

Chapter 14

How Does Coaching Positively Impact Organizational and Societal Change?

Sunny Stout Rostron

Introduction

This research study incorporates stories and self-reflexive inquiry from a small sample of leading coach practitioners, consultants and executive leaders working with coaching in their organizations. I have gathered the following stories with a focus on the challenges in organizational and institutional environments, to help us understand if and how coaching has influenced organizational and societal change. Executive coaching practice far outstrips its evidence base of knowledge as coaching continues to grow as an international phenomenon. Organizations today are challenged by the complexity and swiftness of change within business, social and political environments, and leaders are expected to quickly adapt their skills and competence in volatile and often crisis-driven markets and societies (Stout Rostron, 2009:19–22).

I have interviewed a range of top leaders and managers who use coaching within their organizations, as well as the coaching consultants, practitioners and researchers, coaching psychologists, and human resources (HR) and organizational development (OD) specialists whose work I knew had made a difference. Their stories and the knowledge that they have gained from coaching highlight a way forward using individual and team coaching to empower individuals, organizations and communities. For me, this research activity has proved to be a useful snapshot of how coaching is working globally, as well as what work still needs to be done. Every one of the participants in this research study insisted that coaching is the way forward out of the difficulties and conflicts that we face as fellow human beings in the twenty-first century. Whether you agree with them or not, I hope you will find their thinking and their work inspiring.

The questions I asked the participants in this study were

- Can you describe your work, and what drew you to your current work?
- How has being coached helped you with this work?

S. Stout Rostron (✉)

Manthano Institute of Learning (Pty) Ltd, Cape Town, South Africa
e-mail: express@iafrica.com

- How have you used coaching in your work?
- As a result of your work, what differences would you like to see (and/or have you seen) in terms of social and organizational change? Can you tell me a story that relates to this?
- What are the main challenges that you have overcome in your work as it relates to societal/organizational change, both in relation to yourself and those with whom you are working? Can you tell me a story that relates to this?
- Is there anything else you would like to share with me as far as how coaching has helped you in your work for social/organizational/institutional change?

How Is Coaching Making a Difference in Organizations and Society?

I asked each coaching leader to describe what drew them to their current work, and how they personally experience and use coaching in their work. Second, they shared the differences they have seen as a result of their work, and what they would still like to see in terms of social and organizational change. There are some dramatic stories, even some radical views on the potential of coaching as a force for change. Personally I feel enthralled and energized by the freshness, enthusiasm and originality expressed by these practitioners, all leading experts in their fields.

What comes through clearly, from the following stories, is a passionate belief in the potential and power that coaching can unleash. Here then are some of the most dynamic and innovative voices within the “coaching process” today. I will let them speak directly for themselves. We should listen very carefully to them.

Nancy Kline: Independent Thinking to Create Societal Change

Nancy Kline is President of Time to Think Inc., a leadership development company specializing in the Thinking Environment[®]. Time to Think is currently developing consultants, facilitators and coaches in the United Kingdom, USA, South Africa, Ireland, Sweden and Australia. Author of Time to Think (1999) and More Time Think (2009). Kline’s Thinking Partnership[®] is based on the “chosen philosophical view that human beings are by nature good: intelligent, loving, powerful, multi-talented, emotional, assertive, able to think through anything, imaginative and logical”. Kline says that “behaviour to the contrary is seen as the result of assumptions generated over a lifetime by events, conditions and attitudes in a person’s environment” (Kline, 2005, p. 4). One of the key theories which determines how we work with clients in the “coaching conversation” is that of “positive philosophical choice”.

I teach, coach, write about and research the Thinking Environment[®] – having been drawn to my work through one observation and one question. The observation, dry but chilling, is that the quality of everything we do depends on the quality of the *thinking* we do first. The question that arises from this observation is, “How can we

help each other to think *for ourselves* with rigour, imagination, courage and grace”? I think I became interested in this question when I was 7 years old. My mother, a quiet, understated woman who never shouted at anyone, 1 day charged through the living room with her fist in the air shouting, “There is no greater crime than the waste of a single human mind”, then disappeared down the hall. I was mystified; but as children do, I stored that memory, filing it under “I” for incomprehensible but immensely important.

Ten years later when I was 17, I was sitting with my father going through his old papers. I picked one up, began to read it and then to cry; it was a speech he had delivered when *he* was 17, in which he called for complete equality for African-Americans. That was in 1920 in Tennessee when black people were segregated from white people by law. I marvelled at his courage and asked, “Dad, how did you ever get permission to deliver this speech? Weren’t you scared?” He looked it over and said, “Well, honey, I didn’t ask for permission. I just asked myself the question, ‘What is the most important issue facing my generation?’ I immediately knew the answer, so I asked myself another question: ‘If I weren’t afraid, what would I say about that issue in my speech?’ As I was delivering it at the graduation ceremony, about halfway through, I looked out at the audience of faculty, student body, parents, board of trustees – and noticed that they had all stood up and were walking out. As I stood there, looking out at the empty auditorium, I decided I needed to do only two things with my life. One: to keep thinking for myself, and two: not get killed.”

Those are two of the earliest experiences of my being drawn to the importance of independent thinking. Over the years I decided somewhere inside of me that I would pursue the question, “How we can help each other to think for ourselves”? I was also drawn to this work because of an increasing awareness that most of what wasn’t working in human life and in organizations could probably be traced to the conformity, inaccuracies and inhumanity of people’s thinking. I wanted to contribute to a core level of change by seeing if independent thinking could make a difference. I soon found myself growing interested in organizational and societal transformation.

My coaching sessions each week are vital to the development of my work. Coaching allows me to refine the capacity to be clear in my own thinking, to be focused on what matters most to me. It helps me in my work to be able to listen in a particular way to people. And I think that perhaps most of all, coaching keeps me curious about one of the core questions in my work, “How far can people go in their *own* thinking before they need mine?” My coaching keeps me courageous, and it keeps me from getting lost in my fears or unwarranted reluctance to go to the cutting edge. It helps me to be less concerned about myself, and more focused on generating others’ independent thought. And I also think it keeps me physically healthy. I wouldn’t want a life without coaching; it lets the streams run clear.

And on the issue of transformation, it seems to me that at the heart of societal change is the resurgence of pride in our own group identities. As a female, a New Mexican, and a woman over 60, I think my coaching indirectly and sometimes directly helps me to be more of *myself*. This matters because we can think

for ourselves only if we can think *as* ourselves. Finally, coaching is the key to my work because I think that it is only out of our own breakthroughs that we can offer a breakthrough process to others with confidence.

When we teach the Thinking Partnership[®] programme and the Thinking Environment[®] coaching and supervision programmes, we are expressly using coaching. But I think that any time two or more people are thinking together, with all ten components of a Thinking Environment[®] present, there is a coaching element in the conversation. This is because we are both interested in what the other person truly thinks and feels. So, in that sense you could say that everything that I do is a form of coaching. This work, however, didn't start as a coaching process. It was embraced by the coaching world because it generates independent thinking in people. The important question I think coaches need to be asking is: *what more can we do in this moment to help people to think for themselves?* The emerging answers to that question do contribute to an efficacious coaching framework, and I feel personally very excited by what is now developing in the search for better and better answers to that question. Also, I've seen the Thinking Environment[®] process create coaching results widely: in one-to-one relationships, in groups, in corporate cultures as well as in organizations that are focused on societal change, and in neighbourhoods, hospitals, families and communities.

From the beginning, my work has been motivated by a passion for a world that works beautifully for everyone. I would like to see a world in which every human being knows that they matter, that their thinking and their contributions are central to our success as a society, and a world in which every human being lives well. I would like to see a world of work in which people come home with a spring in their step because they have spent all day knowing that their thinking was valued. I would also like to see a world in which war is a thing we learn about only through our history books, a thing that seems an outrageous aberration of human activity. Many years ago I began to wonder what might be one change that could change everything else. I reasoned that because everything depends on the quality of the thinking we do first, creating structures in which people could think for themselves might have a chance of helping to bring about some significant, human changes in society.

One story comes from work this year when I was working with a professional multi-disciplinary patient team. The issue the team was considering was "best patient service". Even before the meeting started we turned the issue into a question. Because the mind works best in the presence of a question, this practice of turning agenda items into questions immediately brings elements of a coaching culture to the meeting. The question they crafted was, "How can the patient team coordinator keep the patient at the centre?" This group was made up of experts, all of whom live in their own silos of arrogance. They included the social worker, the key doctor, the physiotherapist, the radiologist and the psychologist. Their behaviour in meetings typically focused on having the loudest voice and the final say, and taking the least amount of time to be seen as the most important person. Not until that day did they consider putting the patient at the centre of their meetings and decision-making. We used the Thinking Environment[®] processes throughout, and everyone had an uninterrupted turn to address the question.

