



COMENSAnews

COACHES AND MENTORS OF SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa's Premier Association for Coaches, Mentors and People Developers



The Power of Collaboration



By Belinda Davies, President of COMENSA

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” (Margaret Mead 1901 - 1978).

This quotation is so true of COMENSA – that it has been a small group of thoughtful, committed people whose collaboration has been so powerful that it has brought us to where we are in 3 short years. Such is the power of a compelling vision and collaborative effort in the pursuit of that vision. I look back on what has been achieved, and ahead to the enormous task that awaits us, and marvel at the courage that it took for a small band of founding members to set us on the path towards the professionalization of the practice that each of us has embraced. What were they thinking - this group of people who could see the possibility where the multitude did not. They must have been crazy! Or not? When I look at what has been achieved through the power of collaborative

effort, I am amazed – so let’s look at where we are three short years after our launch.

Code of Ethics

We have in place a code of ethics that in some respects sets a higher standard for COMENSA Coaches and Mentors, and an ethics complaints procedure that seems to be working well. Our members sign a pledge that binds them to upholding this Code of Ethics and this provides our members’ clients with the reassurance that COMENSA members are committed to ethical practice.

We are increasingly finding that clients are asking if coaches are COMENSA members – and this is a strong indication that there is a growing perception that we are building professional credibility.

Website

We have a website that is up and running and getting richer and richer all the time. You can look forward (within the next few months) to a new “Build Your Practice” section, in which you’ll be able to find sample contracts, proposals, coaching tools, etc. that you will be able to download and use as you wish. I hope members will contribute to this section

in the spirit of abundance that has become a hallmark of COMENSA. In addition to this, the research section is growing and becoming a source of useful material. Look out this month for a great slide presentation that you can use to mar-



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GARY VILJOEN

gary@humanworks.co.za

MICHELLE VAN REENEN

michelle@singisa.co.za

MICHAL LEON

michal@tmlcoaching.co.za

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The Power of Collaboration continued....

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ket your coaching and mentoring work.

Regional Chapters

Our Chapters are thriving, with meetings being held every couple of months. I am sensing a new and exciting energy in our Chapters. These Chapter meetings create an opportunity for members to learn, network and develop a sense of community. My home chapter, KZN, is the smallest chapter but has a high level of activity and a strong sense of community. We have coaches and mentors who have got together and formed a book-club (and yes, we do talk about books a bit!). We have a Coach and Mentor Academy which meets once a month. Each month, one of our members leads a discussion on a particular topic of relevance to coaches and mentors. We have discussed such topics as spirituality in coaching, leadership, emotional intelligence. We've grappled with how to measure ROI in our work and how we might utilise Malcolm Gladwell's insights about Outliers in our work. It has been really rewarding, and I'd love to see other groups of coaches and mentors getting together in each other's homes to learn from each other (and if you are, please tell us what you are doing so that we can learn from you).

Global Coaching Convention

It has been wonderful to have COMENSA members being so active in the GCC and, again in the spirit of abundance, this has created wonderful opportunities for COMENSA members to contribute, learn and do research – and it's only going to hot up even more

over the next few months. We are really proud of the extent to which COMENSA members really extend themselves and are so generous with their time and energy.

Supervision

Our Supervision Committee, under the leadership of Gary Viljoen, is really cooking with gas. They are about to embark on a countrywide tour during which they will present and invite contributions to their Supervision framework and standards of competence for supervisors – which raises our professional game in terms of not only encouraging our members to be in supervision, but also will ultimately mean that COMENSA will be able to create a register of Supervisors who meet the criteria.

Membership Criteria and Standards of Competence

Furthermore, our Membership Criteria and Standards of Competence Committee, led by Marianna Meyer, is very hard at work putting together the next level of criteria and standards. They have entered into a powerful collaboration with the South African Board of Personnel Practice (SABPP) which has walked a 23-year road towards the professionalization of their own field of practice and who have generously agreed to

partner with us and help us to learn from what they have learned.

Marketing

If all that is not enough, you should watch this space... we shortly hope to share with you the details of an enormously exciting collaboration with Summit TV which will catapult the profile of COMENSA and our members.

So, in the words of Steve Jobs "Here's to the crazy ones, the misfits, the rebels, the troublemakers, the round pegs in the square holes... the ones who see things differently – they're not fond of rules... You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them, but the only thing you can't do is ignore them because they change things... they push the human race forward, and while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius, because the ones who are crazy enough to think that they can change the world, are the ones who do."



Diversity, Equality and Power



By Dr Sunny Stout Rostron

To truly honour diversity requires genuinely diverse thinking, including an appreciation of difference, and an elimination of punishment for being different. Crucially, it must highlight authority issues (i.e. who has the power?), and the fundamental issue of individuals being encouraged and permitted to think for themselves.

Equality and power are in many ways related. Power creates its own self-justifying worldview. This often becomes an unexamined rationalisation for a dominant group's power in society. The mirror image of this is that it negates the

view of those without power. Thus it can be very difficult to get those with power to see the prejudiced limits of their bias – particularly their limiting assumptions about the powerless – because it is precisely that which justifies their monopoly of power. On the other hand, to achieve full equality – politically, professionally and personally – those without power also need to come to grips with their own limiting assumptions (often dictated by those who have had power over them). In both cases, for the powerful and the powerless, being able to discard such limiting worldviews is liberating.

