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Bridging the Team Coaching Competency Gap: A review of the literature

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Abstract

The primary purpose of this literature review was to provide a comprehensive background for understanding current knowledge, to highlight the significance of new research and to offer a new perspective. A synthesis approach has been used, combining a narrative review and an integrative review. Narrative reviews can inspire research ideas by identifying gaps or inconsistencies in a body of knowledge, thus helping researchers to determine research questions or formulate hypotheses. Integrative reviews are intended to address emerging topics to create initial conceptualizations. This review indicates that the limited team coaching research to date has focused on defining the term, identifying effectiveness factors and investigating the efficacy of team coaching. While each of these areas require further research for team coaching to move beyond its pre-theory status, it would appear that research and theoretical framing for team coaching competencies is even further behind.

Introduction

Given the "centrality of work teams" (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006, p. 115) to modern organisations and the assertion by Hawkins (2017) that teams have greater potential than individuals to rise to the growing challenges facing organisations, it is of little surprise that studies into team effectiveness are increasing. However, research into teams and their effectiveness is not new. A review of 'A Century of Work Teams in the Journal of Applied Psychology', while noting research dating back to the 1920's and 1930s, found that from the 1990's onwards there was a significant increase in the volume of research and range of topics for work groups and teams (Mathieu et al., 2017).

McEwan et al. (2017 p. 16) in their meta review on team training effectiveness, found that team interventions had a significant impact on teamwork behaviours and team performance. Specifically, they reported that to improve team behaviours, team consultants, coaches, managers and team leaders need to focus on two or more dimensions of the team. Their study also reported as "particularly noteworthy" that interventions targeting interpersonal dynamics (managing interpersonal conflict and developing social support between team members) resulted in significant positive effects on team performance. The link between how team members relate and team performance supports the work of Edmondson (2012) on team psychological safety. More recently, Google's two-year quest to understand how to build the perfect team, also highlighted the importance of psychological safety (Duhigg, 2016).

So, what is the role of specific coaching activities in relation to teams? While a coaching style of leadership has been recognised for over 50 years, Mathieu et al. (2008 p. 450) have stated that the coaching of teams "after a hiatus of sorts" has "reemerged and taken hold in the literature on work teams". Despite an increase in the literature on teams, team coaching as a term is a relatively new concept. Grant's (2009) annotated bibliography of peer-reviewed papers on coaching published between 1937 and 2011, included over 70 papers out of 518 that make reference to teams, and only included six papers that used the term 'team coaching,' with the first of these being published in 1999.

Team coaching as a method to develop team effectiveness (Wageman, 2001) has continued to grow (Worldwide Association of Business Coaches, 2016), with the 6th Ridler survey reporting that while team coaching represents only 9% of total coaching, 76% of organisations expected an increase in team coaching over the next two years (Mann, 2015). This increased demand for team coaching, has been accompanied by developing peer-reviewed literature. Peters & Carr (2019) have suggested that the team coaching literature has developed significantly since Grant's review in 2009 and their own literature review in 2013 (Peters & Carr, 2013a). The number of studies on team coaching outcomes had more than doubled since their review in 2013 (Peters & Carr, 2019). In their 2019 review, Peters and Carr highlighted 17 empirical studies that outlined the benefits of team coaching, including improved results/outcomes and team process improvements. Nevertheless, they noted limitations, including that: 12 of the 17 studies involved team coaching provided by team leaders rather than a formal team coaching programme; all of the studies used team member self-reporting to measure outcomes; and that only four studies included feedback from other stakeholders outside of the team members (Peters & Carr, 2019).

While team coaching is gradually assuming professional characteristics (Clutterbuck et al., 2019), Jones et al. (2019 p.62) have stated that "despite the increase in team coaching practice and practitioner-oriented literature, an empirically validated theory on team coaching is yet to emerge" leading to their description of team coaching as "pre-theory" (p. 64). The need for a comprehensive theory of team coaching, has been highlighted as essential to provide a series of testable propositions that can guide the research into team coaching effectiveness (Jones et al., 2019; Hastings & Pennington, 2019).