We went round the group systematically so that people knew when their turn was; the chair didn't determine who spoke first and people kept attention on the person whose turn it was. As a high level of respect for each person became palpable, arrogance began to dissipate and silos began to break down. Ease prevailed so that people could think afresh, without interruption or urgency. As a result the thinking accelerated.

Within an hour they came up with new ideas easily implementable by the lead professional. They agreed, for example, that the patient should be asked how they would like to interact with these experts so that they would not feel infantilized or frightened. The patient would be invited to ask questions of these professionals; they would be key in shaping the building of the relationship with the professional. The professionals also agreed to ask themselves when in patient meetings, "Is this patient at the centre of this meeting, and if they aren't, how can we restore them to that central position?" For this team it was a radical idea to listen to each other without interruption and to learn from each other, regarding each other *and the patient*, as thinking equals throughout. This was a step right outside of their too often me-centred culture. A particularly societal-change focus of this outcome, also, was that the patient group was adolescents. In the meeting, the professionals had effectively discarded their own prejudices against young people as thinkers. They began to operate instead on the assumption that young people can think brilliantly, for themselves, if they are offered a thinking environment. Through that meeting the patient had moved firmly into the centre.

Certainly one of my greatest challenges has been sustaining a thinking environment in conflict. A key question is: how can we keep each other thinking well for ourselves when the message we are delivering is hard, and when it is born of anger or fear? How do we express difficult things so that the person can *keep thinking* while we are expressing it?

I saw this challenge handled beautifully recently. One of the members of a team was feeling discriminated against by his colleagues. It had to do with his not being selected to deliver some of the work others were delivering. He wanted to understand the selection criteria and he was angry. He called together a teleconference of the team. He consciously created a thinking environment. He said, "I would like to speak and say everything I want to say as if I am handing you the moon. And then I would like everyone to have a chance to speak as if you were handing me the moon." And he did exactly that. He talked about the things that were upsetting him; his tone was loving, he was not urgent; no one interrupted and at the end of the turn he felt different and more open to hearing what the others were saying. The others weren't feeling threatened by him, and they spoke calmly and intelligently. As we went round the circle, there was an accumulation of accurate information about how the people had been selected, information that hadn't been communicated during the selection process. He was satisfied with the criteria, and they decided that in the future they would communicate all criteria in particular ways, creating transparency to prevent the perception and the experience of marginalization. At the end, this man spoke again, generating his freshest thinking, which was useful to everyone; then everyone appreciated him, and he appreciated them. In my view, what took place in that 45 min probably prevented a year of misunderstanding.

Mark Rittenberg: Theatre Practices to Develop Holistic, Authentic Leaders

Dr. Mark Rittenberg has worked as an executive coach all over the world for the last 20 years. In addition to coaching leaders from Fortune 500 companies, he acts as master coach for consultants from the major US consulting firms, and has been instrumental in instituting organizational coaching programmes to grow emerging and aspiring leaders. He was invited to participate as both master coach and mediator in Level 3 of the Middle East Peace Process. An award-winning actor and director, he teaches at a number of business school faculties including the Kellogg School, Olin School of Business and Haas School of Business of the University of California at Berkeley, where he is the designer and senior consultant for the Executive Coaching Institute. He divides his time between Berkeley and Johannesburg, South Africa, where he is an executive coach and designer of internal coaching programmes working with the new black leadership in several South African institutions.

His programmes coach leaders in the practices of Active Communicating[®], based on four principles which distinguish effective and high-performing teams from ineffective and dysfunctional ones: show up and choose to be present; pay attention to what has heart and meaning; tell the truth without blame or judgement and be open to outcome, not attached to outcome.

I was drawn to my current work after having been an actor and theatre director for many years. In 1984, I won an award at the Jerusalem Festival for a play called “Life or Theatre”, and I was subsequently invited to direct it at Harvard University. I recast the play with a group of Harvard MBA students who shared with me that this was “the most profound leadership development” they had ever experienced, despite their current MBA classes. Their request was that I facilitate similar theatre-based work with their peers and colleagues at the Harvard Business School – for them this work was about authentic leadership.

When I asked what they liked about the work, they said that I was coaching them holistically, as an actor, in voice, body and individual leadership. They said, “You’re not afraid to go deep, yet somehow you create a safe space for each individual to find their own authentic, true voice. We have all changed as a result of this rehearsal process, and we believe that this work will greatly impact on leaders who want to motivate their work groups and become authentic, inspirational leaders.” From that moment in the mid-1980s, the theatre-based Active Communicating[®] work began. We coached several teams at Harvard Business School, and those already successful, final-year MBA students invited us into their companies to facilitate theatre-based workshops on the Art of Leadership Presence.

These teams were particularly interested in one-on-one coaching. So began a massive amount of work at Pacific Bell, AT&T and Levi Strauss in the USA, putting groups of managers alongside their rank-and-file employees to work, not just on interpersonal communication skills, but to become true communicators and ambassadors for their brand. The one-on-one coaching impacted their work groups and peers, emphasizing how they themselves could be forces for change within the workplace.

At the moment I have three coaches, because when working with others in a generous, compassionate and empathetic way, I need a baseline of where I as a coach can take someone. I need to understand where I am willing or not willing to go on a certain journey, and I must overcome my own barriers. Being in a coaching relationship gives me a baseline of what I will do myself, helping me to develop competence and the right to work with others in a similar way. My coaches have always asked my permission before opening up a conversation around a leadership behaviour that I need to change. I have adopted this in my coaching approach to ensure that the work we do together is meaningful, helping them to fulfil their aspirations and their dreams.

My coaching practice encompasses three areas. First, my private coaching practice of 12 individuals who are each taking part in an executive team-coaching programme. Second, I have personally trained a group of executive coaches who work in my Active Communicating[®] team. Third, at the Center for Executive Education at the University of California at Berkeley, we facilitate open enrolment and customized programmes for the “Leader as Coach”. In this programme, managers and emergent inspiring leaders who want to grow themselves and others, experience the Active Communicating[®] theatre-based skills of “coaching behaviour”. This theatre-based methodology enables them to coach their own direct reports more easily. The coaching tools we look at include what it means to be an excellent listener, how to listen and facilitate in a group dialogue, and to truly engage their group in problem-solving and consensus-building.

Finally, at the Center for Executive Education at Haas Business School, we launched the Executive Coaching Institute (ECI) for three specific markets. The first wish to become better coaches; perhaps they are changing profession, changing their role within the organization or even setting up their own executive coaching practice. Some are already successful coaches; however, due to our methodology using actors’ skills to train coaches, these students add techniques and evolve their own repertoire. A second group refers to the current trend in the field of coaching where organizations are developing in-house coaches; they send these internal coaches to us to learn theatre-based coaching techniques. The third group are senior executives who don’t want to train as an executive or internal coach, but want to adopt a coaching leadership style. This executive is someone who facilitates learning, problem-solving and employee growth.

As a result of the work that I’m doing, I want to see leaders who operate from the head and the heart, becoming more in touch with themselves and others. If more in touch with others, they are more tolerant, understanding that people have different work and learning styles – i.e. one size doesn’t fit all. But what does it mean to embrace a variety of learning and leadership styles? One of the stories that spring to mind is an executive I coached for a number of years; he was a command-and-control leader in a large American multinational corporation.

As a result of the coaching process he became an extraordinary visionary – an exceptional individual who could see and act on the future of his company. Although many people in his workforce were intelligent, diligent and hard-working individuals, they could not meet his high expectations. During the second year of the coaching relationship, he shared his concerns about succession planning,

worrying that there was no one to take his place or that of the other vice-presidents.

As one of his coaching goals was to pay attention to succession planning, we created a leadership institute within the company; he put his most aspiring leaders through an intensive, high-level leadership development programme to give them the skills and competence to become “leaders of tomorrow”. I made an observation that what was missing was his “relationship” with those leaders, even though he had created the programme. To open the Institute’s first morning, I asked him and the other seven vice-presidents serving as faculty to create their individual leadership story and share it with the audience. The stories were to illustrate how they became the leaders they are today. He exclaimed, “I don’t have a leadership story; I don’t even know what I want to say”. I suggested, “Why don’t you speak about the events in your early life that really touched and challenged you? I think that should be the context of your leadership story”.

