Chapter 7
Coaching Global Teams and Global Team Leaders

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The torrid pace of globalization is challenging businesses worldwide to adjust to the rapidly evolving competitive landscape. According to McKinsey Global (2014), the total value of cross-border trade in goods, services, and financial flows in 1990 accounted for an impressive $5 trillion in value or a total of about 23 % of global GDP; by 2012, the number had leaped to $26 trillion, the equivalent of an astounding 36 % of global GDP. An Ernst and Young (2013) study estimated that a billion new middle-class consumers from India, Brazil, Mexico, China, and other developing countries would be added to the world marketplace by the end of the current decade. The same study projected that two-thirds of the world's entire middle class will reside in the Asia-Pacific region by 2030. These trends, coupled with rapidly graying populations in the developed world, represent a major shift away from slow growth United States–Western Europe–Japan as the global economic center of gravity. Rather, the world economy is increasingly driven by rapidly growing emerging markets.

Globalization creates both opportunities and challenges for businesses (Hill, 2011). The rising middle class in emerging markets has created new demand for products and services. Regulatory burdens have generally decreased worldwide (Hill, 2011) and digital technologies have created opportunities for ever-smaller companies to engage in cross-border trade (McKinsey Global, 2014). At the same time, numerous challenges confront businesses working in a global environment. Challenges include developing and launching new products (Barczak, McDonough, & Athanassiou, 2006), dealing with language differences (Berg & Holtbrügge, 2010; British Council, Booz, & Hamilton, 2013; Gundling, Hogan, & Cvitkovich, 2011), addressing team conflicts that result from time differences and communication delays (Kankanhalli, Tan, & Zwok-Kee, 2006; Montoya-Weiss, Massey, & Song, 2001; Schlenkrich & Upfold, 2009), and responding to cultural differences (Handin &

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Steinwedel, 2006; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004; Peterson, 2007; White & Shullman, 2012).

Maznevski and Chui (2013) asserted that teams accomplish most of the work done by organizations today. Virtual teams are increasingly being used to enhance cooperation required in partnering and joint ventures and to provide increased flexibility and innovation in service delivery and product development (Yukl, 2006). As globalization proceeds apace, teams that are global in reach are increasingly tasked with a variety of missions including innovation (Tjosvold & Wong, 2004), developing and launching new products (Barczak et al., 2006), achieving competitive advantage (Hagen & Aguilar, 2012), and improving coordination of value-chain activities (Berg & Holtbrügge, 2010).

Leader-provided coaching for team members has become a central responsibility for leaders and executive coaching has seen a precipitous increase in use over the past 15 years. Coaching can be provided by a leader of an individual or team (which will be referred to in this paper as leader coaching) or an internal or external executive coach. Very little empirical research has been conducted on coaching effectiveness,[1] and even less on coaching across cultures. This chapter provides an overview of the literature on coaching with the caveat that most of the extant literature has been written by practicing professional coaches. Despite the drawback of limited generalizability, practicing leader coaches and executive coaches can provide real-world lessons as the empirical work on the field of coaching continues to grow.

This chapter will first provide a brief overview of the world of coaching, discussing differences and similarities between executive coaching and leader coaching. Since modern coaching practices were developed largely in the west, particularly in the United States, this section will also focus on identifying potential dangers of applying unmodified western practices in a global environment. The second section will focus on global teams. Global teams are often comprised of individuals from different professions, different national cultures, and different organizations, and these individuals accomplish much of their work together virtually (Briscoe, Randall, & Tarique, 2012). When team members are geographically dispersed and they utilize extensive use of information technologies such as teleconferencing or web-based technologies, the team is referred to as a global virtual team (GVT).

The focus of the third section of this chapter is effective global team leadership practices identified in the literature. While global leadership has received some attention recently, there is little research focusing specifically on global team leadership. Team leaders exert a major influence on a team's effectiveness by setting goals, monitoring work, providing feedback, coaching, and influencing (Joshi & Lazarova, 2005). The fourth section will provide an overview of global and cross-cultural coaching, focusing both on executive coaching and leader coaching. The section will present a synthesis of the global leadership and coaching literature as it relates to coaching global teams and global team leaders. The penultimate section will provide tentative suggestions for coaching global leaders. A brief closing section will include suggestions for future research.

[1] Most scientific work in this area is drawn from case studies.

Overview of Coaching

While one often thinks of coaching as a modern phenomenon, its western roots stretch back at least to Socrates' rejection of the sophists' narrow focus on persuasive rhetoric in favor of the search for wisdom and the good life. Plato's teaching, delivered in a style recognizable by coaches today, had a profound impact on Aristotle, who would in turn tutor one of the most famous leaders in western history, Alexander the Great. In the east, Buddha and Confucius also instructed followers on how best to lead their lives. Both philosophers had a lasting impact on eastern thought. Like its philosophical forebears, modern coaching involves the facilitation of learning (Hamlin, Ellinger, & Beattie, 2006; Rosinski, 2009; Stober & Grant, 2006; Ting & Scisco, 2006) but is generally directed toward a specific end such as developing skills (Yukl, 2006) or achieving goals (Gundling et al., 2011; Rosinski and Abbott 2006; Spence & Oades, 2011).

Both leader coaching and executive coaching have become ubiquitous in organizations. There has been a marked increase in the use of formal coaching programs. Handin and Steinwedel (2006) found that nearly 40 % of Fortune 500 firms were integrating coaching into their development programs, and the American Management Association (2008) placed the figure at just over one-half the organizations they had surveyed. According to Gentry, Manning, Wolf, Hernez-Broome, and Allen (2013), just five years later the number had risen to over 70 % of organizations.

Coaching is a core activity of leaders. Effective leader coaching has been shown to improve performance and productivity (Yu, 2007), manager–employee relationships (Hagen & Aguilar, 2012), and effective coaches have been shown to improve learning and skills in teams (Hagen & Aguilar, 2012). Despite the increasing popularity of executive coaching, empirical research on its effectiveness is scarce (Sherman & Freas, 2004). Nonetheless, the research that exists indicates that executive coaching may be effective (De Haan, Duckworth, Birch, & Jones, 2013; McGovern et al., 2001), particularly when paired with multirater feedback (Luthans & Peterson, 2003; Thach, 2002). Tangible results such as improved productivity, improved quality, and reduced turnover as well as intangible results such as improved stakeholder and direct report relationships, improved teamwork, improved job satisfaction, and reduced conflict were reported by McGovern et al. (2001). The American Management Association (2008) found that companies that reported utilizing coaching more than in the past were more likely to see increased revenue growth, greater market share, higher profitability, and better customer satisfaction.

Leader Coaching and Culture

Individuals and organizations have overwhelmingly embraced leader coaching. Coaching is viewed as a core function of management (Hagen & Aguilar, 2012) and is critical for developing organizational talent. In the *CCL handbook of coaching*,

Ting and Scisco (2006) define a coach as "anyone who is formally or informally engaged in a coaching relationship with individuals and aspires to improve his or her leadership and in so doing improve the leadership capacity in an organizational context…" (p. 10). Hagen and Aguilar (2012) define manager coaching as "the process by which a manager, through guided discussion and activity, helps a member of his/her staff to solve a problem or carry out a task more efficiently and/or effectively" (p. 367).

