Jackson, & Neal, 2009).

The comments submitted by EC experts on the *Good Interpersonal Skills* competency corroborates the findings on this competency (reported in Chapter 2) and

revealed how essential EC experts felt this competency is for effective EC. A total of nine experts submitted comments on this competency. An EC expert commented "Really? Is it possible to be a coach without this?" Another summarized his thoughts in one word "Imperative." Another EC expert wrote, "Without this you [the coach] will not be asked back." The opinions expressed in the above-mentioned comments suggest strong convictions regarding the value of good interpersonal skills for effective executive coaching. However, the comments reflect the opinions of only slightly more than half of the 17 EC experts who rated the competencies in Delphi Round 1.

Delphi Study Round 2

The Delphi Round 2 competencies instrument was comprised of competencies that did not reach consensus during Delphi Round 1. Though none of the competencies in Delphi Round 2 reached the consensus threshold, there are still inferences that may be drawn from the data collected. There were some notable changes in respondent ratings that are worth mentioning. For instance, in the Delphi Round 2 instrument there was an increase in the mean value of five competencies, indicating a positive shift in the opinion of EC experts regarding those competencies. The five competencies were: experience as a business executive, understanding of the Socratic teaching method, ability to facilitate conflict resolution strategies, working knowledge of family systems theory, ability to administer and interpret psychological assessments (e.g., 16PF, Strong Interest).

The increase in the mean of ratings for the five competencies listed above may have reflected a change in the opinion of EC experts regarding those competencies. Participants were instructed to read comments receive from respondents during Delphi

Round 1 before completing the Delphi Round 2 instrument. Those comments could have influenced the opinion of the EC experts, resulting in a change of ratings they assigned to competencies during Delphi Round 2. However the change was not strong enough to reach the threshold of what was deemed to be a consensus. . Of the 5 competencies mentioned above, *Ability to administer and interpret psychological assessments (e.g., 16PF, Strong Interest)* had the highest increase in mean value, from a mean value of 3.19 in Delphi Round 1 to a mean value of 3.69 in Delphi Round 2. In the literature review of Chapter 2 the ability to administer and interpret psychological assessments featured as important for effective EC. In its list of competencies for effective EC Executive Coaching Forum (2012) included administration and interpretation of assessments. Additionally, Executive Coaching Forum advised coaches to be knowledgeable in a broad range of assessment methodologies.

The comments submitted in the instrument in Delphi Round 1 on the *Ability to administer and interpret psychological assessments* provide some insight regarding why this competency did not reach consensus. On the one hand, commenting on this competency, an EC expert wrote "essential skill without which you cannot coach and make a meaningful difference." Conversely, another EC expert wrote "All [executive coaching assessments] can be outsourced. The coach can then discuss results with the client." Apparently, this EC expert believed that training in administering and interpreting assessments was not needed for successful EC.

Furthermore, one EC expert wrote "not sure about psychological assessments – but workplace, for sure (DISC, MBTI)." This comment is very revealing. On the one

hand the EC expert expressed uncertainty about the value of psychological assessments for EC, yet the two examples of assessments that the EC expert listed as "workplace" related (DISC, MBTI) are psychological assessments. It is apparent that some EC experts may be implementing psychological assessments with their clients but these executive coaches do not realize that those assessments are based on psychological theories.

There was a total of 17 competencies in the Delphi Round 2 instrument to which participants assigned lower ratings, which resulted in a decrease in mean value when compared to mean values of responses in Delphi Round 1. Table 8 of Chapter 4 shows a list of competencies and corresponding mean values obtained from the Delphi Round 1 and Delphi Round 2 instruments. In the list, there are 16 competencies whose mean value was lower in Delphi Round 2 than in Delphi Round 1. It is plausible that the comments collected from the Delphi Round 1 instrument, which participants were instructed to read before completing the Delphi Round 2 instrument, could have influence participants views about those competencies. It is also possible that the EC experts completing the Delphi Round 2 instrument wanted to communicate in a stronger way their opinion on those competencies.

It is surprising that competency 8 in Table 8 of Chapter 4, *Demonstrable return on investment for cost of coaching service,* did not reach consensus in Delphi Round 1 neither in Delphi Round 2. It may seem logically essential for executive coaches to be able to demonstrate to purchasers of EC services a return on their investment (ROI). However, not only did this competency not reach consensus during the Delphi Round 1 iteration, the mean value of ratings decreased in the Delphi Round 2 instrument. The

literature review in Chapter 2 revealed that, though Anderson (2005) reported that the ROI for executive coaching is 700%, there is a lack of empirical evidence of demonstrable ROI for EC services. The comments of EC experts who participated in this study and the ratings they assigned to this competency corroborate reports in the literature review on ROI for EC. These findings emphasize the need for more research in this area.

A look at the comments provided by some of the EC experts on the Delphi Round 2 instrument reveals that some of the respondents struggled with the competency addressing ROI for EC. One EC expert commented "Once you figure this out let me know." "Too many intangibles" said one respondent. Another wrote "yes [,] if there is a way to do that." And another commented, "…this is tricky and not always possible to have the data…" Still, another EC expert wrote, "It sounds great, but the amount of time to measure success is not worth it. It's nice to have when it is something measurable, but how do you control for all the variables to really make the result measurable?" During Delphi Round 1, one respondent commented "if the client/org[anization] does not care about ROI, then why should the coach?"

Conversely, on the importance of demonstrable ROI, one EC expert wrote "…a steady overview of "where we were" and "where we are today" is the best proof of ROI." Another commented "it can help with organizations," and two EC experts expressed confidence that ROI for EC could be proven. One wrote "Studies show ROI. Each engagement." Another commented "studies have proven there is a return on investment for coaching."

Implicit in most of the comments submitted by the EC experts in Delphi Round 2 was the idea that a demonstrable ROI is important. However, based on the comments submitted by participants in this study and presented in the two preceding paragraphs it is probable that most of those who submitted comments lacked the tools for measuring ROI for EC. And, a few of the EC experts seemed to be uncertain as to whether it was feasible or even possible to measure ROI for EC. A comparison of the SD of ratings of Delphi Round 1, Delphi Round 2, and Delphi Round 3 for this competency shows rating fluctuation among EC experts. Considering the participants' comments on the ROI competency, the fluctuation in ratings is likely indicative of a lack of clarity and training on ROI for EC among EC experts. Some of the EC experts changed their ratings back and forth as they completed the three instruments, possibly indicating ambivalence among EC experts regarding demonstrable ROI for EC services.

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 provided evidence-based methods for measuring ROI for EC. For instance, Clutterbuck (2008) reported that ROI for EC can be assessed by measuring *before* and *after* coaching intervention for each goal or assignment pursued in the coaching relationship. In addition, Clutterbuck recommended coaches do an assessment with the client after a six-month period to ensure that the desired change has been sustained. Clutterbuck suggested that 360-degree feedback could be used after each goal is achieved or when an assignment is completed, and also after six months. The 360-degree feedback needs to be aimed at specific behaviors against which the assessor would judge whether progress was achieved, and how sustainable the change may be.

Delphi Study Round 3

A comparison of the data obtained in all three Delphi rounds for two competencies (*Formal training in psychology* and *Experience as a business executive*) reveal patterns in participant responses, which could be valuable to the reader. These competencies were not among the list of competencies with a mean of scores high enough to be considered essential for effective EC in our study, still there are lessons that may be learned.

Formal training in psychology. The mean of ratings and *SD* for *Formal training in psychology* decreased in each subsequent round of the Delphi study. The declining mean of ratings across the three competencies instruments could indicate that participants may have been influenced by comments of their peers in this study. Also, the decreasing ratings on this competency could be reflecting attempt by some participants to emphatically communicate their opinion on this competency. Furthermore, the decreasing SD in subsequent instruments shows a decrease in variability in the ratings regarding level of agreement among participants indicating that, for EC experts in this study, this is not an essential competency for effective EC.

In the literature review in Chapter 2 I reported that while some scholars (Berglas, 2002; Dean & Meyer; 2002, Kilburg, 2000) consider training in psychology imperative for effective EC, other scholars (Berman & Bradt, 2006; Bono, Purvanova, Towler, & Peterson, 2009; Stern, 2009) consider training in psychology to be valuable but not essential for effective EC. So, though some of the EC experts in my study assigned high ratings to the training in psychology competency, the ratings and comments of most

participants in this study seemed to indicate that training in psychology is helpful but not essential for effective EC.

Experience as a business executive. When I compared the mean of ratings and the *SD* of *Experience as a business executive* for all three rounds of the Delphi study, I found that the mean of ratings for this competency increased with each subsequent completion of the instrument. However, the *SD* fluctuated from one round to another and was higher in Delphi Round 3 than in Delphi Round 1. The fluctuation of ratings reflected in the data suggests disagreement among respondents regarding the importance of this competency for effective EC. Only one of the EC experts claimed the credential of a business executive, yet, all of the other participants, with apparently no business executive experience, were successful executive coaches. Therefore, it is understandable if a majority of the EC experts who participated in this study to consider this competency nonessential for effective EC.

In the review of the literature reported in Chapter 2 business knowledge and experience featured prominently as essential for effective EC (Berman & Bradt, 2006; Foxhall, 2002; The Executive Coaching Forum, 2012). However, there was not much research on the relation between experience as a business executive and EC effectiveness. Clutterbuck (2008) noted that experience as a company executive does not necessarily prepare an individual to be a good executive coach. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, only one of the participants in this study reported having experience as a company executive, yet all participants reported practicing EC successfully for three years or more.

Instrument Development Stage and Delphi Round 1 Compared

Of the four EC experts who rated the competencies during the instrument development stage, three had graduate degrees in psychology and were members of the Society for Industrial Organizational Psychology. These details are important because we are able to compare and contrast the results of the competencies rated by the Instrument development panel comprised of mostly psychologists with results obtained from the larger Delphi Round 1 panel of EC experts who were approximately 90% nonpsychologists.

The results of the instrument completed by the panel of EC experts who were mostly psychologists (panel of four) showed 15 competencies that were essential for effective executive coaching. But, in Delphi Round 1 the EC experts identified 17 competencies as essential for effective EC. Given that 75% of the members on the panel used in the instrument development phase reported being psychologists, and only 5% of members on the panel used in the Delphi multiround phase identified as psychologists, it could be helpful to combine competencies from both phases. The merging of competencies rating results of both phases could reflect greater diversity of ratings and opinions.

When I combined the competencies that reached consensus in the instrument development phase and the competencies that reached consensus in Delphi Round 1 the result is a total of 22 competencies that reached consensus. A combination of competencies that reached consensus in the instrument development phase and competencies that reached consensus in Delphi Round 1 (see table 5 in Chapter 4)

resulted in five additional psychology-based competencies that reached consensus. This suggests that the professional training of participants may be a significant indicator of what competencies they selected on the instrument as essential for effective executive coaching. This may also be reflective of a bias of psychologists to favor greater implementation of psychology in EC. A comparison of the list of competencies that reached consensus in the Instrument Development Phase and the list of competencies that reached consensus in Delphi Round 1 reveals that 11 competencies were common to both lists. The list of competencies in Table 5 of Chapter 4 is noteworthy because those competencies were identified by psychologists and nonpsychologists as essential for effective EC. And the low *SD* of each competency indicates significant agreement among EC experts regarding the importance of these competencies for effective EC.