On an individual level, many problems are fuelled by our own self-limiting assumptions. We see through the filters of our own worldview, as we are all products of our personal histories, language, culture, experience, education, gender and social conditioning. And, although people live and work in a diverse world, we have become suspicious and mistrusting of our differences. In doing so, we discriminate against and disempower others on the basis of their difference, rather than welcoming these differences and encompassing other worldviews to enhance our own.

Having worked for many years with Nancy Kline in the Thinking Environment[®], I have come to understand how important it is for us as business coaches to first help ourselves, then our clients, by exploring the roots of our own discriminatory attitudes and behaviours. We do this by starting to examine “untrue” limiting assumptions which society and organisations make about people on the basis of their “group” identities and their place in the social and workplace hierarchies (Kline, 1999:88–89).

When working with a client in the coaching conversation, it is useful to help them learn to remove the limiting assumptions they hold about themselves, others and the systems in which they live and work. We actually need diversity in order to approach difficult situations with fresh thinking. Only true, liberating assumptions can free individuals and groups and help them to reclaim their self-esteem and influence. This, of course, means developing an awareness of our own prejudices, biases, limiting thinking and life conditioning.

It also means being able to see through a multiplicity of lenses – experiencing the

“Diversity is about difference: in equality, power, and worldview”

Sunny Stout Rostron and Marti Janse van Rensburg



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Diversity, Equality and Power continued...

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world not just through your own individual perspective, but beginning to experience and understand the worldviews of those whose experience, education, background, hopes and fears are very different from your own. The business coach also needs to see through the lens of the organisation, the individual executive being coached, the society and community within which both operate – and to understand how their own limiting assumptions may prevent them from understanding other points of view.

To appreciate the power of diversity and equality, we need to operate from a foundation of really believing that people are created equal. We all need to work on developing an internal ease in the world of difference that we face every day.

Note

This article is adapted from the new book, *Business Coaching Wisdom and Practice: Unlocking the Secrets of Business Coaching* (2009), by Sunny Stout Rostron with contributing author, Marti Janse van Rensburg.

Sunny Stout Rostron is on the Research Advisory Board for the Institute of Coaching at Harvard; is the Founding President of COMENSA, Coaches and Mentors of South Africa; and is a Director with the Manthano Institute of Learning (Pty) Ltd. and Resolve Encounter Consulting.

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- Kline, N. (1999/2004). *Time to Think: Listening with the Human Mind*. London: Ward Lock.
- Stout Rostron, S. (2009). *Business Coaching Wisdom and Practice: Unlocking the Secrets of Business Coaching*. Johannesburg: Knowledge Resources.

The Power of Presence



By Dr Elta Boschard

THE POWER OF PRESENCE

Turbulent and rapid change typifies the business arena. Living life in uncertain times presents us with risks and opportunities. There are dangers around every corner and dead-ends that can make the strongest of us flinch in the face of adversity and uncertainty. We be-

come driven by our fears and/ or failures – trying to live in the past or the future. We do not grieve our losses nor celebrate our successes. We disconnect from the here and now.

PRESENCE: SKILL OR CHOICE?

One of the skills that coaches need, and one that has been under the spotlight for a while now, is the practice of presence. Executive coach, Mary Beth O'Neil calls a strong signature presence a coach's central tool. She states that presence means bringing one's self into the space of coaching: "... your values, passion, creativity, emotion,

and discerning judgement to any given moment with a client. Your resourcefulness and authenticity are crucial dimension of you work".

O'Neil warns: "If you do not develop yourself enough to withstand a client's stress, you default to actions that handle your own discomfort but are not useful to your client".

PRESENCE IS POWERFUL

Presence is a tangible sense of being all here – physically, mentally, and emotionally. Presence provides a masterful command of self and commands the attention of others. Being present means being aware –

"If you do not develop yourself enough to withstand a client's stress, you default to actions that handle your own discomfort but are not useful to your client". Mary Beth O'Neil

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consciously— of what's going on inside of you in the moment, and allowing it without judging it right/wrong or good/bad. At this level of consciousness, presence gives us full freedom to be who we are. With it also comes a remarkable sense of inner peace. You know you are present when you feel at ease within your 'own skin'.

Presence prevents underlying tension; your mind does not sit in judgment of you, or your client. Presence is to just be – and to accept a moment to be as it is.

The power of presence is to truly embrace reality – not reviewing the past and projecting it into the future. We do not end up resisting the present moment in fear of what failure the future might bring.

HARNESS THE POWER OF PRESENCE

Check-in with your heart.

When we only use our head, our experience of our “self” and the world is limited. When you sense discomfort use the “stop, drop, breathe” motto. Put your hand over your heart and focus there - what is it telling you? Is my heart at Peace or War? The choice is always mine.

Connect with your body.

Our bodies are a tremendous source of useful information. We may not be always conscious of the body's voice. When we ignore the body's message, we lose out on valuable information

designed to let our heart know what works for us and what doesn't. Remember, the body keeps the score!

