

Team Coaching Supervision Survey

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Team Coaching Supervision Survey Summary

This study was stimulated by a project to produce the first *Handbook of Team Coaching*, currently underway. In researching the topic of supervising team coaches, we discovered that there was very little substantive literature (and not even much in the way of anecdote) to throw light on when, where and how team coach supervision took place, the methods used, or indeed on any of the questions that would normally be applied to a professional practice. Even in France, which has at least a decade longer history of team coaching and team coach supervision, research has been very limited and what there is has largely been inaccessible to the wider world, as a result of the language barrier. We therefore designed a survey, which would provide a foundation level of information, upon which future more specific research could be built.

The survey was distributed through a number of networks, both general coaching and coach supervision networks as well as specific networks, including the Association of Coaching Supervisors and the Team Coaching Zone. There were altogether 55 respondents altogether: 52 team coaches, 23 supervisors of team coaches and 20 people playing both roles in different contexts. Respondents as team coaches were geographically diverse: UK, France, Australia, Ireland, United States, Sweden, Brazil, Singapore, Mauritius, Laos, Belgium and Latvia. The largest contingent (29 respondents) was from the UK. Team coach supervisors came from UK, Australia, Ireland, France, UAE and Belgium.

All respondents were experienced coaches, with length of experience ranging from 6 years to 30 years, having between 700 to more than 5000 hours of one-to-one coaching to more than 5,000. They had a wide range of qualifications, ranging from ICF MCC and PCC, EMCC senior practitioner to EIA master coach, and a variety of coaching related post-graduate certificates and diplomas. All but four described their experience as a one-to-one coach as either high or relatively high, with just four describing it as moderate. See Table 1.1 for description of level of *team coaching experience as.....* Experience as a team coach supervisor was more varied (see Table 2.1).

The survey contained two parts: one aimed at team coaches and the second aimed at supervisors of team coaches.

Part One: Team Coach Responses

Experience as a team coach

Only three respondents had a formal qualification (i.e. had attended specific training) as a team coach. However, four had designed or delivered team coach education and others had qualifications from related disciplines such as team building, team facilitation and systemic coaching. This is congruent with an emerging discipline.

Table 1.1 Experience as a team coach

High	16%
Fairly high	41%
Moderate	33%
Low	10%

Focus of team coaching

Anecdotal evidence suggested that team coaches are mostly employed to work with senior executive teams and our survey confirms this. Team coaching is a relatively expensive intervention, so it is not surprising that it is mostly reserved for people at the top of organisations. Unlike one-to-one coaching, team coaching has not yet established itself as a discipline for coaches within organisations. It is probable that the “elite” focus of team coaching will diminish as organisations enable their experienced internal coaches to make the transition to team coaching – as has happened, for example, in the Kent, Surrey and Sussex region of the UK’s National Health Service.

Table 1.2 Focus of team coaching

Leadership	45
Executive and middle management	45
Education, charities, third sector	2
Dysfunctional group	1
Sport	1
Small business	1

Types of intervention

The reasons for team coaching varied widely, with the most common being helping the team achieve its potential, aligning team members around a common purpose and conflict resolution. Other interventions were to help the team build its collective intelligence, improve communications, restructure and “right-size”, improve performance, manage change, work better with external stakeholders, achieve greater alignment of values and manage succession. Several respondents also referred to assisting new teams or merged teams to speed up their development to the performing stage of Tuckman’s (1965) forming, storming, norming and performing.

Table 1.3: Types of intervention

Reaching full potential	51
Team members not aligned	45
Conflict resolution	28

Where do they practice?

Only 13 practice both locally and internationally; the rest locally.

What models do team coaches use?

The responses showed a huge diversity of approaches, drawing upon mainstream team coaching literature (Hawkins 2014, West (accessed February 2017), Clutterbuck 2007, Katzenbach & Smith 2001 etc); structural dynamics; neuroscience; organisational development, action learning, conflict resolution, transactional analysis, systems theory and constellations. Team coaches also used a variety of psychometric and other tools, ranging from 360 feedback through MBTI and Lencioni's team dysfunctions (2002) to team profiling and the team accelerator. Some team coaches drew heavily on specific schools of psychology, such as Gestalt. Others, as might be expected in an emerging discipline, had created their own models and methods informed by OD literature. A minority of team coaches work in pairs, to provide support to each other. An important factor in France (and to a lesser extent elsewhere) is the expectation that team coaching will be delivered in pairs of coaches.