Inferences of the Study

The data obtained from the panel of EC experts during the course of this Modified Delphi Study have led to three inferences. First, in the Delphi multiround stage of the study, the panel of EC experts evaluated 39 competencies and selected 17 competencies which they considered essential for effective EC. Second, if the data from the smaller expert panel used in this study is considered, the total number of competencies deemed by EC experts as essential for effective executive coaching would be 22. Third, there were seven competencies, of the 17 that reached consensus in Delphi Round 1, with the highest mean, that were rated by EC experts as most essential for effective EC (see Table 5 of Chapter 4). Those competencies are: a) trustworthiness, b) adherence to code of ethics from a coaching federation, c) Ability to quickly develop a coach/client working

alliance, d) Self-confidence of the coach, e) Good interpersonal skills, f) Professional coaching certification, and g) Working knowledge of coaching frameworks.

The full list of 22 competencies which include competencies that reached consensus in the instrument development phase and the Delphi Round 1 phase (Table 6 of Chapter 4), may be organized in four categories and are listed below in order of the mean of ratings (from highest to lowest) in each category:

Coaching Knowledge/Skills competencies

1. Adherence to code of ethics from a coaching federation

2. Ability to quickly develop a good coach/client working alliance

3. Professional coaching certification

4. Working knowledge of coaching frameworks

5. Adherence to informed consent

6. Knowledge of goal setting strategies

7. Ability to conduct 360-degree review

8. Executive coaching experience

Psychology Knowledge competencies

From Delphi Round 1

1. Ability to apply models of emotional intelligence

2. Ability to identify clients who may need psychological intervention

3. Stress management techniques

4. Knowledge of adult development theories

From Instrument Development

1. Understand models of behavioral change

2. Formal training in psychology

3. Ability to apply models of human motivation

4. Knowledge of adult learning theories

5. Ability to administer and interpret psychological assessments (e.g., 16PF, Strong Interest Inventory, Firo B, etc.)

Business and Leadership knowledge competencies

1. Business experience

2. Knowledge of leadership theories

Personal Attributes

1. Trustworthiness

2. Self-confidence of the coach

3. Good interpersonal skills

Implications of the Study

Executives are often charged with the responsibility of leading organizations through challenging situations. Like a captain steering a ship through turbulent seas, executives are expected to be visionaries guiding organizations to profitability amidst countless organizational, local, national, and global challenges. There is a number of implications associated with this study that could impact executives and other stakeholders in EC.

First, this study added to the body of research in EC pertaining to competencies that are essential for effective EC by further identifying knowledge and skills that executive coaches should have in order to deliver effective EC services. This could likely lead to many positive outcomes. For instance, if acquired, the competencies identified in this study may be beneficial for enhancing the performance of executive coaches, enabling them to better help their clients. The competencies identified in the current study may be used by purchasers of executive coaching services when selecting an executive coach, potentially improving the executive coach selection process. The performance of executives who are coached by executive coaches who attain the competencies identified in this study could improve as they receive more effective EC.

Furthermore, an executive who is coached by an executive coach that has adopted the competencies identified in this study is likely to enhance the performance of the organization he or she represents, thereby impacting the lives of thousands of employees, vendors, and customers. And, if executive coach trainers adopt these competencies as part of their training programs it is possible that large numbers of executive coaches and their clients could be positively impacted.

Second, the apparent confusion reflected in the comments of participants in this study regarding ROI for EC and the disparate fluctuation in ratings assigned to the ROI competency confirmed the need for additional research on ROI for EC. This need for research on ROI for EC was recognized and reported in the literature review in Chapter 2, and has been reiterated in this study.

Third, the ratings that most participants assigned to competencies pertaining to psychology, and the comments submitted by participants related to those competencies suggest a need for additional clarity regarding the role of psychology in EC. This finding corroborates similar findings reported in the review of the literature of Chapter 2 in this dissertation. Also, EC experts who had formal training in psychology seemed much more open to embrace psychology-related competencies in EC. However, most none-psychologists (approximately 80%) of the EC professionals who participated in this study expressed, through their comments on psychology-related competencies, a desire to clearly distinguish EC from therapy or other psychological interventions.

If the distancing of EC from psychology becomes a trend, there may be implications for psychologists who are seeking to become executive coaches. Also, if standardization in the field of EC becomes a reality, the desire of some to clearly differentiate EC from psychology could influence the standards that are ultimately adopted. This could result in a reduction of psychology competencies in the field of EC.

Fourth, as reported in the literature review, the coaching field is unregulated, with great disparity in executive coach qualification. The high ratings participants in this study assigned to the *training in executive coaching* competency may indicate that the field of EC could be drawing closer to standardization. Standardization was one factor identified in the literature review as necessary for improving outcomes in EC, and some of the comments and ratings submitted by participants in this study seemed to support a need for standardization.

Fifth, though the need to administer and interpret assessments was identified in the literature review in Chapter 2 as important skills and knowledge for effective EC, the results of the current study seemed to suggest some variance from the research. Participants in this study commented, and reflected in the ratings they assigned to the *ability to administer and interpret psychological assessments,* that this competency is not essential for effective EC because assessments can be outsourced. If the sentiment expressed by most participants in this study is more widely held, then there may be emerging a subfield in EC in which individuals trained in the administration and interpretation of assessments provide those services to executive coaches.

Limitations of the Study

Throughout the process of this modified Delphi study, I encountered several limiting factors that may have influenced the results reported. As mentioned at the beginning of Chapter 4 in the Instrument Development Phase, it was challenging to get participants willing to commit to several rounds of completing a long competencies instrument. After contacting hundreds of individuals, I decided to move forward with the instrument development phase using four participants, three of whom were psychologists.

A more diverse panel of experts would have been more desirable for the instrument development Phase. Additionally, EC experts who participated in the instrument development phase stopped participating after completing the first round of rating the competencies. It would have been more desirable for participants to have completed three rounds in the instrument development phase. The instrument development phase was based on only one round of the competencies instrument.

Consequently, instead of using the results derived from the instrument development phase to revise the instrument, I decided to use the entire initial Competencies for the Delphi multiround stage of the study. A shorter competencies instrument (maybe 20 items to evaluate) may have been more acceptable for some potential participants and may have led to a higher participation rate in both the Instrument development phase and the Delphi multiround stage.

The results obtained and presented in this study may have been influenced by the demographic characteristics of EC experts who participated in this study and may not necessarily be generalized to other populations. A different panel of EC experts may have produced different results regarding EC competencies that are essential for effective EC. However, as noted in Chapter 3, it is likely that the results attained in a Delphi study could be replicated if conducted with a panel with similar characteristics; in which case similar conclusions, while not generalizable, are probable.

Recommendations for Future Research

The literature review reported in Chapter 2 of this study revealed a need for research studies in EC that are scientifically supported. The data collected in this modified Delphi study illuminated areas in EC where additional research is needed. I specifically identified four recommendations for additional research:

Return on investment (ROI) for executive coaching services. As mentioned in previous chapters in this dissertation, EC is a multibillion-dollar field. Executive coaching fees range between $500 to $725 per hour, and some top executive coaches charge $3500 per hour (Kauffman & Coutu 2009; Tyler, 2014). Executive coaches are

hired to help CEOs with: behavioral change, self-awareness, learning, and organizational performance, professional and personal skills building, onboarding, work/life balance, and more (Walker, 2011). Organizations are increasingly demanding that executive coaches provide proof of ROI. The comments provided by some of the EC experts in this study suggest a real need for education and research in this area. For example, EC expert commented, "If the client organizations are not worried about it, why should the coach [be?]" Another wrote, "Let me know when you figure how to do this," and another EC expert suggested that it was not possible to demonstrate ROI for EC services because of the number of variables one would have to account for.

The role of psychology in executive coaching is another area revealed in our study in which further study could be a positive addition to the body of knowledge in EC. Most participants in this study agreed that business and leadership skills and knowledge are essential for effective EC. But there seemed to be a divide among the EC experts in our study regarding the role of psychology in EC. Some participants in our study submitted strong statements such as "executive coaching is not psychology," implying that psychology should be kept separate from EC. Other EC experts in our study expressed, in their comments, strong convictions implying that psychology was essential for EC. Therefore, additional study in this area could be valuable for executive coaches.

This Delphi study produced a list of competencies that EC experts rated as essential for effective EC. But additional research of minimum qualifications expectations for current and aspiring executive coaches could also be of great benefit for the field. As noted in the Literature Review, the EC field is not regulated. Therefore,

anyone could claim to be an executive coach. The responses received from some

participants in this study suggest a need for training and skills acquisition regarding EC

assessments. It could also be beneficial for executive coaches to gain knowledge about

psychological theories, which was reported in the literature review of Chapter 2 to

enhance the practice of EC. Additionally, this study supported reports (in Chapter 2) of a

need for the field of EC to develop and adopt minimum standards for the practice of EC.

Such an initiative may be spearheaded through a cooperation of coaching entities such as

the International Coach Federation (ICF), International Association of Coaching (IAC),

Certified Coaches Federation (CCF), and the Certified Coaches Institute (CCI), in

consultation with EC scholars and practitioners, purchasers of EC services, and other EC

stakeholders. Regulation of the field could produce clarity and direction on the issues we

have addressed in this section.

<div align="center">Implications for Social Change</div>

General

   Given the real and potentially far-reaching influence of executives in

organizations and beyond and, considering that 93% of executives at Fortune 1000

companies in the United States use EC services (reported in Chapter 2), there is great

potential for the results of this study to be a catalyst of significant positive social change.

Executives are often leaders of multinational corporations. The fate of thousands of

employees and others who rely on those corporations is often dependent on decisions and

actions of the executives. The competencies identified in this study could contribute to

greater effectiveness of executive coaches; who intern are usually hired by HR to

enhance the performance of executives. When executives perform well the organizations they lead often improve. The improvement in executive performance could, potentially, impact thousands of people and even local, national, and global economies. Therefore, the prospect of this study leading to significant positive social change is great.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were derived from the research study conducted in this dissertation. These recommendations are intended to increase research in EC; to spark a flame of positive social change in EC; and to contribute to executive coach training.

Recommendation 1: I propose that executive coaches assess their level of preparedness for delivering effective EC services in light of the list of competencies generated in this study. Coaches are encouraged to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to attain competencies where needed. The research shows, and this study corroborated, that proficiency in the competencies described in this study could improve the effectiveness of executive coaches.

Recommendation 2: For human resource managers and other procurers of EC services to consider using the competencies identified in this study as part of the criteria for selecting an executive coach. In the literature review presented in chapter I reported that very few organizations have a clear method for selecting an executive coach. Additionally, the research review showed that few organizations have a method for evaluating executive coaching effectiveness. The research reported in Chapter 2 of this study may be helpful in this aspect as well.

Recommendation 3: I encourage those who engage in the training of executive coaches to consider supplementing their training curriculum with the findings revealed in this study.

Recommendation 4: Individuals that work in the mental health fields and who desire to become executive coaches could benefit from the research presented in this study. Additionally, mental health professionals are advised to consider carefully the competencies identified in this study and pursue training where needed.