Leader-provided coaching has been shown to have a positive impact on group processes, team and individual learning, self-management, and perceptions of levels of empowerment (Hagen & Gavrilova Aguilar, 2012). Ting and Scisco (2006) integrated coaching research and practice from the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL), and provided a practical framework for coaching, as well as specific tools and techniques.

The CCL leader coaching approach consists of three foci. The first of these is relationship, the context in which the coaching occurs. The second focus includes CCL's leadership development model: assessment, challenge, and support (ACS). The final focus is on results, both tangible and intangible, that are being targeted (Ting & Riddle, 2006). The relationship focus is the interpersonal connection between coach and the individual being coached. Relationship includes rapport, commitment, and collaboration, of both the coach and the person being coached working together as equals to explore challenges and develop solutions. A focus on relationships is obviously a critical element in effective coaching, but assumptions of what constitutes a good relationship and how to develop effective relationships vary across cultures. A number of cultural factors complicate the intercultural relationship between coach and protégé. In an intercultural context, culture impacts how relationships are formed and maintained as well as how power is viewed and exercised. Even the assumption of working together as "equals" has cultural overtones.

CCL's assumption of equality in the relationship, while admittedly an important factor in low power-distance cultures such as the US, the Netherlands, or the UK may be problematic in higher power-distance cultures. Working together "as equals" presumes there is little or no difference in hierarchy between the coach and person being coached. However, in higher power-distance cultures, the person being coached will have different expectations of his or her leader than in lower power-distance cultures. Such cultural differences will be broached more fully in the later discussion on global team leadership.

Nangalia and Nangalia (2010) argued that western assumptions, such as equality, must be scrutinized: "Given the fact that most Asian civilizations (especially Chinese and Indian) have traditions ranging back to a few thousand years, it is difficult to accept that management practices, including the conventional understanding of coaching, could be applied in an Asian ethos without adaptation" (p. 54). This admonition extends to leader coaches who are obviously also viewed as authority figures. Jenkins (2006) related an instructive anecdote from an Asian coach: "Asians, particularly those from countries with a Confucian heritage, such as China, Japan, Korea, and even Singapore, are taught to listen to and show respect for their elders and superiors—particularly to teachers or 'experts.' Coaches therefore have to

beware of being cast in that role. This can lead to the coachee saying, 'Tell me what to do and I will do it.'" (p. 24).

This anecdotal evidence is supported by Nangalia and Nangalia's (2010) exploratory study involving 10 executive coaches from India, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Japan, and Taiwan who worked with clients from Asia and also with clients from the US and Australia. The authors found that "The coach in Asia is not seen as an equal. He or she is seen as a respected elder or teacher…" (p. 56). The authors argued that this stems from the understanding that "status is ascribed from the social hierarchy present in Asian society" (Nangalia and Nangalias, 2010). Coaches in Asia are viewed as trusted advisors who share their wisdom, offer guidance and insight, and provide direction by giving advice and teaching. The executive coaches in this study also noted that establishing trust takes longer in collectivist Asian cultures than in the west. The coaches noted the contrast between western and Asian approaches to the first several coaching sessions: most often the first three to four sessions with Asian clients focus on establishing a trusting relationship well before any feedback is discussed or offered, while feedback is more commonly discussed and analyzed in the United States during the first couple of sessions. Establishing trust and rapport with the client is important in any cultural setting, but is established in different ways and in different time frames.

Assessment, challenge, and support (ACS) comprised the second focus area in CCL's approach. Assessment includes acquiring data about the person and the performance context in which the coaching takes place; challenge refers to plans and actions designed to create disequilibrium that can spur the individual to stretch, change, and grow. Support includes determining and acquiring resources, celebrating wins, dealing with setbacks, maintaining momentum, and focusing on results (Ting & Riddle, 2006). I will address the impact of culture on the ACS component of the model in turn.

First, culture can impact assessment. Delay and Dalton (2006) underscored that cultural values play a critical role in how assessment is conducted and how the feedback from assessment is related to the person being coached. The coach must realize that tools such as 360° multirater feedback are more popular in the United States as a result of a preference for quantification, objective measurement, empirical data (Hoppe, 1998; Delay & Dalton, 2006), and low-context, explicit communication (Hoppe, 1998). Hoppe contrasted the preference of US Americans for quantification to French and German preferences for theory rather than "isolated" data. Hoppe also contrasted US cultural preferences for quantifiable data to Japanese and Chinese cultures where there is a preference for "relational, synchronic, and metaphorical thinking that pays less attention to isolated, linear, analytical data and instead emphasizes the broader context of human relationships and events to provide meaning" (p. 351).

In terms of challenge, the types of learning activities that are likely to be effective in individual cases also will be influenced by cultural preferences. Hoppe (1998) argued that tolerance for uncertainty, referred to in the cultural literature as uncertainty avoidance, should play a role in determining the best learning activities for developing individuals. Uncertainty avoidance is "the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations"

(Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010, p. 191). Hoppe contrasted lower uncertainty avoidance cultures such as the US, Britain, Australia, and Sweden to higher uncertainty avoidance cultures France, Germany, Turkey, and Japan, arguing that individuals from the former cultures would be less likely to be motivated to accept assignments "in novel, ill-defined, and potentially conflictual situations that push them beyond their comfort zone… as a consequence, leadership development in these countries tends to be more planful, functional, incremental, and tied to organizational needs" (Hoppe, pp. 369–370).

The cultural dimensions of individualism–collectivism, power-distance, and uncertainty avoidance may also influence an individual's preferences for level of leader support. 'Rugged individualists' from the US reel at the thought of 'micromanagement', and generally measure their own achievement in individual terms. In dozens of leadership workshops with American and Canadian leaders I have conducted over the past 20 years, micromanagement has never failed to make the list of poor leader behaviors. Fostering employee self-reliance is seen as a major function of the leader. In collectivist cultures, with a greater focus on the group, the level of support viewed as effective is generally greater. As Hoppe (1998) noted, "managers in China, Mexico, Japan, Indonesia and Singapore consider it their duty to guide and counsel their employees…Similarly, the workgroup believes itself responsible for helping each member's professional development" (Hoppe, 1998, p. 373).

Such cultural differences have important implications for coaches as well. A coach who avoids being too directive and leads clients to higher levels of self-awareness through the skillful use of questioning skills may be viewed as highly effective in a Canadian or US context. In contrast, in Latin America and Asia, advice, insights, and greater direction are more likely to be expected. One Thai coach wrote, "my Thai clients have a tendency to have the coach give them an answer to their problems, so I "share" a lot of information and that is appreciated…In Asian cultures clients appreciate a coach sharing his knowledge, so that the coach would spend more time doing the talking" (Nangalia & Nangalia, 2010, p. 58). Asking probing questions and sharing observations are important tools for coaches regardless of culture, but how much of each behavior is expected varies across cultures.

Finally, culture may impact the interpretation and value of results. DeLay and Dalton (2006) argued that more collectivist cultures focus on achieving group results while more individualistic cultures focus on achieving individual results, and linking those to organizational results. A global leader coach must seek to understand what results are critical from the perspective of the organization, team and individuals being coached, and provide coaching directed more toward group results or individual results depending on the context.

