PRACTICAL METHODS FOR EVALUATING COACHING

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Practical Methods for Evaluating Coaching

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Report 430

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This report is the product of a study supported by the IES HR Network, through which Members finance, and often participate in, applied research on employment issues. Full information on Membership is available from IES on request, or at www.employment-studies.co.uk/network/.

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Contents

Executive Summary

As the coaching industry continues to grow and enters the market maturity phase of its life cycle, the pressure to show that coaching works and adds value is likely to intensify. Coaching evaluation is an activity that almost all companies agree is important, but it is one that is often neglected in the perpetual rush to get things done. This report aims to demystify coaching evaluation and provide coaching programme organisers with the practical help they need in planning their own evaluations.

Coaching as a development tool is increasingly prominent. However, many coaching programmes are either evaluated superficially (if at all) or only at the reaction level of the coachees. There is also very little non-partisan advice on coaching evaluation.

The IES study

The aims of the 2003–2006 research study were to:

- examine the evidence about whether coaching is an effective tool
- explore issues in evaluating coaching in a workplace context and identify what factors help/hinder
- provide illustrations of how leading companies are evaluating their coaching programmes
- develop and test a model of how to evaluate coaching programmes, which can be of practical use to companies in planning their own evaluations.

Findings

The literature and our study suggest that for coaching to sustain credibility levels of evaluation need to increase. Suggestions arising for organisations in planning your evaluation are:

- Adapt the traditional model of training evaluation you use elsewhere. Or you can use the evaluation framework presented as part of this research.
- Clarify why the evaluation is being conducted. Are you seeking to prove something, improve something, or learn something?
- Be realistic about constraints. Clarify your budget, resources available and any time constraints, and consider these in relation to your purpose.
- Define success criteria before choosing measures.
- Be selective in your evaluation measures. Collect data to show whether success criteria have been achieved. Consider looking for benefits well after the coaching has ended.
- Consider the perspectives of different audiences for the evaluation and how you will access a range of viewpoints.
- Make sure in advance that your coaches are willing to use your evaluation tools when operating in your organisation.
- Minimise resistance to the evaluation by letting participants and managers know before the coaching starts what evaluation measures will be used and how they will be expected to contribute.

Company illustrations

Our six featured companies come from a variety of sectors and cover a diverse range of approaches to evaluation. They include T-Mobile, Corus, a global distribution company, a building society, NHS in Wales and a UK government department.

The lessons learned from the company illustrations about using methods for collecting evaluation information will be of interest to would-be programme evaluators, and are summarised here.

Business Results

If bottom-line business results are what you want, focusing on one key business indicator can be a simple approach yielding straightforward results.

It is better to plan how to evaluate the coaching before starting the programme so 'hard' baseline data can be collected. It is not always necessary to complicate things by calculating return on investment (ROI). Measuring where it is easiest provides 'reasonable evidence', meaning you can avoid the expense of measuring benefit elsewhere where it may be difficult to identify an appropriate measure. If you do go down the RoI route you will need significant financial resources and statistical competence at your disposal.

Behavioural change

Multiple viewpoints and multiple data collection methods are essential when it comes to measuring perceptions of behavioural change. Face-to-face interviews enable behaviour change to be explored in more depth, although telephone interviews can also generate detailed information and allow probing and can be a less expensive alternative.

When designing impact questionnaires looking at behaviour change, make sure your ratings scale allows for the possibility that changes may be perceived as negative rather than positive.

Surveys

Attitude surveys are a simple and non-resource-intensive method to collect reactions to coaching. Climate surveys can be useful in identifying changes in soft-skill areas such as communication, and are especially relevant to organisations implementing coaching as a style of management.

Keep survey questionnaires short to get a better response. Response rates will increase further with reminders and chasing. They can be improved by asking coaches or line managers to distribute and collect questionnaires.

Be cautious in interpreting survey findings where the size of surveyed population is small.

Control groups

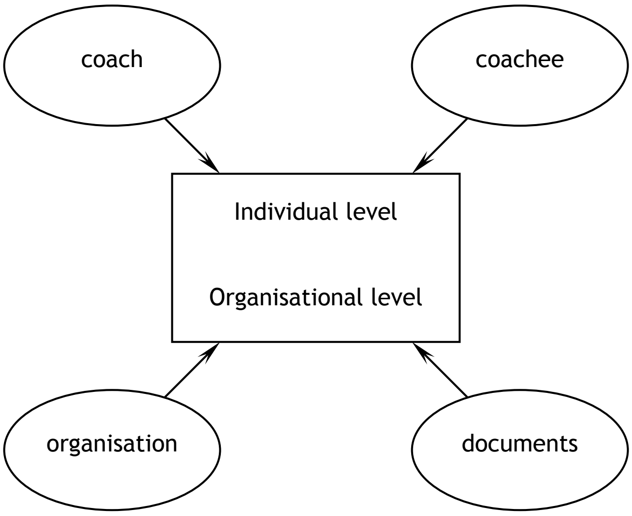
Comparing the results among coached with a 'control' group of non-coached individuals can be a very effective approach. Being able to compare before-coaching with after-coaching results can also be seen by some as more credible than examining post-coaching data alone. If you don't have a 'control' you will need some form of benchmark for comparative analysis to assess whether the activity in question is relatively effective.

An evaluation framework

IES produced a provisional framework which was tested over a two-and-a half year period on an in-depth evaluation of three cohorts of a local government strategic coaching programme for HR executives. The framework was then refined.

Figure 1 summarises the two dimensions we propose as being key for would-be evaluators: three main areas of evidence sought and four main likely sources of evidence.

Figure 1: Key dimensions in framework



Source: IES, 2006

Three sets of key questions were identified relevant to the areas to seek evidence about. Evaluators need to understand the answers before the coaching begins:

- What do coachees expect to gain from the coaching? And how will we know at the end if these benefits are realised?
- What does the organisation expect to gain from the coaching? And how will we know at the end if these benefits are realised?
- What internal and external processes need to be in place to enable the coaching programme to deliver the changes expected? And how will we know if they are working in time to change them if they are not working?

The research also identified numerous perspectives that might be relevant as likely sources of evidence. However, it seems there are four main sources that it is most helpful to consider: documents, eg records of objectives, achievements, coaching contracts; coachees; coaches, whether internal or external; organisation perspective, eg line managers, sponsors, HR, staff.

The three main areas and four main sources can be presented as a simple framework, as in Figure 2.

The report

The report also contains details of how to use the framework, plus a selection of evaluation tools used by our early adopter organisation, which should offer ideas and inspiration for those developing their own tools.

Figure 2: A framework for coaching evaluation

Likely sources of evidence ▸ Evidence sought at: ▾	Coachees	Line managers or sponsors	Coaches	Documents
Individual level				
Organisation level				
Programme processes				

Source: IES, 2006

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the research project

Coaching is now a widely accepted method for the development of people's talents in support of corporate objectives. Eighty per cent of large companies in North America and the UK use coaching. Use is also growing in the rest of Europe and Australia. Studies highlight the potential for coaching to be effective in increasing performance but evidence on actual impact is lacking. Despite very positive anecdotal reports, most organisations still have no hard evidence about the outcomes from their coaching investments either.

In-company knowledge and expertise about evaluating training and development activities in general has been growing. But back in early 2003 there was concern among IES Network members that one-to-one collaborative learning methods, like coaching, just did not sit properly within any of the evaluation models currently on offer. In addition, some members felt there was no proper guidance available to them on how to evaluate coaching within their own organisations.

The aims of this IES research project were to:

- examine the evidence about whether coaching is an effective tool for improving individual and organisational performance
- explore issues in evaluating coaching and identify what factors help and/or hinder good evaluation in a workplace context
- provide illustrations of how some leading companies are evaluating their coaching programmes
- develop a model of how to evaluate coaching programmes, which can then be of practical use to companies in planning their own coaching evaluation
- refine the model through applying it in a real-life workplace context, and explain it in a step-by-step manner that can be used by IES HR Network members.

1.2 Method

There were four main aspects to the research project, starting in February 2003 with an extensive examination of the academic and practitioner evidence already published about evaluating coaching. From this we concluded that coaching may need a different evaluation approach than more traditional development methods.

Between April and September 2003 we completed company illustrations and practical examples of how organisations are evaluating coaching through desk research and by conducting in-depth interviews with a range of HR specialists, coaches, coaching scheme organisers and coachees within eight organisations from seven different employment sectors.

From this we then developed a provisional framework and approach for organisations to use in evaluating their own coaching provision.

In order to test the new framework, from November 2003 to April 2006 we worked collaboratively with one 'early adopter' organisation in designing a new, flagship coaching programme underpinned by a comprehensive evaluation of the pilot programme using the new framework. We then used the framework to evaluate two subsequent cohorts. Evaluation methods included in-depth telephone interviews, impact questionnaires and focus groups involving 74 coachees, 74 management sponsors, five external coaches, 13 internal coaches, programme organisers and other interested parties. From this we refined the coaching framework and developed a range of tools for organisations to use in evaluating their own coaching provision.