He resisted for a long, long time. On the opening day he told his story: “I am not a storyteller and so will have to share my story with you in three sentences. My father died when I was six, and from that moment my mother had to go out each night, after her day job, to work in the wealthy homes of people who lived in the next neighbourhood. She cleaned their houses every evening to provide school uniforms for myself and my five brothers. My mother will be 89 next month and she remains my greatest hero.” The entire room dissolved in tears. The barrier that had always been between him, his direct reports and the entire workforce disintegrated. >From the moment he told his story, the leadership team began to rise to the occasion as he had wanted them to. Somehow previously they had been too intimidated or too frightened to do so. Everything he wanted began to happen. And the reason was because he too had begun to show his vulnerability.

The main challenge that I’ve overcome in my work has been to overcome my own fear of being able to really help a leader who desperately wants to commit to personal change. As an external consultant I am very conscious that there is a certain protocol to be observed inside each organization. The idea of taking a CEO and turning him or her into a storyteller when giving an annual report is generally taboo! Leaders move away from traditional corporate stereotypical roles when they get in touch with what people want to hear, and with what really motivates and inspires them. I have seen such miracles happen by not being afraid myself, helping a leader to open their own creative possibilities through storytelling. This means encouraging leaders to talk about their failures and challenges through their own stories. For years, I’ve had a curious relationship with those in very senior leadership positions; often they insist that the leaders and the teams are not ready to work on building relationships, becoming powerful communicators or engaging in building trust through partnership and collaboration. Often, building trust is not even on the radar screen of work to be done with leaders. Although I haven’t committed these acts of “civil disobedience” deliberately, when I conduct a leadership study I ask the sponsor, “If you were his coach what would you be working on?” Or, “What are the three things as a workplace community that you would like to become in the next year?” I hear things like, “We need to be better communicators and partners in

the building process, able to understand what makes each other tick. We've never had time to build relationships with each other. In addition, we'd like our leaders to communicate with us, to let us know what is happening, and what challenges lie ahead that keep the leadership awake at night". Internal communication between leader and staff continues to rank as the loudest "positive change" employees want to see in their workplace.

When I hear the voices of the people echo these themes, it removes my fear and gives me the courage to do things in coaching conversations and in facilitating workshops, which might normally be the least-chosen alternative. The results are often the release of untapped potential in people, where trust is built between leadership and staff in a way that allows individual passion, talent and true selves to come forward.

Lee Salmon: The Entrepreneurial Go-To Place for Executive Coaching

Lee Salmon is an executive coach and management consultant with the Federal Consulting Group of the US Department of the Interior in Washington, DC. He provides professional services in organizational development, change management, executive and personal performance coaching. He is a practice leader for executive coaching, leadership development and mentoring programmes to agencies in the Federal government on strategic planning, change management, leadership and organization development, executive coaching, meeting facilitation, teambuilding, and human capital development. He also specializes in coaching executives in scientific and technical organizations for career transitions, change management, leadership development and performance management. He represents the International Consortium for Coaching in Organizations (ICCO), a group of senior-level coaches who are committed to working in public and private organizations to have a positive impact.

I started to make a shift into organizational change, human development and the softer side of change in 1995. I was working at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a senior scientist and health physicist. At that time, I was given an opportunity to reinvent my career due to downsizing which took me out of management. I was asked to figure out what I wanted to do with my career, and I decided to work with organizational transformation, working with the skills I had used in teams, presenting and teaching. I started to make that shift in 1995, which led me to explore coaching in government, which was new at that time. More and more, as we shifted to teamwork environments with small group practitioners, I could see that people were having difficulties working effectively in teams. I could see how to make those teams function and be effective from the beginning, and it was then that I started full facilitation work: in meetings with senior officials, and with colleagues in the EPA.

I worked as team leader for the science teams until I reached a turning point in 2000. It was then that I joined Federal Consulting Group, a small internal

government-consulting group that serves only government agencies. We are a unique hybrid, working in government with an entrepreneurial model yet with government constraints. We bring in outside consultants and coaches to assist us in our work, but we are the ones who take care of customers, contracts and get the results that government wants. Our focus is to transform government so that it can provide services the public trusts and has confidence in. We've been in existence 22 years with only ten of us in the group, doing \$12 million worth of business each year. When I arrived at Federal Consulting Group, coaching was contracted at senior executive level only, and quietly executed through human resources (HR) departments. In the last 10 years, I have created and built a coaching and consulting practice that serves all government agencies. We provide extraordinary coaches and consultants to help in personal and organizational transformation, having built a reputation as the "go-to place" for executive coaching.

Coaching has helped me to accomplish my particular personal goals – to affect the quality of leadership in the organization, and be able to create a government that serves the needs of society. From a stewardship or "servant leadership" perspective, which I believe in, one of the ways I can be a more effective servant leader is to develop my skills in coaching, process and facilitation. This means engaging in one-to-one work, and working with teams to influence the ways they collaborate, communicate and make government work. In meeting a large range of people who have a similar or like-minded focus, I have slowly begun to build a community of coaches and consultants where we can share our learning and experiences. This means we are not so isolated, and have more impact in the areas in which we work and serve.

In using coaching in my work, I've contracted individual coaching assignments for myself and other coaches who form part of our network of coaches. I have also started working with other government agencies to help them develop coaching programmes for future leaders in their organizations. It's only now that we have the capability to provide coaching services from individual assignments, to full organizational and systemic coaching programmes that play an ongoing part of leadership and succession planning. I can best illustrate this with a case study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC University) in Atlanta, Georgia. CDC deals nationally and globally with health care systems, global pandemics and other huge issues that affect public health. The Director of CDC University had long wanted to do some work with coaching. Together we developed a coaching programme that served groups of 30–35 small executives annually. We started with the top senior executives, working across the organization, hitting management systematically across all the different offices in CDC. It has been very successful, and we've coached over 100 executives and senior managers within CDC, including all of their functional areas.

We have had phenomenal results in terms of the impact and the way leaders show up, engage others and have impact in their organizations. For example, in clearer communication, effectiveness in activity, partnering and reaching out to other organizations, and in the leaders' ability and capacity to be adaptable and flexible in times of crisis and change. That's the impact of the work we've done in CDC, which

has been nominated a couple of times for the International Coach Federation's (ICF) annual PRISM award.

There's something else. We realized the work we needed to do in changing these leaders and making them more effective was to build their emotional and social skills – with a strong focus on emotional intelligence, working in areas that relate to emotional effectiveness. We used the work of Reuven Bar-On, which is one of the most heavily researched 360 instruments (Bar-On is an internationally known expert and pioneer in the field of emotional intelligence, and has been involved in defining, measuring and applying various aspects of this construct since 1980. He coined the term “Emotional Quotient” or “EQ” in 1985 to describe his approach to assessing emotional and social functioning). We administer the EQ360 Instrument at the very beginning of each coaching programme, using that to help guide the developmental work of our clients.

Lately, we have been using the Kouzes and Posner leadership profile to help complement the EQ work for the last 6–9 months (the Kouzes and Posner approach is that, leadership is a measurable, learnable and teachable set of behaviours. The leadership practices inventory (LPI) is a 360° assessment instrument based on 25 years of research. It allows participants to test Kouzes and Posner's five practices model for leadership behaviour, and provides a tool that helps leaders assess the extent to which they actually use those practices). What we've seen is a dramatic improvement in the leaders' emotional and social intelligence scores, along with critical factors relating to “change resilience” leadership.

The evaluation results vary from the individuals themselves, depending on how transformational this has been in their lives, how they have changed their way of being and how they are engaging in their relationships with others. As people in the organization are reporting remarkable changes in their leaders due to this work, it seems that positive organizational change is occurring and we are continuing to focus on creating positivity. Our coaches are positive psychology-focused, and use the work of Martin Seligman and Barbara Frederickson on the power of positive psychology.

What I would like to see, however, is more work with leaders around transition. It seems that not only are leaders willing to get used to change, but they live in a sea of constant change. All of them need to develop flexibility in their leadership style and competence, with the ability to adapt to a rapidly changing world. The big challenge is to get people to actually take part in the coaching intervention, and to integrate their learning into their existing leadership style. That sustainable long-term perspective on leadership is yet to be recognized by most organizations. Also, we see constant change in administrations, with political leaders stepping into their roles without much strength in terms of emotional competence. They tend to try to whip people into shape, thinking they can push a button, telling them that what's been done before has been terrible, instead of building upon what has been successful. They push the great “undo” button, which means that they try to undo everything that's gone before, often without understanding how to work with people through a process of change. This means they basically dismantle people's lives: “Well, we're going to be doing something different, so get on with it”, without

realizing that if you don't engage the heart and souls of people nothing will be sustainable.