Listen to your intuition.

Intuition is to simply “know” something without knowing exactly how you know that you know. Can you remember a time that you had a "gut feeling" about something? That was your intuition talking to you.

I believe in the power of presence.

“The power of presence is not a one-way street, not only something we give to others. It always changes me, and always for the better.” Debbie Hall. Martin Buber, in his classic work, *I and Thou*, states: ‘In the beginning is relation’. When we are in such a respectfully-aware relation to ourselves, others, and the world, presence becomes a way of being.

FOR FURTHER READING:

Hall, D. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5064534>

O'Neil, Mary B, 2007. Executive Coaching with Backbone and Heart. Jossey-Bass. San Francisco
Swann Jr, William B. 1999. Resilient Identities: Self-Relationships and the Construction of Social Reality. Basic Books. New York.

Dr Elta Boschard has been in the business of people development for 30 years, both as HRD Manager and consultant. She joined IAC as a Founder Member in 2003. She completed a PhD on the topic of Human Service Providers and Compassion Fatigue end of 2003. Her talents include ACTIVATOR - RELATOR - STRATEGIC- MAXIMIZER – FUTURISTIC



Michelle's Top Tip for Making the MOST of your COMENSA Membership: Add Potency to your Coaching Toolbox - Add Attitude!



A successful practitioner coach recently shared; *“Coaching is way more profound than people think. You only learn part of it in coaching school. Attitude must match toolbox!”*

Our Attitude, sometimes called our approach, is that personal quirk – that ‘something’ unique to each of us – which each of us brings to our coaching practice. It’s this unique attitude, as much as it is our knowledge and aptitude that allows our clients to gain their insights and shift from their comfort zones. Adding authentic personal attitude to your coaching toolbox with not only rev up your coaching potency, but will also likely impact on the longevity of your coaching business.

Fresh, new growth in your coaching business happens when your energy and attitude toward your business are positive and sharp. Like any profession, we coaches too can get caught in the treadmill of service delivery and allow our attitude to dull.

Are you still sharp and clear on your business purpose?

Are you still clear what you stand for? Are all your products and services aligned to serve your ideal and best customers? Are you clear when you explain your business purpose to someone else? Remember, clarity is key - you can't promote what you can't succinctly say to others.

How strong is your staying power? Your energy levels? Your focus?

To succeed in business requires staying power – stick-to-itiveness - a commitment of your energy, resources, and time on a consistent, ongoing basis. Consistent energy allows your business to grow itself. Staying power is key.

How patient and flexible are you?

Impatience doesn't serve us well. Flexibility is a key component of business building. Rigidity invites impatience and rigidity doesn't last.

How opportunistic are you?

Following through with an idea, a contact, an article that would be helpful to another - all of these are opportunities to make your connections and your business stronger. Taking action on opportunities is key to building business.

How keen is your intuition?

Skepticism and fear are business killers. Intuition and openheartedness create businesses with high

energy, integrity, and success.

How does your attitude check come out? Pat yourself on the back if you're on track. If not, take some time to set yourself some attitude-adjusting goals. And make them potent – full of attitude. Remember the words of Duke Ellington and Irving Mills ‘It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing!’

Michelle Clarke is a Cape Town based Master Coach who delivers successful coaching interventions both locally and internationally. She is a committed member of COMENSA and works with High-Achieving Coaches and Independent Professionals helping them to build their successful businesses. She can be reached on +27 72 391 9912 or by visiting www.motivcoach.co.za



Coaching South Africa



By Dale Williams, Past-President of COMENSA

I spend some of my time coaching executives in South Africa and across Europe. I got thinking the other day what South Africa could need from a coach. I mean the whole country. Not the president – not any individual – all of us who live on this southern slab of Africa. All together – melted down into one, put on a chair and ready for an executive coaching session with me.

Let's start with what I mean by executive coaching. A definition of coaching is problematic because everyone is a coach these days and definitions are all over the place. I'll define it based on what I have been doing for the past seven years.*

Executive coaching involves a coach, who has both executive experience and training in the art of coaching, working with a person, a client (mostly executives, entrepreneurs etc) on a shared concern.

The shared concern is something brought to the relationship by the person being coached. Being a shared concern means something that we can both get motivated to work on, and resolve.

In this case the client is South

Africa. Armed with the above definition, and a shared concern of creating a country that can grow, prosper and develop to its full potential, we start our process.

There we are, South Africa and I sitting in a room, having our first conversation about how we are going to achieve our objective. At first it's hard. We haven't yet built rapport and the conversation is exploratory.

I'd start by assessing the current situation and understanding the strengths and talents of my client followed by successes to date. Let me tell you why.

My philosophy is that as humans we are uniquely talented and that our challenge is to uncover and use these talents. I've been trained by Gallup (the research people) on this approach and amongst all the tools, models and techniques I have come across, their research has stuck with me. I agree with their findings that we do much better playing to our strengths, than fixing our weaknesses.

Gallup originally got interested in this topic when they came across research by psychologist Elizabeth Hurlock. In 1925 she studied school children in a maths class and discovered that when she divided them into two groups, and gave the one group critical feedback, they improved by 19%. Critical feedback is the type we are all aware of – pointing out mistakes and suggesting how to correct them.