Less formally, the researchers have been in contact with two private sector organisations that have also used the provisional framework, with IES assistance, during the period of our formal study.

1.3 Structure of this report

Chapter 2 provides a commentary on the existing literature and explores coaching elevation issues in an organisational context. In particular, it asks the question: 'Is coaching an effective tool?' This chapter will be most relevant to those with an interest in the broad strategic issues and theory behind evaluation. Those readers anxious to get on with reading about the nitty-gritty of practice may wish to start at Chapter 3 and return later to Chapter 2 before finalising their own evaluation plans.

Chapter 3 presents six real life company examples of coaching evaluation practice. This should give readers a good illustration of how organisations have tackled their evaluations. Following each company example we highlight particular learning by way of 'tips' for readers.

In Chapter 4 we introduce the new coaching evaluation framework, which is followed by a description of a company example of using the coaching framework by our 'early adopter' organisation in Chapter 5. This extended example should enable readers to get a clear picture of precisely what that organisation expected to achieve, which evaluation methods it used, how it chose to present its findings and a summary of lessons learned.

By way of conclusion, we present a summary discussion of the factors which seem to help and hinder good evaluation practice and offer our final top tips for would-be coaching programme evaluators.

The title of this report suggests some practical 'toolkit'-type solutions will be included which readers can extract and use for their own purposes. The appendices are where to look first if this is your burning interest. They contain a selection of the evaluation tools used by our early adopter organisation. They are not designed as templates because each was developed for use in a specific company and coaching context. What they demonstrate is the range of tools in use, and they should offer ideas and inspiration for developing your own tools.

2 Does Coaching Actually Work?

Many organisations feel that coaching is beneficial, but have no hard evidence to support their anecdotal information. Indeed, a previous IES study found that 'the area of evaluation was the single most widespread source of concern to commissioners of executive coaching' (Carter, 2001). The organisations involved in this early research were keen for IES to assist them in reviewing and developing approaches to evaluating coaching. The sponsors of this study asked us to examine the existing research evidence about whether coaching is an effective development method.

The aim of this chapter is to explore issues in evaluating coaching which arise from the existing literature. In particular, we examine whether there are different considerations in evaluating coaching from those in evaluating other development tools.

2.1 Is coaching an effective tool?

A recent review of coaching evaluation (Gray, 2005) argues that the many claims for effectiveness of coaching emanate from interested parties, such as individual coaches or coaching organisations.

There is limited evidence on the impact of coaching as a tool. This is especially true when it comes to two applications of coaching: using internal specialist coaches and creating a coaching-style management culture usually known as line-manager-as-coach. Some of the published studies in these areas have serious limitations in the design and analysis of the data collected. However, there are some insightful papers particularly in a third, and longer established, application of coaching: using external executive coaches. Eight studies have been identified that focus on the efficacy of executive coaching. These include:

- McGovern et al. (2001), who use Kirkpatrick's model of evaluation to assess the impact of coaching on reactions, behavioural change, organisational outcomes and return on investment (RoI)

- Olivero et al. (1997), who investigated the outcomes of executive coaching in a US public sector agency
- Judge and Cowell (1997), who surveyed current executive coaching practices
- Genger (1997), who investigated the effectiveness of executive coaching practices through quantitative and qualitative methods
- Hall, Otazo and Holenbect (1999), who interviewed executives and coaches regarding executive coaching practice, effectiveness and future directions
- Foster and Lendle (1996), who investigated the effects of eye movement desensitisation reprocessing (EMDR) as a technique used in executive coaching
- Laske (1999), who explored the transformative effects of executive coaching on an executive's professional agenda
- Garman et al. (2000), who examined public perceptions of executive coaching.

In summary, these studies provide some limited evidence that executive coaching is effective in increasing performance (McGovern et al., 2001; Olivero et al., 1997), is viewed favourably by executives (Genger, 1997) and has the potential to facilitate developmental change (Laske, 1999). However, as can be seen by the list, they all vary in what they were assessing in terms of effectiveness, and all use different approaches and methods for evaluation. Some had 'quasi-experimental' approaches to gathering information on coaching; others were more informal in their approach. They do, however, provide an indication of the potential for coaching to be effective in certain areas but, apart from McGovern et al. (2001), offer limited guidance on how to evaluate coaching within organisations.

We now look at the practical issues in similar approaches to coaching (eg mentoring) in exploring what we can learn about the key issues in evaluating it.

2.2 What can we learn from mentoring?

There are undoubted similarities in the nature of the mentoring and coaching process. Given this, there are likely to be similar issues when it comes to evaluation. An extensive literature exists on mentoring, primarily because it has been around for a longer period and it is worth considering the approaches used. What can coaching learn?

Unfortunately, there are few good instances of the evaluation of mentoring or coaching which address the evaluation problems. Gibb (1994) highlights the fact that the evidence suggests that evaluating mentoring usually consists of asking mentors to assess the usefulness of the mentoring relationship (Gibb and Megginson, 1993).

In others, the focus is on asking the mentees to assess the value of the mentoring for themselves. While this may provide some useful information, it does not amount to an evaluation that quantifies the overall value of mentoring.

Evaluation of mentoring has tended to focus on the evaluation of formal mentoring schemes, particularly for young people. Different aspects that are considered include:

1. mentoring outcomes – identifying the nature and achievement of mentoring outcomes – what is the value of mentoring in changing knowledge, skills or attitudes of the mentee?
2. the contribution of mentoring to the broader initiative
3. mentoring costs.

These three aspects would appear to provide a useful framework by which link to traditional evaluation theories and methods. Gibb (1994) concludes by recognising that there are no 'ready made' models for evaluating mentoring, but that considering outcomes, effects and costs in a framework for evaluation is a good starting point. These three areas are considered in the coaching arena along with a number of other issues that need to be borne in mind.

2.3 What about return on investment approaches?

In our search of the published literature we could only find one reported study that had used any systematic approach based on a model of evaluation. In the example given by McGovern et al. (2001), they applied Kirkpatrick's model systematically to evaluate coaching at the reaction, learning behavioural and organisational outcome levels. They also included a measure of RoI by applying Phillips' work (1997). In addition, they developed a methodology for assessing the factors contributing to coaching effectiveness and ineffectiveness and found that the key factor to the effectiveness was the quality of the relationship between the coach and the executive.

During telephone interviews with researchers in the McGovern study (2001), participants were helped to identify the tangible business benefits that resulted from coaching, and to calculate the monetary value and their level of confidence in that estimate. They were also asked to give a percentage of the benefit that they attributed to the coaching and their level of confidence in that percentage.

One senior manager working on interpersonal skills and project management skills attributed 50 per cent of the improvements in her work outcomes to the coaching. She was 100 per cent confident in this estimate. She estimated the monetary value resulting from her coaching to be US $215,000 and was 90 per cent confident in this estimate. The cost of the coaching was US $15,000.

Adjusted benefit = US $215,000 × 50% × 100% × 90% = US $96,750

$$\mathrm{RoI}\,(\%) = \frac{\text{US \$96,750 - US \$15,000}}{\text{US \$15,000}} \times 100 = 545\%$$

The researchers believe that this senior manager's company got back 5.45 times its investment in the coaching of that one individual.

Since the McGovern study, consultancies have been tripping over themselves to sell companies formulae for calculating value or RoI. At their heart, most of these approaches simply seek to help you identify a significant margin of benefit over cost:

$$\mathrm{RoI}\,(\%) = \frac{\text{Benefit}\,(\pounds) - \text{Cost of coaching}}{\text{Cost of coaching}} \times 100$$

The difference between the various approaches now being marketed is how to estimate the benefit data. This is a really time consuming and difficult task to do properly. It is tedious stuff if you are not a 'numbers person' but exciting stuff if you are! Isolating cause and effect in any training intervention is always difficult, but even more so if the goals are complex and not easily quantifiable as they often are in coaching. Other things that are happening in the organisation or to the individual can also influence outcomes.

As the coaching industry continues to grow and, in the US at least, enters the market maturity phase of its life cycle (Maher and Pomerantz, 2003) the pressure on coaching suppliers to prove that coaching works and to add additional value is likely to intensify. This may in part explain why authors, professional associations and coaches are so keen to persuade research foundations and companies to invest in studies which document the benefits of coaching investment by quantifying an RoI. It is certainly in the coaching industry's interests for an RoI to be demonstrated. However, IES Research Network members we spoke to advise real caution in using these kinds of RoI formulae as the costs to a company of an RoI study might outweigh the knowledge gained by that company.

Personal beliefs are also a factor in going down the RoI route. Some board members will just not accept the reliability of the results because, as any student of finance will tell you, they are only as good as the quality of the subjective data that is fed into them in the first place. Of course you could argue that not all performance indicators are subjectively measured but bear in mind that their very selection may be viewed by others as subjective.