Summary

This modified Delphi study aimed to identify EC competencies that could be essential for effective EC. An extensive review of the literature was conducted and reported in Chapter 2. The literature review showed that despite spending billions of dollars yearly for EC services very few procurers of EC services are able to produce data that support those expenditures. This is not to say that EC is ineffective, instead this study identified competencies that could contribute to more effective executive coaches. This study also helped to reveal the need for additional empirical evidence to substantiate the claims and assumptions regarding the effectiveness of EC.

I developed a 39-item competencies instrument based on the literature presented in Chapter 2. A panel of four EC experts participated in the evaluation and development of the competencies instrument. The instrument was used later in the Delphi multiround phase of the study. A second panel of 17 EC experts participated in the iterative Delphi process consisting of three rounds. The EC experts rated the competencies in terms of how essential the experts believed each competency was for effective EC. Participants

were also encouraged to submit brief written comments as rationale for the ratings assigned to the competencies. Data from the completed instrument were gathered, organized, and analyzed.

In this final chapter, I sought to interpret data derived from the modified Delphi study, I conducted. I compared and contrasted the results of the study with the research findings presented in the literature review of Chapter 2. Inferences were drawn from the collected data and recommendations were made. I also discussed some implications associated with this study, addressed limitations of the study, and suggested ideas for further research.

Conclusion

Executive coaching is a leadership development approach implemented by many organizations to enhance the performance of executives. Approximately 93% of executives at Fortune 1000 companies in the United States reported using EC services. The research review conducted in this study showed that billions of dollars are spent each year on EC. However, though there is some scientific evidence of the effectiveness of EC, the review of the literature showed that there is limited empirical data to justify these expenditures. This gap in the EC literature lead to the question I attempted to answer with this study: What competencies are prompted my pursuit of this modified Delphi study. With this research study, I sought to identify EC competencies that could be essential for effective EC.

Having conducted an extensive review of the EC literature, I believe this is the only modified Delphi study, to my knowledge, that focused on ascertaining competencies

for effective EC. By identifying 22 competencies that executive coaches should have for a more effective delivery of EC services this study has contributed to the body of research in the EC field. If adopted by EC trainers and embraced by executive coaches, the competencies identified in this study could impact the effectiveness of executive coaches thereby enhancing the performance of executives. With better executive performance, organizational functioning could be enhanced, potentially, resulting in positive social change for thousands of individuals.

Approximately 70%t of EC experts who participated in the multiround phase of this study did not rate demonstrable ROI as essential for EC. Therefore, if organizations and other purchasers of EC services do not demand ROI, it is unlikely that executive coaches will provide such information. However, given the unregulated state of the EC field, coaching approaches can vary greatly from one executive coach to another, making it difficult for purchasers of EC services to assess and prove ROI for EC services.

On the other hand, there are studies showing that ROI for EC can be measured. But, the fact that approximately 80% of EC experts who participated in this study implied not having tools necessary to demonstrate ROI for coaching services suggests that additional research and training for executive coaches are needed in this area.

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Appendix A: Email Invitation Sent to Prospective SIOP Participants

Dear SIOP Professional:

I am seeking individuals with experience in executive coaching to serve on a panel of experts for my research study and I need your help. My research study is entitled: Executive Coaching competencies that are Essential for Enhancing Executive on-the-job Performance: A Delphi Study.

Participants will evaluate competencies on a instrument by completing the Internet-based instrument, and providing brief feedback as rationale for their choices. The evaluation of the executive competencies item will be done in a four-step process. First, each expert member of the panel will rate the competencies independently and provide brief feedback as rationale for the ratings they assigned to each competency. Second, the researcher will gather the data and comments provided by the panel of experts, and will email the compiled information to the panel. The panel of experts will, independently, consider the feedback they received from the researcher and rate the competencies once more. Responses from participants will be shared anonymously.

A number will be assigned to each participant and will appear on all of the data collected. There will be no matching of names of participants with the data they provide.

To participate in the study on the panel of experts, participants must meet the following criteria:

1) Commit to remain objective for the duration of the study. 2) Be highly interested in executive coaching and desire to contribute to the advancement of research in the executive coaching field. 3) Have been practicing executive coaching or purchasing executive coaching services for 3 years or more.

As a professional experienced in executive coaching, your participation is vital to this study. Please reply to this email **ecresearch@ensyn.net** to confirm your willingness to serve on the panel of experts. If you have questions related to the study, please contact Arturo Maxwell at 269-XXX-XXXX or via the email address provided above.

Please respond to this invitation by Friday Nov. 19.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Arturo Maxwell
Doctoral Student at Walden University (PhD in OD)
269-XXX-XXX
ecresearch@ensyn.net

Appendix B: Email Invitation Sent to Prospective ICF Participants

Dear ICF Professional Coach:

I am seeking individuals with experience in executive coaching to serve on a panel of experts for my Doctoral research study and I need your help. The results of this research could be beneficial to your coaching. My research study is entitled: Executive Coaching Competencies that are Essential for Enhancing Executive on-the-job Performance: A Delphi Study.

Research participants will evaluate competencies on a web-based instrument and will provide optional brief feedback as rationale for their choices. The evaluation of the executive competencies will be done in a four-step process. First, each expert member of the panel will rate the competencies independently and provide brief feedback as rationale for the ratings they assigned to each competency. Second, the researcher will gather the data and comments provided by the panel of experts, and will email the compiled information to the panel. The panel of experts will, independently, consider the feedback they received from the researcher and rate the competencies once more. responses from participants will be shared anonymously. I estimate that the total amount of time required is about 2 hours, 30 minutes at a time.

There will be no matching of names of participants with the data they provide.

To participate in the study on the panel of experts, participants must meet the following criteria:

1) Commit to remain objective for the duration of the study. 2) Be highly interested in executive coaching and desire to contribute to the advancement of research in the executive coaching field. 3) Have been practicing executive coaching or purchasing executive coaching services for 3 years or more.

As a professional experienced in executive coaching, your participation is vital to this study. Please reply to this email at **ecresearch@ensyn.net** to confirm your willingness to serve on the panel of experts. If you have questions related to the study, please contact Arturo Maxwell at 269-XXX-XXX or via the email address provided above.

Please respond to this invitation as soon as possible.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Kind regards,

Arturo Maxwell
Doctoral Student at Walden University (PhD in OD)

269-XXX-XXX
ecresearch@ensyn.net

Appendix C: Consent Form Emailed to Participants: Instrument development

You are invited to take part in a pilot study evaluating competencies that executive coaches should have for improving the performance of executives. If you choose to participate in the study your role will be to form part of a panel of 5 experts who will help develop a instrument that will later be used for the main study with a larger panel of experts. To participate in the study, you must: a) have at least 3 years of experience practicing executive coaching or purchasing executive coaching services, b) have the ability to remain objective, and c) have a high level of interest in executive coaching. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.
This study is being conducted by a researcher named Arturo Maxwell who is a doctoral student in the Organizational Development Psychology program at Walden University.
Background Information:
The purpose of this study is to evaluate competencies that are essential for executive coaches to have in order to enhance the performance of executives.
Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study:
- You will be asked to provide basic demographic information such as age, occupation, gender, ethnicity, race, years of experience in executive coaching, etc.
- You will be asked to give your opinion (in an online instrument) on how important you believe it is for executive coaches to have each of the competencies listed on the instrument. You will have the option to provide a brief reason for your choices on the competencies instrument.
- You will be asked to read brief anonymous comments provided by other participants in the study.
- You will be asked to complete 3 or 4 online competencies instruments and the completion of each instrument will require approximately 50 minutes to complete.
- Care will be taken to ensure that the identity of all participants is protected.

Here are some sample competencies items:
— Please use the Likert scale to the right of each competency below to provide your professional opinion regarding the importance of the following competency for effective executive coaching:

1. Graduate training in psychology	1.☐strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
2. Business Experience	1.☐strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
This study is voluntary. The researcher will respect your decision whether or not you choose to be in the study. The researcher respects your right to choose not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind during or after the study. You may stop at any time.
Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as fatigue. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.

Individuals who decide to participate in the research study may benefit from the results of this study because it could provide key competencies that executive coaches should have in order to more effectively improve the performance of executives. Those who participate in the study could integrate the key competencies resulting from this study in their coaching or they could use the competencies as a guide when considering the purchase of executive coaching services. **Participants will receive, by email, a document summarizing the results of the study.** Furthermore, participants will have the satisfaction of being part of a study that could increase the body of knowledge in executive coaching research.

Payment:
There will not be any compensation for participating in the study.

Privacy:
Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by assigning a number code to each participant so that the participant's name will not be used in any manner that could reveal the identity of participants, including the final report of the study. Demographic information will be stored on a password protected disc. The website where the competencies instrument is housed will be password protected as well. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:
You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher by telephone 269-815-5218 or by email ecresearch@ensyn.net. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 1-800-925-3368, extension 3121210. Walden University's approval number for this study is **10-14-14-0110408** and it expires on **October 13, 2015.**
Please print or save this consent form for your records.

Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By replying to this email with the words, "I consent", I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Appendix D: Competencies Instrument Developed Based on Literature Review

General Instrument for Effective Executive Coaching Competencies

Dear professional, below you will find 40 potential competencies that may be important for effective coaching. The potential competencies were generated from an extensive review of the executive coaching literature. Please use the Likert scale to the right of each potential competency to provide your professional opinion regarding the importance of the competency for effective executive coaching. Please indicate your response using the following guide 1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, and 5= Strongly agree. Thank you for your participation.

Potential Competencies	Essential for Effective Executive Coaching?				
1. Formal training in psychology	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
2. Business Experience	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
3. Professional coaching certification	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
4. Experience as a business executive	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
5. Working knowledge of coaching frameworks	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
6. Understanding of the Socratic teaching method	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
7. Experience in specific organizational/business areas	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
8. Self-confidence of the coach	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
9. Executive coaching experience	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree

10. Knowledge of leadership theories	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
11. Good Interpersonal skills	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
12. Knowledge of goal setting strategies	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
13. Trustworthiness	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
14. Knowledge of organizational development	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
15. Adherence to informed consent	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
16. Adherence to the code of ethics from a coaching federation	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
17. Experience in the facilitation of organizational change	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
18. Ability to quickly develop a good coach/client working alliance	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
19. Understanding of psychological theories	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
20. Demonstrable ROI for cost of coaching service	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
21. Knowledge of personality theories	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
22. Ability to apply models of human motivation	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree

23. Knowledge of adult development theories	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
24. Knowledge of adult learning theories	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
25. Knowledge of models of career development	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
26. Understanding of models of behavioral change	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
27. Knowledge of work/life balance strategies	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
28. Stress management techniques	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
29. Understanding of how social factors impact individual behavior	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
30. Ability to identify clients who may need psychological intervention	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
31. Ability to apply models of emotional intelligence	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
32. Understanding of gender differences in adulthood	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
33. Ability to conduct 360-degree review	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
34. Experience facilitating strategic planning	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
35. Ability to apply Models of substance abuse	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree

36. Understanding of how clinical diagnoses (e.g. narcissism) can impact workplace dynamics	1.□ strongly disagree	2.□ disagree	3.□ neutral	4.□ agree	5.□ strongly agree
37. Ability to facilitate conflict resolution strategies	1.□ strongly disagree	2.□ disagree	3.□ neutral	4.□ agree	5.□ strongly agree
38. Working knowledge of Family systems theory	1.□ strongly disagree	2.□ disagree	3.□ neutral	4.□ agree	5.□ strongly agree
39. Working knowledge of abnormal psychology	1.□ strongly disagree	2.□ disagree	3.□ neutral	4.□ agree	5.□ strongly agree
40. Facilitation and interpretation of psychological assessments (e.g., 16PF, Strong Interest Inventory, Firo B)	1.□ strongly disagree	2.□ disagree	3.□ neutral	4.□ agree	5.□ strongly agree

Appendix E: Email instrument Completion Instructions: Instrument development

Dear Coaching Professional,
Thank you for your willingness to participate in this executive coaching research.
Below is a web link to the competencies instrument. You may click on the link to be
directed to the instrument. If clicking the link doesn't wok you can copy the link and
paste it in your browser.
Please complete the process by Tuesday April 28. Limit: one instrument submission per
participant.
Link to instrument:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EXEC2015S

Thank you,
Arturo Maxwell
PhD. Student, OD
Walden University
269-815-5218
ecresearch@ensyn.net

Appendix F: Email Reminder to Participants: Instrument development

Dear Coaching professional and research participant.