Nineteen percent is not bad, but the second group got an im-

provement of 71%. How did that happen? What she did with them was to skip the critical feedback and only reinforce the positive aspects of their performance.

By ignoring their faults and focusing alone on what they were doing right, the school children produced a 71% improvement vs the 19% achieved by giving critical feedback. Since 1925 there have been reams of scientific study that back up this approach. Gallup has been at the forefront of this research examining more than 3 million people and thousands of companies around the globe.

The original research has given birth to a whole movement called positive psychology. While positive psychology is gaining a foothold, there are still many people and organisations that spend a huge amount of energy focusing on fixing weaknesses rather than building strengths. Besides the deficiency of results using this approach, it also takes a lot more effort.

I often start workshops on the topic of positive psychology, by asking participants what they would say if their child came home from school with a 5 As and a C? The answer, almost all the time, is how to get the C to an A. Wrong answer. It is much better to focus on the As as there is, somewhat counter-intuitively, more room for improvement with the 5 As than there is with the C.

So with South Africa across the desk I focus on strengths rather

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"A definition of coaching is problematic because everyone is a coach these days and definitions are all over the place." - Dale Williams

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Coaching South Africa continued...

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than weaknesses. Armed with the experience of Hurlock and her more modern peers, I know that I have more chance of addressing our shared concern talking about success.

My first series of questions would look at what is working, why it's working and how do we make the talents and strengths of South Africa explicit and more visible so that we can spend time building and entrenching success thinking.

Would I just ignore the negatives? No, that would be naive. What is important is the ratio of positive to negative in our conversation. Dr Marcial Losada found when examining teams that the ideal ratio of positive to negative was between 3:1 and 8:1. Higher than 8:1 and less than 3:1 teams became less effective. The negative aspects have to be covered, but, and this is imperative, they have to be examined in a context of overall positivity, if we are to produce significantly better results.

Next it would be interesting to understand the context within which South Africa operates. I can often, without jumping to superficial conclusions,



make some simple assumptions about a person depending on whether they are in their 20s, their 40s or closing in on their 60s. Erik Erikson, the psychologist, broke down our lives into eight developmental stages and described the nature of each stage. More specifically, he describes the series of crises that we face. This is our rite of passage into the next stage. Each crisis has a positive or negative outcome.

To illustrate this, Erikson describes the crises faced in the first year of our lives as being about trust vs mistrust. Children who are consistently cared for build a sense of trust with parents, the world and themselves. Those who don't make it through this initial hurdle, emerge with a sense of distrust which affects all later stages. For South Africa — thinking about 1994 as birth — certainly of a new age in our history, I'd probably find myself sitting opposite the equivalent of a pimply teenager faced with Erikson's stage five or adolescence crises.

The adolescence crisis is about identity vs role confusion. It is a time when we need to ask "Who am I?". To successfully answer this we need to have integrated the positive outcomes from the earlier crises. Did we develop a basic sense of trust? Do we have a strong sense of independence, competence, and feel in control of our lives? Once the easier crises have been resolved, adolescents can face the "Identity Crisis", which Erikson considers the most significant.

Solved positively South Africa emerges with a strong identity, and ready to take on the challenges of the future. However, without a positive outcome, we sink into confusion and are unable to make important decisions.

At this point, and this would probably be after a good couple of sessions, I would draw on the work I did in my

thesis which covers the use of scenario planning for coaching. This is particularly apt for South Africa as scenario planning has had a deep impact on our country. Most prominent is the Anglo American work, better known as Clem Sunter's "High Road" and "Low Road" scenarios. Back in 1988, who would have thought that we could avoid going down the "Low Road"?

In addition, The Mont Fleur Scenarios in 1992, looked at what South Africa would be like ten years down the road. I have to take an aside here to ask you to imagine what it must have been like in 1992 trying to map out possible futures for South Africa. Violence was widespread, we had no idea how negotiations would turn out and the country was effectively bankrupt as result of sanctions and wars fought on our borders.

Perhaps it was as a result of the difficulty of the exercise that it had the impact that it did on the participants, most notably Tito Mboweni and Trevor Manuel. Both participated in the exercise and later took significant leadership roles in the country. Together with my client, we would jointly create scenarios for 2014 which would describe plausible futures for South Africa. These would likely emerge as follows.

1: Labelled and limited

This scenario describes a South Africa which follows on its current path of division. We compare ourselves to other "First World" countries and label our shortcomings loudly and destructively.

There is little tolerance and labels such as "democracy" are used as a stick to beat ourselves up and show how we are not up to the level of other countries who proclaim to have "better democracies", despite their obvious shortcomings.

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Coaching South Africa continued...

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We constantly highlight our non-achievement, ignoring significant steps we have taken. To the rest of the world this further illustrates how little we have achieved since 1994. "I told you so" becomes our mantra. As with the person who compares themselves to others and always finds someone better, we dwell on our weaknesses rather than our strengths.