Personal beliefs about RoI aside, you could use bucketloads of time and effort only to have the result thrown out as a waste because people can 'see with their own eyes' improvements to someone else's skill set. For others the degree of measurement capability required is impressive and this in itself raises the credibility of the training function. It's up to each company to consider the pros and cons of RoI in reaching its own decision on using this kind of approach (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Advantages and disadvantages of RoI Approaches

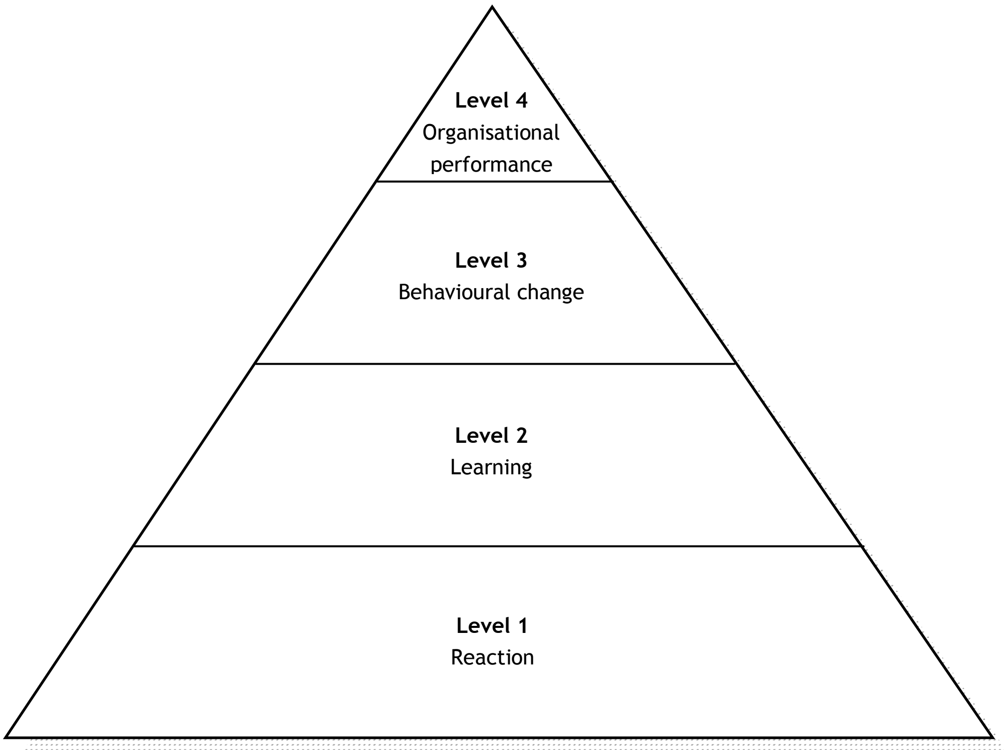
Advantages of RoI	Disadvantages of RoI
applies a monetary value to business benefits	can be time consuming and resource intensive
encourages participants and coaches to think systematically about the business focus to their coaching	still relies on subjective judgement
knowing organisational value is being measured may encourage commitment from all parties	need to train participants in evaluation guidelines
	need to overcome participant resistance to sharing their specific results

Source: IES, 2006

2.4 Issues in evaluating coaching

We have considerable knowledge and understanding of the theory of evaluation in training and development. Any discussion of evaluation within this context does not develop too far before models such as Kirkpatrick's (1997) are introduced (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Four levels of evaluation



Source: Kirkpatrick, 1996

In reality, very few organisations systematically evaluate traditional forms of training and development, so why the concern over evaluating coaching? Most evaluation of management development takes place at the 'reaction level' (level 1) of Kirkpatrick's model of evaluation (Tamkin et al., 2002) without much effort placed at the learning or behavioural change levels. If this is the norm of evaluation for other forms of training and development, is this level of approach also appropriate to coaching evaluation? In practice, and from discussing the issues with IES Research Network members, there seems to be a requirement and need to be able to demonstrate the contribution of coaching in more detail, either at the level of learning gained or outcomes achieved, individually or organisationally. As a less established form of development that training and development departments are embarking on, it is more likely to be scrutinised in terms of its impact on development than traditional forms of development that are well established. Coaching is also considered a relatively expensive intervention. Traditional forms of development may have limited evidence of impact on individual and organisational behaviour change, but they are more accepted and less likely to be challenged in terms of their value. An attempt at addressing key evaluation issues in coaching is, therefore, important in establishing its credibility as a successful intervention. If we take existing models such as Kirkpatrick and apply to coaching, what are the key issues that emerge?

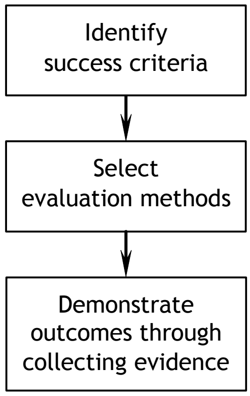
2.4.1 Defining outcomes and evaluation measures

Evaluating coaching presents a number of problems for traditional models. Coaching is often less formal than training interventions based on one-to-one sessions which may not be related to any specific programme. A particular issue here is that coaching may start without formal aims, objectives or outcomes which would almost certainly be central to any formal training course. This lack of clear aims and objectives at the start of the process causes real difficulties for evaluation of that process. Defining outcomes of an intervention in development and training is the cornerstone to most evaluation models as it provides an anchor for your evaluation measures (Figure 2.2). This in itself is the single biggest difference of the evaluation of coaching from other approaches.

The credibility of coaching depends on being able to help achieve set outcomes made in the coaching process. Yet the nature of coaching means that it operates at a very ‘individual’ level where different people will get different things out of it. Where traditional approaches to training aim to have a level playing field by the end of the session, where everyone knows the same thing to the same level, coaching is individually focused. This has a major impact on evaluation, in that no set absolute criteria for outcomes can be established across an organisation. However, this does not mean that no valuation is taken as criteria can be set within a broader framework.

Published accounts of the coaching process and best practice guidance suggest a number of common processes involved in coaching, most of which actually do include setting goals or reaching a shared understanding of what will be discussed. Some of the key features of coaching are that it is: goal specific; action and performance oriented; and objective. These elements all lend themselves to some element of measurement framework and hence evaluation. However, these goals and objectives emerge as part of the process, rather than existing at the beginning as part of the course. Data collected from 60 coaches by Gray (2005) indicated that indeed most

Figure 2.2: Summary of traditional evaluation approaches



Source: IES, 2006

coaches do discuss a clear set of goals with coachees at the outset of the coaching process. Once goals are made within the coaching process these then lead to defined success criteria (Carter, 2001), which could and should be linked to evaluation measures. How this might operate in practice is explored further in the final section but the key would be to decide:

- What are these elements or success criteria and outcomes?
- Which of these elements are measurable? When? By whom?
- What is the overall value to the individual and the organisation?

2.4.2 Evaluating the 'bigger' picture

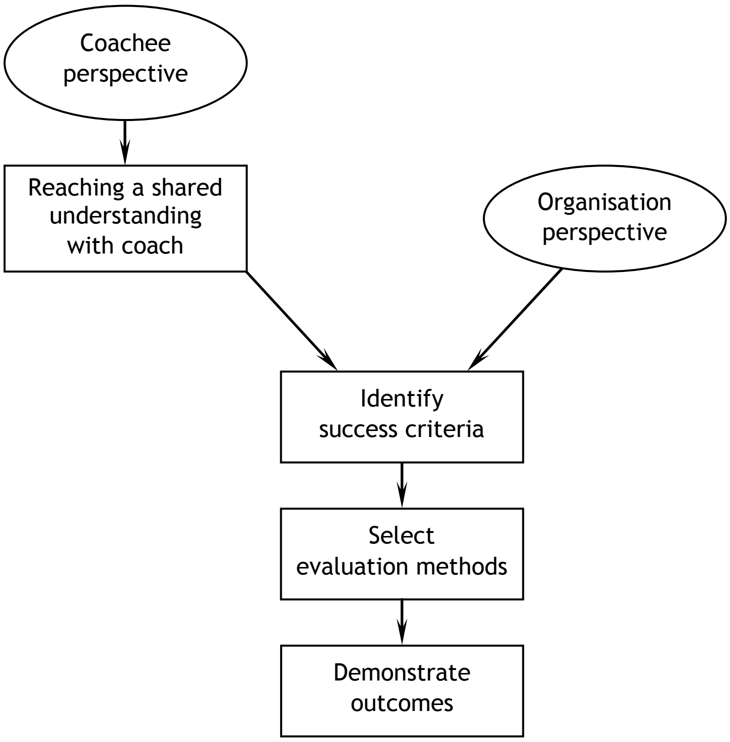
Stand-alone coaching sessions are difficult to evaluate as they do not appear at first glance to link to any particular individual outcome or organisational contribution. Where coaching is one aspect of a more traditional intervention *e.g.* leadership development or cultural change programmes that are being formally evaluated, outcomes will have been articulated for the programme and there may be some way of linking evaluation to these outcomes. While the effect on an individual through self report may be positive the strategic value for organisations as well as individuals needs to be answered.