How often do you seek supervision for your team coaching?

Almost all respondents (out of the 52) took their team coaching practice to supervision. This is in sharp contrast to surveys of one to one coaches (Hawkins & Schwenk 2006; Turner & Hawkins 2016), where the use of supervision is still far from universally expected. A possible explanation of this difference is that team coaches tend to be much more experienced professionals than coaches in general. It may also be that the complexities of team coaching make supervision both more essential and more valuable. This is a topic for future research.

Table 1.4: Frequency of supervision as a team coach

Never	6%
Less than 3 times a year	36%
More than 3 times a year	58%

Do you separate out supervision for 1-2-1 coaching from team coaching?

Once again, the responses show a wide variation in practice. Given that learning gained through team coaching can be expected to influence the scope and quality of a coach's one-to-one coaching (for example, by creating insights into system dynamics in the workplace), it would seem that combining 1-2-1 supervision with team coach supervision has practical benefits. However, a contrasting view is that the two approaches and contexts are so different that combining them in the same supervision session would be confusing.

Table 1.5 Do you separate out supervision for 1-2-1 coaching from team coaching?

Never	24%
Sometimes	49%
Always	27%

The supervision format

The most common forms of supervision are one-to-one, group (with one or two supervisors), peer (usually with someone, who is a colleague, rather than a qualified supervisor) and intervision (a form of group peer supervision).

Table 1.6 What format?

One to one	40
Group	16
Peer	14
Intervision	2
None	1
Always coach in pairs so we attend supervision together	1

How did you choose your supervisor?

While there was again a wide variation in what respondents looked for in their supervisors, several common themes stand out:

- Experience and expertise in both 1-2-1 and team coaching
- Strong academic and/or psychological background
- Professional qualification in supervision (not necessarily coaching supervision)
- Familiarity with their work
- Seeking recommendations
- Working with tutors or colleagues from courses attended

Some respondents described the process of selecting a supervisor as one of trial and error “deciding together if it made sense for us”. Others referred to intuition. One reported: “I work with more than one supervisor, who bring different aspects. It is not unusual for me to work the same issue (with more than one of them) to see what emerges”

What are your expectations of your supervisor?

Responses covered all three areas of supervision -- formative, normative and restorative (Proctor 1997)– with the greatest emphasis on formative.

Formative expectations included:

Challenge, intellectual discussion, bringing new awareness and ways of working with the system, provide fresh insight, bring the wider system into our discussions, listen and assist reflection, someone who has a kind of wisdom in

life, add experience and insights, will hold the mirror up to my awareness of what is happening for me during the process, support my CPD, clarify what happened in the situation with the team, relate my experience to theory Input from psychological principles, share their experience, to continue to raise the bar for my profession, applying tools/approaches to different contexts.

Normative expectations included:

To look at the process between me and my fellow team coach; let me know what I am doing well and what I can change; help me manage contracting and boundaries; I need his help to share my diagnostic of psychological games in team coaching and to identify parallel process in face to face coaching; help me get clear about what belongs to me, what to the team; raise awareness - new angles, deeper insights on what I could miss and why.

Restorative expectations included:

Giving me confidence, helping me prepare and anticipate; serve as a metaphorical 'hose down' so I feel clean when I next meet a team; safe and trusted space to download, to think and to create anew.

Other expectations included: give advice with permission and if useful; and commercial awareness. Amongst longer comments was the following:

- “The supervisor we chose was not the most 'comfortable'. We chose the one who we felt would 'disrupt' us the most and not the one who everyone liked, as we wanted to mirror the system we will be working within. Personally, I expect a qualified and experienced supervisor. I expect someone to have experience themselves of team coaching and to be able to work across all lenses with us (in terms of the 7-eyed model for example).”

How do you consider what issues to take to your team coach supervisor?