An important aspect of this developing theory is a more comprehensive understanding of team coaching competencies, which it is suggested would help organisations "effectively assess potential team coaches and further inform team coaching educators regarding the essential elements of team coach training programmes" (Jones et al., 2019, p. 75). In addition, the developing work on team coaching competencies should eventually offer a basis for consistency and pathways towards professional team coaching accreditation. As sponsors of coaching are increasingly requiring accreditation (Mann, 2015), team coaches are unlikely to be exempt.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a foundation for further research by summarizing and interpreting the available literature on the competencies of a team coach. We will investigate three research questions pertaining to team coaching competencies. The researchers have taken the stance that it is important to be clear on what team coaching is and is not, in order to delineate the

resulting team coaching competencies. The research questions we have identified include: (1) what does the literature say on what team coaching is and is not; (2) what are the competencies of a team coach; and (3) what areas of further research can be identified?

Following a review of what team coaching is and is not, the paper will discuss team coaching competencies under four constructs. It is important to highlight that our focus is on the content of the actual competencies, rather than the various constructs used to describe and group competencies. Hawkins' (2017) description of competencies, capacities and capabilities in the context of team coaching was extremely useful and has helped to inform some of our findings. However, given the absence of an agreed framework, we are of the view that Drake's (2009) framework of coach mastery, while proposed in the context of one-to-one coaching, offers a useful lens through which to consider a framework for team coach competencies. Drake (2009) has suggested that coaching mastery can be mapped into four domains of knowledge, including: foundational knowledge, professional knowledge, self-knowledge, and contextual knowledge. The paper will conclude by suggesting several areas for further research.

Methods

This study followed an interpretive, qualitative methodology. The philosophical stance of interpretive research is constructionism in that there is no objective truth "waiting for us to discover" (Crotty, 1998, p.8) but that people make sense of their world by engaging with it and constructing meaning. This means subjective interpretation is important. Therefore, identifying researcher subjectivity is essential to the research process (Maxwell, 2005).

The research questions at hand, cover an emerging topic in the field of coaching. Moreover, team development is a broad topic studied across diverse disciplines, and different types of studies have been produced. Thus, a synthesis approach, combining a narrative review (Baumeister & Leary, 1997; Green et al*.,* 2006; Wong et al*.,* 2013) and an integrative review (Torraco, 2005), was conducted. From an interpretive, qualitative perspective, this synthesis approach is useful for identifying themes and theoretical perspectives (i.e. narrative) in order to create preliminary conceptualizations based on perspectives from multiple fields (i.e. integrative). The dual purpose of this approach is to a) accumulate and synthesize literature to demonstrate the value of a particular point of view, i.e. the competencies for team coaching and b) to develop a framework for a competency model.

This type of approach does not follow specific rules and procedures like a systematic review nor does it seek generalization or cumulative knowledge from what is reviewed (Paré & Kitsiou, 2017). Instead, this type of review requires a tailored, documented approach to survey the literature. The methods followed the four criteria of rigor for interpretive research: dependability, credibility, confirmability, and transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

A research team of scholar-practitioners assembled to gather literature related to the research questions. The research team consisted of 17 team coaching experts, including academics, practitioners, and coach training providers, from the main professional coaching associations— (Association of Coaches (AC), European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC), and International Coaching Federation (ICF). All had graduate degrees. The research team had over 255 years combined practitioner experience. The research team agreed on the research questions to answer, the scope of the literature review, and the reading materials.

The research team began with material retrieved on the topic for each research question in Google Scholar, the Henley Business School online library, ICF's research portal with over 2,500 articles on coaching, and from personal reference databases. As materials were assimilated, additional important pieces were gathered that were cited in those pieces. This ensures that the researchers

were gathering all important pieces backward and forward in time in that particular stream of research.

The review included literature from the fields of coaching, team coaching, group coaching, family therapy, group dynamics, gestalt, team development, team effectiveness, systems thinking, transactional analysis, constellations, reflective practice and supervision. Key terms, team coaching, team coaching competencies, team effectiveness, team development and coach competencies, were used to search the following sources: peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, scholar-practitioner books and conference presentations. In all, the team reviewed 115 pieces of research material of which 88 were relevant to the topic and research questions.