Five days ago, I sent you an email inviting you to complete the executive coaching instrument. This is a reminder to encourage you to use the link below to access and complete the Executive Coaching instrument. I thank you so much, in advance, for your help. If you need any assistance, please contact me.

Please use this link to access and complete the instrument.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EXEC2015S

Thank you,

Arturo Maxwell
PhD. Student, OD
Walden University
ecresearch@ensyn.net
269-XXX-XXXX

Appendix G: Participant Comments: Instrument Development Phase

Following are the comments participants provided on each competency in the instrument. The competency is in **bold** type face and participant comments are in regular type face.

FORMAL TRAINING IN PSYCHOLOGY
No comment submitted
BUSINESS EXPERIENCE
No Comment submitted
PROFESSIONAL COACHING CERTIFICATION
No comment submitted
EXPERIENCE AS A BUSINESS EXECUTIVE
However, this depends on who you are coaching
WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF COACHING FRAMEWORKS
No comment submitted
UNDERSTANDING OF THE SOCRATIC TEACHING METHOD
No comment submitted
EXPERIENCE IN SPECIFIC ORGANIZATIONAL/BUSINESS AREAS
Depends on the people you will coach
SELF-CONFIDENCE OF THE COACH
No comment submitted
EXECUTIVE COACHING EXPERIENCE
No comment submitted
KNOWLEDGE OF LEADERSHIP THEORIES
No comment submitted
GOOD INTERPERSONAL SKILLS
No comment submitted
KNOWLEDGE OF GOAL SETTING STRATEGIES
No comment submitted
TRUSTWORTHINESS
No comment submitted
KNOWLEDGE OF ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
No Comment submitted
ADHERENCE TO INFORMED CONSENT
No comment submitted
ADHERENCE TO CODE OF ETHICS FROM A COACHING FEDERATION
No comment submitted
EXPERIENCE IN THE FACILITATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE
No comment submitted
ABILITY TO QUICKLY DEVELOP A GOOD COACH/CLIENT WORKING
No comment submitted
UNDERSTANDING OF PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES
specific theories such as how people change
ABILITY TO APPLY MODELS OF HUMAN MOTIVATION

No comment submitted

KNOWLEDGE OF ADULT DEVELOPMENT THEORIES

No comment submitted

KNOWLEDGE OF ADULT LEARNING THEORIES

To understand your own biases and point of view

KNOWLEDGE OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT MODELS

Unless you are doing career coaching, then more knowledge is needed

UNDERSTANDING OF MODELS OF BEHAVIORAL CHANGE

No comment submitted

KNOWLEDGE OF WORK/LIFE BALANCE STRATEGIES

This is a growing need, I would not have included several years ago.

STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

This is a growing need.

UNDERSTANDING OF HOW SOCIAL FACTORS IMPACT INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR

No comment submitted

ABILITY TO IDENTIFY CLIENTS WHO MAY NEED PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTION

No comment submitted

ABILITY TO APPLY MODELS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Especially self-awareness

UNDERSTANDING OF GENDER DIFFERENCES IN ADULTHOOD

No comment submitted

ABILITY TO CONDUCT 360 DEGREE REVIEW

No comment submitted

EXPERIENCE CONDUCTING STRATEGIC PLANNING

No comment submitted

UNDERSTANDING OF HOW CLINICAL DIAGNOSES (E.G. NARCISSISM) CAN IMPACT WORKPLACE DYNAMICS

This is an interesting thing to study, but not as a basic entry course

ABILITY TO FACILITATE CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES

I don't see this as coaching, I guess it depends on your client base

WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY

Not relevant

WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY

No comment submitted

ABILITY TO ADMINISTER AND INTERPRET PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS (E.G., 16PF, STRONG INTEREST INVENTORY, FIRO B, ETC.)

Absolutely critical for corporate work, not as much for other clients.

Appendix H: Email Request to Complete Competencies Instrument: Instrument

development

Dear Coaching professional and research participant.

Five days ago I sent you an email inviting you to complete the executive coaching instrument. This is a reminder to encourage you to use the link below to access and complete the Executive Coaching instrument. I thank you so much, in advance, for your help. If you need any assistance, please contact me.

Please use this link to access and complete the instrument.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EXEC2015S

Thank you,

Arturo Maxwell
PhD. Student, OD
ecresearch@ensyn.net
Walden University
269-XXX-XXXX

Appendix I: Email to Prospective Participants: Delphi Multiround Study

Dear Executive Coaching Professional,

I am seeking individuals with experience in executive coaching to serve on a panel of experts for my Doctoral research study and I need your help. The results of this research could be beneficial to your coaching. My research study is entitled: Executive Coaching Competencies that are Essential for Enhancing Executive on-the-job Performance: A Delphi Study.

Research participants will evaluate competencies on a web-based instrument and will provide optional brief feedback as rationale for their choices. The evaluation of the executive competencies will be done in a four-step process. First, each expert member of the panel will rate the competencies independently and provide brief feedback as rationale for the ratings they assigned to each competency. Second, the researcher will gather the data and comments provided by the panel of experts, and will email the compiled information to the panel. The panel of experts will, independently, consider the feedback they received from the researcher and rate the competencies once more. Responses from participants will be shared anonymously.

A number will be assigned to each participant and will appear on all of the data collected. There will be no matching of names of participants with the data they provide.

To participate in the study on the panel of experts, participants must meet the following criteria:

1) Commit to remain objective for the duration of the study. 2) Be highly interested in executive coaching and desire to contribute to the advancement of research in the executive coaching field. 3) Have been practicing executive coaching or purchasing executive coaching services for 3 years or more.

As a professional experienced in executive coaching, your participation is vital to this study. Please reply to this email at **ecresearch@ensyn.net** to confirm your willingness to serve on the panel of experts. If you have questions related to the study, please contact Arturo Maxwell at 269-XXX-XXX or via the email address provided above.

Please respond to this invitation by Monday June 22.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Kind regards,

Arturo Maxwell

Doctoral Student at Walden University
269-XXX-XXX
ecresearch@ensyn.net

Appendix J: Email Sent to 24 Participants with Consent form

Dear Executive Coach,

Please find attached the consent form for participation in my Executive Coaching research study. I ask you to read it and reply to this email as soon as possible with the words "I consent" In the subject line. Once consent forms are received I will send you a weblink to the competencies instrument.

Your prompt response will be very helpful in expediting the completion of this research.

Thank you again for your willingness to participate in my research study.

Sincerely,

Arturo Maxwell
PhD Student, Walden University
ecresearch@nsyn.net
269-XXX-XXXX

Appendix K: Consent Form Sent to Experts: Delphi Multiround Study

You are invited to take part in a pilot study evaluating competencies that executive coaches should have for improving the performance of executives. If you choose to participate in the study your role will be to form part of a panel of 5 experts who will validate a competencies instrument that will later be used for the main study with a larger panel of experts. To participate in the study, you must: a) have at least 3 years of experience practicing executive coaching or purchasing executive coaching services, b) have the ability to remain objective, and c) have a high level of interest in executive coaching. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Arturo Maxwell who is a doctoral student in the Organizational Development Psychology program at Walden University.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to evaluate competencies that are essential for executive coaches to have in order to enhance the performance of executives.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study:

- You will be asked to provide basic demographic information such as age, occupation, gender, ethnicity, race, years of experience in executive coaching, etc.
- You will be asked to give your opinion (in an online instrument) on how important you believe it is for executive coaches to have each of the competencies listed on the instrument. You will have the option to provide a brief reason for your ratings of the competencies.
- You will be asked to read brief anonymous comments provided by other participants in the study.
- You will be asked to complete 3 or 4 online instrument and each instrument will require approximately 50 minutes to complete.
- Care will be taken to ensure that the identity of all participants is protected.

Here are some sample competencies items:

— Please use the Likert scale to the right of each competency below to provide your professional opinion regarding the importance of the following competency for effective executive coaching:

1. Graduate training in psychology	1.☐strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
2. Business Experience	1.☐strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. The researcher will respect your decision whether or not you choose to be in the study. The researcher respects your right to choose not to be in the

study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind during or after the study. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as fatigue. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.

Individuals who decide to participate in the research study may benefit from the results of this study because it could provide key competencies that executive coaches should have in order to more effectively improve the performance of executives. Those who participate in the study could integrate the key competencies resulting from this study in their coaching or they could use the competencies as a guide when considering the purchase of executive coaching services. **Participants will receive, by email, a document summarizing the results of the study.** Furthermore, participants will have the satisfaction of being part of a study that could increase the body of knowledge in executive coaching research.

Payment:

There will not be any compensation for participating in the study.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by assigning a number code to each participant so that the participant's name will not be used in any manner that could reveal the identity of participants, including the final report of the study. Demographic information will be stored on a password protected disc. The website where the competencies instrument is housed will be password protected as well. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher by telephone 269-XXX-XXXX or by email ecresearch@ensyn.net. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 1-800-925-3368, extension 3121210. Walden University's approval number for this study is **10-14-14-0110408** and it expires on **October 13, 2015.** Please print or save this consent form for your records.

Statement of Consent:

   I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By replying to this email with the words, "I consent", I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Appendix L: Email Sent to Panel of 17 Experts - Link to Competencies Instrument: First

Round

Dear Coaching Professional,

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this executive coaching study.

Below is a web link to the instrument. You may click on the link to be directed to the instrument. If clicking the link doesn't wok you can copy the link and paste it in your browser.

Please complete the instrument as soon as possible. Limit: one instrument submission per participant.

Link to instrument:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ExecCoach2

Thank you,

Arturo Maxwell

PhD. Student, OD Psychology

Walden University

269-815-5218

ecresearch@ensyn.net

Appendix M: Email Reminder to Complete the Instrument: Round 2

Dear Coaching Professional,

Many of you have completed the instrument, and I thank you. However, I'm still waiting for some responses. The population of experienced executive coaches is limited so I need your help. If you have not completed and submitted the competencies instrument, I ask for your help so that we can move-on with the study. I will truly appreciate this.