I'm in the process of writing a new paper that is coming out in the ICCO journal looking at how coaching can support leadership during times of crisis. It's looking at government institutions in the financial arena through my and other coaches' experiences as to how we have supported leaders during times of crisis, and how we have started to build leaders' capability to tackle change in the moment. This entails stepping back to understand how to build change resilience in these leaders. We know change is constant, and that government leaders will continue to move from one crisis to another. This area of crisis leadership is coming to the fore. For social and emotional effectiveness, how can we build practices and capability to help leaders step up to these crises, to survive, thrive and lead organizations and people in times of extraordinary change? I believe that a new consciousness is emerging.

We have obtained funding from four different programme offices in the EPA, and have been able to stay below political levels of scrutiny so that no one sits on us. We've been given full range to address environmental leadership, stewardship, sustainability, global climate change and how to create "change-resilient" leadership from the ground up. Seeing that there is something larger emerging that I am now a part of, I can let it emerge without trying to force it. That is part of my stewardship role to connect people and create resources. We're looking to offer this service using IP TV so that other government departments can also participate using social networking technology to bring more people into the conversation.

Lew Stern: Positively Influencing Leadership for Global Sustainability

Dr. Lew Stern is president of Stern Consulting and Founder and executive director of the Foundation for International Leadership Coaching. Lew is a licensed psychologist in Massachusetts, and since 1977 has served as a leader, executive and leadership coach, and consulting psychologist. Lew has coached and consulted to senior leaders of private- and public-sector organizations around the world. He serves as senior advisor to the Institute of Coaching at McLean Hospital, Harvard Medical School and has a faculty appointment as clinical instructor at Harvard Medical School. On the board of advisors of the International Consortium for Coaching in Organization (ICCO), he is an editorial board member of Coaching: An International Journal of Theory Research and Practice. He chaired the Working Group on Education and Development at the Global Coaching Convention (GCC). He has authored or co-authored many articles and handbooks in coaching including Executive Coaching: A Working Definition; The Executive Coaching Handbook; and Executive Coaching: Building and Managing Your Professional Practice. Lew has a passion for bringing the power of leadership coaching to leaders around the world who are committed to global sustainability.

I have three different areas in which I currently work, although I will focus on the Foundation for International Leadership Coaching. The first two areas are in organizations, coaching senior leaders and their teams, and as a senior advisor to

build and achieve the mission for the Institute of Coaching at Harvard/McLean. This is to help develop coaching as a professional discipline. The Foundation's mission is most important right now, to have an impact so that leadership coaching can change the future of our world. I feel passionately that our world is headed in the wrong direction, and that government and NGO leaders are in control of funds, policies and resources that, if shifted, coaching could positively influence global sustainability, for the environment, international peace and worldwide quality of life. I believe coaching can positively influence our world leaders and their impact on our future.

However, most coaches aren't hitting that. Instead, they are helping large corporations make more money to improve the lives of the people working in those organizations, but they are not making a difference to our global society. What's drawing me to it? I'm a grown-up hippie; a pacifist; an environmentalist; I truly love children; I believe in the democratic process and in equality of human rights and freedom. So much of the work I've done in the past had little impact on any of that. What I hope to do now is help bring the world's leading coaches together to build the leadership capacity of international leaders and ultimately to shift the direction of our planet.

Other people coaching me has helped me with my work, and I'm fortunate to work with people like you. My colleagues coach me; my friends and colleagues are generous with their feedback, confronting me, acting as devil's advocate to ensure that I balance my health and my life. They question me if I am doing too much or too little, and bombard me daily with positive coaching. I've been truly stretched in this last year, seeing the world from a global perspective, seeing my own ethnicity from a larger perspective, seeing myself as a person with continuous needs for personal and professional development, helping me to be more humble, yet see the influence I can have. Coaching has changed my whole outlook on life, on my profession and on my place in the world.

More specifically, I use coaching in my daily routine as I coach global leaders in the corporate and the non-profit world. In the last 2 weeks I have shared coaching conversations with executives from Russia, Mexico, Asia, Europe and the USA. I have been working with potential CEOs of organizations and leading executives in government and educational institutions. I see coaching more as a process than a profession: it is the process of stepping back and helping people to look at themselves in a positive way, helping them to leverage their strengths, identifying what they want to accomplish while they work with others to remove personal barriers in order to unleash the power of what they want to do. I use coaching in everything I do, whether it is with other coaches, colleagues, leaders, building affiliations and collaborations.

As a result of my coaching work, the biggest story is yet to be told, because right now there's very little coaching taking place with the world's leaders. Most of them have stepped into their positions through technical capability, political affiliation or other reasons than being effective leaders. I'm looking at the Foundation project as a 5-year plan to make an impact on society rather than just on individuals. We need to gather many leaders together to collaboratively address societal and planetary change albeit in a different way, as opposed to winning elections, money and power. It is time to think about future generations, and the impact of what we are

doing today in the world. This story is not yet told. I would like us to help these leaders to be leaders! Recently, I spoke in Scottsdale, Arizona to 100 consulting psychologists at the Society for Consulting Psychology (Division 13 of the American Psychological Association). The audience was made up of doctoral-level experts with many years' experience in their field. When I explained the vision and mission of the Foundation, many wanted to sign up immediately.

Almost everyone I speak to, including coaches, teachers, leaders and individuals from many different perspectives, see the need to build international leadership capability. All view the potential of positive psychology and coaching as having the capacity to build leaders who can build the future of our world. I am told leadership stories from day-to-day and am asked, "What can we do?" Many organizations have similar exciting missions in different parts of the world. Some focus on organization development, another takes coaching to third world villages; others work with leadership development for government leaders; others bring leaders together across international boundaries – e.g. the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) and their Leadership Beyond Boundaries Programme. There are many different voices. For example: the Coach Initiative, the Coaches Alliance for Social Action, Coaching in Philanthropy Project, Coaching Beyond Boundaries, Coaching for a Cause, Coaching the Global Village, the Global Coaching Community; there is a separate Group for Societal Change; the Mirus Coaching for Social Change; International Coach Federation who offer *pro bono* grants for coaching and education; Root Cause, the Kennedy School of Leadership; the Clinton Foundation who send coaches to Ethiopia to work on AIDS; Mexican ICF: Social Initiative for Social Change.

There are many organizations trying to build world leaders in their own way. We are collaborating, reaching out to as many organizations as possible to leverage each other's resources. There's another group with whom we speak regularly, which is interested in facilitating the coach's impact on social change in the United Kingdom, the USA and many other countries. Worldwide, many different organizations are forming to make an impact and to leverage social change. This is a very exciting story, and it gives me hope that many people really want to make a difference in a positive way. I know I sound idealistic, but I don't mind idealism!

Italia Boninelli: Global Mining and Its Impact on Communities and Society

Italia Boninelli is senior vice-president, human resources of Gold Fields, and is the chairperson of the Gold Fields Leadership and Business Academy. Previously group human resources director of Netcare, the largest private healthcare organization in South Africa, and HR director and marketing director at Standard Bank, Italia has more than 20 years' experience in human resources, marketing, communications, customer relationship management and business transformation in a variety of industries. A registered industrial psychologist, she is a founder member of the National Human Resources Research Initiative of the South African Board for

Personnel Practice, which is setting the agenda for research into strategic human resources practices.

Italia has lectured at business schools and for national bodies such as the Institute for Personnel Management; she is passionate in her support for women's leadership development programmes and the development of strategic business skills in HR practitioners. She received the "HR Director of 2008" award from the Institute for People Management of South Africa and the "SA Most Influential Women in Business and Government" award for the Mining Sector for 2009 from CEO Magazine together with Wits Business School. She is the author of numerous publications including two books: Building Human Capital, and Conversations in Leadership: South African Perspectives, which are used as set works at various universities.

I head up human resources (HR) and training and development for the Gold Fields Group. We have mining operations in South Africa, Ghana, Australia, Peru and exploration sites in 16 other countries. My work is setting the strategic direction for HR, and current focus areas include negotiating wage demands and other significant issues with multiple unions, stakeholder management, maintaining and developing the talent and skills pipeline, managing the leadership development portfolio and driving a significant investment in organizational design and culture change. What drew me to my work is the ability to make large-scale systemic changes and to turn an organization around, which is part of my track record. I was attracted to Gold Fields by a visionary CEO who had a very clear idea of what he wanted a new Gold Fields to become. In this job, what appeals to me is that I operate at a different level of work that involves huge organizational change with international exposure and the ability to influence across other countries as well.