As another source of material, the research team sent out a call to their professional networks asking for team coaching competency models. The team collected seven competency models from publications (see Hawkins, 2017 p. 260; Hawkins, 2011 p. 157; Britton, 2013 p. 61), training providers (H&S Team Coaching Accelerator Programme; Executive Coaching Studio; AoEC Systemic Team Coaching; Corentus Team Coaching Certificate) and a professional coaching association (ICF) to review.

A thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Clarke et al., 2015; King & Brooks, 2017) was conducted in order to detect qualitative patterns in the form of themes and to identify components for a theoretical framework for team coaching competencies. Eleven overall themes were identified: what is team coaching, what is a team, what is the difference between team coaching and other forms of team interventions, what makes a team effective, what is the efficacy of team coaching, when to use a team coach, why reflective practice is essential for a team coach, is team coaching suitable for all types of teams, what are team coaching competencies, what models of team coaching exist and finally, what essential practices are needed to do team coaching. The seven competency models were used to identify 28 different team coaching competencies. The team used the themes and competencies to map out a framework based on Drake's (2009) knowledge mastery model.

This tailored thematic approach was iterative in nature. The research team reviewed and reflected together and consulted their wider coach networks to validate what was emerging. Two of the authors presented initial findings at the UK ICF Chapter's annual symposium in 2019 to get feedback from participants, and three volunteers from the event reviewed an earlier draft of the findings.

Findings

There is still some confusion as to what team coaching is and is not. Both coaches and consultants have been reported as describing team facilitation, team building, and one-to-one coaching for people in the same team, each as team coaching (Clutterbuck, 2009). Lawrence and Whyte (2017) have noted that there are challenges in gaining agreement on how to distinguish between team coaching from other team interventions. To help offer some clarity, we will briefly review the relations of team coaching with team development, team building and team facilitation.

Megginson and Clutterbuck (2010) consider if team coaching as a process is significantly different from other established modalities, such as action learning or team building. Lanz (2016) has no issue referring to team coaching as a discipline and notes that while, it is behind individual coaching, it is catching up fast. As the demand for team coaching has increased, so have attempts to define it. O'Conner and Cavanagh (2016) have suggested that the most widely used definition of team coaching was provided by Hackman and Wageman (2005 p. 269) who defined team coaching as a "direct interaction with a team intended to help members make coordinated and task-appropriate use of their collective resources in accomplishing the team's work". However, more

recently, Jones et al. (2019) reviewed fifteen different team coaching definitions published since 2000 and conducted 410 web-based interviews exploring the question of what team coaching is.

They have proposed that team coaching is:

> *a team-based learning and development intervention that considers the team to be a system and is applied collectively to the team as a whole. The focus of team coaching is on the team performance and the achievement of a common or shared team goal. Team learning is empowered via specific team coaching activities for self and team reflection, which is facilitated by the team coach(es) through the application of coaching techniques such as impactful, reflective questioning which raises awareness, builds trusting relationships and improves communication. A team coach does not provide advice or solutions to the team. Rather, team coaching requires advanced coaching skills from the coach such as considering multiple perspectives simultaneously and observing and interpreting dynamic interactions and is typically provided over a series of sessions rather than as a one-off intervention* (p. 73).

Turning to other modalities, Hawkins (2017 p. 351) defines team development as "any process carried out by a team, with or without assistance from outside, to develop its members' capability and capacity to work well together". Hawkins (2017) highlights that most theories and experiences of team development, point to distinct stages or phases. Tuckman (1965), Bales (1965), and McGrath (1984, 1991) have put forth models to explain the different stages or phases of team development. In contrast, Gersick (1988, 1989) suggested that teams would need to have "a deliberate abrupt attentional shift at the heart of groups' midpoint efforts to progress." (Gersick, 1989, p. 302). The insights from these theories is evident in the work of Hackman and Wageman (2005) and Carr & Peters (2013) who emphasise the importance of beginnings, mid points and endings. While there are different ways of describing the stages of a team development, what is clear is that a team coach assists the team based on the stage of development identified.