Responses showed a wide variation. Recurring themes fell into three main categories: when the coach feels stuck or stressed; when the team is stuck, or there are issues around the team's dynamics within the wider system and when the coach wants to share successes. Comments included:

1. When the coach feels stuck or stressed

- I bring whatever I feel stuck about - if I find myself thinking about it repeatedly I will take it to my supervisor
- Usually the things I am stressing about or find tricky or challenging
- When I'm struggling with a certain theme, thinking during a longer period about it....
- When I feel challenged by the team and notice it within my own reflections
- I give an overview and then raise areas that have spiked my mind
- Noticing patterns – mine or the team's
- When I feel I could have done better
- The ones that feel least good/clean/clear - where the shame is/might be

- I listen to my internal supervisor and take issues when I am feeling anxious or unsure or just feel that there may be new learnings that could improve my work

2. Issues around the team

- When things are not shifting with the team, when I have been triggered, when someone in the system has had an unusual reaction to something
- Those where I feel enmeshed in the systemic dynamics, have a complex or ethical dilemma, or need to think through next stage of design
- Anything where I am unsure, particularly re the team dynamics and the wider system When I want to seek out learning from an experience
- Contracting issues
- When the system is complex, I feel I should be on guard and am not clear where
- Toxic relationships within the team, radical loss of trust
- When I/team are stuck (caught in parallel process) or transference happens, or when I feel uncomfortable with the session and don't know why
- If I notice my concerns are raised / alerts on outcomes / behaviours in the group

3. When the coach wants to share successes

- Both things that went well and challenges, issues around confidentiality
- Clarifying what a good result looks like
- I prepare in advance and then look at the most challenging issue that I would like to work on with my supervisor

Some examples of team coaching assignments brought to supervision

Once again, the range of responses was large. They included: supporting a team in building trust, coping with a weak leader in a strong team, working with team dynamics in a mature team, situations where the team leader, the team and external stakeholders have different views of the issue, sabotage of the team coaching process by the team leader, "A particularly tricky CEO who invited me personally to do the work with him and his team but cited that he didn't want to go anywhere near the space of sharing emotions", a team leader who is wanting me "to fix" the team and they're not willingly participating in the process, saying one thing in the room and doing something else in the organisation, "political" issues where I felt there were several psychological contracts at play - dealing with my own reactions to a fairly toxic leadership style and resultant company culture.

What value did the supervisor add in these cases

The supervisor helped to provide clarity and insight into what was happening to the coach and the team and what was going on between them. At the same time, the supervisor enabled the coach to step back from the system to identify

themes, patterns and parallel process. They provided the coach with feedback about their own process, gave them confidence and helped them to think through subsequent intervention options. In most cases, the supervisor's input was extremely useful/valuable. Some examples the team coaches appreciated were:

1. Clarity and Insight

- Supervisor able to act as sounding board
- Listened, helped me think through, provided new insights
- She helped me to work through some of the different ways I could hold people accountable during group meetings
- Clarity
- Sometimes enhancing my understanding, sometimes providing specific ideas to use, always enhancing my understanding of dynamics and bringing out parallel process I might not have seen etc
- The first, helped me to take a fuller systemic view and clarify the value I could add. In the second, helpfully identified the parallel process In the third, unpacked more about the dynamic in the team by getting me to externalise the choices I made intuitively
- A person outside of the environment, no conflicts of interest, authority to understand groups in different organisations (cases)
- More clarity Recognition of what was happening in my life along with the Client's life. The reality that I was allowing the Client transfer their frustration onto me
- Critical reflection. Insight that enables me to address next situation differently
- I clocked it while reflecting on the way home in the car. the supervisor helped me dissect the separate issues creating this and I had clarity on what I wanted to do next time

2. Feedback to the coach

- Being a sympathetic listener and kick ass mirror
- Helped me to remind myself of my wisdom and experience Helped me to be more grounded and confident
- Varies between nothing and a little frustrated to helpful to insightful to vitally awareness-raising to crucial business/career support
- We arrived at strategies for 'unsticking'. Designing an intervention to replicate behaviour in the room, notice it and challenge it. Interventions to confront
- Listened and let me hear my own thinking. Challenged my assumptions Help me explore options
- Helped me reflect on practice, offered some suggestions, challenged me
- Increased confidence in my approach. The idea that dynamics in a work team sometimes are where unresolved childhood / family issues play out
- Clearer thinking reminder of my strengths confidence to stick to my guns
- His ability to help me to disentangle my Emotions and to overcome my imposter syndrome, by relying on my personal skills