Besides providing a sounding board (it is always "lonely at the top" in an executive role), coaching has helped me with my own personal transition to a new level of work. It has also helped with the adjustment to a new industry and culture. I moved from the Netcare environment in the healthcare industry where the staff was 84% female, to Gold Fields, which is in the mining industry with a 95% male workforce. Gold Fields is a very large organization, with about 50,000 permanent employees and 16,000 contract staff. The traditional hierarchical structure and paternalistic yet authoritarian management style has meant that organizational and culture change occur slowly and require great effort. There is often resistance in the ranks to new initiatives. I've used coaching of key executives and senior managers inside the organization to help transition people to higher levels of work and to develop a critical mass of people who are starting to think in a new way. That helps to leverage change.

Very specifically in the HR arena, I have used coaching to support particular programmes; for example specific women's programmes to bring women into mining and to progress women through the ranks. Second, we have Mining Charter obligations and need to find ways to accelerate black talent with leadership potential. Due to the skills shortage, we also need to accelerate young graduates and technical specialists into managerial roles much more quickly than might have been the case in the past. The scarcity of key mining skills has been an issue for more than 20 years, but in the past we had old experienced hands that were internal mentors.

As retirement, emigration and other factors have depleted their ranks, coaching has been used to fill part of that gap. The third area where coaching has played a key role is in support of our leadership development programme. Leadership in large organizations emerges when three sets of conditions are met: where people have the analytical and problem-solving skills together with the technical and business knowledge required to address that industry's challenges; where they have the personal passion, purpose, stress resilience and risk propensity to take up the challenge; and lastly where the context requires leadership, i.e. there is some pressing issue or "burning platform" that requires bold action. Executive coaches help people to confront their personal limitations, understand their risk preferences and leadership styles, and enable them to make the transition to being a real leader, and not just a manager. And this can occur at all levels of the organization!

One of the interesting developments I have seen is how the use of coaching to support leadership development has resulted in broader social and organizational change than just the person being coached. We have seen greater personal empowerment for those who are receiving coaching, and they have transferred their coaching skills into the workplace, coaching their colleagues and subordinates. This has impacted other parts of the organization, where those being coached have used their personal insights and coaching skills to coach young graduates across the other disciplines; this has broadly impacted and started to change organizational culture. Once we have created "critical mass" thinking and behaving in a new way from their coaching experience, our managers have started to positively influence hundreds of other managers who have not yet been through this experience. Some of the coaches have also applied their coaching skills to our community investment projects. Our employees are thus involved in an expansion of coaching outside of the organization.

What are our challenges? Like many companies in the mining industry, Gold Fields as an organization has focused on production costs and efficiencies. But the complexity of the challenges we face is rising exponentially. Many traditional managers do not necessarily have the skills or awareness of the more complex challenges which a mining organization faces today. We need to manage new stakeholder groupings that pose new challenges. For example, the green movement and community groups are challenging companies like ours on the environmental impact we have. The focus on safety and health factors is high on the agenda of workers, unions and government. Any of these issues can potentially impact the continuation of mining activities, and might even force the closure of a mine. The challenge is to get staff who have functioned very successfully at an operational level to understand the increasing complexity of the world in which we live, and to assist them in improving their own skills to deal with these challenges. In all the countries in which we operate, we support very broad corporate social investment initiatives.

Shani Naidoo: Coaching and Social Networking

Shani Naidoo is managing director of human resources for Foschini Group in South Africa. She has spent the last 20 years in human resources practice. She joined

the Foschini Group in 1990 and developed competence in recruitment and selection; psychometrics; counselling, and training and development. She then joined BMW South Africa as general manager, human resources. During her career she has led small, medium and large teams, worked across multi-level international and national organizations, and led projects from performance management to remuneration and transformation. She rejoined the Foschini Group in 2005 as general manager of the human resources division, and was appointed to the board as managing director, human resources in 2006. She is known for her well-developed technical expertise in human resources, her vision in developing world-class solutions and pursuing a sound understanding of the business she works in to deliver these solutions. As a senior industrial psychologist, she mentors psychology internship candidates and continually pushes the boundaries of HR practice in business. Not willing to wait and see what business requires, her motto is to predict and develop solutions before it is needed in business. She has served 3 years as the chairperson of the Retailers' Association, where her work involved developing sound HR practice in retail, and engaging retail stakeholders on transforming business and HR policy.

My work is to develop the best people solutions in support of the business achieving its goals. These people solutions involve the entire human value chain in the organization, and my job is to optimize, research and diagnose the business issues as they relate to people, finding solutions that are business and people appropriate. What drew me to this work is its complexity. There is more than just one business unit, and there are quite distinct cultural attributes, even a different DNA within individual business units. When I arrived, these business units were quite disparate, and one of my roles has been to realign them. Retail is a fast moving, dynamic, people-focused business, and because human resources is a critical and strategic function in Foschini, I wanted to work in an organization where people are important.

Coaching has helped me as an individual leader to think and diagnose without emotion, to talk something through, to see the wood for the trees, to create space in my mind to see the picture clearly. Through working with a coach, I have been able to develop distance and perspective and improve my decision-making as a result.

In my work, coaching has helped me to improve individual and company acceleration towards a goal. For example, coaching has helped individual executives find solutions quickly, and coaching has helped individual executives when they have been stuck – helping them think something through, finding a solution. Sometimes coaching has resulted in clear change and achievement of an individual's objectives. Coaching has also been used for longer-term interventions to grow and develop an individual's certain weaker attributes, as well as to assist them in improving and building new relationships. I think coaching has even helped our leadership to appreciate the value of coaching; it has helped our very senior executives develop a greater awareness of the nexus between individuals and the achievement of business objectives.

The difference that I would like to see as a result of coaching is collaboration, particularly greater collaboration between silos. There has been social change between business units who previously worked very separately. But now we have chat rooms where individuals in Foschini get together across business functions and units to

develop relationships and business solutions. This is due to the need for change processes to be bedded down quickly. We are currently experiencing an economic slowdown, and we need to identify what processes require improvement, which requires people to work across functions and to create new processes. Change in itself is requiring us to change our practices. The other area that is still new for me is social networking. Facebook and Twitter have affected how our business operates internally and externally, and is changing the social interaction of our employees and with our customers. If you want to interact with people on Facebook, it can be in real time; people respond and make comments on your wall, and this is definitely starting to filter into our business! We will post a business problem and it can be debated and blogged using social networking technology. We will soon be trialling that technology with my performance management tool. Having developed a paper-based tool in the last 3 years, we will use some of the aspects of social networking to optimize performance management in our business. Social networking is changing how we engage, communicate and tell stories inside the organization.

One of my main challenges is that this organization is so fragmented. When I arrived it was unusual to find a coordinated strategy where people worked together on common issues. The same problem was being solved in different places but with differing levels of quality, and the organization didn't benefit as a result. That has been a challenge that we have addressed using cross-company collaboration (CCC). CCC is there to help us to change the organization, but I think other societal changes such as an increased legislative environment has played a major role. We have had to adhere to a wide range of social changes: BBBEE (Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment); amendments to corporate law; the King Commission's third set of recommendations on corporate governance; the National Credit Act and Consumer Protection Act; changes to labour equity law – all of these changes have forced us to work together as one unit, instead of disparate companies within one group.

Willem de Jager: Leadership and Innovation for Social Projects

Willem de Jager is leadership and organizational culture specialist for Resolve Encounter Consulting, a leading consulting firm in South Africa. He completed his Ph.D. in executive leadership development from a systems psychodynamic stance in 2002 with the University of Johannesburg/Tavistock Institute. He has extensive experience in the design, development, consultation and facilitation of leadership development programmes for global and national organizations. He developed and implemented ABSA Bank's organization development consultation model, and played an instrumental role in the Barclays/ABSA high-performance leadership culture turnaround strategy.

Willem regularly leads cross-cultural executive and team-based coaching interventions, and currently manages the Resolve Group Executive Coaching and Mentoring Service Line; he has developed the largest coaching services panel in Africa, in which he project-leads major coaching and mentor development

initiatives in South Africa. Willem has presented and published nationally and internationally on the topics of leadership development and group dynamics, and is a member of the Centre for Creative Leadership's international coaching panel.

At the moment I am senior coach consultant for the Resolve Group, which means that I develop proposals for coaching tenders and work on leads for business development in the executive coaching market. I lead the executive coaching service line branding for Resolve, coordinating our major executive coaching projects, project managing and supervising our executive coaches to ensure quality delivery and the achievement of organizational leadership development strategic aims. I custom-design executive and group or team coaching initiatives to ensure that executive coaching assignments are aligned with organizational talent management architecture, and retention and development strategies. We package executive coaching initiatives for wellness coaching, appointment of executives into new roles, performance coaching, alignment of leadership behaviours with organizational values, succession pool initiatives, and cross-cultural coaching for expatriates.