Research on evaluation of mentoring suggests that determining the contribution of mentoring to achieving the objectives of broader initiatives is a problem (Wilson and Elman, 1990). Determining and distinguishing the effects of coaching is difficult in itself — then to link these effects to the achievement of specific objectives in a broader context is even more difficult. Many other factors also influence progress towards objectives. Although no direct link made, it is possible to clarify the expected links between coaching and the achievement of objectives within the broader initiatives. For example, relating outcomes to the broader initiative or as McGovern et al. (2001) have done by demonstrating the chain of impact. However, the question still remains:

how do you evaluate the coaching element, in particular from the organisational perspective rather than the individual's or coach's? This leads us to consider from whose perspective the evaluation is taking place

2.4.3 Perspectives on evaluating outcomes

Figure 2.3: Adapting traditional evaluation for coaching



Source: IES 2006

The objectives and aims of the evaluation, particularly in terms of which outcomes are measured, will also differ according to the various stakeholders involved in the process. For example, the organisation may want any evaluation to demonstrate the impact of the coaches on whatever initiative they were brought in to influence (eg leadership, cultural change). Individuals (on the other hand) may have a different set of criteria with which they evaluate the success of the coaching, possibly related to the criteria agreed upon in the coaching session rather than the broader organisation aims. While they may often be the same, they may not always be. Any evaluation needs to be explicit about whose criteria and outcomes it is measuring and, where success criteria are different, that both perspectives are evaluated (see Figure 2.3). The same example may be given for an external coaching company who may want to demonstrate the influence of their coaches on an organisation initiative, in addition to achieving individual outcomes and success criteria. They too would need to employ an evaluation tool that evaluates from both perspectives. Again, this is where coaching differs, as it may have dual objectives from individual and organisational perspective which, given the set objectives in traditional training, is less likely to occur.

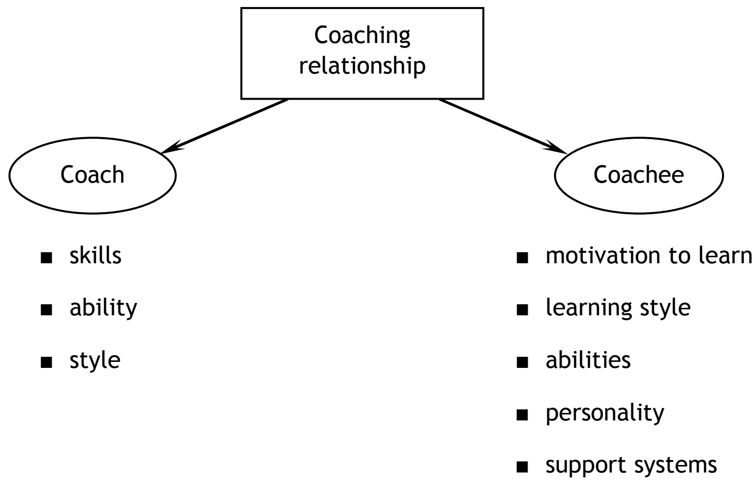
2.4.4 Timing of evaluation and availability of information

Two other issues arise where coaching evaluation is different from traditional forms. The first is the timing of the evaluation and how it affects the information gathered on the effectiveness of the coaching. Evaluation directly after the coaching experience may not be appropriate as the benefits may only accrue later on when the coach or person coached fully reflects on the benefits that the relationship has brought them. In this sense it can be seen as similar to evaluating careers guidance. Although this is true also of other forms of training, whereby you may not get to use your skills until a later date, it is more likely that you will be able to anticipate or recognise where training will help. With coaching, the outcomes of what is learnt or discussed may not be immediately obvious, either to the coach or to those coached, unless they are linked into a wider programme (*e.g.* leadership development, culture change). As the defined success criteria may not be agreed upon until the coaching process has begun, it is difficult to measure pre- and post-coaching intervention to assess the impact. The second issue is that information with which to evaluate may not be readily accessible in a coaching situation (eg because of the confidential nature of the coaching context).

2.4.5 Qualities of the coach and coaching relationship

A further significant issue is the contribution of the quality and abilities of the coach to the outcomes. The moderating effect of the quality and skills of the coach is perceived to be more important an influence in coaching than the role of trainer in a traditional training event. This is because of the suggestion that the effectiveness of any coaching intervention is primarily determined by the ability of the coach — what was it about them or the relationship that brought about the changes and outcomes observed? Therefore, any evaluation mechanism would need to evaluate not only the changes in outcome variables, or 'success criteria' as a result of coaching, but also take a measure of the nature of the relationship that helped to bring about those changes (Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4: Enabling factors to achieving success in coaching



Source: IES, 2006

Not all employers may choose to take on this additional perspective, although it could be useful in identifying any corporate 'enablers' or 'barriers' which may be helping or getting in the way of achieving desired results. Once identified these barriers can be removed by the organisation.

2.5 Summary of suggestions arising from the literature

Coaching as a development tool is becoming increasingly prominent. However, many coaching programmes are either evaluated superficially (if at all) or only evaluated at the reaction level ie of the coachees to the programme. This chapter suggests that for coaching to sustain credibility, the organisation:

- adapts the traditional models of training evaluation it may use elsewhere
- tries to avoid unnecessarily complicated RoI formulae unless it has significant financial resources and statistical competence at its disposal
- considers the perspective of different audiences for the evaluation and how it will access a range of viewpoints
- defines success criteria before selecting measures
- selects evaluation measures that collect data about whether success criteria have been achieved
- gets feedback on enabling factors it can change next time *e.g.* style of coaches selected.
- considers looking for benefits well after the coaching experiences have ended.

3 Organisational Examples of Evaluation Practice

Our study sponsors asked us to provide some illustrations of how organisations are actually evaluating their coaching programmes. Despite the problems and difficulties faced by organisations – as outlined in the previous chapter – in our study we did encounter many organisational examples of planned activities designed to assist the organisation in making judgements about how the coaching was going, and to make decisions about future coaching provision in the light of these judgements.

In this chapter we present a number of different examples of applied evaluation and our thoughts or tips on what we can learn from them. From among all the examples we encountered, our six chosen corporate illustrations are not presented to readers as exemplars of best practice, but rather as diverse examples of practical approaches used by organisations.

The company illustrations on the following pages come from a range of sectors and cover a range of diverse approaches to evaluation:

- T-mobile, who used attitude surveys of managers and their staff to determine priority areas for future coaching support to further progress the development of a coaching style of management
- Corus, who developed standardised evaluation documentation for use by external executive coaches and coachees to improve consistency in the organisation's administration and tracking of coaching processes, and achievement against objectives
- NHS in Wales, who sought to understand whether (and how best) external coaching could be implemented to accelerate organisational culture change
- Bristol & West Building Society, who measured impact on sales performance measure between groups of financial planners, only some of whom received coaching (from Sherwood, 2004)

- a central government department, who were initially disappointed not to find a suitable 'hard' business measure. Instead they piloted documentary analysis and reaction questionnaires to test the effectiveness of their ongoing programme and to improve the degree of behaviour change among managers
- a global distribution company who compared perceptions of the degree of behavioural change using pre- and post-coaching attitude surveys.

3.1 T-mobile — identifying priority areas for future

3.1.1 Context of the coaching programme

The telecommunications company started rolling out a programme called 'Coach to Inspire' back in August 2001, designed to enhance the skills of all line manages. The programme consisted of six job-related coaching modules eg Coaching by Example and Planning a Coaching Session.

3.1.2 Purpose of the evaluation

An initial evaluation in April 2002 aimed to:

- assess reactions to the programme
- determine what effect the programme had made
- identify additional help needed to support line managers in their role as a coach.

3.1.3 Evaluation methods

Twenty five team managers and 100 customer service staff per site were surveyed. Respondents were asked to respond to a series of short statements using a scale of 'strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, don't know or not applicable'.

Examples of statements for managers include:

Coaching is part of my daily routine.

I coach irrespective of my workloads.

I keep up to date records of my coaching activities.

The development provided has helped me improve as a coach.

The company provides an environment that enables me to coach when I need to.

Examples of statements for staff include:

I benefit from coaching at least once a week.

My line manage has a positive attitude to coaching.

My line manager coaches me irrespective of our workloads.

The way I am coached gives me a feeling of satisfaction and pride.

The coaching I receive helps me serve my customer better.

Managers were asked an open question inviting suggestions for further development they would like to improve their performance as a coach.