Executive Coaching and Culture

Executive coaching has become big business. The International Coach Federation (ICF, 2012) estimated that the industry generated around $2 billion in annual revenue and counted some 47,500 coaches globally. The ICF's own membership had

increased from 11,000 in 2006 to 19,000 by the end of 2011 (ICF, 2012). Gentry et al. (2013) noted that Asia was increasingly using coaches and that there were estimated to be between 16,000 and 18,000 coaches in Europe.

The Worldwide Association of Business Coaches Website (2014) defines a professional business coach as one who "engages in meaningful communication with individuals in businesses, organizations, institutions or governments, with the goal of promoting success at all levels of the organization by affecting the actions of those individuals" (WABC, 2014). Sherman and Freas (2004) noted that there are many different types of professional coaching offered including "life planning, career counseling, health and nutritional advice, New Age aura readings, and training in skills from public speaking to flirtation" (p. 85). This chapter focuses more narrowly on executive coaching, designed to help individuals and organizations align professional development with organizational goals to maximize performance (Handin & Steinwedel, 2006).

There is a 'triangle relationship' between coach, coachee, and the contracting organization, with specific roles, responsibilities, and goals clarified before the coaching begins (Rosinski, 2009). Typically, specific discussions in coaching sessions are expected to remain confidential between the coach and the person being coached, while the coach usually has the obligation to inform the organization of the general progress being made. Once contracted, executive coaches begin the coaching process by gathering data about the organization, including its line of business, vision, values, and strategic goals. They then gather information about the person being coached from his or her leader, peers, HR, and sometimes, employees. Frequently, data is acquired by administering psychometric instruments including personality assessments such as 16PF or MBTI, behavioral assessments such as DiSC or FIRO-B, thinking style assessments like HBDI, and most frequently, 360° multirater feedback instruments. Effective questioning skills are critical for effective coaches and are employed to help increase self-awareness of the person being coached. Handin and Steinwedel (2006) concisely described the executive coaching process: "Using self-awareness and reflection, coaching expands the way an executive observes, relates to, and engages the world by challenging the underlying beliefs and assumptions that are responsible for his or her actions and behaviors" (p. 20). The person receiving the coaching is generally encouraged to share goals and progress with her leader, as well as with her team. Coaching usually has a fixed length, the majority of engagements lasting between three months and one year (American Management Association, 2008).

Stober and Grant (2006) provided an overview of several evidence-based approaches to executive coaching. According to the authors, evidence-based coaching that draws from social science and empirical research allows qualified coaches to translate research into practice in order to maximize coaching outcomes (Stober & Grant, 2006). The authors stated that many theoretical perspectives inform various coaching approaches, including humanistic, behavioral, adult learning, cognitive, positive psychology, action learning, and psychoanalytic. Abbott and Rosinski (2007) suggested that several of these approaches could be employed in a global coaching context and presented a case study illustrating how evidence-based approaches might be used.

Added to these approaches are the eclectic methods brought to the coaching field by business professionals who have ample business experience but limited coaching or social science training. The use of such widely varying approaches makes it difficult to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of coaching, or to choose a single approach as being superior to all others. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss these approaches in detail, but the book itself is testament to the wide variety of approaches taken by professional business or executive coaches.

Despite the explosion in the use of executive coaching, there have been criticisms of the western bias perceived in its approaches. Nangalia and Nangalia (2010), for example, argued that coaching schools and associations teach models and approaches based on “a Western cultural ethos” (p. 52). The International Coaching Federation (ICF) website, for example, defines coaching as “partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential” (ICF, 2014). Nangalia and Nangalia argued that this definition makes several western cultural assumptions including, “(i) coaching is a relationship of equals; (ii) the coach must not give advice or tell the client what to do; (iii) a coaching conversation can focus on the client’s agenda without the necessity for a deep coach-client relationship being established first; (iv) a client is an independent agent responsible for his or her own destiny and actions” (p. 52). Cultural differences affect not only the relationship between coach and the global leader he or she is coaching, but more broadly impact the team environment where the leader is leading, which can be particularly challenging when the team is global.

Effective Global Teams

Teams, small groups of individuals who have interdependent roles and complementary skills and are tasked with accomplishing a common purpose (Yukl, 2006), are frequently used by organizations to accomplish organizational goals (Maznevski & Chui, 2013). A global team is a team whose members come from different national backgrounds and/or whose work spans national boundaries (Maznevski & Chui, 2013).

Briscoe et al. (2012) note that a complicating factor in reviewing the literature on teams operating across borders is that different names are used to describe them, including global teams, multinational teams, multicultural teams, transnational teams, transcultural teams, and geographically dispersed teams. Other names include cross-border teams, virtual and GVTs, culturally diverse teams, intercultural teams, and virtual intercultural teams. This chapter utilizes the more common term global team and will identify exceptions in cases where important differences indicate the use of one of the alternate names.

One feature of many global teams is their geographically dispersed nature. Such teams, generally referred to as GVTs, not only face the challenge of bridging cultural differences, but they also must grapple with time zone and distance barriers (Kankanhalli et al., 2006; Maznevski & DiStefano, 2000; Montoya-Weiss et al., 2001; Schlenkrich & Upfold, 2009).

Table 7.1 Global team challenges identified in the literature

Global team challenge	Authors
Cultural differences	Hinds, Liu, and Lyon (2011), Kankanhalli et al. (2006), Maznevski and Chui (2013), Maznevski and Chuboda (2000), Maznevski and Zander (2001), Montoya-Weiss et al. (2001), Moosmüller et al. (2001), Mukherjee, Hanlon, Kedia, & Srivastava (2012), Tjosvold and Wong (2004)
Process loss as a result of increased diversity	Stumpf and Zeutschel (2001)
Language differences	Berg and Holtbrügge (2010)
The ability to create and maintain a shared direction	Gundling et al. (2011)

While many global teams are geographically dispersed, this is not the case for all such teams. For instance, I have coached leaders from the Latin American headquarters of a Fortune 500 company in south Florida whose leadership team was comprised of a US-American with extensive experience in Central America, two Colombians, a Chilean, a Puerto Rican, and a Venezuelan. While not geographically dispersed, this example fits the definition of global teams used in the chapter. For large global corporations, it is becoming more common to see top executive leadership teams that are also comprised of leaders from different countries. A good example is Renault–Nissan Alliance's executive team led by multilingual Brazilian Carlos Ghosn. This team is comprised of 20 executives who among them hold French, Japanese, Brazilian, Belgian, German, and American nationalities.[2]

Research has shown that diverse teams offer many benefits to organizations. A McKinsey study of 180 publicly traded companies in the United States, France, and the United Kingdom found that companies whose executive board was ranked in the top quartile in terms of national and gender diversity achieved return on equity (ROE) 53 % higher than those in the bottom quartile and earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT) was 50 % higher (Barta, Kleiner, & Neumann, 2012). Other potential benefits to organizations include: more perspectives and ideas (Stumpf & Zeutschel, 2001), increased creativity and innovation (Maznevski & Chui, 2013), quicker customer response times and 24-h customer service (Kankanhalli et al., 2006), reduced potential for groupthink (Moosmüller, Spieß, & Podsiadlowski, 2001), and increased effectiveness at accomplishing complex tasks than individuals (Tjosvold & Wong, 2004).