All coaching assignments are custom-designed to meet client organizations' leadership development aims as part of their overall talent management retention and development planning. Individual executive coaching initiatives are often supplemented with group or team coaching which we custom-design. All members of the Resolve coaching panel are required to be registered with COMENSA and the ICF to ensure continuous professional development, supervision and development towards classification as "master coaches". I also run an internship programme for young black qualified executive coaches to ensure that Resolve always have a well-represented and diversified panel from which clients can select their potential coaches.

I have been coaching (executive face-to-face, group or team coaching) for the past 15 years, and worked on many large-scale coaching contracts with teams of executive coaches, including continuous supervision of coaches on coaching assignments. This has helped me with my own personal mastery, to be more effective as a leader, stepping into my personal power and authority when I lead large coaching projects with multiple organizations at a time. My role is complex, as I deal with many different sectors and clients; this requires a certain personal autonomy and self-authorization from the coaches and organizational clients with whom I work. Coaching has also helped me to understand the covert human response, and organizational collective covert resistance, to change in leadership culture and transformational change initiatives. I have developed insight and skills as a result of my own coaching to work effectively with transformational change and oversee coaching initiatives towards high-performance leadership culture.

I see coaching as a leadership style and leadership culture in organizations. Whether you are a situational leader, change leader or high-performance leader, coaching is the next-generation leadership style. Adopting a leadership coaching style has helped me to lead an executive coaching panel of 110 executive coaches who coach on multiple projects at a time. I try to adopt a coaching style with all of my clients, particularly in large project interventions, to help my clients feel

empowered. Part of the process is to be as collaborative as possible, empowering the coaches and clients with whom I work. The back office supports me with finance and administration, and I also follow a coaching style with them so that they can feel empowered in their work.

One of our greatest success stories is a coaching contract that we are delivering for the Leadership and Innovation Network for Collaboration (LINC) in the children's sector. Resolve developed a custom-designed executive coaching methodology to work collaboratively with multiple service providers in leadership development and systemic problem-solving, to address the South African crisis with orphaned and vulnerable children. Resolve's Executive Coaching for Fellows – carefully selected from government, NGOs, business donors and the private sector – was implemented during 2008. Today the total number of Fellows on this national project has reached 150. All Fellows receive executive coaching and are part of a group coaching initiative across the country, contributing to the development of innovations to make a difference to South Africa's orphaned and vulnerable children.

All Fellows who are part of this incredible journey take on multiple roles in their journey with LINC and the Department of Social Services, and have achieved numerous successes at the level of societal change.

- *Building community* – funding proposal for the development, testing and institutionalization of a model for 16–18-year olds to access a foster care grant, support a household, stay in the community, and access support and develop skills.
- *Building local government* – funding proposal to involve municipalities in improving community participation and becoming more sensitive to hearing children's voices.
- *Coordinating the children's sector* – funding proposal and mandate letter received to develop the cooperative governance structures which are responsible for children.
- *Department of Social Services Children's database* – database developed by the Department of Social Services to track maternal orphans (the database did not exist before).
- *Donors* – establishment of a national donor forum to increase collaboration between donors which has resulted in the publication of research results on the AIDS Buzz Website; successful donor dialogue meetings and a national donor forum are being created.
- *Education* – research and assessing the approach to increase parental and community involvement in the education of children that has reached crisis proportions in South Africa; the result is a proposal for funding to support proposed work.
- *Media* – research for a funding proposal for mass mobilization campaigns to increase the focus on children in need.

The second success story relates to executive coaching for Volkswagen South Africa (VWSA). Resolve developed a 360° feedback survey for leadership culture behaviours which was aligned to VWSA's company values. In 2009, all executives

and senior leaders were assessed using the 360° VWSA leadership-alignment survey. Individual and divisional survey results were used in an executive coaching assignment (twelve 90-min sessions a month) to turn around leadership behaviour in alignment with company values. A significant development in leadership behaviours was reported in post-assessment results, and in the leadership development initiative through executive coaching. This programme is nominated as a global leadership best practice in the VW Group worldwide. As a result of the effectiveness of the Resolve executive coaching approach, VWSA has decided to continue with the coaching process during 2010 with a focus on team coaching at divisional level, to further embed leadership behaviours in alignment with company values.

My challenges, and what I have gained in the LINC project, are that what seemed to be an impossible task proved to be very successful. I think the other challenges we are normally faced with as providers of executive coaching interventions, stem from organizations splitting coaching contracts to make use of multiple service providers. The company's executive committee is often split from the rest of the organization in terms of its leadership development, and is often working with a different coaching provider to other levels of management. Working across the gap becomes challenging, particularly in regard to sustaining the very leadership behaviours that are required to transform as a result of coaching assignments. It is challenging for coaches to deliver high-quality and effective coaching interventions when the corporate system is neither transparent nor working collaboratively; it often maintains the "dysfunctionality" in the system.

Roger Maitland and Brett Anderson: Coaching for Wellness and HIV/AIDS Awareness

Roger Maitland is a founding member and director of LifeLab. He specializes in leadership coaching and organizational change, consulting to blue-chip corporations in South Africa and internationally. Roger lectures on the M.Phil. programme in coaching at the University of Stellenbosch Business School. He has a special interest in the development of transformational leadership practices that effectively address complex sustainable development issues.

Brett Anderson is also a founding member and director of LifeLab. His work focuses on enabling leaders and organizations to innovate by reframing change. He coaches and consults to facilitate performance enhancement, sustainable leadership and workplace wellness. He is a well-regarded international HIV/AIDS activist, and a UN fieldworker who provides strategic business insight with a creative edge.

Brett Anderson

My interest in human development arose from my own personal journey in discovering that I had HIV. In that first year, it was through the deeper learning about myself and what was made possible through the horrendous situation of being HIV-positive, that I became fascinated by human potential through tragedy – it took various courses. In terms of behaviour change: some people die, and some resist

behaviour change; I determined to change direction. For my own personal journey, I became curious about how other people's tragedies held them back, and I used coaching to help others to go to that deeper place to review what needed to change. I love to learn by jumping right in, and finding out what takes people to their next level. As a coach and a change consultant, I am the catalyst to help people identify their way ahead. But I don't believe you have to go through tragedy to create change.

Having HIV/AIDS is what got me curious; and working in the field of coaching, I have had a number of mentors and coaches who have helped me to identify things I hadn't yet seen. Observing the techniques that these mentors and coaches used with me, I noticed a pattern and could see how I could help others. When Roger began his masters in Executive Coaching, it was a catalyst for me, going through it with him. What always stands out in our work today is not to get stuck in one methodology – every client presents a different issue and problem. They either need a spanner or a star screwdriver, and so I need tools to help the client achieve their goals. Having qualified as a counsellor early in my career, coaching is the next step in problem-solving; how can I help my clients to make their next decisions? Coaching has helped me and my clients – it has helped my clients to overcome obstacles when they discover they are HIV-positive. We ask, "What can we do?", rather than being defeated by the problem.

This led us at LifeLab to present a coaching methodology to VirginActive in South Africa to support people with manageable diseases and relationship issues. How could coaching help people to find solutions, like a traffic light, helping them to think through their options? How could coaching allow the client or the group to see more options than they presently see? We worked with VirginActive in 86 fitness clubs scattered across the country, and we trained up 86 internal coaches to work primarily with "wellness" and support issues in the workplace.

I believe there is a huge developmental need in South Africa, and I can see how coaching helps to broaden the possibilities, options and solutions – to solve some of the many problems we are seeing. My interest rose from my own personal one, but I would like to see more coaches play a bigger role, helping South Africans to overcome the many challenges we have. It's not that the challenges don't have solutions, it's that we need a different way of looking at the solutions, with LifeLab's work in coaching, and through the mentoring where I work at the Medical School at the University of Cape Town. This deeper process of self-reflection, identifying my risks and through mentoring helping others to open the door to a new way of seeing solutions – knowing that through tragedy brings new possibilities. That's the analogy I use in helping people to see and overcome their own personal obstacles. Rather than running away, I enjoy coaching to help them face it. The opportunities are endless because there are so many needs.

Roger Maitland

My work is in coaching, but I see it more broadly than that. For me, the core competence for coaching is to help organizations and individuals make transitions. That takes various forms, and what I enjoy is interacting within a range, from working in

a rural town to working in a corporation, or with an individual leader going through substantial leadership change. What drew me to my work? I was studying towards being a psychologist and was frustrated in my career. I heard about coaching, experienced it as a client, and saw how powerful the coaching paradigm was. I had always wanted to be involved in making a positive contribution, so coaching was a good fit for me. My work has diversified, but it is always to do with change – practical change, and the quality of thinking around change.