Below is a web link to the instrument. You may click on the link to be directed to the instrument. If clicking the link doesn't wok you can copy the link and paste it in your browser.

Please complete the instrument as soon as possible. Limit: one instrument submission per participant.

Link to instrument:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ExecCoach2

Thank you very much,

Arturo Maxwell

PhD. Student, OD Psychology

Walden University

269-XXX-XXXX

ecresearch@ensyn.net

Appendix N: Statistical Results EC Competencies: First Round

Dear participant, below you'll find the basic statistical analysis of your responses to the competencies instrument. Please look at the Medians, Means, and Standard Deviations columns to inform your selections during the second round of the study.

Mean: The average of all responses. **Standard deviation:** The amount of spread or distance from the mean.

For this study, competencies with a mean of 4.0 or above have reached consensus, that is, most participants agree that this is an essential competency.

Competencies	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. Formal training in psychology	3.13	1.17
2. Business Experience	4.06	1.09 Consensus
3. Professional coaching certification	4.56	0.86 Consensus
4. Experience as a business executive	3.25	0.90
5. Working knowledge of coaching frameworks	4.50	0.61 Consensus
6. Understanding of the Socratic teaching method	2.81	1.13
7. Experience in specific organizational/business areas	3.19	0.95
8. Self-confidence of the coach	4.63	0.60 Consensus
9. Executive coaching experience	4.13	0.86 Consensus
10. Knowledge of leadership theories	4.38	0.60 Consensus
11. Good Interpersonal skills	4.63	0.78 Consensus
12. Knowledge of goal setting strategies	4.31	0.85 Consensus
13. Trustworthiness	5.00	0.00 Consensus
14. Knowledge of organizational development	3.44	0.79
15. Adherence to informed consent	4.38	0.78 Consensus
16. Adherence to code of ethics from a coaching federation	4.69	0.46 Consensus
17. Experience in the facilitation of organizational change	3.38	1.11
18. Ability to quickly develop a good coach/client working alliance	4.63	0.60 Consensus
19. Understanding of psychological theories	3.06	0.97
20. Demonstrable Return On Investment for cost of coaching service	3.44	0.79
21. Knowledge of personality theories	3.50	0.71
22. Ability to apply models of human motivation		

Competencies	Mean	Standard Deviation
	3.63	0.86
23. Knowledge of adult development theories	4.00	0.71 Consensus
24. Knowledge of adult learning theories	3.88	0.70
25. Knowledge of career development models	3.50	0.61
26. Understanding of models of behavioral change	3.81	0.63
27. Knowledge of work/life balance strategies	3.81	0.73
28. Stress management techniques	4.06	0.75 Consensus
29. Understanding of how social factors impact individual behavior	3.88	0.70
30. Ability to identify clients who may need psychological intervention	4.31	1.16 Consensus
31. Ability to apply models of emotional intelligence	4.50	0.61 Consensus
32. Understanding of gender differences in adulthood	3.25	0.75
33. Ability to conduct 360-degree review	4.19	0.95 Consensus
34. Experience facilitating strategic planning	3.44	1.27
35. Understanding of how clinical diagnoses (e.g. narcissism) can impact workplace dynamics	2.88	0.86
36. Ability to facilitate conflict resolution strategies	3.56	0.70
37. Working knowledge of Family systems theory	2.44	0.86
38. Working knowledge of abnormal psychology	2.38	0.93
39. Ability to administer and interpret psychological assessments (e.g., 16PF, Strong Interest Inventory, Firo B, etc.)	3.19	1.24

Appendix O: Participant Comments: Delphi Round 1

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS
Following are the comments participants provided on each competency in the instrument. The competency is numbered and in uppercase letters, followed by the comments. Note: bold and normal type are alternated to help you know where one comment ends and another starts.

1. FORMAL TRAINING IN PSYCHOLOGY

It can be an incredible asset, yet not all with the background/formal training have emotional intelligence or actual people skills. Tough call
Probably a nicety.
Coaching schools should add psychology courses in their curriculum
unless the client has mental issues, going forward should not need psychology training
Understanding different stages of human development and different behavioral patterns.
A great coach relies on coaching principles, not on psychology
knowledge in psychology is a good background to have, it may help understand human behaviors and motivations
It was my minor and I find it to be helpful at times.
Coaching is more about improving business behavior/results than it is psychology
Executive coaching is a delicate process of business knowledge, understanding people and being able to guide. We are also often the ones who deal with anxiety, depression and delicate family issues that are impacting the executive. Although they may still see a therapist, our skills as psychologists are important.
Coaching is not psychotherapy, and, as such, psychology per se is not an important competency. It is imperative we keep this distinction clear.
The primary focus of coaching is behavior change in key areas related to job performance - that's what Psych provides.
Not necessary to be effective
This felt less important in the past but with advances in positive psychology, adult developmental stages. and neuroscience related to coaching over the last decade, grounding in the sciences has become important.

2. BUSINESS EXPERIENCE

Very helpful yet coaching (versus consulting) is not about being an expert in the field of your clients
A must if one is coaching executives
Not having previous business experience seems not possible in Exec Coaching
could help if feedback is given
The ability to understand some of the implications of business decisions.
Though the coach does not need to have had personal experience as an executive, an understanding of the corporate environment and strategic planning helps.
a Coach who works with executive and has had corporate/ business experience can relate and understand the executive challenges at a deeper level

As a CEO, I learned everything I need to know to be an executive coach.
If improving business results is the goal a background in business is critical
Experience in business if coaching business execs, or in nonprofits if coaching NFP execs.
It is impossible to provide effective coaching for behavior change if you don't understand the business context of the changes that need to take place. Business experience provides this.
A great tool to provide options during brainstorming
Having corporate experience business builds credibility with clients, and provides a more informed context for coaching.

3. PROFESSIONAL COACHING CERTIFICATION

Coaching has a set of competencies and norms that keep the coaching engagement fluid, clean evocative without being entangling.
I feel this would show that a coach understands certain areas and has gone through coach training themselves to attain this certification. Although, I have never had a client ask me about my certification.
Specifically for corporate engagements

unless one is amazing at intuition, formal training is a must
To demonstrate competencies, and understand the code of ethics, confidentiality, and conflicts of interest.
Nontrained and noncertified coach often confuse coaching, consulting and mentoring.
professional coaching must abide by the code of ethic, and it is paramount for coaches to have a strong knowledge of the 11 core competencies. Those without formal certified training who call theme selves coaches oftentimes do not even know what coaching is, sometimes they give advice, they offer solutions, they consult as subject expert, but they don't coach because they don't know how to do it
At least one certification would be good. I have about four.
Because otherwise anyone can do it since it is not licensed - certification at least gives you some comfort that the person has coaching skills
Certification is a way for those without the proper training to call themselves coaches.
This is essential. It is the only way to acquire coach-specific competence.
Certification has become an industry in and of itself and has opened the floodgates for many "lay" people to enter the coaching profession with minimal professional credentials and capabilities.
A must!!!
There are too many people willing to hang a shingle without this. Some may be great, but many are not. Investing in professional certification shows commitment to the profession.

4. EXPERIENCE AS A BUSINESS EXECUTIVE

Can be very helpful yet not necessary for a trained coach
unless feedback is needed

Most executive coaches manage their own businesses so this comes as a benefit.
Just as a physician does not need to have had every disease to diagnose and treat them, an executive coach can be effective without having been an executive.
it could help, so that as a coach you can better relate to the clients' experiences and challenges. But it if no essential
This gives you the foundation for your coaching.
helps to understand the environment and pressure the client faces
You need to understand the financials, budgeting, management and dealing with the politics as well as other topics to be a good coach. You need some experience inside a company handling a management role.
Not necessary to have been an exec, though helpful.
Depends on the focus of the coaching. Experience in having done the same type of job as the client is a double edged sword - you can bring good insight into the predictable challenges for the role. On the other hand, you also bring ingrained biases about how the job should be done.
May provide tools for brainstorming of options
Helpful, not required.

5. WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF COACHING FRAMEWORKS

Imperative
Helps to understand the different frames to view the clients issues.
Each situation may require a different framework. The wider the knowledge, the wider the tools.
vital! training here is really important, and after the formal training of course it comes the practical experience on the field
Yes. This is good so that you are a true listener.
of course...
Helpful, you should have a referent for how to coach and deal with various issues.
Essential
A plus

6. UNDERSTANDING OF THE SOCRATIC TEACHING METHOD

Coaching stimulates critical thinking in its own unique way
There are many different methods not sure that this is the must have.
The Socratic method is one-on-one tutorial with q & a....which we get throughout our early training in schools.
Most coaching is based on the Socratic method, which works beautifully in developing insights and self-growth but in executive coaching, there is a room for an executive coach to provide learning through advocacy of new theories, tools and advice depending on needs and development challenges.
not essential but it could help
This helps in forming questions that allow the person to talk.
to help people get to the answer themsleves
Have not used it and have coached for 30 yrs

This depends on the type of coaching being delivered. A coach's job is not simply to ask questions.

May provide tools for brainstorming of options

Not sure what that is

7. EXPERIENCE IN SPECIFIC ORGANIZATIONAL/BUSINESS AREAS

Can provide insights however coaching is not consulting.

This could be helpful to understand impact and strategy but not a requirement.

The client's specific area of expertise should not affect the coaching. If the coach is too specialized, he can fall into consulting mode.

not essential but it could help

Your clients will be looking for your experiences, that you'll need to share.

as long as they have been in an executive position - not needed

Probably helpful, but broader knowledge of the business is better than a narrow focus.

A good coach does not need experience in what s/he is ciaching.

May provide tools for brainstorming of options

Helpful but not neccesary.

8. SELF CONFIDENCE OF THE COACH

The balance of confidence and humility and unattachment to each is the charm.

As a coach, you must have an understanding of yourself, your biases, and your own confidence to challenge the client.

Imperative. That self-confidence means being vulnerable and transparent as well.

this really helps a lot! without self-confidence coaches cannot really serve their clients at their best

That self confidence helps them feel better about themselves.

of course

The coach needs to know what they know, can and can not do and covey assurance, not arrogance.

Especially critical when gaining trust with execs.

A must

Confident, but not knowing better than the client and/or being too prescriptive.

9. EXECUTIVE COACHING EXPERIENCE

Strong coaching foundation, training and confidence/interest in working with executives is needed.

At some point coaches have not done this and need to break into this arena. Therefore, a coach may be taking on their first client in this area.

Having been coached by trained professionals helps to understand the perspective of clients and how to model the appropriate behaviors.