3. Identifying Themes/Patterns

- Explored the issue from different angles/lens Explored parallel process
- The eye from outside the system
- Explored approaches and how to raise issue of power with the group
- Perspective humour resources ideas
- Naming unconscious behaviours and representation of roles in the system
- Help me step back Turn my fears or feeling of inadequacy/ fear into a leverage: I could see what was at play and how to best help the team handle it
- Helping me to work through what I was noticing. Guiding me. Supporting me. Resourcing me. Pointing out my blind spots. Impact of the system on me and the team and the work
- Appreciation of underlying systemic factors. Helped me realise the benefits of not trying to confront or solve but contain my clients' anxiety to support them to inquire, explore and realise more of what happens and keeps happening that they want to change

4. Exploring Impact on the coach

- Helped me reach understanding of how I was impacted by these issues
- Greater clarity on the systemic dynamics and my own process generated new ways forward
- Helped me see perspective, be courageous, increase self awareness and contract well with the client
- Understanding what was at stake for me as a person, what hooked me, learning how to gain self awareness and also how to frame psychological safety from beginning that allows regulation all along the process

How satisfied are team coaches with their supervisors?

By and large, team coaches were highly satisfied with their supervisors, with only a handful of comments such as “fine” or “OK”.

Differences between supervision for 1-2-1 and team coaching

Most coaches saw considerable differences between 1-2-1 and team coaching supervision. The persistent theme here was that the supervisor needs to have a strong grounding in systems, group processes and team dynamics. Ideally, they are also doing team coaching themselves so they have a genuine appreciation of the issues that arise. At the same time, there were a few who saw no difference between these forums. Some interesting comments included:

1. Supervisor needs a strong grounding in systems, group processes & team dynamics

- Supervision for team coaching is much more system oriented and the parallel process becomes a major tool

- Level of complexity. One-to-one coaching is much easier to identify one connection at a time to focus the supervision exploration
- Team coaching supervision is like unravelling a knot in a ball of wool. I would not take on team coaching without supervision
- They should both be systemic, though one-to-one supervision often isn't. A team coaching supervisor must have a systemic perspective and have a good understanding of group dynamics
- The team related discussions take more time, are often more complex, and require a more diverse skill set
- The client is the team not the individuals in a team, always taking the organisational effects and influences into account, complexity of parallel processes
- A supervisor who understands group dynamics and some team coaching methods-approaches
- Supervision for team coaching needs knowing about groups dynamics that are very helpful to feel safe and prepared
- More complex, more focus on group dynamics
- The ability to see the team as a whole and individuals
- System and complexity of inter relations
- More focussed on dynamics and the complexity of the system
- Much more complex
- There is much more to 'hold'. A systemic approach is essential. There is always a bigger picture, which may have moved out of sight for the coach, as I get sucked into the actual process on the day
- Systemic vision is essential Not get tangled up in the relationship, focus on the processes at work. Personally: a risk for more archaic personal stuff being stirred
- The complexity of relational dynamics and the ability to hold everyone in the system vs holding the relationship between the client, the coach and the system influences
- Team coaching supervision benefits from an understanding of group dynamics and roles, a deeper systemic perspective and the ability to hold the complexity of the supervisee's client work and relationships

2. Ideally, the supervisor has experience of team coaching

- It is about experience. I don't think you can be a Team Coach supervisor unless you have been a Team Coach
- Team coaching supervisors need deep and felt experience of team coaching themselves, and have studied team coach supervision specifically. I'm wondering about the irony of a team coach getting supervision on a 1:1 basis! But I also think there is a time to get 1:1 supervision, even re team coaching
- I think a good supervisor who is experienced with teams can help with both
- We are dealing with people so of course there are similarities in both, but dynamics are more complicated with teams as more people!
- For me it hinges on the potential of the group to mirror processes in the teams and this provides rich insight

- People who do not understand and have not had experience of group dynamics should not be undertaking team coaching. The only way to thoroughly learn this is through having theoretical knowledge AND hanging out in groups enough to understand their own triggers and blind spots when in a group.
- In team coaching supervision, I look for a supervisor who has insight and experience in dealing with complex team dynamics within a wider systemic/cultural frame

3. There may be some value in group supervision

- No obvious differences
- More people who can bring themes on the table
- Value of learning from others in the team balanced with need to be concerned about others' needs in the session, which is not present when it's only all about me!
- I don't see much difference
- Not much

Part Two : Supervisors Responses

Experience as a team coach

Most team coach supervisors have experience of and/or are team coaches as well.

Table 2:1 Experience as a team coach

High	47%
Fairly high	22%
Moderate	22%
Low	9%

Qualifications

Supervisors have a range of years' experience, from two to 14 years. Only 7 have a specific qualification as a coach supervisor.