3.1.4 Findings

Results showed that 96 per cent of staff respondents agreed they understood that coaching was important in enabling the company to meet its future vision and 85 per cent agreed that their line manager had a positive approach to coaching. Ninety one per cent of the manager respondents agreed that the development had helped them improve as a coach, but as yet a majority disagreed that the company was providing an environment which enabled them to coach when they needed to. This was helpful to the company in providing a clear pointer of where next to focus its efforts.

3.1.5 Tips from T-mobile illustration

Attitude surveys are a simple and non-resource-intensive method to collect reactions to coaching.

Keep your survey questionnaire short like T-mobile did to get a better response.

Response rates will increase further with reminders and chasing.

3.2 Corus — tracking achievement of objectives

3.2.1 Context of the coaching programme

Despite its long tradition of investment in management development programmes, including MBAs, in the past the Dutch-UK steel maker Corus had possibly focused more resources on young talent development rather than its key senior managers. So in 2003, Corus piloted a coaching programme for personal development involving 20 senior managers from its European division and three external coaches. Six initial one to one coaching sessions in the pilot were supplemented by a start up residential mini-conference with all coachees. There was also a one day wrap-up meeting.

3.2.2 Purpose of the evaluation

The evaluation had two aspects. First, to consider whether coaching as a primary delivery mechanism for opening up personal development was an acceptable approach for this key group of senior managers. The second aspect was whether the collective part of the approach would have an extra added value on top of the widely applied individual approach of executive coaching.

3.2.3 Evaluation methods

A key aspect of the approach was to gain agreement with the external coaches (from different coaching companies) about the need to use standardised documentation to collect data about outcomes which would be useful to the company for monitoring the process. During the early coaching sessions a coaching contract — including goals and success criteria — was written by each senior manager and his/her coach. Part of the coach's job was to help individuals translate their own criteria into evaluation measures and to agree mechanisms to collect evidence of achievement. These too were included in the coaching contracts. The main purpose was to support self-managed development.

Telephone interviews were also undertaken by the management training manager with the senior manager coachees and a meeting was held with the coaches. These tended to cover quality assurance monitoring issues such as: the number of meetings held and their venues; length of sessions; quality of discussions; main learning so far.

3.2.4 Findings

Feedback from senior manager coachees through interviews and questionnaires indicated that coaching as a delivery mechanism was well received by this group. Good use of precious time and the high degree of tailoring to personal learning were particularly highly valued aspects of the coaching. The self-reported data in the coaching contract allowed the individuals to manage their own development better also after the coaching activity had ended The company noted the richness of collecting individual 'stories' through the telephone interviews. Without these, the company would have been able to identify what was working, but not to what degree or why.

3.2.5 Tips from Corus illustration

Don't underestimate the power of a collective coaching activity. For Corus it brought to light the degree of alignment between personal development and corporate culture.

Telephone interviews can provide detailed information and allow probing, and can be a less expensive alternative to face to face interviews or focus groups.

Some coaches are attached to their usual evaluation methods so make sure in advance that your coaches are willing to use your evaluation tools when operating in your company.

3.3 NHS in Wales — learning about coaching as a tool for cultural change

3.3.1 Context of the coaching programme

Following the introduction of the Welsh National Assembly and other changes to the political landscape, the Centre for NHS Leadership in Wales identified that the time was right to broker a development programme for CEOs and directors across the public healthcare sector. The programme aimed to kick-start the creation of a more innovative organisational culture that valued new ideas, new thinking and managed risk-taking. Twelve coaches with a good knowledge of the sector, selected from five different external coaching companies, provided four one-to-one coaching sessions. Thirty two CEOs and directors participated as 'coachees'.

3.3.2 Purpose of the evaluation

The Tavistock Institute was asked to conduct evaluation on behalf of all the programme sponsors and partners. The evaluation approach focused on two questions:

1. Has the coaching intervention taken place in the intended way?
2. What can the organisations learn from the intervention?

3.3.3 Evaluation methods

A variety of evaluation methods were used, many of which were based on 'self-report' by coachees. Firstly, all coachees were asked to provide some 'baseline data' at the start. This included information about:

- the biggest challenges they faced in their role
- the biggest workplace issues
- which networks they were already involved in.

After each coaching session every coachee was asked to complete a score sheet to generate data useful for quality assurance purposes. Aspects scored included timing, quality of coach/coachee relationship and content. Coachees were also asked to identify the most helpful element in each session. After their final session, all coachees were asked to complete a questionnaire on more general issues such as:

- motivation to joining programme
- criteria used in selecting which coach to work with
- particularly helpful models / inputs
- what they have done differently as a result.

Six of the 32 coachees were also interviewed face to face, to allow some of the issues to be explored in more detail.

The perceptions of coaches were also collected. They were asked at the outset what issues they imagined might be key. The idea was to go back to the coaches again after the final session to compare these with the actual issues arising. Finally, coach/coachee pairs were asked to write a 'learning vignette' covering what they were working on and how successful the coaching relationship had proved.

3.3.4 Findings

The findings revealed that the opportunity offered by the coaching had definitely been perceived and utilised as a management learning tool, rather than a personal development one. Coaching, as a learning method, was also viewed positively. Coachees valued the individual care and attention, and the acquisition of easy to apply models. The programme was also thought particularly timely in terms of inter-professional learning and had a positive effect on the personal morale and motivation of coachees. The evaluation also raised some questions. The implications of using 'known' coaches — who were formerly senior employees within the sector —might have sent mixed messages to coachees if the programme was about retention. Coachee comments from the interviews suggests that using 'role-models' who have left an organisation can be seen as something of a paradox.

3.3.5 Tips from NHS in Wales illustration

Response rates from feedback sheets or reaction questionnaires can be improved by asking coaches or line managers to distribute and collect them.

It is difficult to evaluate the potential of coaching for cultural or other systemic change.

Face to face interviews enable behaviour change to be explored in more depth.

The production of learning 'vignettes' after the final coaching session can serve as a useful reminder to coachees of the need to apply learning in the workplace.

3.4 Bristol & West Building Society — sales performance indicator

3.4.1 Context of the coaching programme

In June 2003 the head of training and recruitment at financial services provider Bristol & West Building Society was considering supplementing existing training programmes with one-to-one follow-up coaching sessions after training had been delivered. As well as helping to transfer newly learnt skills into the workplace, it was hoped this would support the creation of a coaching culture throughout the organisation.

3.4.2 Purpose of the evaluation

Before proceeding the company decided the best approach was to quantify the likely effectiveness by running what they called a 'test pilot'. The performance of the sales force was selected as the best output measure for a small scale test pilot. The selling skills training course was targeted as the best input activity to research. The evaluation strategy was designed by the organisation in partnership with the external coaches.

3.4.3 Evaluation method

The sales performance of 24 financial planning managers was followed over a six month period: for each planner, sales figures from the three months following the training course. Twelve managers attended the course; six had no external coaching but did receive the usual follow-up support from their line manager. The remaining 12 managers acted as a 'control group' as they did not attend the training course and therefore had no follow-up support from a coach or their managers.

3.4.4 Findings

For the control group, sales grew by four per cent. From this, the company concluded that, had it not done training or coaching at all, other internal or external factors – such as market conditions – meant business would have increased by four per cent anyway. For the training-only group, sales increased by eight per cent, double the increase of the control group. For the group who received training plus coaching sales increased by 27 per cent. The dramatic results led the organisation to value their training programme, as well as emphasise how important some kind of effective follow-up regime is to embed learning.

3.4.5 Tips from Bristol & West illustration

Focusing on one key business indicator was a simple pragmatic idea that yielded easy to understand results.

There is no need to over-complicate things by calculating RoI when everyone can clearly see that the increase in sales exceeded the cost of the coaching.

Measuring where it is easiest provides 'reasonable evidence', meaning you can avoid the expense of measuring benefit for other groups coached where it might be less easy to identify an appropriate measure.

Comparing the results among coached and non-coached can be a very effective approach.

Designing evaluation in partnership with external coaches before the coaching begins can work well.

3.5 Government department — developing tools

3.5.1 Context of the coaching programme

During 2003 a large government department launched a major senior management and leadership development programme covering all 300 of its senior civil servants and staff managers. A variety of learning methods was used, including 360 degree feedback, shared cross-organisational learning groups and optional workshops/action learning sets. An external coach provided the critical element underpinning the programme. The final cohorts of participants on the twelve month programme were not expected to finish until 2005 but by March 2004 the early cohorts were over half way through their programmes.

3.5.2 Purpose of the evaluation

Even though the programme was still being rolled out, given the resources being invested in the programme, the organisation was keen to act early to ensure that the programme had a good business focus and that participants were being sufficiently supported in making the connection between their personal development and business outcomes required.

Quality assurance and review processes were built into the programme from the outset but not evaluation. During March to July 2004 IES conducted an exploratory study with the aim of extending and refining the organisation's thinking in constructing an evaluation strategy. The approach agreed included working in collaboration with two directorates in developing and piloting evaluation tools suitable for future use by other directorates in identifying impact at individual and organisation levels.