While teams offer organizations many potential benefits, global teams face a number of hurdles that can reduce their performance. Language differences, an increased likelihood of conflict, and miscommunication resulting from cultural differences can adversely impact team performance. Critical challenges to global and GVT performance identified in the literature are listed in Tables 7.1 and 7.2.

Much of the research in the area of global teams has focused on GVTs. Heavy reliance on technology-assisted communication such as e-mail, phone, and even video conferencing is less rich than face-to-face communication and leads to the loss of contextual cues communicated via body language and tone (Maznevski &

[2] From the Renault–Nissan Alliance blog.

Table 7.2 Global virtual team challenges identified in the literature

Global virtual team challenges	Authors
Culture	Kankanhalli et al. (2006), Maznevski and Chuboda (2000), Montoya-Weiss et al. (2001), Mukherjee et al. (2012), Paul, Samarah, Seetharaman, and Mykytyn (2005), Schlenkrich and Upfold (2009), and Tjosvold and Wong (2004)
Asynchronous communication	Kankanhalli et al. (2006), Maznevski and Chui (2013), Mukherjee et al. (2012), Paul et al. (2005)
Use of communication technology	Maznevski and Chui (2013), Schlenkrich and Upfold (2009)
Time differences	Kankanhalli et al. (2006), Montoya-Weiss et al. (2001), Mukherjee et al. (2012), Schlenkrich and Upfold (2009)

Chui, 2013; Montoya-Weiss et al., 2001). The loss of face-to-face communication also negatively impacts the ability to share tacit knowledge (Maznevski & Chui, 2013). Time delays in providing feedback brought about by greater reliance on virtual communication and time differences have also been shown to increase conflict (Schlenkrich & Upfold, 2009).

In their review of effective global teams, Maznevski and Chui (2013) argued that many of the characteristics of effective teams, regardless of their make-up, are the same. Characteristics of effective global teams include clearly defined tasks, objectives, and common goals; team composition/right skills; clear roles; and effective processes. Successful GVTs set up effective communication protocols, make sure feedback is timely, and utilize effective scheduling practices (Kankanhalli et al., 2006; Montoya-Weiss et al., 2001; Schlenkrich & Upfold, 2009). Other characteristics of effective global teams include the ability of the team to manage conflict productively and the development of norms for positive interaction (Montoya-Weiss et al., 2001; Schlenkrich & Upfold, 2009; Tjosvold & Wong, 2004).

One of the most frequently cited characteristics of high performing teams was trust (Berg & Holtbrügge, 2010; Maznevski & Chui, 2013; Mukherjee et al., 2012; Paul et al., 2005; and Tjosvold & Wong, 2004). Maznevski and Chui (2013) defined trust as "a positive attitude about other team members, specifically a belief that a team member would make decisions, even in the absence of other team members, that optimize the team's interests" (p. 146). Trust is a critical dynamic because it increases commitment, leads to greater efficiency, and helps create conditions that can generate innovation (Maznevski & Chui, 2013). In a review of recent literature on cross-national collaboration, Hinds et al. (2011) summarized their findings: "Taken together, these studies suggest that teams with a shared identity, aligned interests, and congruent practices might have more fruitful cross-national collaboration and fewer coordination costs" (p. 155).

Coaching, Culture, and Effective Global Team Leadership

While few studies have focused specifically on effective global team leadership, a number of books addressing global leadership have appeared over the past decade. These include works by Dalton, Ernst, Deal, and Leslie (2002), Gundling et al.

(2011), House et al. (2004), McCall and Hollenbeck (2002), Mendenhall, Osland, Bird, Oddou, and Maznevski (2013), Mendenhall, Kühlmann, and Stahl (2001), and Rosen, Digh, Singer, and Phillips (2000). Since global team leaders represent a subset of global leaders, a general understanding of successful characteristics of global leaders can add to our understanding.

Beechler and Javidan (2007) define global leadership as “the process of influencing individuals, groups, and organizations (inside and outside the boundaries of the global organization) representing diverse cultural/political/institutional systems to contribute toward the achievement of the global organization’s goals” (p. 140). Mendenhall et al. (2013) define global leaders as “individuals who effect significant positive change in organizations by building communities through the development of trust and the arrangement of organizational structures and processes in a context involving multiple cross-boundary stakeholders, multiple sources of external cross-boundary authority, and multiple cultures under conditions of temporal, geographical, and cultural complexity” (p. 20). From these definitions, it is clear that global leaders work in a highly complex environment in which they must interact and build trusting relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders while working to achieve organizational goals. This has important implications for effective global coaches, both leader coaches and executive coaches. In order to provide coaching that can enhance team performance, global coaches must understand the multifaceted work of global leaders and the significant challenges inherent in managing relationships across borders and building trust across cultures.

The largest of the recent academic studies on global leadership was the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) study of 62 different countries and more than 17,000 managers in 951 organizations (House et al., 2004). One of the primary goals of the GLOBE researchers (over 160 academics around the world participated in the study) was to determine leadership characteristics that might be universally viewed as positive across all cultures. Rather than define global leadership per se, project GLOBE researchers from 38 countries developed a working definition of organizational leadership as “the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members” (House et al., p. 56). The study contributors did not seek to discover the characteristics of effective global leaders, but rather sought to understand how effective leadership was viewed in different national and regional contexts.

A major contribution of the GLOBE study was to identify a number of characteristics that were widely viewed as positive across all regions, those universally viewed as negative, and those that varied by cultural context. Universally positive characteristics included the descriptors trustworthy, just, honest, encouraging, positive, motivational, dependable, administrative skilled, coordinator, and team builder. Loner, asocial, noncooperative, irritable, egocentric, ruthless, and dictatorial were universally viewed as negative. Finally, a number of characteristics were viewed as contributing to outstanding leadership in some cultures but not in others. These included autonomous, cautious, evasive, individualistic, status conscious, risk taker, enthusiastic, intragroup conflict avoider, and subdued among others.

One of the most difficult challenges of global team leaders is grappling with issues arising from cultural differences among team members. Maznevski and Zander (2001) argued that successful global team leaders should lead team members in a way that is consistent with the team member's cultural expectations. The idea of adapting to meet team members' cultural expectations is consistent with the GLOBE finding that individuals from different cultures have different expectations of leaders. Effective team leaders must be able to recognize when such cultural differences are impacting team communication, understand the different team member perspectives, and facilitate problem-solving by effectively flexing their behavior to bridge cultural differences. In teams that have representatives from many different cultures, a distinctive team agreement or charter that incorporates a hybrid form of managing teamwork may be needed.

Effective global coaches, whether they are leaders who are coaching teams or executive coaches who are coaching leaders, must also be able to discern when cultural differences may be playing a role in team communication and problem-solving. An effective global leader coach must develop the ability to flex his coaching behavior to understand different team member expectations. A global executive coach must also be able to discern potential cultural influences impacting the coaching relationship as well as cultural influences that may be at play in the client's global environment. He or she must also be able to help the client distinguish cultural influences impacting performance from other influences such as personality, attitude, the work environment, or other situational factors.