That depends on the need of the client. An executive who wants a better life/work balance can work with any coach. An executive who wants to develop into a better leader may need specific leadership coaching.

experience is always helpful. But one has to start somewhere, hence at the beginning it is fair that we all need to build the experience up

You should start with experience coaching people from all walks of life.
it is not a simple skill to develop - so practice and experience is critical
These seems an odd question. A competency is not experience in the field. When working with executive you should have worked with various levels and understand how to manage and lead a business. The more experience you have, the more likely you are to have business.
Of course, this is chicken and egg! Gotta do some to get some!
Recommended
    10. KNOWLEDGE OF LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Very helpful
Most of executive coaching is dealing with leadership issues and having knowledge of the different aspects is key.
Executive coaching is about coaching leaders to get the best out of their teams and themselves.
this helps a lot if you work with leaders / are a leadership coach
Your clients will want you to identify their leadership style and will want to talk about others styles they may want.
helps to help the client sort through ideas and options
It is important to be able to explain leadership and non leadership, using a theory helps as well as directing them to great books.
Essentiatl.
May provide tools for brainstorming of options
    11. GOOD INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Imperative
Your ability as an executive coach to listen, observe, communicate, have empathy are critical.

The coach needs to relate to a wide variety of clients with a variety of backgrounds and needs good interpersonal skills to do so.
this characteristic helps, of course, so that you can connect easier with your client
Always helps.
not sure how you could coach without this
Without this you will not be asked back.
Really? Is it possible to be a coach without this?
A must!!!
    12. KNOWLEDGE OF GOAL SETTING STRATEGIES

Can be very helpful yet coaching training grounds the coach in forward focus and goals

Holding the client accountable is one of the tenants of good executive coaching.

it helps to support the clients' in building their plan of actions

Every session should finish with solidifying the goals the client should be reaching toward.

setting goals is key to improving results

critical to helping the person lead, also need to know score cards and strategic planning.

Can be negotiated situation by situation.

Part of the coaching skills

Depends on what the client is trying to acheive and how they want to get there.

13. TRUSTWORTHINESS
Imperative

If the executive client does not trust his coach, there is no possible coaching relationship

There is a trust relationship and is necessary to delve deeply into issues that are challenging and uncomfortable.

Coaching is based on a strong alliance between coach and client. Establishing trust is a must..
essential for confidentiality

Always

Confidentiality

Need to communicate trustworthiness and convey faith in other. Do what you say and walk the talk.

No comment required!

A must

Trust is a prerequisite for meaningful coaching.

14. KNOWLEDGE OF ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Very helpful yet outstanding coaching training provides the framework for the coaching engagement

In some specific cases

It provides some ideas where to point the client but not as critical as other skills for the executive coach.

Organizational development is a company wide assessment and implementation of solutions. It's not about one on one executive coaching.

helpful, not essential

Helpful.

is helpful

How else would the coach provide coaching?

This is a very specific competence that is useful to have, but not essential

May provide tools for brainstorming of options

Basic knowledge is helpful for context.

15. ADHERENCE TO INFORMED CONSENT
Necessary to honor agreements

?

A good executive coach always asks permission (informed consent) to ensure there is awareness and agreement.

paramount

This involves trust, too

of course

More critical with counseling that coaching. The company is the client and you need to agree on what they are told and what is confidential.

Have no idea what you are asking.

16. ADHERENCE TO CODE OF ETHICS FROM A COACHING FEDERATION

Imperative

Not decisive for the hiring process of the Executive coach, but a foundational dimension of any coaching relation

Ethics grounds the relationship and provided trust and confidence in the executive coach.

It's just good business and establishes a baseline for the profession.

this is a must

Even if you aren't part of that organization, you can get a list of what is right and not right to do.

because the profession isn't licensed this is very important

Disagree from the coaching federation, that is a bias. ethics from APA or other professional organization is critical. I do not see a "coaching federation" as anything but a school for poorly trained people wanting to get into a lucrative field without the credentials.

Or professional organization such as APA.

Strongly Agree

Agree

17. **EXPERIENCE IN THE FACILITATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE**
Coaching the executive, not the organization

In specific coaching engagements

Some executive coaches are asked to facilitate and this is a good skill if part of the engagement.

**Developing leaders is primary for an organization in flux
helpful, not essential**

Essential today.

helpful...not required

Often working with the team, board, etc is critical to the individual's success. Understanding org change and how to guide the executive is important.

This is a very specific competence that may be useful, given the circumstances.

Depends on the type of coaching being done.

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Disagree

18. **ABILITY TO QUICKLY DEVELOP A GOOD COACH/CLIENT WORKING**
Needed. the clinet can be slow to warm up- the coach needs to be present

First meeting is decisive

It is always a critical part to establish (and reaffirm) a mutually agreed upon working relationship (sometimes referred to as designing the alliance).

The basis of a good coaching relationship. Without it, there is no trust.

this is a great ability that helps to build a strong relationship quickly

They must feel comfortable with you. They make a judgement about you in the first eight seconds.
you've got to establish the relationship quickly
If you don't the person will not open up and you will not succeed.

Executives are not going to wait around for the ciach to get his/her act together!

Agree

Agree

19. **UNDERSTANDING OF PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES**
Can be helpful

Enables the coach to coach more effectively

It helps the executive coach to understand theories (ex. efficacy) to help when a client is stuck, or listening to their "sabatoures."

Coaching is not based on psychological theory.

Knowledge of psychology is not necessary to be a great coach.

it can help, not essential

It's good to know them, but of course a coach is not a counselor.

see above re: psychology

It helps to explain behavior and change.

Interesting, but not required.

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Agree

20. **DEMONSTRABLE RETURN ON INVESTMENT FOR COST OF COACHING**

The research shows the return on investment. The organization can gather this data on the coaching engagements or the executive can write it up.

How do you plan to measure this?

There are a lot of non tangible results with coaching

unless required

If the relationship is consistent and in agreement (and partnership), the determination on ROI is more about if there is impact/transformation by the client and that is acknowledged on an ongoing basis.

For managers and teams, yes. For executive coaching, not necessary.

it can help particularly with certain corporate clients

Must be able to show them the value of what you offer.

important and very hard to do

Would be nice to have and there are a few studies. I think it is more important to agree on the changes desired and how you will know they happen. Then check in periodically to make sure you are achieving the objectives. If the person is valuable, the change is the return on investment.

An individual coach doean't neer to be able to this.

There are studies and data available.

This is a joint responsibility for coach and the client organization - if the client/org doesn't care about ROI, then why should the coach?

Agree

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

21. **KNOWLEDGE OF PERSONALITY THEORIES**
helpful

Enables the coach to coach more effectively

?

Most of the executive coaching is about what is happening with the client, their agenda, and not about personality theories. This is usually identified by "clinicians/psychologies/therapist" which is not coaching.

A basic understanding of personality theory helps the coach to understand his client's motivation, needs, values and behavior and to help the client understand himself.

Helps you in understanding what they client needs.

helps to sort our ways to support your client

Nice to know.

Interesting but not essential.

Neither Disagree Nor Agree
Agree

22. **ABILITY TO APPLY MODELS OF HUMAN MOTIVATION**
Can help

Good reference materials/tools for the coach to access.

You must know different ways of motivating different individuals. It's all according to how they learn best.

helps when supporting movement forward

Helps when guiding the exec.

Useful.

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

23. KNOWLEDGE OF ADULT DEVELOPMENT THEORIES
Can shed light on words that stimulate the client

Critical to understand at different stages where the client is and what impacts that has on the coaching situation.

You should at least understand these theories.

see above

Have found this very valuable as I work with and help clients understand their and others behavior.

A great framework for coaches.

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Agree

24. KNOWLEDGE OF ADULT LEARNING THEORIES
repeat from previous

Somewhat important to know but overall coaching is more about where the clients is and their issues.

You can't teach them if you only have one style of teaching.

see above

Theories are not critical ... But knowledge of how adults learn is.

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Agree

25. KNOWLEDGE OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT MODELS
interesting option

Depending on what the clients issue is, focusing on career decisions are sometimes discussed (hence when looking for new opportunities/fulfillment), yet executive coaching can be more about leadership development.

I offer the DISC assessment so that I can help them in career areas.

yes, as this is often at the core of the coaching

Interesting, not essential.

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

26. UNDERSTANDING OF MODELS OF BEHAVIORAL CHANGE
Can be a very helpful option

These are the grounding of most coaching programs and not as explicitly stated. Coaching is fundamentally about transformation (hence change in behavior).

A topic that almost every client will want to discuss.

see above

Useful.

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

27. KNOWLEDGE OF WORK/LIFE BALANCE STRATEGIES
coach should be grounded in work/life balance strategy

Focusing on mind/body/spirit is a holistic approach and part of what executive coaching is.
This is one of the main sources of stress for my executive clients

A hot topic today. That's why I wrote my book, PerfectTIMING

depends on the client

Essential, given what execs face.

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Agree

28. STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES
coach recognizes the value of coaching in stress management

Yes, such as breathing, noticing, exercise, healthy lifestyles as these are generally options for the client.

The coach can suggest various techniques but does not need to know them himself.

Another hot topic.

depends on the client

Use this a lot

Essential.

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Agree

29. UNDERSTANDING OF HOW SOCIAL FACTORS IMPACT INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR
coach recognizes social implications on decisions and choices- they will be heard easily in coaching and used in reflecting what is heard and observed for client's clarification

Impact of behavior is part of the coaching experience both on self and others.

Peer pressure, family pressure, standard of living, congruency of status with desired environment, are important effectors of behaviors.

Important.

not sure what that means

Useful.

Strongly Agree

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

30. **ABILITY TO IDENTIFY CLIENTS WHO MAY NEED PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTION**

For safety. If a clinet needs psychological intervention for the safety of self or other, this takes priority

intuition needed

As an executive coach (and not a clinician) it is important to refer if outside the scope of the coaching relationship. (part of code of ethics).

The coach should have a basic knowledge at recognizing signs of depression and addictive behaviors.

You must know when the coaching stops and the counseling should begin.

clearly

Essential to keep coaching clean and ethical.

Strongly Agree

Strongly Agree

31. **ABILITY TO APPLY MODELS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

whether intuitively or through education, coaching is grounded in emotional intelligence

Very important for coach to understand and to identify/notice when guiding the client.

Yes. I teach this course and use it in executive coaching.

a coach (at least I) do this all the time when I am coaching

Helps with many clients

Essential.

Strongly Agree

Agree

32. UNDERSTANDING OF GENDER DIFFERENCES IN ADULTHOOD

Impact of gender is for client to make meaning of and coach to reflect so client can increase awareness, make choices

This can be of discussion but not a major issue.

Also will be a good discussion.

not sure when that would be important

More interesting than essential.

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Agree

33. ABILITY TO CONDUCT 360 DEGREE REVIEW

As an executive coach, I'm certified in numerous instruments (360s, MBTI, Strengths, etc.) as part of my overall offerings. It helps develop a baseline and tools for the client.

Not necessary. This can be outsourced, then reviewed with the client

You bet. You need to make sure both the client and the coach evaluate each other.

needs to be a requirement of a coach

Unfortunately, we need this to get in the door. I say unfortunately because i believe 360s are today's excuse for avoiding meaningful and difficult dialogue. Better that we coach our clients to listen and speak.

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Strongly Agree

34. EXPERIENCE FACILITATING STRATEGIC PLANNING

Additional skills set

As an executive coach, I've been asked to facilitate numerous SP sessions...but this is an additional consultation.

The coach helps put a plan in place, minimize risks and maximize strengths and benefits.