As another type of intervention, team building has been described as "any process used to help a team in the early stages of team development" (Hawkins, 2017, p. 351). It has been suggested that team building activities tend to focus on areas such as, interpersonal relationships, improved productivity or improved alignment with an organisation's goals. Examples of team building include: interventions based on fun and enjoyment (e.g. paintballing); interventions that simulate workplace dynamics (e.g. a ropes course); assessment-based interventions (e.g. personality assessments); and problem-solving activities (e.g. experiential games) (Kriek & Venter, 2009). Clutterbuck (2007 p. 108) has suggested that the "efficacy of team building is mixed at best", in that while it improves relationships between team members, the approach does not necessarily translate into long-term performance improvement. It is evident that while team building activities may form part of a team coaching intervention, they in themselves are not team coaching.

Finally, team facilitation involves working with a team on a specific process or helping them to have a specific conversation, normally within the context of a few interventions (Hicks, 2010). For Hawkins (2017 p. 351), team facilitation is "a process where a specific person (or persons) is asked to facilitate the team by managing the process for them so that they are freed up to focus on the task". Hawkins further suggests that team facilitation is part of a continuum of team coaching that ranges from team facilitation with its focus on process, to team performance coaching, leadership team coaching and ultimately transformation leadership team coaching, with its emphasis on the wider system. Clutterbuck (2007) is clear that while a coach may at times use facilitation skills, the difference between team facilitation and coaching is important; with the team facilitator concerning themselves with providing external dialogue management, in order to, help a team reach a decision, whereas, a team coach is concerned with empowering the team to manage their own dialogue.

This review contends that while team coaching is a distinct activity, it is important to understand it in the context of other team interventions, especially team building and team facilitation, with which it

is often confused. We believe that the clarity provided on what team coaching is and is not offers a firm foundation for us now to explore team coaching competencies.

A Framework for Team Coaching Competencies

Research on team coaching has focused on: defining the term and differentiating it from other team interventions (Jones et al*., 2019);* identifying factors related to team coaching effectiveness and outcomes (Hackman & Wageman, 2005; Wageman et al*., 2008;* Peters & Carr, 2013a); exploring what team coaches do (Lawrence & Whyte, 2017); and investigating the methods and approaches used by team coaches when doing their work (Hastings & Pennington, 2019). However, it is evident that little has been done to identify the competencies of team coaching.

Several issues present themselves when asking the question, what are the competencies required to be a team coach? These include issues regarding terminology and consensus on competencies, and how they differ from capacities and capabilities (Hawkins, 2011, 2014, 2017; Bachkirova & Smith, 2015). Hawkins (2017 p.261) distinguishes between competencies and capabilities. While both in his view are about know-how, capabilities relate to how the team coach knows when and how to use and apply different skills. In addition, he refers to 'capacities' as relating "to one's being, rather than one's doing". As a seminal piece in the field, Hawkins' (2017) descriptions of competencies, capacities and capabilities has helped to inform the content of the areas of competency.

This review will focus on the content of the actual competencies, rather than the various constructs used to describe competencies e.g. competencies, capabilities and capacities. The focus on potential team coach competencies is we believe a sound basis for further research in this area.

In the absence of an agreed framework, we are of the view that Drake's (2009) framework of coach mastery, while proposed in the context of one-to-one coaching, offers a useful lens through which to consider a framework for team coach competencies. Drake (2009) has suggested that coaching mastery can be mapped into four domains of knowledge, including: foundational knowledge, professional knowledge, self-knowledge, and contextual knowledge. The following sections define each domain and point to relevant literature on team coaching competencies.

Foundational Knowledge

For Drake (2009), foundational knowledge includes the various theories, models, and guidelines based on research and scholarship from the basic and applied sciences that inform choices in coaching. The literature suggests that a team coach needs to have knowledge of group dynamics, team psychology, team coaching models, theories on stage development of teams, and types of teams, including virtual teams (Grijalva et al., 2020; Hawkins, 2017; Leary-Joyce & Lines, 2018; Mathieu et al*., 2017;* Carr & Peters, 2013; Thornton, 2019). While Drake (2009) discussed foundational knowledge in the context of one-to-one coaching, our view is that foundational knowledge is equally applicable to team coaching.

