



New Venture and New Voice

From the Desks of the Co-Editors

What's In A Name?

The International Journal of Coaching in Organizations. What an awkward title! Will it soon be called *IJCO* or simply *that* "Coaching Journal." The CO is nice because it is also the abbreviation for "company." The term "Coaching in Organizations" might even become standard – perhaps as initials "CIO" (a reminder of past times when the unified labor movement was housed under something called the AFL/CIO). All of this is highly speculative – this after all is not only a new journal, but also part of a newly formed field which itself is still taking form. So, the primary question becomes "why adopt this title and what does this title imply in terms of the content and scope of this journal?" A formal statement regarding the nature and scope of the journal is contained in the first article to be found in this inaugural issue. However, we would like to offer this initial statement regarding the reasons why this journal has been given the title: *The International Journal of Coaching in Organizations*.

Differentiated from Personal Coaching

In establishing this journal, the Editorial Board decided that it should not be given a general title – such as *International Journal of Coaching* or *International Journal of Professional Coaching*. Most members of the Editorial Board felt it was critical to distinguish this journal from any that might focus on personal coaching.

There is a precedent for this distinction in professional psychology. Psychologists have addressed a similar issue when seeking to distinguish between those professional psychologists who do clinical psychology and those who do consulting work. The latter type of professional psychologist is often called an "organizational psychologist." We might similarly distinguish between "personal coaches" and "organizational coaches."

Other members of the Editorial Board, however, felt that the journal should be more inclusive. They noted, as experienced coaches, that they often move between personal coaching and coaching in organizations – and often can't draw a clear distinction between these two approaches to coaching. As a way to acknowledge the validity of both positions, we have decided to focus on coaching in organizations, but have also decided to devote one issue each year to personal coaching, beginning in 2004. We will keep a close watch on what happens in the field during the next three years.

By the end of 2007 the Editorial Board may decide that it makes sense for *IJCO* to continue focusing one issue a year on personal coaching. Alternatively, the Editorial Board may decide to discontinue this issue, either because there is no longer a need for separate attention to personal coaching or because another journal now meets the need for publications regarding personal coaching. There is a third alternative. If *IJCO* is prospering and there is a demonstrated need for a journal on personal coaching, then the publishers of *IJCO* might decide to initiate a second journal that is devoted to this topic.

Broad Enough For Multiple Perspectives/Strategies

Other titles that might distinguish the coaching on which this journal focuses tend to be limiting or are controversial in terms of what is meant. The *International Journal of Executive Coaching* certainly is most closely aligned with the specific services that many Editorial Board members provide; however, "executive" can refer to a specific role in organization ("executive" = "high level administrator") or to a specific function ("executive" = "decision-making"). Furthermore, what about other forms of coaching that take place in organizations – such as performance coaching, ontological coaching or various forms of leader-

ship coaching? A similar problem is encountered if “leadership” is in the title (for example, *The International Journal of Leadership Coaching*). What does “leader” mean and isn’t this too limiting. The same problem is encountered when using the term “business coaching” (what about those who do coaching in nonprofit and governmental organizations?)

A New Term without Baggage

The term “coaching in organizations” is not widely used at the present time (perhaps because it is an awkward and not terribly exciting term). This gives us an opportunity in this journal to define it with some precision and to establish it as an umbrella term for the various types of coaching we do within an organizational setting. Furthermore, the term “coaching in organizations” suggests that the key point in differentiating our work from that of personal coaches resides in the context where and when the coaching is being offered.

The person who provides coaching in an organizational setting is always seeking to serve the organization as well as the person/group being coached. Many forms of organizational coaching focus to varying extent on the welfare, perspectives, values, aspirations, development of individual members of an organization (and in this way is to be distinguished in most instances from organizational consultation). However, the organization’s welfare, needs, interests, strategies, plans, concerns, visions are always in the background—and often in the foreground—of the organizational coaching engagement. Something like this distinction is the basis for our ongoing dialogue regarding the nature of coaching-in-organizations.

Aligned with First Executive Coaching Summit

The concept of coaching-in-organizations seems to be very much in keeping with the initial statement regarding “Executive Coaching” that was formulated at the first Coaching Summit (the proceedings from which are published in this first issue of the journal). Let’s briefly consider the following definition that emerged from this summit meeting:

Executive Coaching is a facilitative one-to-one, mutually designed relationship between a professional coach and a key contributor who has a powerful position in the organization. This relationship occurs in areas of business, government, not-for-profit, and educational organizations where there are multiple stakeholders and organizational sponsorship for the coach or coaching

group. The coaching is contracted for the benefit of a client who is accountable for highly complex decisions with wide scope of impact on the organization and industry as a whole. The focus of the coaching is usually focused on organizational performance or development, but may also have a personal component as well. The results produced from this relationship are observable and measurable, commensurate with the requirements the organization has for the performance of the person being coached.

Five summary points followed this definition in the Summit document:

- A relationship exists between Coach and high-level individual(s) of the organization.
- The relationship occurs in and is sponsored by differing kinds of organizations with multiple stakeholders.
- Coaching is for the benefit of a person with high levels of responsibility and broad scope of impact.
- Focus of the coaching may be both organizational and personal development.
- Outcomes are observable and measurable, and match organizational performance requirements.

This definition and these summary points are all directly related to organizational context. This form of coaching relates to organizationally based roles, responsibilities, development and performance requirements. While this form of coaching is intended for personal development and benefit, it also relates inevitably and appropriately to organizational needs and issues. Hence, the terms “coaching-in-organizations” and “organizational coaching.” These are our reasons for selecting the title “International Journal of Coaching in Organizations.”

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