While the GLOBE study offers useful information for global leaders in terms of recognizing that there are universally viewed perceptions of leader behavior and understanding that other behaviors may be viewed as positive or negative contingent on the culture, there are *cultural* influences in the interpretation of how even the positive characteristics should translate into behaviors so that they are seen as positive. Such differences in perceptions have important implications for both global leaders in terms of their coaching effectiveness and for global executive coaches.

The universally positive traits of 'trustworthy' and 'honest' may have culturally distinct meanings. A US American or German leader may build trust with her team by encouraging open, honest, and direct feedback, both positive and constructive, understanding that her team members value such a forthright approach. Viewed as honest communication, direct assessments of the team's strengths and shortcomings, combined with specific praise and direct 'unvarnished' feedback may be seen by leader and team members alike as helping the team accomplish its mission. Such timely, direct feedback on mission progress in this cultural context can help establish trustworthiness.

In contrast, a Honduran team member may interpret direct feedback as blunt personal criticism, especially if the leader has not laid the groundwork to demonstrate care for his employees and his loyalty to the team. Especially if delivered in a public setting, such direct feedback may not only fail to establish leader trustworthiness, but instead be interpreted as demonstrating how little the leader cares for the employee. The leader's direct approach, so successful with his team in the United States and Germany may in fact *reduce* trust in a Honduran context. An effective

leader coach must take care to learn such cultural differences and adjust his or her behavior when coaching global team members. A global executive coach must also understand how differences in values, norms, and behaviors can impact leader effectiveness.

The cultural anthropologist Hall (1998) contributed the construct of high- and low-context cultures, a concept that is instructive in this case. High-context communication is that "in which most of the information is already in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message. A low-context (LC) communication is just the opposite, that is, the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code" (Hall, p. 61). Lower context cultures, such as the US, Germany, Holland, and Australia, communicate largely through words in a very specific manner and are more direct and explicit (i.e., tell me exactly what you want). Higher context cultures like Japan, China, Malaysia, or Colombia communicate less directly and depend on situational and verbal cues, as well as information communicated by status and acknowledged roles. Direct specific feedback can be interpreted as a behavior promoting individual performance in individualistic, low-context cultures; in more collectivistic, high-context cultures, feedback considering the individual's role and delivered in a more indirect, diplomatic, "read between the lines" style that preserves group harmony may be preferred (Milliman, Taylor, & Czaplewski, 2002).

While high- and low-context communication can be found in all cultures, the predominance of one preference over the other in different cultures can easily lead to a breakdown in communication in a global team environment. A global leader from a relatively high-context culture coaching team members from lower context cultures may come to find that his team members are becoming frustrated by his lack of specificity and detail. In contrast, a global leader from a relatively low-context culture may see her effectiveness diminished as a result of missing key subtle cues from her higher context team members.

I have seen each of these missteps in my past role as a leader coach coaching global team leaders as well as in my more recent executive coaching experience. While managing a new US American leader on a global project team in Latin America, I casually dropped in on her several times a week to chat and see how her work was coming along over the course of the first 3 weeks after she had come on board. This was common behavior for Latin American leaders working on the project, and along with our weekly formal staff meeting, considered an effective way to show support for team members while keeping abreast of progress on important projects. Occasional informal visits beginning with conversations about family and personal interests replaced frequent formal meetings more common in the US. Finally, the new manager suggested that holding a structured meeting with me once a week to catch up on project details (low context) might be more efficient than our informal chats. Perceiving the manager's mounting frustration, I realized that I had been communicating the cultural importance of frequent informal visits with employees by using the high-context medium of demonstrating the behavior, rather than explicitly coaching her on this critical cultural difference. Realizing how my management style had disrupted her carefully planned workflow, I was able to change course, and in a low-context manner describe the differences in leadership

behaviors with the goal of helping her lead her teams in a more culturally accessible, higher context manner.

High- and low-context communication may impact how coaching tools are deployed as well. Multirater 360° feedback, used extensively by executive coaches, is a very low-context tool. While there is empirical evidence of growing acceptance and use of 360-feedback tools in Asia (Gentry et al., 2013), culture likely plays a role in how they might be deployed to obtain optimal results. In Arab countries, for example, receptivity to feedback can be influenced by tribal membership, kinship, and friendships and direct feedback may even be taken as an attack (Peterson, 2007).

Peterson (2007) noted that from a desire to maintain face, direct feedback has traditionally been seen as inappropriate in Japan. A few years ago, after a one-day training session where aggregate 360° feedback data was shared with the senior leadership team to kick off a major culture change initiative, I was tasked with delivering the individual 360-feedback results to each leader. One of the senior Japanese leaders who had never experienced 360° feedback questioned the purpose of the instrument during our individual session. I spent time culturally translating how 360° feedback worked in the US, describing how it was developed to help leaders understand what their peers, employees, and their leaders viewed as his strengths and developmental opportunities. The goal of the feedback was to identify areas where he could leverage his existing skills and continue to develop new skills to help the company and his team to achieve the new strategic goals. While 360° feedback has become one of the top ten best practice leadership development tools worldwide (Curry, 2012), it is important to realize that the practice has a US pedigree. When used as a coaching tool, culture needs to be taken into account.

Hoppe (1998) cited a study that showed negative feedback motivated US managers, but failed to increase organizational commitment from the Japanese, Mexican, South Korean, and Taiwanese participants, while positive feedback increased organizational commitment in all five management groups. Referring to feedback intervention theory, Coultas, Bedwell, Burke, and Salas (2011) suggested that the most effective way to deliver feedback in feedback-averse cultures would be to place a positive focus on what skills might be further developed rather than weaknesses: "This suggests that the tenets of feedback intervention theory are likely even more salient in these cultures since inappropriate feedback is more likely to be perceived as personally offensive rather than generally instructive" (p. 155). When working with Japanese professionals, both Hoppe and Peterson mention the tried and true method of more direct feedback through *tsuikiai*, the after work drinking ritual in Japan where employees can give more direct feedback after several drinks, and apologize the next day.

Another challenging cultural difference cited in the literature is individualism–collectivism. More individualistic cultures prioritize the interests and goals of the individual above those of the group and are more motivated by individual achievement and rewards, while collectivist cultures prioritize group goals above individual ones (Hofstede et al., 2010). Tjosvold and Wong (2004) offered the example of Asian team members who tend to be collectivists and whose identities are strongly linked to their personal relationships. The authors noted that Asian team members

are likely to be more concerned about not losing social face in their interactions with others than are many other cultures. The authors also demonstrated that despite cultural differences, diverse teams with Asian members could incorporate elements from each culture to create third way productive team norms and processes that were accepted and shared by all members in a manner that confirmed social face. They suggested a cooperative 'holistic' approach to managing conflict in global teams similar to other communication strategies proffered by Gundling et al. (2011), Osland (2013), and Maznevski and Chui (2013). The approach consisted of learning and understanding the motives, norms, and cultural styles of team members; developing a holistic perspective; and working to strengthen relationships and communicate across differences. This approach is consistent with Hinds et al.'s (2011) finding that creating a hybrid shared culture and identity was a hallmark of effective cross-border collaboration.