There are several team coaching models available and many have been the foundation of publications and research over the past 15 years. Peters & Carr (2013a) identified five key team coaching models related to the team effectiveness literature, including: Clutterbuck, 2007; Hackman & Wageman, 2005; Hawkins, 2011; Moral & Angel, 2009; Thornton, 2010). Of note, Thornton has an updated edition (2016) and Hawkins (2011, 2014, 2017).

Other team coaching models include: (Hauser, 2014; Peters & Carr, 2013b; Price & Toye, 2017; Widdowson, 2018; Woods 2016). These models, in common with (Clutterbuck, 2007, 2019b; Hawkins, 2011, 2014, 2017; and Thornton, 2010, 2016) tend to not only focus on the internal

relationship and dynamics that evolve with the team leader and the team, but also the task, purpose, management routines and governance. They also take both an inside out and outside in perspective, encouraging the team to look wider than itself to see what internal and external factors are contributing to its performance.

The literature also provides many examples of different techniques and approaches that are useful to team coaching. Team coaching can benefit from the approaches and insights generated from different disciplines, including psychometrics, team questionnaires, business development, drama therapy techniques, family constellations, and behavioural models. The more frequently referenced (Hawkins, 2011, 2014, 2017; Thornton 2010, 2016) models include: business development (Guttman, 2009; Curphy & Hogan, 2012; Murphy & Saal, 2013; Skiffington, & Zeus, 2003); drama techniques (Dassen, 2015); systemic coaching and constellations (Burchardt, 2015; Whittington, 2012); transactional analysis (Choy, 1990; Karpman, 2014; Thornton, 2010); and gestalt (Barber, 2002; Cox et al., 2018). Whilst all of these areas are important for team coaches, a recurring theme in the literature points to systemic coaching as central to the work of the team coach (Hawkins, 2011, 2014, 2017; Jones et al., 2019; Thornton, 2010, 2016).

It is of little surprise that as team coaching develops, an increasing number of team coaching models are being proposed. Models and the theory that underpins them are designed to help identify the most suitable team coaching approach, process, and tools and techniques, for any given team coaching session. Regarding what model a team coach should use, Thornton (2016 p. 123) has commented "models have their uses, if we remember they offer a starting point, not an end point". Hastings and Pennington (2019 p. 183) found that team coaches take an "eclectic and agnostic approach" towards their use of tools, theories and methods. Lawrence and Whyte (2017, p. 105) have suggested, "the general lesson appears to be less around adopting a specific approach, as to be confident in adopting an approach that the coach understands and has confidence in." In summary, while foundational knowledge is important, how a model is used is also of major significance.

Professional Knowledge

Professional knowledge refers to the competencies and methods based on research and scholarship used by practitioners to engage in coaching practice and reflect on outcomes (Drake, 2009). Professional knowledge is about 'what I do' or the doing (Alexander & Renshaw, 2005). Van Nieuwerburgh (2017) suggests that coaching skills along with the coaching process are key elements to successful coaching. The coaching professional bodies including the International Coach Federation (2019), the Association for Coaching (2012) and the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (2015) have all developed competencies for coaches. Broadly, they fall into eight categories: ethical practice, coaching mindset and presence, continued professional development, contracting, developing a trusting relationship, creating awareness and insight, effective communication and client growth and mindset. While these coaching competencies offer a base that team coaches should display competency in, there are other areas specific to team coaches that need to further be explored and researched. While the literature is sparse regarding the professional knowledge necessary for a team coach, we have highlighted a few recommendations.

Unlike one-to-one coaching, facilitation appears to be a key competency that shows up repeatedly in team coaching. Hawkins (2017 p. 72) has suggested that a team coach should be competent in facilitating teams or groups. He has described team facilitation as when "a person (or persons) is asked to facilitate the team by managing the process for them so they are freed up to focus on the task". Similarly, Heron (1999) indicates that teams need skilled facilitators to work with them on team structure, goals, process, and behaviour. Britton (2013) has also discussed the need for team coaches to develop their facilitation skills and experience.