I also offer a course in this. Very helpful.

helpful not required

Agree

Disagree

35. UNDERSTANDING OF HOW CLINICAL DIAGNOSES (E.G. NARCISSISM) CAN IMPACT WORKPLACE DYNAMICS

With increase in rates of narcissism, this may be helpful

Had not thought about this until now.

Executive Coaching is not about clinical diagnosing (leave that to the clinicians/therapists) and not generally a coaching responsibility.

A coach is not a psychologist.

Doesn't hurt to know this.

yes, that would be helpful

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

36. ABILITY TO FACILITATE CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES

This is a specific skill set in addition to coaching

is one is that kind of coach

Helpful to know as this is usually an area most executives get "stuck" in.

Conflicts in executive suites is par for the course.

Yes. This will help when they face it in their workplace.
if the client needs it

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Disagree

37. WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY

Beautiful knowledge set in addition to coaching skills

In Executive Coaching, this has not been as required. Other kinds of coaching/consulting/therapy may need this.

Not familiar with this theory

Not familiar with this area

can't see the direct link

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Disagree

38. WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY
Can be helpful

In Executive Coaching, this has not been as required. Other kinds of consulting/therapy may need this.

A coach is not a psychologist.

Probably good.

can't see the direct link

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Disagree

39. ABILITY TO ADMINISTER AND INTERPRET PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS (E.G., 16PF, STRONG INTEREST INVENTORY, FIRO B, ETC.)
Having at least one solid evaluation tool gives a coach option depth of insight and can increase credibility to organization

As an executive coach, I'm certified in numerous instruments (360s, MBTI, Strengths, etc.) as part of my overall offerings. It helps develop a baseline and tools for the executive client.

All can be outsourced. The coach can then discuss results with the client.

These surveys help them see how science confirms what we are seeing.

not sure about psychological assessments - but workplace, for sure (DiSC/MBTI)

essential skill without which you can not coach and make a meaningful difference

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Neither Disagree Nor Agree

Appendix P: Competencies that Did <u>Not</u> Reach Consensus: Delphi Round 1

Please read all instructions before proceeding.
Dear coaching professional, below you will find competencies that may be important for effective executive coaching. The competencies were generated based on an extensive review of the executive coaching literature, and the competencies were validated by a panel of 5 executive coaching experts.

Please provide your professional opinion regarding the importance of the following competencies for effective executive coaching. Indicate your responses using the following guide 1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4= Agree, and 5= Strongly agree.

Please provide a brief rationale or comment specific to your evaluation of each competency. Comments will be viewed later by other participants. The person providing the comment or rationale will not be identified. Please scan all the competencies in the Competencies before writing comments or suggesting new competencies. Thank you for your participation.

Potential Competencies	Essential for Effective Executive Coaching?				
1. Formal training in psychology	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
2. Experience as a business executive	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
3. Understanding of the Socratic teaching method	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
4. Experience in specific organizational/business areas	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
5. Knowledge of organizational development	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
6. Experience in the facilitation of organizational change	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree

7. Understanding of psychological theories	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
8. Demonstrable Return On Investment for cost of coaching service	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
9. Knowledge of personality theories	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
10. Ability to apply models of human motivation	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
11. Knowledge of adult learning theories	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
12. Knowledge of career development models	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
13. Understanding of models of behavioral change	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
14. Knowledge of work/life balance strategies	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
15. Understanding of how social factors impact individual behavior	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
16. Understanding of gender differences in adulthood	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
17. Experience facilitating strategic planning	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
18. Understanding of how clinical diagnoses (e.g.	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree

narcissism) can impact workplace dynamics					
19. Ability to facilitate conflict resolution strategies	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
20. Working knowledge of Family systems theory	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
21. Working knowledge of abnormal psychology	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree
22. Ability to administer and interpret psychological assessments (e.g., 16PF, Strong Interest Inventory, Firo B, etc.)	1.☐ strongly disagree	2.☐ disagree	3.☐ neutral	4.☐ agree	5.☐ strongly agree

Appendix Q: Email Sent to Participants: Delphi Round 2

Dear Executive Coaching Professional,

I am very grateful for your participation in this executive coaching research. Thank you very much for completing the first round of the study.

Please read the following information carefully.

Attached you will find two PDF documents, one with all the brief comments/rationale you provided in the first round of the study, and a document containing basic statistical results of your competencies responses. Please look at the comments and statistics in these files first; then use the weblink below to complete the second round of the study. Some competencies have been removed from the first-round instrument because more than 70% of you agreed that these competencies were essential for effective executive coaching.

Below is a web link to the modified instrument. You may click on the link to be directed to the instrument. If clicking the link doesn't wok you can copy the link and paste it in your browser.

Limit: one Competencies submission per participant.

Link to instrument:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EXECCOACHSURV

Thank you,

Arturo Maxwell
PhD. Student, OD Psychology

Walden University
269-XXX-XXXX
ecresearch@ensyn.net

Appendix R: Email Reminder Sent to Participants: Delphi Round 2

Dear Executive Coaching Professional,

I imagine that you are very busy but I need your help. Some of you have completed the second competencies instrument and I thank you. But I am still waiting for others. Your participation is critical for this research. Some have found the attached list of comments and statistics very insightful.

Thank you very much for completing the first round of the study. Below is information for completion of the second instrument.

Please read the following information carefully.

Attached you will find two PDF documents, one with all the brief comments/rationale you provided in the first round of the study, and a document containing basic statistical results of your competencies ratings. Please look at the comments and statistics in these files first; then use the weblink below to complete the second round of the study. Some competencies have been removed from the second-round instrument because more than 70% of you agreed that these competency were essential for effective executive coaching.

Below is a web link to the instrument. You may click on the link to be directed to the instrument. If clicking the link doesn't wok you can copy the link and paste it in your browser.

Limit: one Competencies submission per participant.

Link to instrument:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EXECCOACHSURV

Thank you,

Arturo Maxwell
PhD. Student, OD Psychology
Walden University
269-XXX-XXXX
ecresearch@ensyn.net

Appendix S: Participant Comments from Competencies Instrument: Round 2

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS – ROUND 2
Following are the comments participants provided on each competency in the instrument for Round 2. The competencies are numbered and in UPPER CASE followed by the comments. Note: bold and normal typefaces are alternated to help you know where one comment ends and another starts.

1. FORMAL TRAINING IN PSYCHOLOGY
Professional training of Coaching is what is needed

Formal training in psychology becomes a slippery slope for a coach as the coach will then have a tendency to lose the core principles of coaching and rely on psychology instead. Study of positive psychology is useful but that is not 'formal training'. It is just like learning about philosophy. These are more thoughtful principles of life.

it can help a lot, but it is not essential

A distinction between counseling and coaching should be clear to the exec coach.

I think of Coaching as different from psychology - certainly wouldn't hurt

Not necessary

Coaching is not psychology; it is clearer if we keep the professions distinct.

although the growth of narcissism is on the rise, so it might help to recognize this or axis two personality disorders, coaching frameworks provide the working text for engagement.

This has become more important. Execs will expect the coach to have familiarity with positive psychology, adult developmental stage, neuropsychology and coaching, etc.

Coaching is distinct from counseling, however understanding human behavior and being able to address issues such as anxiety, recognize when they need more than you can provide.

I feel it helps to understand human behavior and things that can be getting in the way of accomplishing goals.

2. EXPERIENCE AS A BUSINESS EXECUTIVE

Well this can be helpful, fresh outlook also was very helpful. Coaches do not need to be to their clients are, they need to be a good coach

Either way. It can help but is not necessary. It depends on the goals of the client. A very specific business goal may require in depth knowledge of the subject, in which case experience in this area may prove important but then the coach becomes more of a consultant. Still, I am ambivalent. Great coaches coach executives to thrive beyond the material aspect of running a company. That's what they pay me for.

it helps a lot if you work with executives

A must!

helps to understand the world the client is in

Helpful

A coach does not need experience as a business executive to coach business execs.

We DO need an understanding of the dynamics of working in organizations.

coaching frameworks provide the needed perimeters. Refreshing to not have an executive at times

Expected
It helps to understand the issues they face and build credibility.
It can help, but does not always make a difference, it depends on the coachee's issues.

3. UNDERSTANDING OF THE SOCRATIC TEACHING METHOD

Well this can be helpful, fresh outlook also was very helpful. Coaches do not need to be to their clients are, they need to be a well-trained coach

Coaching is based on the Socratic method, which is to help the client develop their own critical thinking skills. A trained coach is usually taught via this method. We probe into the problems at hand, question assumptions, encourage deeper answers and wider perspectives, aid in judgment and interpretation of situations, coax creative visions and fresh approaches and let the client determine their strategies, goals, etc.... all with a blend of disciplined and intuitive questioning. To not use the Socratic method means you are more a consultant than a coach. Nothing wrong with that. but let's not call it coaching.

it can help but I don't believe that it is essential

basis for coaching

Not important.

I want them to learn to find the answers for many things. Other times they need information first

Do you mean asking questions rather than telling how to do something? Is executive coaching teaching?

4. EXPERIENCE IN SPECIFIC ORGANIZATIONAL/BUSINESS AREAS

Necessary for a consultant, not necessary for Coach

There may be a natural tendency for a coach to be attracted to an area that they are more familiar with. Are they a better coach because of it? Not necessarily but it may build trust and credibility faster with the client. In that sense, it's a plus.

it can help but I don't believe that it is essential

Only if one is choosing to specialize in a particular industry.

Helpful

Only if specializing

A good coach does not need to have experience in the field of the client.

not necessary

Should have held a leadership role with P & L and budgeting responsibility.

It helps to the extent that you can connect with the person easier, but not critical

5. KNOWLEDGE OF ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Necessary for a consultant, not necessary for Coach

Not necessary. Executive coaching is about the 'executive', not about having the knowledge of assessing and implementing solutions at the company. A consulting firm would be more appropriate in this case and can work in tandem with an executive coach.

it can help a lot, but I am not sure that it is essential

yes

Nice, not necessary

A good coach does not need to have experience in the field of the client.

may be helpful not necessary

At least basic Tuckman model

6. EXPERIENCE IN THE FACILITATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Necessary for a business consultant, not necessary for a coach

Yes. Organizational change is among the causes that pushes an executive to search for a coach. It's a good skill to have.

it helps a lot

This may not be relevant.

support the change

Depends on area of specialty

Could be useful.

only if hired as an organizational change coach/facilitator

Familiarity but don't need to have direct expertise

Not needed as a coach, but good to have to work more broadly within organizations.

7. UNDERSTANDING OF PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES

Necessary for a psychologist, not necessary for a coach-

After coaching successfully for 14 years, I continue to believe that the knowledge of psychology is not a requirement for good executive coaching and can, in fact, muddle the profession. Not to say that we don't use psychology, of course we do whether we know it or not. But to make it a formal competency in executive coaching is what bothers me.

it can help but I don't believe that it is essential

not sure

Understanding human nature, formal or not

Coaching is not psychology; it is clearer if we keep the professions distinct.

