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Senior Lecturer in Organisation Studies Coaching as a talent management practice : specificities and impact at individual and organisational level

**ILM Webinar** 



7 December 2023 10.00-10.45am



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# Relevance, background and context

- TM and LD : a perennial issue and a priority for organisations in post covid-19 era (Caligiuri et al. 2020; Collings et al. 2021)
- TM in the banking sector: talent shortages and leadership crisis (Quinlan and Associates, 2017; PWC, 2017)
- Wide use of coaching in organisations in UK and world and one of the most effective TM practice (CIPD, 2015; ICF, 2020)

#### BUT

- Effectiveness of TM practices often questioned (McKinsey, 2018)
- The views of talented employees is often missing in empirical studies (Gallardo-Gallardo-Thunnissen, 2016; Sparrow, 2019)
- Coaching often studied as part of a bundle of TM practices, not examined specifically (Blackman, Moscardo and Gray, 2016)

### What is the role of talent coaching?

# How is coaching characterised in the context of TM?

# Talent or not Talent?

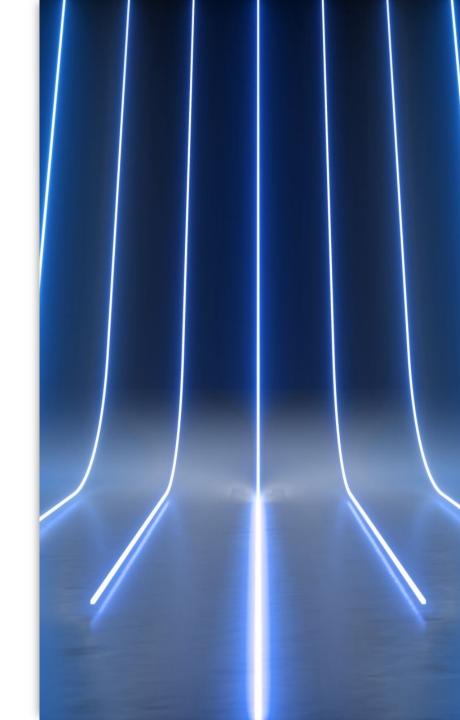
- 17 definitions of talent based on 4 different approaches (Gallardo-Gallardo & Thunnissen, 2019; Skuza et al., 2022). :
  - elitist vs egalitarian;
  - the trait/skill approach (innate abilities or acquired competencies);
  - high-performance *vs* high-potential;
  - TM as object (talent as people's characteristics) vs subject (talent as people)

The management and development of highperforming and high-potential incumbents in critical organizational roles. (Collings, 2014:111)



# Talent or not Talent?

- Conceptualisation of talent according to the sector and context:
  - an elitist approach in the private sector (Meyers et al., 2020)
  - an egalitarian approach in the public sector (Tyskbo, 2023)
  - in small or medium-sized organisations (Meyers et al., 2020).
- Implications of the multiple interpretations of the term 'talent' :
  - o on TM practices (Skuza et al., 2022)
  - on employees' reactions towards TM (De Boeck et al., 2018; Sumelius et al., 2020).
  - On perceived organisational justice (Gelens et al., 2014)



## Talent management

- An inevitable topic and a growing field of study (McDonnell et al., 2017; Thunnissen and Gallardo-Gallardo, 2019; Sparrow, 2019)
- TM and LD schemes typically include coaching, mentoring, training, international assignments, rotation programmes, etc.

#### BUT

- Lack of empirical research on the talented employees' views, experience and their expectations
- Little is known on the impact of TM practices on career progression and leadership development (Gallardo-Gallardo and Thunnissen, 2016; Cascio and Boudreau, 2016)

# Coaching in organisations

 Many definitions and hybrid practice (Western, 2012; Garvey, Stokes, & Megginson, 2018)

"A human development process that involves structured, focused interaction and use of appropriate strategies, tools and techniques to promote desirable and sustainable change for the benefit of the coachee, and potentially for other stakeholders" (Cox, Bachkirova and Clutterbuck, 2018:1)

- Prevalence of the positive impacts of coaching : Leadership development, performance enhancement, well-being and employee engagement (Birckerich, Michael & Shea, 2017; Theeboom et al., 2014)
- 'Talent coaching': one-to-one developmental interventions received by talented employees taking part in a TM programme





# The context of the study

A qualitative single case study

Real-life and in-depth understanding of talent coaching as a phenomenon (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009; Ellinger, McWhorter, 2020)

- One multinational bank
- Focus on the EMEA region (about 30,000 employees)
- 4 TM programmes including coaching element
- 30 semi-structured interviews
- Participants: talented employees, HR managers, internal and external coaches



## Data sample

	1st	2nd
TM Programmes in EMEA	interview	interview
Programme A - Junior	3	1
Programme B- Senior	2	1
Programme C- Middle managers -		
Consumer division	4	1
Programme D- Senior women	3	1
External coaches	3	2
Internal coaches	2	1
HR managers	3	0
Programme managers	3	0
	23	7