Based on their team coaching literature review, Peters & Carr (2013a) have highlighted suggested best practices in team coaching. These include:

- To assist leaders to reprioritise their focus towards more front-end team design and launching their team, rather than trying to refocus a team once it is underway;
- To time interventions to coincide with the beginning, middle, and end of a team cycle;
- To hold a team launch but to be careful not to overdesign the group or provide detailed guidance during the initial session so the group can figure out the way forward;
- To suggest that teams invite team members to take an informal peer coaching role within their team to initiate, motivate, and encourage their colleagues to bring forward their full contribution;
- Team coaching, while focused on the team, can also include some specific, individual coaching of the team leader or team members.

Hastings and Pennington's (2019) qualitative study explored the methods experienced team coaches use in practice. The participating team coaches used a wide range of methods and tools. From this research, Hastings identified the purpose for method selection into the following themes:

- To adapt coaching approach in the moment
- To create coaching space (safe)
- To catalyse team self-awareness and insight
- To build autonomy and accountability
- To facilitate
- To challenge
- To provide psycho-education
- To use team assessments or diagnostic tools
- To encourage peer-coaching and self-coaching

In addition, Hawkins (2017 p. 261) has suggested the need for the team coach to effectively contract with all key stakeholders and team members on the "objectives, success criteria and process for the team coaching". The team coach will also listen and observe to identify issues for both individual team members and the team as a whole. The use of "incisive questions, facilitation methods and team coaching tools" (Hawkins, 2017 p. 262) can help the team gain clarity in a number of areas, for example, their fundamental purpose, their collective strategic focus and objectives. All this to say, it is evident that the core areas of coach competency detailed by the professional bodies along with additional skills and knowhow, will be important elements of the team coach's professional knowledge.

Self-Knowledge

Self-knowledge refers to the awareness, maturity, and wisdom based on personal development of practitioners and their clients as they participate in coaching (Drake, 2009). The self-knowledge domain in Drake's mastery model is in line with the literature on a coach's or team coach's 'way of being' (Alexander & Renshaw, 2005; Hawkins, 2017; Hullinger & DiGirolamo, 2020; Rogers, 1975); reflective practice (Hawkins, 2017; Leary-Joyce & Lines, 2018); coaching supervision (Hawkins, 2014); and ethical maturity (Carroll, 2012).

There is extensive emphasis on this area of knowledge within the coaching literature. Way of being stems from the work of Rogers (1975) who proposed the term to refer to a person's ability to build empathy and a relationship with another person. He continues to say that this happens when a person is secure enough in their own self, that they can focus on the other person, almost putting their own agenda and thoughts to one side. Hullinger and DiGirolamo (2020) when considering Roger's work, describe a person-centred mindset as enabling the growth and learning in others. Being able to apply professional knowledge confidently and with self-ease is part of a way of being

(Alexander & Renshaw, 2005; Hawkins, 2017). Due to the importance placed in the literature on 'way of being' and self-awareness, more consideration is given to this domain.

Indeed, a 'way of being' is considered so important, that Hurley and Staggs (2012) have contended that coaching itself is not just about 'doing' (i.e. professional knowledge) but also about 'being' (i.e. self-knowledge). The subject of 'being,' i.e. 'who I am,' versus 'doing,' i.e. 'what I do,' is also discussed by Johns (2017). For van Nieuwerburgh (2017), a 'way of being' is an important element to successful coaching, alongside coaching skills and coaching process. For Alexander and Renshaw (2005) a 'way of being' for a coach is more than learning skills, rather it is about possessing a strong self-awareness. A strong self-awareness means that a team coach considers themselves "the instrument" who works to be the change they "are encouraging in the team" (Hawkins, 2017, p. 263). A coach should be creating opportunities to improve their own 'way of being' alongside their client.

A coach's way of being can be developed through reflective practice. Hawkins (2017 p. 65) advocates for team coaches to engage in their own reflective practice in conjunction with facilitating learning for their clients, stating that "most of us can go on repeating the same ineffective behaviours and somehow hoping we will get a different result". This line of thinking is echoed throughout the literature on coaching (Hullinger & DiGirolamo, 2020; Jackson, 2008; Leary-Joyce & Lines, 2018; Thornton, 2010; Van Nieuwerburgh, 2017). Several authors (Hay, 2007; Johns, 2017; Hullinger et al., 2019) have offered relevant models for how to engage in reflective practice.