3.5.3 Evaluation method

Anonymised programme documentation was analysed from 88 participants to determine what kinds of individual objectives participants were working on. Documentary sources included development profiles, action plans, reaction questionnaires and focus group data generated as part of the six month progress check workshop.

In order to get a clear view of leadership capability requirements and objectives for the programme from the perspective of the directorates, organisation documentation was reviewed, directors interviewed and a focus group of staff held. Documentary sources included: directorate business plans, organisation scorecard, recent staff survey results, management information and service delivery data and skills profile. Unfortunately the department was unable to determine a sufficient connection between existing business measures and the objectives participants actually appeared to be working on. This meant there was no possibility of using 'hard' business measures at the interim stage. Therefore the primary focus of the pilot evaluation was the development and testing of 'soft' measures.

A series of impact questionnaires was developed to assess perceptions from participants, their line managers and staff of behavioural and performance changes. The self-assessment participant questionnaires were the only ones of these questionnaires actually distributed in the pilot, going to all participants within the directorates. Issues at the individual level explored by the impact questionnaire included:

- self-awareness
- team development
- motivation
- personal effectiveness and behaviours
- strategic skills
- individual performance in service delivery.

Issues at the organisation level explored by the impact questionnaire included:

- corporate leadership effectiveness
- organisation culture
- corporate reputation
- communications
- directorate performance in service delivery.

A small sample of nine participants on the early cohorts was also interviewed in depth.

3.5.4 Findings

The programme appeared to be working well in terms of securing behavioural change at the individual level. For those leaders in new roles or with complex new tasks the programme appeared particularly beneficial. Specific individual outcomes included implementing techniques for long-term planning, more pro-activity in seeking customer feedback and increased personal capacity to lead change.

The pilot evaluation was not able to demonstrate impact at the organisation level. This did not mean that the programme was failing; it may well have been that the mid-way point was too early to identify such an impact. The pilot did, however, demonstrate the usefulness of the impact questionnaire approach and how they could be used to link to future staff survey exercises. Such an early pilot also allowed actions to be identified to further strengthen the business connections into the programme for the majority of cohorts still to come. The evaluation findings identified actions as needed in five areas:

- briefing all coaches and giving them responsibility for ensuring future participants' objectives support business priorities
- using real business improvement tasks as programme tasks
- introducing a formal link between action plans developed on the programme and annual personal development plans
- introducing support for participants' line managers and ensure they are clear what their role is in supporting participants
- encouraging sharing of development needs and learning within local management teams.

After the interim evaluation was finished the organisation's business measures had been updated and the opportunity was taken to use these for evaluation purposes to cover all future cohorts of the programme.

3.5.5 Tips from government department illustration

It would have been better to plan how to evaluate the coaching before starting the programme so 'hard' baseline data could have been collected.

Minimise resistance and increase response rates by letting all parties know before the coaching starts what evaluation measures will be used and how they will be expected to contribute.

Be cautious in interpreting survey findings where the size of surveyed population is small.

Transfer of learning back into the workplace can be assisted by line manager involvement throughout, ie discussing action plans, supporting implementation of goals and encouraging team members to share objectives.

Effective evaluation is not just a one-off activity at the end; it can be really useful as an interim stock-take of necessary improvements needed to a programme.

3.6 Distribution Company: perceptions of behavioural change

3.6.1 Context of the coaching programme

A global distribution company introduced a coaching programme for line managers in the expectation of improving standards of people management and manager behaviour in the workplace.

3.6.2 Purpose of the evaluation

A comprehensive internal evaluation was undertaken in 2002 in view of the heavy investment made in coaching and other initiatives. As programme success criteria focused on achieving changes to manager behaviour, the evaluation involved collecting perceptions of various parties to determine whether the required behaviour changes were happening.

3.6.3 Evaluation method

Pre- and post-coaching measures were taken, including relevant statement in staff attitude surveys sent to all staff and managers. Attitude statements for staff in both the 'before coaching' and 'after coaching' attitude surveys included items such as:

> *I receive regular and valuable feedback from my manager.*
>
> *My manager encourages me to develop my skills and knowledge.*
>
> *My manager consults me before making decisions that affect me.*

Face-to-face interviews were also undertaken by in-house training specialists with a sample of managers, their bosses, staff and their coaches.

3.6.4 Findings

Interestingly, there was agreement from all on those behaviours where a positive or negative change (in behaviour) had occurred. There was also agreement about the extent of change among all groups, except among the individual managers themselves. Individual managers consistently rated their behavioural change as considerably greater than anybody else did. From this the company inferred that it is important to seek feedback from more people than just coachees, otherwise there is a risk that the company may get an exaggeratedly rosy picture of behavioural change.

3.6.5 Tips from Illustration

Multiple viewpoints and multiple data collection methods are essential when it comes to measuring perceptions of behavioural change.

Being able to compare 'before coaching' and 'after coaching' results can be seen as more credible than examining after-coaching data alone.

Climate or attitude surveys can be useful in identifying changes in soft-skill areas such as communication.

When designing surveys looking at behaviour change make sure your ratings scale allows for the possibility that changes may be perceived as negative rather than positive.

3.6.6 Summary of evaluation methods used

In this chapter we have presented a number of different examples of applied evaluation in real-life organisation settings. Table 3.1 summarises the evaluation methods used in our company illustrations.

Table 3.1: Summary of evaluation methods in company illustrations

T-mobile	**Corus**	**NHS in Wales**
Questionnaire surveys to the coached Questionnaire surveys to staff of the coached	Telephone calls to coached Questionnaire to coached Meeting with coaches Review of coaching contract Review of achievement reports Individual stories	Baseline info from the coached Post-session scoresheets from the coached Final questionnaire for the coached Interviews with sample of coached Start and end questionnaires to coached Learning vignettes from sample of coachee/coached pairs
Bristol & West	**Distribution Company**	**A large government department**
Pre- and post-course sales performance figures Use of 'control' group to compare coached and non-coached	Questionnaires pre- and post- coaching to: ▪ the coached ▪ the coaches ▪ boss of those coached ▪ staff of the coached Interviews with sample of all perspectives	Impact questionnaires to the coached Interviews with sample of coached Focus group of staff Analysis of participant action plans Review of business documents Interviews with directors

Source: IES, 2006

In the next chapter we present an evaluation framework which other organisations might wish to use.

4 A Framework for Coaching Evaluation

Our study sponsors also asked us to present a model, or framework, of how to evaluate coaching programmes which could be of practical use to companies in planning or reviewing their own coaching evaluation strategies. Having reviewed the research about evaluating coaching programmes and considered what we found from our company illustrations, IES perceived that organisations would be best advised to consider the situation from up to four different perspectives and look at up to three different types of outcomes. In this chapter we present a simple evaluation framework.

4.1 Key dimensions

Based on the research and its own experience, IES was able to identify three sets of key questions that would-be programme designers and evaluators need to understand the answers to before the coaching begins:

- What do the coachees expect to gain from the coaching? And how will we know at the end if these benefits are realised?
- What does the organisation expect to gain from the coaching? And how will we know at the end if these benefits are realised?
- What internal and external processes need to be in place to enable the coaching programme to deliver the changes expected? And how will we know if they are working in time to change them if they are not working?

For would-be evaluators, it may be helpful to consider these three sets of questions as areas to seek evidence about.

The research identified numerous perspectives that might be relevant as likely sources of evidence. However it seems there are four main sources that it is most helpful to consider:

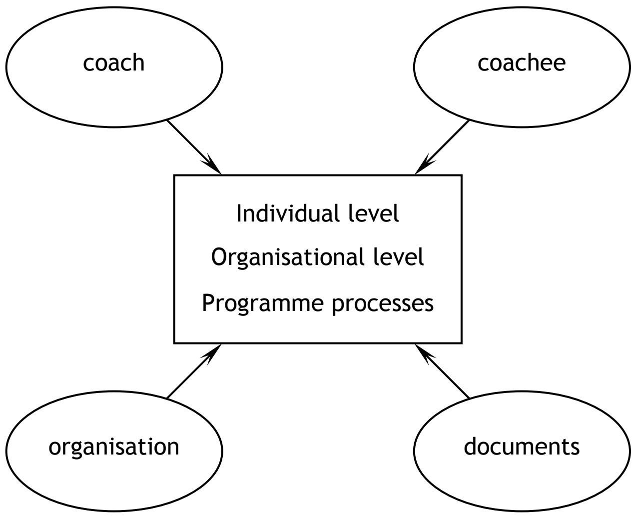
- documents eg records of objectives, achievements, coaching contracts
- coachees

- coaches, whether internal or external
- organisation perspective eg line managers, sponsors, HR, staff.