From the beginning, I developed an understanding of the tacit knowledge around the process of change. I began to get a sense of the process of change, particularly going through it in a coaching relationship where I was supported. It helped me to have more self-insight, which makes it easier for me to withhold judgment. I think for me it has been coupled with therapy – two support structures have supported my process. It's interesting that both of those experiences have been quite different, and both have made a powerful contribution to my life. We get drawn into the helping professions, even if we consider that work in the corporate sector is commercial. Coaching has also helped me to accept my sexual orientation, and my personal crisis after coming out of the closet, as the internal battle took time to work through that internalized repression. Understanding those motivational roots and making them part of my value system, allowed me to separate my issues from the client, learning to use myself as the instrument of practice, although I don't get that right all the time! Coaching was an early influence in my career; it influenced how my practice developed, and is now integrated across the board in the way I work. The coaching and learning principles that support coaching have shaped how I design interventions for the client. Aside from delivering coaching for example in VirginActive, the need was around HIV training. What I have seen through many years of experience in this field is that standard training models don't lead to behaviour change. Coaching, however, can help to create support structures inside organizations, empowering people to have conversations and explore their own attitudes, behaviour patterns and the situations in which they find themselves and that inhibit them from helping themselves. When designing training programmes, even the way we design the daily sessions involves peer coaching to help people to make changes in their lives and their work. We use coaching in individual and group coaching interventions, moving towards creating a coaching culture, helping teams to work across boundaries or silos.

I would like to see people harness their strengths more, identifying and utilizing internal resources they hadn't noticed before. We did some work with an insurance company, within the legal services department of that company, where I was coaching several managers. One story stood out for me – the coachee was a man in his mid- to late-40s, a lawyer by training. He was working in a compliance function in that company, and was despondent as he had been trying for a promotion for over 5 years without success. He struggled to make decisions, and I had noticed very little progression; robust conversations did not create much movement. We decided to take him through the neuro-science inventory that I work with; it is related to Jung's model, with the key difference being that it can pick up falsification (Benziger). Essentially it looks at competence, and at an individual's lead strength in the brain.

This is found to be 100 times more efficient than the other regions of the brain. My client had studied law, but had barely graduated. He did not see himself in the courtroom, and ended up in the compliance function in the corporate sector, which was the safety net of administration.

We picked up falsification; he had a frontal-right dominance (spatial creative thinking), and had wanted to be an architect (working in the opposite region of the brain!). With that framework, and building that into our coaching, we started to see the root cause of his difficulties. We began to see where his strengths were; essentially our competences might not be our core talents (i.e. dominance in the cerebral cortex). Sometimes, after many years of falsification, the competences and dominance can be difficult to distinguish; it just gives a guide to where his talents actually lie. I supported him through a coaching intervention, harvesting his strengths in a natural way. Preliminary data shows us that falsification rates may be higher in South Africa than in the rest of the world, and may be due to the post-apartheid context.

There's one other example that might be interesting about a woman of mixed race working in the financial information technology sector. We were engaged in a broad coaching intervention in the company at her level. In our coaching conversations, I noticed a pattern that she constantly spoke of feeling that her peers and subordinates did not accept the value of her work and her contribution. This was her perception, sometimes noticed in conflict situations, sometimes in other ways. At some point our coaching conversations began to deepen. She started to talk about her experiences as a student during her days at university. She came to the end of her studies and to the graduation. She had studied with a very small class, and some of those 30–40 people with whom she had studied for 4 years didn't even know her name; she felt invisible, and that she hadn't been valued as a person. Other, similar stories emerged from our coaching conversations, which highlighted her constant questioning of her own value, asking "Am I really good enough?" She struggled academically, but socially she really struggled, coming out of the strained race relations in apartheid South Africa.

This is the "internalized mediocrity" Paolo Freire refers to when people are marginalized – their voice becomes internalized, and it becomes an internal mechanism (which Ngūgĩ wa Thiong'o referred to in terms of the need for "decolonizing the mind"). As we named it, the internal work became so important – through the conversation we started to name it, and as that dynamic came into place, she started to see other elements of the conversation that she had been missing. She started to see that it was the opposite of what she believed to be true; she began to see (e.g. she was in a peer conflict with a white male, vying for the same position), and she was worried she would get the job just because she was black and female; she also thought he would get it because she wasn't valued. She began to see that people really valued her. What she was picking up was quite distorted. This is a positive psychology domain – the road to draw on those positive psychology tools is quite a process. Importantly, I wasn't doing therapy; we were trying to make progress using a coaching agenda. This led to delving in a practical way into these fundamental beliefs. It radically changed the way my client could operate socially in her

business network and ultimately deliver results. She experienced a fundamental shift and growth in self-esteem.

Another story that pops out is due to doing quite a bit of work in continental Africa, and encountering the perception that South Africa is the “America of Africa”. South Africans who work in the African continent tend to go in with an arrogance and an attitude of “knowing better” and adopting a rather autocratic way. In delivering services and starting up businesses, we South Africans have got ourselves a bit of a tarnished reputation. We had to overcome this in our coaching and training work, using our own vulnerability as coaches and facilitators to connect and build bridges. Through this, even in the town of Rundu, on the border between Angola and Namibia, on the battlefield where South Africa was occupying Namibia and invaded Angola during the mid-1970s and early 1980s, it is possible to make an even deeper and more real impact as a result of our history.

In coaching local business leaders in Africa, a similar dynamic existed where South African expatriates have sometimes treated locals very autocratically, as if they were “less than”. We learned to name this dynamic, offering a mutual learning environment in which we act as partners, taking a coaching position, working respectfully within their values system and context, rather than in a neo-colonial fashion. And I think often the other element is trying to understand and locate the need for change, within the paradigm of a nation, trying to link or frame the way that the intervention is used by using local dynamics and local knowledge. In Namibia, where we were working with HIV, we used a training model in alignment with coaching conversations. We used the theme of their political independence and their struggle. We used visualization (taking delegates back to their feeling and memories of Independence Day) and coaching processes to harness the strengths they had learnt from the struggle, and used those to figure out how to fight HIV. It was inspired through our coaching practice, and provided an opportunity for them to harness Namibian solutions rather than us as South Africans providing the models, and in an emotive way – they danced to their own music. The quality of input that was referred to later on when we worked with them in smaller groups was that they figured out their own solutions, which was profound.

Marilyn Johnson: Coaching for Leadership and Community Awareness

Marilyn Johnson, an African-American born in Tennessee, has nearly 30 years of corporate experience contributing to the profitability of organizations through various procurement, operations and sales/marketing leadership roles. Her strategic and tactical know-how lends itself to the development and implementation of wide-scale organizational change initiatives while successfully managing to business objectives. Currently, Marilyn combines her functional expertise in an expatriate assignment as general manager – Africa, in Johannesburg, South Africa, for the US-based Cummins Inc., a \$14 billion, Fortune 206 manufacturing company.

Whether growing a business utilizing innovative methods, enhancing operational efficiencies through a disciplined approach, or improving the communities in which she works via creative interventions, Marilyn demonstrates high-energy, tireless passion and a results-oriented focus. Marilyn received her Master of Business Administration from the University of Tennessee – Knoxville, and Bachelor of Science in biochemistry from Tennessee State University. She serves on the Board of the Center for Women’s Health Research at Meharry Medical College, and is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., a public service organization.

Coaching has helped to keep me grounded; it allows me to step back and think strategically and in a focused manner to accomplish my goals. Specifically coaching has helped me get to the end game by giving me different perspectives on how to manage the business. But for me coaching is not just about work: it’s about my overall being and ensuring positive results when making tough decisions. It allows me to look at things from a different viewpoint and stretches me mentally. Coaching is also a good networking opportunity; it broadens my capacity to reach further when making career decisions.

As the general manager of Africa for the Filtration Division of Cummins Inc., the scope of my work includes business development, leading and executing business strategy, analysing, measuring and tracking market sales potential, community social responsibility, and financial responsibility for the entire profit and loss of the business. My role also encompasses human relations – i.e. skills and leadership development through coaching. In South Africa it’s about the transfer of skills.

Before coming to South Africa, my line manager convinced me that she recognized what she thought were natural abilities to become a general manager. The position has given me an opportunity to experience all facets of the business, from sales to finance, manufacturing, operations and logistics, as well as involvement with the key parameters, particularly human relations, that make Cummins Filtration a successful business.