One particularly useful piece of advice from Tjosvold and Wong (2004) was for team members to reflect on and learn from each intercultural encounter. They suggested that a good team leader should be able to facilitate the process by providing mentoring and coaching. While such experimentation through trial and error may lead to effective problem-solving, Hinds et al. (2011) note that the evolution of a culture capable of using such a sense making approach may be slow. Moreover, as a result of the psychological energy required to code shift from one culture to another, the hybrid team identity may be difficult to sustain (Hinds et al., 2011).

Another cultural challenge involves differing team member expectations in terms of power and hierarchy (Maznevski & Chui, 2013; Maznevski & Zander, 2001; Milliman et al., 2002). Hofstede's dimension of power-distance refers to how cultures deal with hierarchy and inequality: "In small-power-distance countries, there is limited dependence of subordinates on bosses, and there is a preference for consultation (that is, interdependence among boss and subordinate). The emotional distance between them is relatively small: subordinates will rather easily approach and contradict their boss" (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 61). In contrast, in high-power-distance countries, "there is considerable dependence of subordinates on bosses….subordinates are unlikely to approach and contradict their bosses directly" (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 61). In higher power-distance countries, individuals accept and expect a hierarchical distribution of power. A team leader from a relatively high-power-distance South American culture that I was coaching felt disrespected by two of his 'insubordinate' global team members from two lower power-distance cultures. In turn, these team members felt they were being micromanaged, were not adequately involved in team decision-making, and were 'talked-down' to. Different interpretations of the role of the leader based on power-distance preferences undoubtedly played a role in this conflict. Understanding how the dimension of power-distance might be impacting relationships between leaders and their global team members is essential for global coaches.

Finally, uncertainty avoidance impacts global teams (Mukherjee et al., 2012). Uncertainty avoidance (UA) is defined as "the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations" (Hofstede et al., 2010). While all individuals seek to reduce uncertainty in their lives (Mukherjee et al., 2012),

higher rankings on UA are manifested in a strong dislike for ambiguity, a need for predictability and rules, and anxiety produced by a lack of rules (Hofstede et al., 2010). Greece, Belgium, Russia, France, Argentina, and Costa Rica rank higher in UA while Singapore, Denmark, Sweden, China, Malaysia, Great Britain, and the US rank lower. Mukherjee et al. (2012) noted that individuals who are high in UA may experience more detachment from the team as a result of the dispersed nature of virtual global teams and associated time, distance, reliance on communication technology, and attendant challenges of enforcing rules and norms. When working with leaders and teams, global leader coaches and executive coaches should be aware of how this dimension may be impacting leader–team member dynamics as well as team dynamics in general.

Maznevski and Zander (2001) recommended that the following actions be taken by global team leaders to manage cultural challenges presented by working with global teams more effectively. They suggest spending face time with members, especially early in the project, in order to learn about team member preferences and facilitate communication; being vigilant and responsive to differences in team member expectations of hierarchy, decision-making and power; and, serving as a 'cultural interpreter' when necessary to help team members understand one another. Finally, seeing cultural differences as assets rather than liabilities can help create synergy that leads to increased performance.

A useful tool cited by Gundling et al. (2011) provides a practical model that can be used to withhold judgment, reflect on the situation, and then develop a strategy to bridge differences. BRICC is the acronym the authors chose: (1) bracket one's own ideas/approach and withhold judgment; (2) relate with individuals involved in the process to create trust to bridge cultural differences; (3) inquire what one knows and does not know about the problem—explore possible changes in approach; (4) cocreate solutions by involving others, learn, and consider how to contribute; (5) commit, confirming buy-in and ensuring that one has leveraged local, functional, and global resources. This approach is similar to Osland's (2013) 'effectiveness model' that she created with Allan Bird. Three steps define the effectiveness model: (1) perceive, analyze, and diagnose the situation; (2) identify effective action to take based on global knowledge, experience, and situational factors, and; (3) put the cognitive and behavioral skills together to act on the understanding. Both models provide useful guidance to global coaches as well as global team leaders for helping them withhold judgment as they decipher complex behaviors across cultures.

Citing the diverse composition of teams and the virtual nature of most communication, Gundling et al. (2011) argued that creating and sustaining a common vision and direction was the most significant challenge that global leaders face in working with global teams. They suggested that although all ten behaviors are important for leader effectiveness, the three most critical behaviors for global team leaders are inviting the unexpected, frame shifting, and leading across boundaries.

Inviting the unexpected included several specific leader actions such as establishing strong relationships with team members. This could be accomplished by kicking off the team effort with a face-to-face retreat to help identify and work with 'unexpected' differences in work styles, functional area, and culture. Barczak et al. (2006)

and Maznevski and DiStefano (2000) also strongly advocated kicking off the team face to face and investing time in learning about cultural differences of team members.

The second behavior identified was frame-shifting communication style, leadership style, and strategy. Depending on the context presenting itself, global team leaders should be able to shift focus from tactical to strategic, local control to central control, facilitative style to directive style, and technical focus to visionary focus. The authors recommend using a frame-shifting tool that starts with identifying the 'what,' or the local cultural differences that impact interactions. The next step is to ask 'so what,' the impact on the leader and team effort, not impact to the leader and team effort. The final step is to ask 'now what,' developing a strategy to minimize the cultural differences/leverage differences to achieve results.

The final behavior Gundling et al. (2011) cited is to influence across boundaries. Conducting a stakeholder analysis is the heart of this behavior. This includes an analysis of all stakeholder needs and goals, including executives in the country where the team is operating. Similarly, Barczak et al. (2006) argued that it is important to assess the team member differences and similarities, languages, and national distribution. Maznevski and DiStefano (2000) and Maznevski and Chui (2013) advocated a similar approach. They suggested that each team member map out their similarities and differences from one another in terms of culture, function, and business unit perspectives. Maznevski and Chui (2013) also suggested using cultural instruments and personality assessments in an effort to ferret out differences and similarities, focusing on creating alignment around definition of tasks and objectives, and determining how diverse members could contribute differently. Once team member differences are mapped, the team should work together to bridge the differences using effective communication.

In cases where leaders are encountering cultural challenges in their teams, global coaches can inquire whether the leader has mapped out differences and similarities. A chartering process, where team members meet together face to face, can help team leaders clarify the team's purpose, goals, values, and decision-making process in its formative stage. Combined with teambuilding activities designed to help members get to know each other as human beings rather than Chinese, American, Indian, or Colombian team members can also help improve the team's chances for success. In the case of GVTs, Maznevski and Chui (2013) also cited research that showed periodic, scheduled face-to-face meetings focusing on strengthening relationships was more effective and more cost effective than ad hoc meetings scheduled to solve specific problems.

A number of competencies for global team leaders have been identified. Working with team leaders from a Fortune 500 software and hardware company, Joshi and Lazarova (2005) interviewed 89 team members and 50 team leaders from the US, France, Germany, India, UK/Ireland, China, Australia, and Eastern Europe/Russia. From extensive interviews, they developed a list of competencies. Lerner (2008) conducted extensive interviews with 41 software team members from Hungary, the US, and India. Both studies identified communication, providing direction, goal setting, and scheduling/coordination as critical leadership success factors. Additionally, Joshi and Lazarova (2005) identified the following as key competencies:

facilitating teamwork (resolving conflicts and ensuring ownership of team goals), motivating and inspiring, managing cultural diversity (understanding, respecting, and responding to differences), empowering (making sure all team members contribute and have the ability to influence team decisions), boundary spanning (championing the team with headquarters, being aware of political changes outside the team, identifying and maintaining communications with upper management), staffing, and mentoring and coaching.