In IES' experience many organisations are nervous about relying on the perspective of the coaches, especially when the coaches are external commercial providers. This may be because they perceive the coaches have a vested interest in seeking to demonstrate that their coaching was successful. Our experience suggests that coaches can add valuable insights into coaching relationship process aspects, as well offer a third opinion on individual outcomes. On the other hand, many organisations are apparently happy to rely exclusively on the perspective of coachees. As we saw in the distribution company illustration, this too is unwise as the organisation may get an exaggeratedly rosy picture from 'happy' coachees. We therefore suggest that the most useful way forward is to ensure that you consider all three different types of perspective.

Figure 4.1 summarises the two dimensions we propose to be key for would-be evaluators: areas of evidence sought and likely sources of evidence.

Figure 4.1: Key dimensions in framework



Source: IES, 2006

4.2 The framework

The three areas and four main sources can be presented as a simple framework, as illustrated in Figure 4.2.

We perceive simple frameworks as useful only if they enable users to treat them as a starting point to decide where they want to look and what things to do. With this simple framework there are twelve blank squares to consider. You don't have to fill in all the squares if you don't want to. The important thing in using the framework is to consider each square in turn and decide whether or not it would make a useful contribution to your evaluation strategy. Questions from the three rows to ask are:

Figure 4.2: A framework for coaching evaluation

Likely sources of evidence ▸ Evidence sought at: ▾	Coachees	Line managers or sponsors	Coaches	Documents
Individual level				
Organisation level				
Programme processes				

Source: IES, 2006

- What are the objectives the coachees are looking at?
- What are the organisation objectives? What is it that senior managers really want to see?
- What are the enabling factors or process factors?

Next, for each of the columns, questions to ask yourself are:

- What outcomes can we expect the coachees to identify?
- Who are the relevant organisation representatives for this programme, and what outcomes do we need them to identify?
- What outcomes do we want the coaches to help us identify?

Asking and answering the questions based on this framework should help you decide what evidence you want to consider and which perspective you want to look at.

Once you have decided which squares you are interested in, we envisaged the next step would be to consider which indicators (eg sales per employee) and data sources (eg net sales income figures and employee numbers from payroll) you would use in order to collect the information you have decided you need and that meets your evaluation objectives.

Table 4.1 provides some examples of areas suitable for measurement. Your choice of actual indicator within each area will depend on the type of business, what indicators are already used within your organisation and what existing data sources you can tap into.

Table 4.1: Examples of areas suitable for measurement

Organisation level	
Business performance based	
	Sales/turnover
	Market share/new customer
	Productivity
	RoI
	Cost-effectiveness/cost-benefit
	Media citations
	New products/services
	Product/service quality
	Task time/product development time/production time
People based	
	Staff absence/sickness
	Customer satisfaction/complaints
	Employee attitudes/corporate climate
	Credibility/reputation/satisfaction among external stakeholders
	Retention/motivation
Individual level	
	360-degree feedback ratings
	Achievement of coaching objectives
	Comparisons pre and post coaching
	Skill level/knowledge level
	Appraisal
	Manager assessment/self-assessment
	Job performance
Process indicators	
	Coachee, line manager and/or sponsor satisfaction with coaching
	Performance and quality of coach
	Learning transfer conditions/support
	Cost per coachee
	Administration arrangements/venues etc.

Source: IES, 2006

One of the things we do notice is that people often forget their existing measurement methods like 360-degree feedback or the annual staff survey. Often the tendency is to assume you have to invent something new. IES would advocate considering what is already in place; it makes before and after snapshots much easier and, of course, it saves on the development time/costs of having to implement a new system.

5 Applying the Framework in Practice

The study sponsors asked us to test the evaluation framework in a real-time coaching setting. We therefore looked for a suitable ‘early adopter’ organisation which was willing to work with us in using the evaluation framework. It was also important that the organisation be willing to share its experience and outcomes. We were fortunate that a number of IES member organisations volunteered.

In this chapter we outline the local government coaching programme we selected to evaluate and present it initially as a further company illustration. Following this we offer joint reflections from the research team and our local government collaborators on the experience of using the framework and the methods selected, and we present the findings. One of the reasons we selected the local government programme was because they were clear that they wanted a comprehensive approach to evaluation to underpin the design of their programme from the outset. We are lucky that the selected programme ultimately ran for three phases over a period of three years, enabling us to explore how well the framework adapted to changing programme content and changing corporate players.

In the appendices you will find some of the evaluation tools IES developed as part of the test evaluation.

5.1 Overview of the local government programme

5.1.1 Context of the coaching programme

Back in 2003 achieving improvements in public services was a cornerstone of central government policy in England. Service improvement initiatives were underpinned by a number of infrastructure projects including building HR capability and leadership capability in local councils. The former Employers’ Organisation for Local Government (EO) decided to introduce the LEAP HR Coaching service as one method of supporting HR directors across local government in raising their strategic capability.

From November 2003 to September 2004 the EO, in partnership with IES, North West Employers Organisation and East of England Regional Assembly, designed and ran a pilot programme in the North West and Eastern regions. Twenty four senior HR staff and their sponsors (typically Council CEOs) were recruited from 24 different councils. The pilot programme consisted of four two-hour, one-to-one coaching sessions and two one-day seminars.

5.1.2 Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation of the pilot was to determine whether coaching might contribute to improvements in strategic thinking and corporate leadership among senior HR specialists. If coaching was helpful for this group, the pilot evaluation was also expected to identify any adjustments necessary before roll out of the programme across England.

5.1.3 Evaluation methods

The first key decision made was that this evaluation would not use 'hard' business performance measures. Since the changes sought at individual and organisational levels were mainly behavioural it made sense to focus on the perceptual measures available. It was also decided that perceptions on all aspects of the programme's processes should be sought. A copy of the evaluation framework for the LEAP pilot programme is shown in Table 5.1 and this lists the many evaluation methods used. A more detailed discussion of these methods is provided later in this chapter.

5.1.4 Findings

The questionnaire responses indicated that the pilot had been highly successful in meeting participants' and sponsors' needs and expectations. There were very high levels of participant satisfaction regarding what they had achieved though the programme and strong perceptual evidence of improved strategic thinking and individual performance. Evidence of organisational impact was thin, although there was a universally shared belief that this would follow over time.

For 80 per cent of the participants, the LEAP coaching programme was their first exposure to coaching, and we were able to capture in direct quotations what the experience of coaching feels like. This was very useful in promoting the programme to future cohorts.

A significant finding was the higher levels of positive response exhibited by participants whose sponsors had also returned questionnaires compared to those participants who had no sponsor or whose sponsor did not return the questionnaire. Having an overtly supportive sponsor, it seems, makes a difference to the extent of a participant's belief in the achievement.

Table 5.1: Evaluation framework for LEAP Pilot

Areas of evidence sought	**Likely sources of evidence**				
	Documents	**Participants**	**Sponsors**	**Coaches**	**Partners**
Individual outcomes	Objective records Application forms Vignettes	Mid-point telephone interview End of programme impact questionnaire Evidence collected by participants One-year-on follow up impact questionnaire	End of programme impact questionnaire One-year-on impact questionnaire		
Organisational outcomes	Objective records Vignettes	Mid-point telephone interview End of programme impact questionnaire Evidence collected by participants One-year-on follow up impact questionnaire	End of programme impact questionnaire One-year-on impact questionnaire		
Programme processes		Mid-point telephone interview End of programme impact questionnaire One-year-on follow up impact questionnaire		Review day focus group	Review day focus group End of programme review meeting

Source: Employers organisation/IES, 2003

Participants and coaches from one region were subject to a careful 'matching' process whereas for practical reasons those from the other region were allocated on the basis of geographical proximity alone. One surprise finding was that there was no difference in levels of general satisfaction and satisfaction with the coach between participants from different regions.

Following a successful pilot, there were two further phases of the LEAP programme. Phase 1 ran from February to December 2005. Based on the evaluation findings from the pilot, two changes were made to the programme. First the seminars were replaced with two additional one-to-one coaching sessions resulting in six two-hour, one-to-one coaching sessions being offered to each coachee. The second change was to give participants the option of undertaking an upfront 360-degree feedback exercise.

The evidence of a successful programme arising from the evaluation encouraged the EO to consider scaling up the programme. Phase 2 ran from April 2005 to March 2006 and involved a further 25 coachees. Phase 2 switched to the use of internal coaches for the coaching sessions. In order to build up the capability of the sector to continue to deliver coaching itself, IES designed an initial training and on-going development programme for 14 senior local government managers to operate as these internal coaches, supported by coaching supervisors behind the scenes. The coach training programme was endorsed by Institute for Leadership and Management.

5.2 Detailed review of how the framework was applied

5.2.1 Answering the framework questions

What are the coachees' objectives?

It was expected that individual coachees (or participants as they are referred to in this example) would each have different objectives, reflecting their unique operating contexts and their differing positions on the strategic capability improvement journey. This, in turn, would mean they would each have slightly different outcomes in mind. The issues from the 'individual outcomes' row on the framework that were noted as needing to be addressed were:

- participant expectations
- personal development needs
- personal effectiveness
- strategic thinking
- personal achievements.