Experience as a team coach supervisor

Team coach supervisors showed an expected bell curve of variation in their experience of the role, with the largest proportion describing their experience as moderate.

High	21%
Fairly high	12%
Moderate	50%
Low	17%

Proportion of supervision that is team coaching focused

Again, there was a wide variation from less than 10% to 100%, with no obvious pattern. The average was 29% of their supervision practice.

Areas, in which the team coaches they supervise focus their activities

Not surprisingly, the emphasis of team coaches using supervision is heavily weighted towards leadership and senior management teams, with very few focusing on junior management or front line teams.

Table 2.2 Team coaching focus of supervisees

Leadership teams	19
Management/ executive teams	21
Junior management, front line teams	3
Sport	1

Main differences between supervising 1-2-1 and team coaching

The recurrent themes here parallel the views of the team coaches and relate in particular to the added complexity of team coaching, resulting both from team context and the interplay between team members, and between them and the organisation.

1. Complexity of team coaching

- The 7-eyed model (Hawkins & Smith 2006) has to be expanded to consider the relationship between team members and the overall team system
- Greater complexity
- Multi-stakeholder roles, dynamics and power issues Relating skills and styles in larger meetings Managing power between self and group
- System, complexity, insight of the coach into their presence and role.
- Knowledge and experience of group dynamics
- Alignment, additional perspectives, differing goals
- Working more broadly. Using all the 7 eyes all of the time
- Work with qualified team coaches requires a fleetness of foot to explore so much and get perspectives on the system quickly - there is a lot of info to process and limited time in supervision to do it. Less experienced/unqualified team coaches often do not know what they do not know and can actually require more straightforward support than they would as one-to-one coaches e.g. with contracting, designing interventions etc
- Coaches do not bring the same topics and are less ready to expose themselves

2. Focus on systems, group process and dynamics

- Much more focus on the system and more use of parallel process
- Managing team dynamics and managing the scope of the contract for team coaching
- Understanding systemic dynamics understanding psychological games at play
- Team coaching has a wider implication, probably organisation based but at least project purpose based whereas 1:1 has a bias toward individual needs.
- The importance and complexity of focusing on the team as a unit and factoring in the group dynamics.
- More politics at play
- It requires more experience and awareness of systems, dynamics, politics and the realities of organisational life, and one probably needs to be a team coach to supervise team coaching
- The widening and deepening of presenting issues and their underlying factors from leaders and managers to leadership and management within their operating context

Models and approaches

Supervisors draw on a wide range of models and approaches, including: the seven eyed model, social psychology and systems theory (Von Bertalanffy 1968), the drama triangle, transpersonal approaches, transactional analysis, constellations, clean language, Gestalt, group dynamics, action language, reflective practice.

Expectations of supervisors

Supervisors have much the same expectations of coaches, whether their practice is 1-2-1 or team based. They expect coaches to prepare and reflect on issues before the supervision session. At the same time, they expect issues to emerge from the supervision conversation as the following comments illustrate:

1. Preparation of the supervisee

- I expect them to have reflected and bring issues to supervision that they are stuck about. I am also prepared for issues to 'appear' in supervision which the coach may not have planned to bring
- Preparation - deciding what they want to work on and outcomes required.
- All my supervisees are asked to prepare and to present "cases" (but not a word I use). I expect them to recognise there is no resistant person or team, rather a supervisee needing to take a new path/approach
- I want to hear observations, conceptualization, intervention plans, results, thinking about what's happening – the difference is linking to organisational issues

2. When the supervisee is stuck

- I expect them to have reflected and bring issues to supervision that they are stuck about. I am also prepared for issues to 'appear' in supervision which the coach may not have planned to bring
- I expect them to be more curious about the dynamics of communication, interaction and relationships as well as the technics of structures, systems and processes, and how both inform and are informed by the prevailing culture to manage both anxiety and risk

3. Complexity

- Many people who come into supervision for team coaching probably are looking for a mentoring style of supervision and/or have no background in things like parallel process, ethics, boundary setting and contracting, and often bring collusion or triangulation
- I expect them to have a good understanding of the industry and organisation of the team, what constitutes high performance for the team and to have a clear position on their relationship to the team and individuals within it. I think I emphasise these more for team than for one-to-one coaches