Coaching Global Teams and Team Leaders: Suggestions for Effective Coaching

It should be clear from the preceding overview that both global executive coaches and global leader coaches need take into account their own culture as well as the culture of the person being coached, and adapt their coaching approaches to the individual's needs. Cross-cultural coaching approaches developed to address cultural issues are just beginning to emerge. Philippe Rosinski's (2009) Coaching Orientations Framework (COF) is the most frequently cited cross-cultural coaching model in the literature.

Rosinski and Abbott (2006) refer to global coaching as a type of "pragmatic humanism" designed to help clients develop effective solutions to challenges they face. The COF model adapts cultural dimensions from Hofstede, Schwartz, Hall, Trompenaars and others into seven categories and 17 different dimensions. When used in conjunction with other information such as personality preferences and behavioral data, the model can be used to map preferences and abilities of coaches, protégés, and team members to help understand similarities and differences that may impact relationships and performance. The model is especially useful for executive coaches who expect to work extensively with global leaders, and the dimensions will be immediately recognizable to individuals working in the field of cross-cultural communication. For a leader coach, the model sacrifices parsimony for comprehensiveness: learning and attending to 17 dimensions and seven categories present a challenging array of cognitive concepts to integrate into a leader's approach.

Both Rosinski (2009) and Handin and Steinwedel (2006) used the Bennett developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) to frame their own cross-cultural coaching models (see Fig. 7.1).

Rosinski (2009) incorporated Bennett's stages into his model of cross-cultural coaching, arguing that the first three stages in the model represented ethnocentric

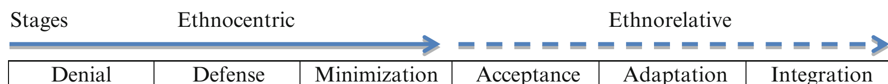

Fig. 7.1 Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, adapted from Bennett, M.J. (1998)

coaching, and the last three ethnorelative stages represented cross-cultural and global coaching. Bennett defined ethnocentric as "using one's own set of standards to judge all people, often unconsciously" (Bennett, p. 26). Ethnorelative referred to "being comfortable with many standards and customs and to having an ability to adapt behaviors and judgments to a variety of intercultural situations" (p. 26). Individuals who are in the denial stage are not aware of cultural differences and may make sweeping generalizations about a culture based on limited knowledge. Defense is marked by an increased awareness of cultural differences and seeing the other culture in "a denigrated 'them' versus a superior 'us' (p. 27). Minimization is a stage where individuals minimize cultural differences, believing that people, in essence, are all the same despite superficial cultural differences. The enthnorelative stages include acceptance, where individuals are aware of cultural differences including their own culture, and adaptation, where individuals can "intentionally shift into a different cultural frames of reference" (p. 28). People at the integration stage are "inclined to interpret and evaluate behavior from a variety of cultural frame of reference, so that there is never a single right or wrong answer" (p. 29–30). Rosinski (2009) believed that global coaches must operate from the ethnorelative stages, and his Cultural Orientations Framework (COF) for coaching across cultures added an additional stage of 'leveraging differences' to the Bennett model.

Handin and Steinwedel's (2006) three core behaviors of effective global coaches—curiosity, cultivation, and collaboration—are also framed as ethnorelative behaviors. The authors included more specific competencies under each of these high-level ethnorelative behaviors. Curiosity incorporated inquiry and listening skills, self-awareness, self-development, and discernment. Cultivation included understanding others' needs, customs, values, patience, and optimism. Collaboration encompassed relationship building, agility, motivating others, and personal disclosure. Handin and Steinwedel's model also underscores the importance of knowledge of self; one's own culture and other cultures; values such as learning, knowledge, achievement, and developing relationships; and the qualities of respect, humility, and appreciation. The Bennett model is a useful heuristic for helping coaches understand that learning about cultural dimensions is only the beginning of the process of developing intercultural competence, and that changes in attitude and behaviors to enable intercultural effectiveness are a process rather than a simple skill that must be learned. It is a simple model that can be used to explore the learning journey rather than a set-in-stone "this is how people develop" blueprint, and used as such can aid both coaches and global leaders in their development of intercultural sensitivity and empathy.

Best practice models in executive coaching have focused primarily on the United States (Gentry et al., 2013). A recent qualitative study of 19 executive coaches working in Europe and 12 in Asia was undertaken by Gentry et al. (2013) to determine best coaching practices in those regions. Three best practice strategies common to both regions included the use of assessments (such as 360° feedback), focusing on the client (relationship building, listening, providing a sense of safety, and building a connection with the client), and cultural awareness. All three of these subjects were discussed earlier. Additional Asia-specific priorities included challenging the protégé to move outside his/her 'comfort zone'; structuring the coaching

intervention by having a schedule, agenda, and plan; using mental models; focusing on results by developing objectives, goals, and follow-up; and providing support, advice, and tools. While both Asian and European cultures focused on relationship building and cultural issues, Asian coaches seemed to pay special attention to task elements of their interventions related to results (Gentry et al., 2013), stressing the importance of preparation, using an agenda, and focusing on results. An important best practice in Europe not mentioned frequently by Asian coaches included coach learning and development, particularly through client feedback. Learning and development is an important factor in the US as the large number of coaching schools can attest.

While recognizing that cultural differences are important, DeLay and Dalton (2006), Coultas et al. (2011), Rosinski and Abbott (2006) all cautioned that a coach must be careful not to overgeneralize based on culture. Coultas et al. (2011) urged coaches to avoid the ecological fallacy of making the assumption that everyone from a country will act in a specific way. In coaching across cultures, it is important to respect the person's individuality, regardless of whether he or she is from a more individualistic or collectivistic culture: individuals are not national cultures. Abbott & Roskinski (2007) deprecated the use of sophisticated stereotyping. Coaches must seek out a fuller understanding of the context of the individual being coached, including his or her personality, the organization, the practical job-related factors, skills levels, and individual and team motivations. Additional factors include the individual's education and religion, and any political or economic factors that may influence the 'mental models' driving the behavior of the individual who is being coached (DeLay & Dalton, 2006). With this important caveat in mind, the penultimate section that follows provides tentative suggestions for effective global leader and executive coaching practice.