We are indignant and divided into smaller and smaller pockets of angry,



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Just [log on to the website](#) and click on the block that says "Update Member's Profile"

(There is also a "Help" section to assist you)

Our website recently ranked #10 when people search under "coaches" on www.google.co.za (up from #400 in the last 2 months!), so if you are not on there, you could be losing out.

frustrated losers. Like the sports team that isn't getting results and enters the downward spiral of turning on themselves, we illustrate this to the world through the law of diminishing returns, as we squander the numerous opportunities that were once available to us. Blame is a cornerstone of our culture and we use our energy and resources to push responsibility onto anyone but ourselves.

2: Strength in diversity

The second scenario plays to our strength in diversity. South Africa creates its own identity which is a unique democracy not modelled on that of any other nation. We stop comparing ourselves to others in a way which limits our imagination and always show us up for being deficient. Instead we learn from others while creating our own positive future.

Our diversity, which currently divides us, is reframed to be a strength. As in the world of agriculture where scientists are finding monoculture is limited and susceptible to disease, we create a new culture for South Africa which is formed from the melting pot of our varied and diverse backgrounds. Like Brazil, where there is no typical Brazilian, South Africans are no longer classified by the obvious and limiting labels such as black, white, Xhosa or English. Rather we focus on much more meaningful descriptions of ourselves. "Ubuntu", "a boer maak a plan" and "the friendliest people in the world" will be some of our own labels, describing unique South Africanisms, which the rest of the world will look to with envy.

Brand experts know that in the busy, noisy and cluttered world that we live in, success requires standing for something unique and leading as opposed to following others while trying to be better. South Africa will be unique in this way — a shining light for the world to see what is possible.

Our strength will come from striving for our own ideals rather than those that others have created before us. Our people will be more tolerant of each other and while dialogue will be robust, it will be within an overarching framework of positivity and success. As individuals and as a country, we take responsibility for our future rather than casting blame.

Choices

With these two scenarios before us as possibilities for the future, I'd leave my client, as all good executive coaches would, to reflect and make their own decision as to which future they would like to create. It's never easy and there are of course things outside of our control which need to be navigated.

There are, however, always facets very firmly in our control. The scenarios become a roadmap for us to hold up our individual and collective behaviour, attitude and actions. We see what we look for, and if we want to look for different things, the scenarios provide a textured background against which we are able to make our choices.



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Some Thoughts About (Personal) Power



By Michal Leon

In “*Emotional Literacy*”¹, Dr Claude Steiner describes the typical view of power as “control, mainly the ability to control people and money. When we think of a powerful person, for example, we picture a captain of industry, a major politician, or a superstar athlete who commands millions in salary: a person with nerves of steel and the capacity to be emotionally detached and cool. We have come to expect these attributes in powerful people. “

Steiner explains that most of us neither achieve the super-power described above, which I would label “external power”, nor are we necessarily interested in it. But even if we have no desire to be “in absolute control over every living thing,” we often imitate powerful people in the belief that, in the real world, “emotions are best kept under tight rein.”

As coaches and mentors, we are well aware of another type of power, which is intrinsic, based on personal congruency, of a life lived according to a personal sense of purpose and meaning. This kind of power is based on a sustainable sense of self, and a reasonable level of emotional intelligence. It can be labelled, “internal power”.

While external power is apparent to the whole world, and is always on display, and therefore easy to identify, “internal power” is often the opposite. It is subtle and is measured through such intangibles as the way people live their lives, their level of contentment their decision-making processes and the depth and strength of their personal and professional relationships.

Steiner’s concept of “emotional literacy” is “heart centred emotional intelligence, and its key positive benefit: “emotions are powerful if you can make them work for you rather than against you.”

Coaching politicians has taught me a great deal about the intricate, often paradoxical, relationship between external and

internal power. Most politicians cleave to external power and it is often, for them, a stretch to cross the gulf to touch the internal, intrinsic power defined as emotional literacy or personal mastery (Peter Senge’s concept). For most politicians, there is an identity and re-

spect for power, which is external. There is often a failure to see the power inherent in living congruently and mastering one’s own path. They tend to look down on “soft skills” and consign into this category anything to do with emotions. Phrases like “emotions have got nothing to do with work”, and “I leave my emotional world at home with the wife and kids” are still prevalent.

Every newspaper provides illustrations of just how many people with deficient emotional literacy occupy prominent leadership roles. We read stories about smart, capable and often senior and famous people who get into trouble by using excuses, accusations, or straightforward violence to solve problems.

President Bill Clinton’s “monumental mistake” with the expose of the Monica Lewinsky indiscretion provides a powerful example. Steiner’s view is that Clinton “allowed his need for sexual strokes [positive feedback in TA parlance] to dominate his good².” He disappointed many people; in addition to the hurt he caused his wife and child in the process.

Clinton’s foible had a recent although a much lesser equivalent in South African politics. We lately witnessed how feelings of anger, resentment, or disagreement escalate into a childlike accusatory mudslinging match, with sexual innuendos, between Julius

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Some Thoughts About (Personal) Power continued...

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Malema, Coastu leaders, MK veterans and Helen Zille.