### Overview of the 4 TM programmes

Programme	Target participants	Length	Coach	Structure	Format
A	Junior leaders: Vice Presidents	6 months	Internal (HR managers and MDs)	3 sessions	Group and individual Internal
B C – Business	Senior leaders: Directors, Managing Directors Middle	3 months 6	Internal (HR managers and MDs) Internal (HR	2 sessions 3 sessions	Individual, 360° Assessment and Hogan Development Survey Individual,
specific (Consumer division)	management leaders: Vice Presidents, Directors	months	managers)		360° Assessment
D – Gender specific (Women)	Women senior leaders: Directors, Managing Directors	3 months	Internal (HR managers and MDs) and external	4 to 5 sessions	Individual, 360° Assessment and Hogan Development Survey



# Finding 1: Talent coaching as social reward

- A rite of passage, especially for leaders transitioning to MD level (Oliver, T, B, 2)
- A gratifying career event, although not systematically conducive of career progression

A hard-landing. (Nathalie, multiple, 2) It is not a panacea. (Adam, HR, 1)

#### A relational reward

So you feel a little bit of love, that they want to spend time and money on you; and that you are not completely unnoticed. (...)We are being recognized and rewarded. (Emma, T, A, 1)

• A symbol of high status and enactment of the talent status



# Finding 2: Talent coaching as catalyst for leadership change

#### Coaching capacity and capability building

Broadening the leadership repertoire of managers and moving away from a command-and-control approach.

Better quality conversation, (Head of OD, Int C.,1)

• An unspoken mechanism for the selection of a talent elite

There'll be the smaller group [of employees] that think, yes, I can do that [coaching] to make me sort of a better person, whether it's here or outside work or whatever. And they're the people that I think eventually go into the really big leadership roles.

(Georges, Int. C, 1)

• An alternative to employee relations management and mediation at senior level





- Not a remedial intervention to address performance issues
- An individualised platform for the development of leadership capabilities based on mutual exchange gains and long-term relationships
- Develop the **political skills and network** to climb the career ladder
- Talent coach as " advocate, ambassador, sponsor, mentor"

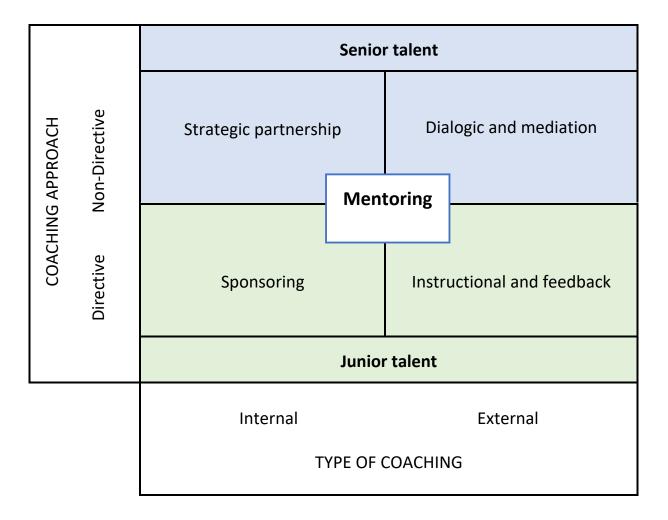
I am quite sure that coaching helps in the positive politics that you need to evolve in any firm. (Emma, T, A, 1)

You realise that the organisation doesn't necessarily have a structure for people who want to peddle faster, because it's a very case-by-case basis how people get to the next point. (Carry, T, A, 1)

If you are positively impacted by a coach, you are the brand ambassador for him as well. Trust me, I know my coach. (Emma, T, A, 1)



### The Talent Coaching Matrix







# Summary and implications

- Talent coaching relies on internal coaching capacities and capabilities, which may vary across EMEA and globally
  - Embedding digital talent coaching in TM
  - Formal recognition and reward for internal coaches
  - Awareness of talent coaching as a mutual and reciprocal relationship
- **Ethical challenges** due to imbalance of power and unspoken role of talent coaching for talent elite selection:
  - Systematic coaching training and supervision for internal coaches
  - Transparent communication on talent status and the role of coaching (Dries and Gieter, 2014, Sumelius et al. 2020)



### Future research: Digital coaching education

# Are you a coach working in an online environment or using digital tools?

You may be interested to participate to this study:

- What are the specificities, opportunities and challenges posed by digital and AI coaching?
- How to support coaches in their development as digital coaches?

Please contact me if you would like to participate to a survey and/or focus group as part of this new study:

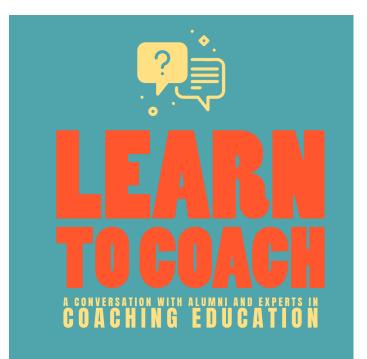
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### Thank you

Connect with me on LinkedIn or by email
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Podcast "Learn to Coach"
<u>https://open.spotify.com/show/7gjZDLYU38</u>
<u>IDNAyvrYnuea</u>





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