4. Whatever the supervisee brings

- To want to reflect on practice. A wish to improve and develop
- Supervisees bring what they bring and my role is to acknowledge that and question what they brought

- Just be prepared with the focus for the conversation, the role they want from me and succinctly let me know the thinking they have already done
- To be themselves, show up honestly and bring the tough stuff to supervision

Issues Team Coaches bring

Given the greater complexity of team coaching compared with 1-2-1 coaching, it is not surprising that supervisors provided many different examples of issues team coaches bring to supervision. The following illustrate this diversity:

1. The coach's issues

- Individual, interpersonal and systemic non-conscious mechanisms that impact the coaching
- Managing power between self and group
- Handling a dominant leader
- Getting hooked by the development needs of individuals within the team and losing focus on the whole
- Unconscious behaviours of the coach
- Contracting, processes, concerns with the sponsor, and hierarchy, motivation,
- Lack of confidence in themselves as coaches

2. Team issues and relationships

- The challenge of overlapping relationships and how to respond to manage the ethics
- Members of teams being at different places in terms of 'trust' and how to work with that
- Depends on their maturity - from tools and techniques, to relational issues to more psychodynamic reflection
- The team leader's role in the coaching the resistant team member
- When team values differ or have altered/ changed during project lifecycle
- Cross cultural misunderstanding and unconscious bias
- Contractual muddles - coaching a team at the same time as individuals within it
- Confusion about what the purpose of the team is and how to help them clarify it
- "Difficult" people power and control issues in group
- Power, control and politics

How did you help?

The recurring themes from the supervisors were in providing the coach with fresh perspectives, awareness of group dynamics and its complexity, insight into the impact of the group on the coach and how the coach could "manage" themselves effectively:

1. Helping the coach

- I worked with the Team Coaches to explore their own part in this and how to help the team create their own ethical maturity. We discussed different ways that the team coach could raise non judgemental awareness of this within the team and get the team to actively seek and offer ways to build trust.
- Ask my supervisee clients. They have reported greater awareness of the role, better judgement around approaches and specific interpersonal complexities, greater awareness to anticipate future power and control issues and facilitate potential over short-term transactionalism
- Creating a very safe space with clear boundaries and contracting Very open and honest discussions of issues..
- In one case, in a group supervision session, playing it out through sculpting brought out dynamics the coach was less aware of Using parallel process as a tool in another case, power and control issues emerged
- Listening Holding the space for supervisee to access their own inner knowing Offering different perspectives and fresh thinking Signposting to new resources help connect the supervisee back to their role, and to where they can add value
- The coach gained perspectives on 'going native' and had a shift in emotional buy in to the drama and tweaked her relationships as a result. After exploring different approaches the coach identified a way of communicating back some difficult messages from parts of the team via metaphor
- By building confidence with the Coaches, inviting them to practice more and challenge their self-limiting beliefs By coaching them around focusing on being their best self and moving away from comparing themselves to others Rationalized their thoughts, look for examples of reference and challenge them to start trusting themselves

2. Developing interventions

- Hopefully raising awareness and perhaps a bit of training to look for dynamics within teams
- Revisited the contract - initial conversations on role. Contracting again - being clear with sponsor and parties in initial conversations
- Listen and directed coach toward facilitation tools and techniques I was familiar with
- Sharing of solutions from other international orgs and encouraging discussion of methods & solutions to overcome Allowing them space to think creatively and find what works best for their organisations. Sharing change tools/strategies and remote platforms that work Asking for further evidence and case studies/ research for next session strengthening conscious multi stakeholder contracts separating out activities changing the nature of the way the organisation views team coaching from team facilitation
- Getting group to share perceptions of conflicts of interest Exploring their approach to clarifying team purpose and getting further examples from the group.

- Getting the group to voice what group members might be saying
- Supporting them to develop their own action inquiry 1st, 2nd and 3rd person model of resilience and improvisation to encourage their experiential knowing and their creative response. I facilitated a free-fall iterative writing exercise (Patterson & Prentice, 2015) to recollect and reconnect to what has happened, widen and deepen its significance, explore the experience and surface their emotional response in order to acknowledge and begin to share what was previously suppressed and shameful, and thereby begin a new process of more appropriate response to the difficulties of their senior team clients.

Developing own capability

Team coach supervisors reported an equal variety in how they approach their own development in the role. Responses include: attending further specialist certification courses, reflection with colleagues, being supervised in turn, “listening to myself on tape getting supervision”, a lot of reading and attending podcasts, feedback from supervisees, and training team coaches.