Formal power is not enough to elicit respect and to reflect the real power of influence. Often, it is the informal elements which are the better guide to true authority. This useful distinction, is provided by Harvard Professor Ronald Heifetz³, who says: “with formal authority come the various powers of the office and with informal authority come the power to influence attitude and behaviour beyond compliance⁴”. (A similar distinction is sometimes referred to in political and social psychology publications as headship versus leadership.)

When a leader (who has formal authority, for example, the US President or a leader of a trade union) behaves in a way that is emotionally illiterate, followers, employees and citizens – tend to see the powerful personas as pow-

erless. In reality, there has been no change in the external power symbols: the leaders still has the title, the salary, the big office and the trappings of authority. However, what the leader has lost, or has had exposed is the gaps of personal mastery and deficiency in the intrinsic power. This infringes heavily on, and starts to limit, the formal power of the leader.

When there is no internal power, and the blunders commence, the spin-doctors, image consultants and political advisors are on hand to provide a remedy. It is usually a cocktail of issuing denials, creating a new attention-competing issue, inventing an event that shows the leader up in a favourable light, et al.

But over time, lack of personal mastery and the absence of emotional literacy, lead to persistent performance malfunctions and high levels of damage, which, eventually, cannot be controlled by

political public relations. Just ask Thabo Mbeki or Gordon Brown, or the majority in the Pantheon of failed or fallen leaders.

1. Dr Claude Steiner, *Emotional Literacy-Intelligence with Heart*, e-book, 2002, [available online: <http://www.emotional-literacy.com>]
2. Dr Claude Steiner, *Emotional Literacy-Intelligence with Heart*, e-book, 2002, [available online: <http://www.emotional-literacy.com>]
3. Heifetz is a long-time scholar of leadership at the Kennedy School of Government.
4. Ronald Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers*. Belknap Press Harvard University, 1994.

Michal practices as an Executive and Leadership coach, and is owner of *TML Coaching & Consulting* (www.tmlcoaching.co.za). Her specialty is maximising organisational effectiveness through personal growth of leaders. Her professional background includes 22 years in management positions, mainly in the NGO sector, focusing on leadership development. Michal (Graduate Business Coach Certificate, SACAP, 2006) is active in the Supervision Portfolio Committee at COMENSA.

Book Review: The Leader on the Couch By Manfred de Vries

Reviewed by Belinda Davies

A psychoanalytical approach to executive coaching which considers some of the personality “disorders” one might find at an executive level. It is rich with anecdotes – which makes it an entertaining as well as an interesting read. I found myself regularly finding explanations for some of the blocks I have experienced with clients, and felt that I would like to have the book as a reference – to help when I get stuck. I have no issue with a psychoanalytic approach – in fact it has such a wealth of frameworks for understanding human behaviour and this

makes it really useful. I found the second section on coaching for change useful and I thoroughly enjoyed the third section on coaching teams.

Most important thing I learnt from reading this book:

There is a variety of personalities which play out on a continuum from mild and largely functional, but with some challenges, the severe and extremely dysfunctional – and the executive world brings the dysfunction into the spotlight, with the danger that it can run rampant. However, all the personalities described have clear roots, and there are specific

things that a person needs to learn in order to overcome them – and they can be overcome if the client really wants to.

Book rating out of 5 and why: 5

I find various schools of psychological thought extremely useful in providing frameworks for understanding what one is dealing with in a client – and modern psychoanalysis is really rich in these frameworks. One does not need to embrace psychoanalysis in order to find much that is useful. Moreover, this is an entertaining read that kept me interested.

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Powerful Language: Five speech acts for coaching high performing teams

By Penny Castle

“Humans live in a house of Language”. For coaches it’s not news that there is a powerful link between our use of language and our actions. When a team needs to ramp up its performance a powerful place for coaches to work is in the realm of Speech Acts.

The premise behind speech acts is that speech is an action of itself. We use speech acts in a myriad of ways but five of the common uses are shown in Figure 1.

Here are five of the common speech acts and some thoughts on how to use them when coaching groups.

Declarations bring about change through utterances. They are statements made by someone in an authority position which result in a change in circumstances, for example, “I resign”. Declarations are hugely powerful and can positive and negative effects. On the positive side, they create. Less usefully they can be used to close down possibilities. As a coach some places to work with declarations are:

- Nudging the team members to move from “I want to...” to “I will...”
- Reflect with the team on how they act in relation to their declarations and, if found wanting, what support systems could assist
- Reflect with the team whether they have the positional authority to make declarations.

Assessments express feelings and attitudes. They are never fact, although the entire group may share the same assessment. Assessments masquerading as facts close down possibilities. Look out for comments like, “My view”, “I think”, “from my perspective”. Some good questions for working with in this area are:



Figure 1

Courtesy of Centre for Coaching (adapted)

- What assumptions are you making?
- What criteria are you basing that assessment on?
- Can you give me a real example you experienced that let you to that conclusion?

Assertions tell people how things are. They are statements made for which the team member is willing to give evidence. This doesn’t means to say that they are always correct! Accurate assertions help the team establish “what is” and can assist in creating shared meaning. Inaccurate assertions are divisive. For the coach it’s critical to establish that the team are making assertions (based on fact) rather than assessments and that the assertions are correct. Be careful of “interpretation” – my truth may be very different to yours. Some areas to start are:

- What have you inferred?
- What facts are you basing this on?
- What makes this true for you?