The opportunity to work in Africa meant stepping into the role of an expatriate; living and working in a new country, and experiencing and learning a wide range of African cultures. This experience has given me the opportunity to contribute and to make a difference. I want to leave a legacy, so that the generations to come will benefit from some of the work that I and my team have contributed to the continent in my role as general manager. Some of the key corporate social responsibility initiatives that I have led, and consider rewarding for the organization and the local communities are as follows:

- Building a Habitat for Humanity home in Pietermaritzburg.
- Building the Masakhane crèche, a crèche for young children born to parents with HIV/AIDS.
- Awarding a significant contribution to the SOS Children’s Village in Pietermaritzburg.
- Leading a committee to secure a Cummins Foundation grant of R4.3 million (\$325,000) for the Ithemba Institute of Technology in Soweto (for high school

grades 10–12; learnerships and skills training programmes for unemployed youths and young adults and trade courses for adults in mechanics, computer science and welding).

During the past 7 years, Cummins has joined with other corporate partners to support Ithemba in developing skills that can be used within Cummins and other major Fortune 500 companies; this is part of the skills transfer.

I use coaching and mentoring with my direct reports. When I recognize my managers may be going off track, I step in to coach them back on track. I use different approaches, from one-on-one mentoring-type conversations to offer guidance, or exposing them to different views through team coaching. My intention is always to use coaching to help my staff become better managers and leaders. I also use coaching for goal setting, and to manage my expectations of them, helping them to think through processes through questions and discussion.

I even coach my customers! I believe the success of my customers depends upon the relationship they have with us at Cummins. In Africa, the business practices are quite different from those used in the United States. I've spent a lot of time transferring processes and skills to my customers e.g. providing marketing support and participating in joint marketing campaigns, making observations to help their business, engaging them in leadership development opportunities so that they can better develop their staff. We have hosted business/sales conferences that are phenomenal in educating customers, not only on our product line but also on sales techniques. Sharing best practices has helped customers develop their team. The positive results are shown through customer loyalty.

A great example is when we had to temporarily shut down one of our manufacturing plants in France. Our customers were challenged with poor delivery service, and had an opportunity to go to our competitors. Instead, they didn't leave us because of our strong relationship; they were confident that we would help them work through the challenges. Yes, we certainly had challenges in getting product to them. But, instead of relying on that particular plant, we looked at other sourcing avenues (e.g. China, India, Brazil and Australia) to get product to them so that they could deliver to their customers. In using a coaching style with them, we kept open the lines of communication, keeping them informed of events that were taking place. Good communication was the key in helping to manage our customers' anxieties.

As a result of my work, the differences that I would like to see are success in managing conflict and diversity issues. For example, because of persisting racial division, difference and conflict within the management team, I brought in a facilitator to work with the managers, and also brought the shopfloor employees and the managers together. I used team coaching to help them to understand each other as individuals. The result was to help them to understand each other, because they were simply working in silos. They discovered that "We've got something in common; I can talk to you, and you aren't going to bite my head off". It raised self-awareness, and now they are working together more as a team; managers are getting input from shopfloor people when decisions are to be made, and shopfloor employees are more willing to participate. They built self-esteem and grew their interpersonal skills – so

coaching helped both the organization in terms of performance, and the individual from an interpersonal development point of view.

My greatest challenge when I first arrived in South Africa was the fear factor. I had a driver who also acted as my bodyguard when I first arrived, and he wouldn't allow me to go out alone. There were also certain places and events he would not allow me to attend. For example, I couldn't go to a soccer game unless I had box seats – from a safety standpoint he was very cautious, as his job was to protect this expatriate American. Eventually, my need for independence outweighed the fear factor. I purchased a global positioning satellite (GPS) navigation system, had my car windows shatter-proofed and relieved my driver/bodyguard of his duties. I have not had any problems, and am in control of my own destiny.

Another instance was when I imagined that someone had put *muti* (bad magic) on me. In my flat there was under-carpet heating. The heating element was underneath my bed, and during the night it had burned through the carpet leaving a burnt, melted spot. The next morning I woke up with ash on my bed from the flames, and I thought, “What is this? Who has come in and sprinkled *muti* in my room?” I was pretty scared and called the owner of the apartment that Saturday morning not knowing what was going on. Finally he looked underneath the bed and there it was, the burnt-out heating element . . . My fear factor had caused my imagination to work overtime!

It was coaching that helped me to overcome the fear factor. On first arriving in South Africa, a colleague came with me, stepping into the role of director of operations and logistics. He left when my line management changed. The biggest challenge when he left was to maintain stability in the operations facility and to achieve targets without having his support. I had to step in and take over the role myself. To cope, I promoted two of the individuals on-site to substitute for the one that my colleague previously held, and I started to work more closely with the plant. This was actually a major organizational change; I had altered the infrastructure, putting people into roles they weren't ready for. But I had no choice, as I could not get approval to recruit or hire any more people. I realized that I had to work very closely with them to get them to perform at an acceptable level. So we worked together, one-on-one, relying for extra support from our functional directors in the United States and Europe. To transfer skills I used on-line training and worked in a coaching style with each of my managers in bi-weekly meetings by phone and in monthly face-to-face meetings, giving each individual time to talk through their challenges. It also allowed me an opportunity to help them with their challenges by sharing past experience and best practices. This process yielded positive results as each manager stepped into their own ability to think and lead, working more closely with other managers. The organizational restructure has given them confidence in their own personal abilities, and is strengthening the relationship between them and me. And we have met our performance objectives.

Nonkqubela Maliza: Driving the Transformation Agenda

My work as director for corporate and government affairs for Volkswagen South Africa (VWSA) is to advance corporate objectives and priorities while enhancing

and promoting relationships at all levels of government and in the community. I drive the transformation agenda, the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) codes, company strategy and the transformation budget. I also drive the transformation agenda, and champion stakeholder engagement for corporate affairs and social investment. I was drawn to the company because I wanted to work for a multi-national firm that is an icon in its industry. VWSA is known to be the best at what it does, and I wanted to work with the best in the big league. It's very meaningful work as it's about transformation, which is of crucial importance to the nation and the company. I'm drawn to the work of corporate social investment as a contribution to development, and the transformation agenda serves national priorities and national objectives. It is about development rather than charity, is a strong way of contributing to development in communities that are underdeveloped. There is the potential to do meaningful work that can leave a positive change legacy and a development legacy.

My own coaching has helped me to do my job better, more effectively because it has created a supportive environment for me. I feel less alienated, and in my coach I've had a thinking partner to test ideas on. Coaching has helped me to feel more self-confident, and has helped me to be more competent in going about my work. I have tried to use coaching with my stakeholders and my team, as well as in my other roles chairing various boards and steering committees. I am drawn to creating a thinking environment, creating an empowering environment where people's thoughts and problem-solving skills are honoured and encouraged. This makes the teams more effective, and makes the work more joyful and qualitatively better. That people's minds are ignited, that is my goal.

My story is a mentoring story, and to simply encourage people to think for themselves. We are starting a mentoring programme in Midrand, and are about to set one up in the Eastern Cape, in our own plant. This is inspiring, as people feel they are making a personal contribution. I love the flyer, which said, "You give nothing when you give your possessions; when you give of yourself that is when you truly give". With mentoring you can make a difference to someone's life. If you impact one person in a family, they will impact the rest of the family, and that starts to make a difference in communities. There are a couple of challenges in the social development space. I manage VWSA's Community Trust; but you have to walk with the community – they must own the process so that they can drive it. I don't live in their community, they do. We need to get the community to own the projects so that they can drive them and lobby and help them to grow and grow and grow, and to get other benefits we might not have thought of. We constantly have to work with them.

One of the projects in Uitenhage is to build an early childhood centre, a preschool for very young children in that community. It is very exciting. Employees have been giving the equivalent of 1 h of their monthly wages for the project for the past 3 years. We are using these people's money for the project, which we call "One Hour for the Future". This is money they have contributed every month; they have a vested interest in the project and are supportive and proud of it. For this project we have partnered with local government, who gave us the land for free. We are setting up a world-class infrastructure, including environmentally friendly aspects such as solar power for heating and insulation, because in South Africa access to electricity

is an issue. My learning is to work alongside the community and have them take an active part in the project.

Conclusion

I hope you have found food for thought in the achievements, concerns and insights of your colleagues working in the field of coaching today. It is still a radical thought to encourage people to think for themselves in organizations and institutions, and coaching is pioneering this “civil disobedience”. The impact of coaching is far wider reaching than any of us have yet to realize, and as the field of coaching and practitioner research grows, we will begin to see the results of these “inspiring conversations” which just may begin to change the way we perceive and manage our world.

References

- Kline, N. (1999/2004). *Time to think: Listening with the human mind*. London: Ward Lock.
- Kline, N. (2005). *The thinking partnership[®] programme: Consultant's guide*. Wallingford, CT: Time to Think.
- Kline, N. (2009). *More time to think*. London: Ward Lock.
- Stout Rostron, S. (2009). *Business coaching international: Transforming individuals and organizations*. London: Karnac.