Main challenges

The supervisors acknowledged they faced some of the challenges that the team coaches faced e.g. the complexity of the client system; the psychodynamics of the client team that the coach was coaching; not getting hooked into the parallel process. Staying outside of the client system to help the coach gain insight and perspective and disentangle themselves from the team dynamics (projections and transference). Likewise, in addition to core supervision skills, the supervisors need particular experience and appreciation of organisational systems and teams, groups and group process.

1. Realistic expectations

- Awareness of how effective team supervision can be for their coaches
- Time - people expect to work on these complex cases in 45 minutes, an hour etc
- Having sufficient experience of team coaching oneself.
- Having a clear definition of team coaching competencies

2. Understanding of systems and group dynamics

- Understanding group dynamics and systemic effects
- Complexity and different levels of conscious and unconscious biases
- Staying present to the complexity of the situations being presented
- Being personally experienced in the challenges of working with teams in the contexts you are supervising eg government, non for profit and commercial, large corporates, small business etc Balancing the needs of the team and the self awareness of the coach

3. Holding the supervision boundary

- Avoiding 'coaching the team' rather than supervising the Team Coach. Keeping sufficiently wide view of the whole system
- Losing purpose of the supervision from coaching into a wider perspective such as project management
- Full attention in the moment. Trusting your background and training as a supervisor
- Keeping the focus on the team When individual coaches take on teams without a solid background in working with groups
- Complexity and multiple layers of parallel process - this is also the fascination! partial sightedness cultural awareness
- Time for effective supervision of team coaches. Cost. The work is undervalued and underpaid but key to effective working
- To stay out of the story with the clients while communicating empathy. To value everyone's style and not compare. To continuously support, encourage and coach them to higher levels, when they might doubt their capability

4. Breadth of knowledge and experience for the supervisor

- Challenges? I think that we need more research on the impact of supervision of the outcomes of the team coaching
- I do believe having experience of actually working in a team and leading a team is important - many team coaches don't have that
- Organisational structure and support for internal coaches working across cultures and remotely
- Relevant research and case studies
- A lack of training and resources for team coaches and their supervisors representing all the elements in a dynamic way
- Seeing the need for it! Having sufficient people with the expertise in both supervision and dynamics
- Lack of professional knowledge and experience and that anyone can set up as a supervisor
- While confidence is established, I realize people are not ready to open up in team supervision as much as one-to-one
- Not realising that the scope of team coaching extends to HR, Finance, IT, L&D, OD&D and any other core functional professional who works as a Business Partner or internal - or external or embedded - consultant with client-facing business, leadership and senior management teams to develop their ability to sense and respond to the operating environment as they deliver stakeholder value. So many people don't realise that they are team coaches, and even more don't have any awareness of the benefits of reflective practice - or supervision

Additional insights

We asked respondents what else they would like to say. The opportunity to reflect on their practice was welcomed by some (as might be hoped within the

coaching fraternity!) and others pointed to the need for further research in this area. We leave the parting word to one of the respondents, however:

- “I love team coaching and supervising team coaches because of the huge advantage for organisations and business in developing high performing teams.”

Summary Based On Findings

It would appear from the findings that there are several key themes that may inform /need to be attended to as the practice of team coaching develops.

1. Team Coaches – appreciate the complexity and demands of the process and the skills required. They acknowledge they draw on a hybrid of approaches that encompass their coaching skills together with knowledge and experience of team development. They are acutely aware of the need for them to have the capacity to work with group process and dynamics, alongside managing the complexity of organisational systems and culture.
2. There is overall consensus amongst the coaches that supervision is of paramount importance for a number of reasons. They develop their self-awareness and the impact that groups may have on them; they value being able to stand back from and disentangle themselves from the client team they are working with to gain fresh insights and ways to move forward, particularly when they and/or the team may appear to be stuck.
3. The supervisors appreciate the complexity of the team coaching process. They draw not only on their supervision knowledge and skills but ideally have a lived experience of team coaching themselves.
4. At this stage, there is no one model or approach of team coaching supervision that meets the needs of the individual team coach. While there was little reference about the ideal format for team coaching supervision, there was a tendency to imply that group supervision may be extremely valuable so that the coach can gain multiple perspectives about the work and their process.

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