Requests try to get people to do things. All requests are not created equal. When a team member is not delivering on a

request, check that the request is well made. Things for a coach to look out for are:

- Was the request specific?
- Was the request directed as a particular person (as opposed to language such as “management”)
- Was the timing clear?
- Did the requestor make clear what level of response will satisfy their requirement?
- Did the requestor make any assumptions about the respondent’s understanding of the request?
- Did the requestor make sure the respondent was competent in the area of the request?

Promises commit people to doing things. Broken promises erode trust within teams. Areas the coach could work with are:

- Did the person making the promise understand what was being requested?
- Were they sincere?
- Did the person make the promise have the competence to deliver?
- Is the person making the promise reliable?

Declarations, assertions, assessments requests and promises are just five example of speech acts but used wisely can open tremendous possibilities when working with teams.

Penny Castle is a certified Integral Coach. Her main area of interest is working in organizations to create, support and sustain high performing teams. She can be contacted on 083 628 2806 or penny@castlecoaching.co.za

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The Power of Being while Doing

By Brenda van Straaten

We freely bandy about the term 'increasing our power' in coaching circles. What does this really mean?

Two good dictionary definitions of power are: "1. the ability to do something or act in a particular way, esp. as a faculty or quality; 2. the capacity or ability to direct or influence the behaviour of others or the course of events"

Another great definition is from L Ron Hubbard: "Power is doing what you're doing while you're doing it".

How often are we doing one thing but not giving it our full attention. We're either doing something else at the same time (e.g. answering emails and taking a phone call) or we're doing one thing but thinking about something else.

When we do this our attention is dispersed and we make mistakes, we have accidents, we have to redo things – all a waste of time and sometimes a real waste of money too. Not a powerful way of operating!

If we solely concentrated on getting one thing done at a time and paying full attention to that one thing we would get it done faster and more efficiently and therefore get more of it done – thereby becoming a lot more productive and effective!

And when we're more productive we have a lot more to exchange and as a result of having a lot more to exchange we will have a lot more income! A good measure of operating in a condition of Power.

To get to a state of Power, which is an operating condition, we need to be organized, be clear on what needs to be done by when, and then to get it done by only doing that one thing.

The power of an organization lies in the speed it gets things done. This speed is determined by its communication lines and abilities of the staff involved.

If the organization's communication lines (internal and external) are open (not jammed), everyone is working towards common goals and purposes, staff know what they are responsible for producing, they are properly trained to produce, orders are clear and they are producing a valuable product at full capacity which clients are willingly exchanging cash and goodwill for, the organization is in an operating condition of Power.

What causes non-power is disorganization, lack of effective communication, uncertainty, lack of appropriate knowledge or skills, lack of ability to

handle the environment (including people).

To increase your power become more productive and effective – get things done simply by doing what you're doing when you're doing it and doing it by when you said you would do it!

Your morale increases, your confidence and competency increases and you will begin to win! And people/clients are attracted to winners! When people gravitate towards you as a result of you oozing power you have increased your ability to direct or influence them and you are also more able to influence the course of events. This is POWER!

Brenda van Straaten can be contacted at brenda@newclearenergy.co.za or on tel: 082 443 4721



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The Centre of Power



By Suzette le Roux

We are all very aware of *the power within* and most of us would like to really experience being “powerful beyond measure”. Although Marianne Williamson says that some of us actually fear that more than anything, which creates an interesting dichotomy. There is also often a misconception of what power really is. Going back to my roots as a physicist, power is what is supplied by the power source - be it a battery, generator, engine or some Higher Source. So power is a supply of energy (energy supplied per second, if we start to nit-pick) to be utilised. The

crucial questions are:

- Where is your power?
- How do you unlock it? and
- How do you manage it?

The mind is an incredible organ of immeasurable complexity and what it truly believes becomes its reality. Believing that you are powerful will make you feel exactly that, but we need to be careful as to what we perceive power (ful) to be.

As coaches we need to remember that *power* needs to come with *responsibility* and *humility* as its companions – for on its own it has the potential to turn into arrogance. We intuitively know this when we connect with the real power within. We have no need to force an outcome and we can relinquish trying to control it all as we become comfortable with any outcome.

Often the coachee wants the coach to shine a light on the road so that they too can access this power within. So how do we go about the process?

The very first step is that you as a coach can continuously engage in your own process of fine tuning this connection with your power. It is only when your engine is switched on, when you are standing in the centre of your

Being and feel connected to your power that you have the steadiness to hold that light up. This does not mean that you have to be perfect, or that you have to know it all. However, when you are spinning on the outside of the ball of life frantically trying to stay on top, you do not feel powerful.

To experience true power – for me – lies in creating regular opportunities to centre myself and I always do this five minute exercise before I see a client. Sitting quietly with my eyes closed while I connect with my whole being and do some deep relaxing breathing exercises I access parts of me that seem invisible when I am spinning on the outside of the ball, but when I am connected to these parts I truly feel powerful beyond measure.