Coaching supervision is another way for enhancing self-knowledge, or a way of being. Hawkins (2010 p. 381) states "Supervision provides a protected and disciplined space in which a coach can reflect on particular client situations and relationships, the reactivity and patterns they evoke in them and, by transforming these live in supervision, can profoundly benefit a coachee, the client organisation and their own professional practice". While supervision has been deemed essential for team coaching, the reality is that there is less availability of supervisors for team coaching or systemic team coaching when compared to individual coaching (Hawkins, 2017). When discussing team coaching supervision, Hodge and Clutterbuck (2019 p.334) comment "As yet, there is no one clear model for supervising team coaches". They further observe that supervisors are currently adapting supervision models for one-to-one coaching to their work with team coaches.

The literature agrees that the maturity, or mastery, level of a coach entering into team coaching is important. This implies that a team coach will need to have had considerable practice and knowledge of coaching one-to-one before embarking on team coaching. Moreover, a coach should bring to a coaching relationship their previous knowledge and training (Thornton, 2016), and should already be a skilled coach and have experience of working with groups (Hicks, 2010). Along this line of argument, Hawkins (2017) refers to the work of Carroll (2012 p. 106) who describes ethical maturity as

"having the reflective, rational, emotional and intuitive capacity to decide whether actions are right and wrong, or good and better, having the resilience and courage to implement those decisions, being accountable for ethical decisions made (publicly or privately) and being able to learn from and live with the experience(s)".

Similarly, van Nieuwerburgh (2016) has proposed a 'virtuous cycle of ethical maturity' which includes confidence in principles and values, openness to moments of choice, courageous choices, reflection on moments of choice and ultimately increased ethical maturity.

Whilst it could be tempting to consider mastery as becoming more skilled, the literature indicates that mastery is about how a coach uses and applies their skills, along with their ability to be present and be themselves in different coaching situations (Passmore, 2014). A key theme appears to be that whatever a coach's knowledge, the path to coach mastery or maturity is about always continuing to learn and grow (Bluckert, 2005; Passmore, 2014). Professional development can help

build a coach's "relationship engagement capacity," ability to work transculturally and with team differences, and enhance self-ease, additional capabilities associated with team coaching (Hawkins, 2017). This indicates that it is essential for a team coach to commit to continuing professional development.

Contextual Knowledge

Contextual knowledge refers to the subject matter expertise, organisational savvy, and strategies based on a systemic understanding of the client's issues and objectives in coaching (Drake, 2009). It is evident in the literature, the importance of the team coach not losing sight of the wider picture, seeing the client as part of a network of relationships, referred to as systemic team coaching or systems thinking in the coaching literature (Hawkins, 2011, 2014, 2017; Leary-Joyce & Lines, 2018).

Systemic team coaching is a multi-discipline approach, drawing on individual coaching, group coaching, team building, team facilitation, inter-team coaching, and organisational development (Leary-Joyce & Lines, 2018). Hawkins (2017 p. 77) defines systemic team coaching as

> *"a process, by which a team coach works with the whole team, both when they are together and when they are apart, in order to help them improve their collective performance and how they work together, and also how they develop their collective leadership to more effectively engage with all their key stakeholder groups to jointly transform the wider business".*

This means that team coaching is multi-faceted and complex with many moving and interacting parts that a team coach needs to account for when coaching teams.

When discussing the capabilities of a team coach working in a systemic way, Hawkins (2017) highlights the importance of the team coach having an appreciation of the wider system. This means understanding how the team connects within the wider organisational system and engages key stakeholders, team dynamics, knowing about the different stages of team development, understanding the organisational and business environment, and having the ability to align the work of the team to organisational change. Indeed, purchasers of team coaching have also reported on the importance of a coach understanding the human condition and the wider systemic issues (Dagley, 2010).