Suggested Practices for Effective Global Coaching

Suggestions for leader and executive coaches:

- Increase personal self-awareness. Understand your own cultural identity, thinking preferences, personality preferences, and other salient sources of your identity and how those differ from other individuals in general, and from your clients/protégés in particular.
- Do not underestimate the difficulty of adapting coaching strategies effectively across cultural differences. Leaders do not find it easy to flex their behaviors when working globally (St.-Claire-Ostwald, 2007), and coaches will also find flexing their coaching behaviors across cultures challenging. At a minimum, learn about the cultural dimensions individualism–collectivism, power-distance, uncertainty avoidance, and high–low context and explore how these dimensions may be impacting your clients/protégés.
- Paradoxically, avoid committing the ecological fallacy, assuming that individuals will behave a certain way because of their culture. Such sophisticated stereotyping

can lead to ignoring other relevant factors such as personality, individual goals, biographical and behavioral data, and information drawn from history and religion. For example, Nangalia and Nangalia (2010) argued that Hinduism and Confucianism have exerted a profound influence on Asia. In a comparative study of Saudi–US leader coaching behaviors, Noer, Leupold, and Valle (2007) argued that Islamic values, Bedouin tribal and family factors, and even the legacy of Ottoman governance were likely to influence Saudi preferences in coaching.

- Take time to develop rapport with the client/protégé/employee. As described earlier, differences in preferences for collectivism–individualism should be used to inform the coach's approach. Creating a safe space for dialog is critical for coaching success (Plaister-Ten, 2009).
- Learn how conceptualizations of effective leadership differ across cultures and how similar conceptualizations of effective leadership may require adaptation (recall the discussion of trustworthiness and the GLOBE findings earlier).
- Cultivate mindfulness. Mindfulness is the ability to be aware of one's own emotional and habitual responses and assumptions while recognizing others' cognitions and emotions (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001). Heightened awareness of one's culture, personality, behavioral preferences, and other situational factors are important for developing this skill. See the last chapter in this book for a detailed discussion.
- Important interpersonal skills include listening, empathy, questioning skills, giving and receiving feedback, being attentive to both high- and low-context forms of communication, displaying personal warmth, awareness of cultural differences in emotional expressiveness, silence, and proxemics, and the ability to flex behaviors to create a safe environment for coaching. Additionally, follow up and planning and organizing are important competencies for working with team members/team leaders for planning sessions, goal setting, building on successes, offering redirects, and celebrating successes.
- Model openness to feedback. Effective global coaches learn from mistakes and continue to hone their skills (Plaister-Ten, 2009). The ability to learn quickly in unfamiliar settings is also important.
- Use assessments such as personality profiles and 360° feedback, but employ them with an eye to adjusting for cultural differences. Do not rush the assessment process when working in a global environment (DeLay & Dalton, 2006). As much as possible, use instruments validated in the target cultures and that are administered in native languages (Hoppe, 1998). Confirm expectations of confidentiality with clients beforehand since different cultures place different priorities on confidentiality.
- An appreciation of the different client/protégé cultures that the coach is working with and personal experience adapting to a different culture are also important (Abbott, Stening, Atkins, & Grant, 2006).
- Be prepared for differing expectations of you as a coach and a plan for working across those differences. As discussed earlier, protégés/team members from some cultures may expect more direct counsel, advice, and prescriptive behavior while others prefer a Socratic process that facilitates self-discovery.
- Cultivate humility. The world counts more than 3,000 languages and over 20,000 cultures; expect surprises.

Additional Suggestions for Executive Coaches for Coaching Global Team Leaders:

- Do advance research to understand the client/protégé's professional and organizational environment. This includes finding out about the protégé's company's products and services, organizational goals, mission, and values.
- Since many global business coaches come from the world of psychology, intercultural studies, or education, I recommend focusing on the issues most salient to our business clients. While we encourage our customers to learn more about human behavior, motivation, and culture, coaches should take time to learn about business and respect the business milieu of the client. Regardless of culture, business leaders are concerned with performance, meeting project milestones, budgets, focusing on project deliverables, customer service, and financial results. While many clients find cultural differences intriguing, culture per se in my experience is not their focus: resolving practical business-related task and people challenges is. Coaches, grounded in social science approaches, need to stretch from their professional cultures to work in business "culture."
- Help clients search for ways to bridge cultural differences between both the leader and team members and among their team members. It may be useful to explore third way approaches with your client such as those discussed earlier in the chapter.
- Find culturally effective ways of getting feedback from clients.

Additional Suggestions for Leader Coaches for Coaching their Team Members:

- Be especially attentive to power-distance as it impacts your leadership role and others' perception of your status.
- Cultivate your ability to perceive cultural differences.
- While learning about global team dynamics, seek to discover the leadership expectations of your team members. Asking team members about their expectations for leadership can be helpful, but with higher context and higher power-distance team members, low context "just tell me what you prefer" approaches may not work well. Reviewing the earlier discussion of leadership, the GLOBE results, and leadership in the context of high performance global teams is a good starting point. Use this knowledge to observe your own team and begin to understand the expectations of your team members.
- During kick-off, meet with your team in person and have members spend time getting to know each other. Consider mapping cultural differences among all the members of your team including yourself during your kick-off session, and include social, non-task-related activities to help members establish rapport. Create a team charter early on stating the team purpose, and work collaboratively with team members to clarify roles and responsibilities and develop team norms around communication, decision-making, and meeting protocols to be included in the charter.
- Look for opportunities to explore third way approaches with your team such as those discussed earlier in the chapter. Learn and encourage team members to

learn from cultural missteps and to apply that learning to build bridges of understanding.

- For GVTs, several authors recommend scheduling periodic face-to-face meetings. While travel costs can add up, team failures resulting from poor communication can be much more expensive.
- Make sure team members are trained to use virtual tools for ongoing communication. Schedule meetings in advance, distribute written agendas prior to meetings, and avoid using idiomatic expressions. If the common language of global team members is English, remember that a majority of the world's English speakers speak English as a foreign language.
- If you are in charge of a project team or working as a country manager, become very familiar with the labor code in the country in which you are operating or in the case of a large multinational, with local HR directors who know the labor code. When providing coaching for performance improvement, a solid knowledge of local labor law and practices is important as you move from coaching into discipline.
- Schedule periodic one-on-one meetings with team members. I work with many leaders who claim they have trouble finding time to coach their team members because they must attend to more urgent issues. Prioritization and better time management is often a big part of the answer. Since coaching is such a central and critical function of leaders, poor time management should not be used as an excuse for not providing needed coaching. Particularly in global settings, taking time to understand team members and provide direction and coaching is important for the team and organization's success.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the empirical and best practice literature on effective global leader coaching and global executive coaching. I began by looking at the increasing popularity of coaching as a method for tackling organizational challenges, and reviewed research on effective global teams. Next, I presented information on coaching, culture, and effective global team leadership before proceeding to offer tentative suggestions for executive coaches working with global team leaders and leader coaches working with global teams.

Handin and Steinwedel (2006) argued that executive coaching could play a role in developing effective global leaders. They argued that organizations were not providing adequate preparation for leaders who were expected to work effectively in a global environment, noting that such work may require skills and behaviors that are "at odds with an individual's deeply held, and usually invisible, assumptions and beliefs, the products of living almost exclusively in one's own culture" (p. 19). Their contention that companies are not doing enough to prepare global leaders was echoed by a study by consulting firm Development Dimensions International. The study showed that only 39 % of the more than 13,000 global leaders and human

resources professionals ranked their current multinational leaders as good or excellent, and a majority of the multinational leaders themselves felt their preparation to work in a global environment was only fair or poor (Howard & Wellins, 2009). As globalization of business proceeds apace, it is likely that global coaching will continue to gain adherents.

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