Having unlocked that power the challenge is to manage it so that it serves your purpose. In coaching this is where the coachee takes responsibility for the decisions and actions he or she takes. It is an ongoing process and long after the coach has physically left the process the coachee will have to live it. As coaches we need to have unlocked an awareness within the coachee so that he or she can step into the moment and regain presence on a regular basis when we are not longer part of the process.

YOU can make a difference!

There are so many exciting things happening in the Portfolio Committees right now – watch this space, visit the website and keep your ears close to the ground! Indeed an exciting place to be will be in a Portfolio Committee or Special Interest Group where there is room for YOU to use your special talents to further your interests.

Portfolio Committees

Ethics Committee
Marketing and Membership Promotion Committee
Membership Criteria and Standards of Competence Committee
Research and Definitions Committee
Strategic Purpose Committee
Supervision Committee

Special Interest Groups

Corporate User SIG
Executive Coaching SIG
Mentoring SIG

Contact Elta Boschard

National Vice-President of COMENSA
012 460-5686 / 082-555-7575

Taking Inventory of our Motivators



By Tom Beasor

There are many theories and tools on the market that

help the coaching practitioner to understand their clients better and which can help clients gain a further understanding of themselves and their relationships with others.

The Strength Deployment Inventory (SDI) is one such self understanding, relationship management and conflict reduction theory. Coaches might find it useful in helping clients understand the motivations behind their behaviours and how that helps them improve their personal and business relationships and the personal conflicts that can often arise from these.

For those practitioners who have not heard of SDI a few words of explanation might be helpful.

The theory was developed by Elias Porter who worked with Carl Rogers in the early 1950's. Based on Fromm's work he tried to understand the motivational drivers behind behaviour and in categorizing this behaviour it looked

at how a coaching client might look outwards towards managing and improving their relationship with others.

Essentially he found that the key driver in behaviour was the need to feel good about oneself and Porter managed to identify 7 areas (Motivational Value Systems). Primarily this looked at task accomplishment drivers (the world is full of jobs to do), nurturing and supporting drivers (the world is full of people to help) and analytical drivers (the world is full of problems to solve and chaos to resolve).

Experience has shown that many people will express their desire to achieve self fulfillment in one or another of these Motivational Value System styles or offer a blend of them. When people are taken away from this self fulfillment they'll often feel that they are in conflict and that life is taking a turn for the worse.

A simple example helps here: Some doctors fight disease. Patients are just units of illness that need to be cured. Some doctors have a good bedside manner. Helping sick people is why they became doctors. Some doctors work in labs and never see a patient.

They do research into disease.

Some doctors enjoy the variety of the job and its daily challenges.

I shouldn't think that research doctors do too well at the patient's bedside and conversely taking the patient away from the illness would seem ridiculous to many doctors and cause them to question their vocation, maybe.

When you're dealing with your next client you might like to ask yourself how they see the world around them and how congruent that world is to their expectations of happiness.

In short behaviour is the outward sign of the inward motivational driver. We can choose our behaviours at every turn but we tend to choose those behaviours that most likely contribute towards our success and happiness as we perceive it. Understanding that perception is one of the coach's key tasks in dealing with clients.

For more information on the application of the theory of SDI in helping clients improve relationships and minimise conflict, refer to www.beasor.co.za

"The key driver in behaviour was the need to feel good about oneself." - Carl Rogers

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Upcoming Events



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BECOMING A COACH SUPERVISOR? OR ARE YOU ALREADY ONE?

Or are you just interested in learning more about Supervision?

The COMENSA Supervision Portfolio Committee invites you to a working Supervision Forum.

(This will be similar to the forums which developed the Ethical Code and Standards of Competence framework for COMENSA)

We will discuss:

- Competences required for coaching supervisors
- Criteria to be included in coaching supervisor training (which are to be endorsed by COMENSA)*
- The incorporation of existing practicing supervisors into the COMENSA framework

As a result of these Forums, which will take place in 3 provinces (WC, KZN and Gauteng) we will be able to finalise the interim policy of the Supervision Committee, (for final adoption at the next AGM). And eventually, create a database of coaching supervisors endorsed by COMENSA and listed on the COMENSA website.

WESTERN CAPE EVENT:

WHEN: Tuesday, the 25th August

WHERE: The Events Room/Boardroom in the Bandwidth Barn on the 5th Floor at 125 Buitengracht Centre

TIME: 17h30 for 18h00 start until 21h30

COST: R80 for members, R100 for non members

RSVP: Angela on info@thecoachingcentre.co.za / 021 7150525 by 19th August

KWAZULU NATAL: To be advised

GAUTENG: To be advised



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COMENSA is Africa’s premier association for individual and corporate providers, buyers and trainers of coaching and mentoring services. Committed to supporting professional and ethical practice, COMENSA is leading the way in research, standards, and coaching and mentoring development as well as connecting the growing network of coaches, mentors and people-developers across Southern Africa.

Our Newsletter will keep you up to date with what is happening in the coaching and mentoring community in South Africa and Internationally.



DON'T FORGET

You can download the COMENSA logo with the words “a registered member of” for use on your business cards, in corporate stationery and brochures, and on websites or in emails from the [members’ section](#) of the COMENSA website.



"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the men to gather wood, divide the work and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea."

Antoine de St. Exupery