Another consideration is that to work systemically, a team coach needs to develop skills that enable them to see relationship issues in a session and how these relationship dynamics may be influenced by systemic patterns of the team and the organisation (Hawkins, 2017). This reflective process can be used with the team and in a team coach's own reflective practice and supervision (Leary-Joyce & Lines, 2018). This translates into being able to support and enable teams to work better collectively in healthy relationships, while considering the wider organisational system and in so doing, help them transform themselves and the organisation for the future.

Thornton (2016) discusses the importance of the team coach being willing to raise systemic issues with the team and the sponsor. Working in service of a teams' agreed upon goals, a team coach may require the courage to say the unspeakable. This means the team coach sharing with the team the systemic challenges and issues a coach is noticing, that might be getting in the way of supporting their goals. Similarly, understanding, observing, and naming power dynamics and politics that could impact a teams' development is important when coaching systemically.

The case for having a strong foundation of business fundamentals, i.e. organisational development and strategy, is limited in the literature, however there is some indication that team coaching practitioners see this as essential (Britton, 2013). Thornton (2016) proposes that an effective group coach needs both personal and business wisdom, as well as, an ability to temporarily inhabit the

team's world and context. Kets de Vries (2011 p. 188) has highlighted the need for a team coach to have "a solid understanding of the business context in which they are operating". This means understanding how the team's work fits into the transformational or cultural change agenda of the organisation (Hawkins, 2017).

Conclusion

While the increased demand for team coaching has been accompanied with an increase in peer reviewed literature, team coaching competencies have not received the attention required. This paper has proposed team coaching competencies that can act as a basis for further research. More research would help the field move beyond what Jones et al. (2019 p.64) has suggested is its "pre-theory" status.

This synthesis of a narrative and integrative review used the literature to detect competencies for team coaching practice. The most prevalent team coaching competencies in the literature appear to be: facilitation; knowledge of group dynamics; coach competencies; a way of being, including the ability to build relationships, self-awareness, maturity of the team coach, reflective practice and use of supervision; and finally systems thinking. We then used Drake's (2009) framework to inform the mapping process to develop a conceptual model of team coaching competencies. Competencies from the literature were identified as foundational knowledge, professional knowledge, self-knowledge, or contextual knowledge (Drake, 2009).

The literature suggests that an effective and competent team coach will draw on a range of different competencies and apply these in an integrative way to their work with teams. The field needs to hone its evidence-based practice, which includes the foundational and professional knowledge of team coach competencies. This will provide a springboard to good practice. The team coach will then be able to use this practice and skillfulness applying it to the team at hand, at a given time and within a given context.

What is evident is that the role of a team coach is multi-dimensional and complex. Whilst all four domains of mastery offered by Drake (2009) are, we believe, both important and applicable to team coaching, it is the self-knowledge domain, i.e. the team coach's way of being, that is critical. The self awareness and maturity of the team coach enables them to apply their knowledge with confidence and self ease, putting their own agenda to one side. Finally, the ability of the team coach to be able to reflect and continually learn, develop and grow is imperative. As Hawkins (2017 p. 276) states, "constantly attending to our development" as a team coach is essential.

Limitations

This synthesis of a narrative and integrative review required a more creative collection of data. The purpose was not to cover all articles ever published on the topic but rather to combine perspectives and insights from different fields. Thus, the main limitation of this review is that it was not systematic, i.e. the methods did not follow a set of rules or procedures to follow. Instead, the methods were tailored to this research project, often the case for this type of narrative and integrative review. As part of this lack of systematic procedure limitation, selection of materials tend to be biased. However, including 17 scholar-practitioners as part of the research team was an attempt to overcome individual biases and to converge on findings. The review was used to inform the development of a framework for a team coaching competency model. This review also was intended to serve as the grounds for future research and theory.

Future Research

We are left with some additional questions that require exploration through future research. The questions and other areas for consideration include:

- How much emphasis should be placed on performance in team coaching?
- How do professional bodies incorporate into their coaching frameworks the developing area of team coaching?
- How important are team coaching models (or team effectiveness models) in identifying the team coaching competencies?
- Should the competencies be weighted in some way?
- How do we ensure a global view of the competencies, taking into account cultural differences?

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