Not necessary. may be a bonus

Understanding of human behavior, adult development, how people change, grow and learn are all important

8. DEMONSTRABLE RETURN ON INVESTMENT FOR COST OF COACHING SERVICE

Studies have proven there is a return on investment for coaching

Some companies will require it. It depends on the executive team. It's hard to define. The job of the coach is to make the executive aware of the positive changes in himself or herself and the overall health of the company. A steady overview of "Where we were" and "Where we are today" is the best proof of ROI :)

it can help with organizations

Once you figure this out let me know.

yes if there is a way to do that

Too many intangibles

Studies show ROI. Each engagement

This is tricky and not always possible to have the data. you do need the impact of coaching measured, often this is subjective at the C level.

It sounds great, but the amount of time and effort to measure success is not worth it. It's nice to have when it is something measureable, but how do you control for all the variables to really make the results measureable?

9. KNOWLEDGE OF PERSONALITY THEORIES

Necessary for a psychologist, not necessary for a coach

That knowledge may help the coach focus more rapidly on the strengths of the executive.

it can help but I don't believe that it is essential

helpful

Not necessary

Could be useful; not imperative.

not necessary, Coaching frameworks has foundation for coaching

Yes! Again, it helps to understand what it will take to make the changes the person wants to make

10. ABILITY TO APPLY MODELS OF HUMAN MOTIVATION

coaching Domain of practice is what is necessary to apply

Important to assess the quickest way to move forward with an executive. Establishes trust in the coach as the client feels that "They get me".

it can help but I don't believe that it is essential

yes

Ability to assist a coachee in reaching their goals

Useful.

can be a bonus yet coaching frameworks has foundation in increasing motivation

I can't get as excited about motivation, I think personality and psychology theories cover it.

11. KNOWLEDGE OF ADULT LEARNING THEORIES

Can be quite helpful not necessary

Adult learning theories is more about the psychology of teaching than it is about coaching. A coach is not a teacher.

it can help but I don't believe that it is essential

yes

Understanding theory isn't the skill required

Very useful.

Huge bonus

Yes, helpful.

12. KNOWLEDGE OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT MODELS

not necessary

Important to help executives assess or change direction in their career. Executives are often restless and creative and can get bored quickly if not stimulated by new challenges.

it can help but I don't believe that it is essential

Only if career development is the area of focus for the coach.

yes

Depends on area of specialty

Could be useful; not imperative.

not necessary

For succession planning this could be helpful and leadership development.

I think this depends on the issues, you can't be an expert in everything, it's an expertise within executive coaching, some people have focused on this and really know the tools and techniques that will help find a job . If that's what the person wants they should find someone with those skills.

13. UNDERSTANDING OF MODELS OF BEHAVIORAL CHANGE

not necessary

This is a really complex subject with many different models. A basic understanding may be useful. I use my own modified form of CBT to facilitate change in my clients if they desire to develop or evolve in a particular way.

it can help but I don't believe that it is essential

yes

Models don't equal competence

Very useful.

not necessary, bonus!

You need to have a model of how you coach such as using cognitive behavioral psychology.

This feels repetitive with psychology or psychological theories.

14. KNOWLEDGE OF WORK/LIFE BALANCE STRATEGIES

Included in the domain of practice for coaching and training

Pretty much par for the course. Executives are stressed and often look for a coach to help them with grounding and centering.

it can help but I don't believe that it is essential

helpful

Knowledge of how to ask applicable questions

Imperative.

helpful! and incorporated in coaching models

A few aspect of success as the person moves up the later for themselves and as a coach to staff.

I suppose it could help. Not convinced that Executive Coaches need it, but could be helpful as a background.

15. UNDERSTANDING OF HOW SOCIAL FACTORS IMPACT INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR

A bonus, but not necessary beyond coaching training

The client is part of an entire network - be it at work, at play or with family. Social factors, for better or worse, often guide the behaviors of a client. The coach should listen for dissonances.

it can help but I don't believe that it is essential

yes

Theories are interesting, not necessary

I donlt know what this means.

Staying with coaching models

This is part of a background in psychology, I do not think it is a separate competency. Most of these are job knowledge rather than what I would call competencies. It is not the understanding of the concept that makes a good coach, it is being able to use it.

Not sure a coach needs this

16. UNDERSTANDING OF GENDER DIFFERENCES IN ADULTHOOD

but not necessary beyond coaching training

It can be a factor that the coach should be aware of but not essential.

I don't believe this is fundamental

I say indifferent, however, it may be something that needs to be researched by the coach.

helpful

Helpful

May be helpful- on the fence about this.

Same for most of these, they are not competencies. This is education and training for a coach. Gender may impact perspective, however men and women both can be empathetic, etc. The coach needs to be about to evaluate and guide the individual based on these concepts.

This could be useful as a specialty kind of thing. Maybe some competency but not core.

17. EXPERIENCE FACILITATING STRATEGIC PLANNING

Not necessary

Very helpful. I have facilitated numerous strategic planning sessions' implementation. However, these are with teams. It's outside of the one on one executive coaching.

it can help but I don't believe that it is essential, it depends on the type of coaching one does

can be helpful

Depends on area of expertise

On the fence- great bonus yet coaching models have basic strategic planning

Being able to facilitate and coach on strategy is critical.

18. UNDERSTANDING OF HOW CLINICAL DIAGNOSES (E.G. NARCISSISM) CAN IMPACT WORKPLACE DYNAMICS

Not necessary although it could be helpful

We are not in the business of playing psychologist in the boardroom. In case of a specific diagnosis, I will work in tandem with a psychologist.

it can help, not so sure it's essential

clinical diagnoses would border on counseling. Knowing what narcissism is, however making the "diagnosis" should not be done by an exec coach.

helpful

Not a psychologist

May be a bonus but sticking with coaching frameworks and models is essential

The not psychology coach should beware of diagnosis and labeling. This can be dangerous, yet it is critical to understand as there are many in leadership roles with these characteristics. They impact the morale and culture.

Only to the extent that you know when you need to do a referral

19. ABILITY TO FACILITATE CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES

although it could be helpful, not necessary unless a consultant

Executives put out fires all day long. Conflict resolution skills are hugely important to them. A coach is well placed to offer help in this area.

it can help

yes

Depends on area of expertise

Could be useful.

Built into coaching

This is a competency.

I think this is outside of coaching.

20. WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY

A bonus but not necessary

Some coaches swear by it. I have taken a couple of classes in Constellation work but I don't see it being really helpful for my one on one coaching practice. For teams, yes.

it can help, not so sure it's essential

do't think this is needed

Doesn't seem relevant to executive coaching

Fascinating and helpful

Have not found this very useful in coaching executives. It is more about work/life balance. Coaches are not family counselors.

Not really critical

21. WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY

A bonus but not necessary

What is the rationale behind that question? If I see that someone is acting irrationally and is uncoachable, I will take the necessary steps to extract myself from the situation or require professional psychological help as part of the coaching.

not so sure it is really fundamental

might be helpful to know when other help is needed

More important to know when other intervention is needed

bonus

Need to recognize when it occurs and translate into business language.

Maybe knowing when a person needs a referral to a therapist is important.

22. **ABILITY TO ADMINISTER AND INTERPRET PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS (E.G., 16PF, STRONG INTEREST INVENTORY, FIRO B, ETC.)**

Coaching domain has it's own assessments

Many of my colleagues are certified in various assessments. I outsource a couple of them and discuss the results with my clients. I don't rely on them and feel pressured to have a couple in my coaching arsenal because they are so prevalent these days. In my opinion, coaches rely too much on them.

it helps a lot

of course

Depends on the coach

360s are more important in a coach's repertoire

Familiarity helpful but can be provided by another facilitator with coach in attendance

I would use ones designed for business rather than to predict pathology. Many an interest inventory, however I have rarely uses one with executives. I uses values, personality-one for business not the 16-PF. OPQ, Assess, Hogan, etc. Firo-B is good. This is a basic skill the interpretation and ability to help the person understand the human dynamic.

I think choice of psychological assessments and ability to interpret them is critical.

Appendix T: Email Sent to Experts for Completing Round 3

Dear Executive Coaching Professional,

Thank you very much for completing the second round of the competencies instrument. And thank you for hanging-in there. This is the last step, in terms of your participation.

Please read the following information carefully.

Attached you will find three PDF documents, one PDF with all the brief comments/rationales you provided in the second round of the study, another PDF document containing basic statistical results of the second instrument responses, and a PDF document containing statistical information (means) from responses in the first and second instruments side by side. Please look at the comments and statistics in these files first; then use the weblink below to complete the third (and last) round of the study. The competencies in the third instrument will be the same as in the second-round instrument because the means of responses did not reach the consensus criteria. (i.e. means of 4.0 or higher). However, after reading the new comments and viewing the statistics you may gain a different perspective and reconsider your ratings on the competencies.

Below is a web link to the instrument. You may click on the link to be directed to the instrument. If clicking the link doesn't wok you can copy the link and paste it in your browser.

Limit: one instrument submission per participant

Link to instrument:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ExecCSurv3

Thank you,

Arturo Maxwell
PhD. Student, OD Psychology
Walden University
269-815-5218
ecresearch@ensyn.net

Appendix U: Email Reminder Sent to Experts: Delphi Round 3

Dear Executive Coaching Professional,
This is a friendly reminder for you to complete the third and last round of the study. Your help would be greatly appreciated.

Please read the following information carefully.

Attached you will find three PDF documents, one PDF with all the brief comments/rationales you provided in the second round of the study, another PDF document containing basic statistical results of the second instrument responses, and a PDF document containing statistical information (means) from responses in the first and second instruments side by side. Please look at the comments and statistics in these files first; then use the web link below to complete the third (and last) round of the study. The competencies in the third instrument will be the same as in the second-round instrument because the means of responses did not reach the consensus criteria. (i.e. means of 4.0 or higher). However, after reading the new comments and viewing the statistics you may gain a different perspective and reconsider your selections on the instrument

Below is a web link to the instrument. You may click on the link to be directed to the instrument. If clicking the link doesn't wok you can copy the link and paste it in your browser.

Limit: one instrument submission per participant.

Link to instrument:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ExecCSurv3

Thank you,

Arturo Maxwell
PhD. Student, OD Psychology
Walden University
269-XXX-XXXX
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Appendix V: Final Reminder Sent to the Panel of Experts: Round 3

Dear Executive Coaching Professional,
This is a friendly reminder for you to complete the third and last Competencies. The Competencies will be closed at 6pm Today, Tuesday Nov. 3. Please try to complete it by 6pm.

Please read the following information carefully.

Attached you will find three PDF documents, one PDF with all the brief comments/rationales you provided in the second round of the Competencies, another PDF document containing basic statistical results of the second Competencies responses, and a PDF document containing statistical information (means) from responses in the first and second instrument side by side. Please look at the comments and statistics in these files first; then use the weblink below to complete the third (and last) round of the instrument. The competencies in the third instrument will be the same as in the second round instrument because the means of responses did not reach the consensus criteria. (i.e. means of 4.0 or higher). However, after reading the new comments and viewing the statistics you may gain a different perspective and reconsider your selections on the instrument.

Below is a web link to the instrument. You may click on the link to be directed to the instrument. If clicking the link doesn't wok you can copy the link and paste it in your browser.

Limit: one instrument submission per participant.

Link to instrument:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ExecCSurv3

Thank you,
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