What are the organisation's objectives?

Since the participants came from different councils, it was also expected that organisational outcomes required would be different. However, an organisational needs analysis had been undertaken before the decision to offer a coaching programme. The issues from the 'organisational outcomes' row on the framework that were noted as needing to be addressed were:

- sponsor expectations
- HR function profile
- HR function leadership
- corporate leadership
- organisational achievements.

The EO itself had a further objective for the programme. It hoped that some among the first cohort of participants would be able to act as role models: willing to be identified as 'HR champions' and happy to describe what the strategic contribution of HR looks like in their council.

What are the enabling/process factors?

The issues noted as relevant for the evaluation in terms of the process factors were:

- administration
- pricing
- quality of coaches
- quality of event speakers
- quality of venues
- changes required before roll-out.

What outcomes can we expect the coachees to identify?

Since we were evaluating a pilot and all the participants had signed up knowing the programme would be evaluated, the EO felt that it was reasonable to expect significant involvement from participants. Thus, we expected coachees to assist in identifying all relevant issues (listed above) for individual, organisational and processes, plus any change they perceived in their behaviour as a result of attending the programme.

What outcomes can we expect the coaches to identify?

We were mindful of what we felt needed to be kept confidential between coach and coachee, but concluded that the coaches' perspective on achievements, behaviour change and programme design would be useful just for the pilot. However, the most significant contribution from the coaches would be taking responsibility for ensuring that participants completed documentation which would then be used as part of the evaluation. Deciding in advance to use written records of objectives set enabled us to agree in advance with participants and coaches what could be shared as part of the evaluation (and at what level of detail).

Who are the relevant organisation representatives for this programme, and what outcomes can we expect them to identify?

Each participant had a sponsor from their council. These sponsors were felt to offer the key perspective on any individual behaviour change, any improvements in HR function and corporate leadership and any other organisational outcomes.

The four partner organisations involved in designing, marketing and administering the programme were also felt to have a useful contribution to make to the evaluation of the pilot, especially in relation to identifying programme processes.

In this particular evaluation context four perspectives were considered essential (ie coach, coachee, sponsor and partner), rather than the three perspectives we typically encountered in our company illustration.

5.3 Detailed review of evaluation methods used

Record of Objectives

Most development planning / appraisal systems and training programmes use standard documentation to record participant objectives, although some of the companies we encountered who employ external coaches rely on the coaches keeping their own records. Other companies meet some resistance from participants when it is suggested later that such forms would be useful for evaluation, as they are perceived as containing confidential data.

The EO required all coaches and participants to use a standard form, to be completed by the end of the first one-to-one coaching session, and it was made clear from the outset that forms would be seen by programme evaluators. Coaches were given the responsibility of submitting a copy of forms for all their participants. This had the advantage of less people to chase than if all participants had been responsible. A copy of the record of objectives form is included at Appendix 1. Just three columns were used to encourage participants to articulate:

- what they hoped to get out of the programme ie their objectives
- how they will know they have achieved their objectives ie their success criteria
- by what means they will demonstrate that achievement ie evaluation method.

Mid-point telephone interviews

Because the initial programme was a pilot, the EO was keen to get some feedback on how things were going mid-way through the programme. This was partly driven by financial considerations: only if it looked like the programme was on course to achieve individual and organisational outcomes would a bid for monies be made to roll out the full programme the following year. (Collecting data at the mid-point also enables changes to programme processes to be made, if necessary, before the programme finishes; had a particular problem with a coach, participant or venue emerged, there would have been time for changes to be made.)

Telephone interviews with participants was the method selected at the mid-point as these enabled all the relevant issues to be explored. It was also expected that the information generated about individual expectations and outcomes would assist in developing the impact questionnaires.

Questions asked in the telephone interviews related to individual outcomes focused largely on participants' perceived personal benefits and behavioural changes since beginning the LEAP programme. Participants were asked to consider what the key personal benefits had been, and how these had been translated into behavioural change; who or what this change had affected; how it had been sustained; and the extent to which they felt it was attributable to the LEAP programme. Following on from personal outcomes and achievements, participants were then asked to consider how they felt the LEAP Programme had affected their organisation, job, HR function and their Local Authority. Questions in this section focused on perceived support within the organisation, the value of the HR function, the use and benefit of the LEAP programme to the HR function and wider authority, plus the extent to which perceived benefits can be attributed to the programme itself. A copy of the telephone interview discussion guide is included as Appendix 2.

The telephone interviews were carried out during May 2004 after two one-to-one sessions and one seminar had been experienced. Twenty-two out of 24 participants took part. Participants were encouraged to speak freely and candidly about their experiences and thoughts in order to consolidate and enhance their own learning from the programme, as well as inform and direct future elements and activities.

The results from the telephone interviews, together with an analysis of the written records of participant objectives, were used to compile an interim report. The interim report provided a summary of key themes and issues that emerged, and was written for the four partner organisations as an interim view of progress.

End of programme impact questionnaires

The EO was very keen that end-of-programme questionnaires be used and that somewhere in the questionnaire should be some perceptual measure of impact. This was because perceptual measures are very useful in capturing the kind of observable behaviour change which lay at the heart of the individual and organisational outcomes sought for the LEAP programme.

Questions sought to access each individual's views in the following areas:

- perceptions of coaching as a method of personal and professional development
- expectations of, and objectives for the LEAP HR coaching programme
- the observed impact of the LEAP HR coaching programme on personal effectiveness, HR function leadership and strategic thinking/corporate leadership skills
- the extent to which participants would recommend the programme
- qualitative assessment of aspects of the coaching process, including coach's style, strengths and weaknesses, and participant's personal comparisons with other forms of personal development
- sponsor assessment of the impact of the programme on this individual, the HR function, and the organisation as a whole
- suggestions for change and development of the LEAP HR coaching programme.

Two versions of the impact questionnaires were distributed in August 2004: one to participants and one to sponsors. Some questions were designed using a six-point attitude ratings scale so that responses from participants and their sponsors on the individual and organisational outcomes could be directly compared. IES also distributed a third version of the questionnaire to the coaches, although this was outside the scope of the EO activity.

Two key areas of personal impact with potential individual outcomes were identified from the previous telephone interviews, and a range of questionnaire statements were developed relating to each. Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements, all of which assessed potential changes in the way participants were working or behaving as a result of the LEAP HR coaching programme.

In relation to organisational outcomes a series of statements were developed, again based on likely outcomes identified through the mid-point interview data. The same six-point attitude scale was used in asking participants and sponsors to agree or disagree with the statements.

Participants were also asked a series of open-ended questions regarding their feelings about being coached, and elements of the coaching that worked most and also least well. It was hoped that their responses would help improve the way we answer the questions from any future participants, *What is coaching like and what can I expect?*

Full responses were received from 20 participants and ten sponsors indicating high response rates of 83 per cent and 56 per cent respectively. The results from the two questionnaires, together with an analysis of participants' records of achievement supported by evidence of achievement collected by participants, were used to produce an end of pilot report.

Production of vignettes

The EO decided from the outset that short vignettes would be produced as an output of the evaluation process. The vignettes are illustrative examples of the overall impact of the LEAP HR coaching programme on some individual participants. Intended to be seen as success stories, the idea was to use them in future promotional material as the programme was rolled out.

Three vignettes were produced at the end of the pilot in September 2004 with participants' permission and have been used widely since then, including on the EO's website. They were also used as part of the press packs, and subsequently as background to articles in local government publications and People Management (Warren, 2005). An example of the vignettes is shown in Appendix 3.

It may be that in other sectors individuals might be reluctant to be identified in vignettes. Participants in the LEAP programme were, on the whole, willing to be publicly identified. It may be that the programme organisers helped by ensuring from the outset that participants knew that if the pilot programme was success they would be expected to act as HR champions throughout the sector, encouraging other HR specialists to embed more strategic ways of working. Perhaps implicit in this is an assumption of being willing to step into the spotlight. It is worth speculating whether the pilot participants may have been more highly motivated to make the most of what the programme offered since they knew their progress was being so publicly monitored!

Focus groups at review day

Initially the EO considered using a second telephone interview with participants at the end of the pilot to capture experiences of the programme. This was quickly replaced by the idea of bringing all parties together for a 'review and evaluation' day in September 2004. Partners, coaches and participants met in separately facilitated focus groups to explore issues and problems with the programme and to discuss what they had gained from being involved. Later the three groups got together to share their views and identify areas for future action.

Follow-up impact questionnaires

In order to assess further the long term impact of the LEAP pilot programme a short follow-up questionnaire was sent to all of the pilot group participants and their sponsors. The primary aim was to look at how the programme had affected participants at an individual level and their councils at an organisational level one year on. The main difference from the end-of-programme questionnaire is that the follow up questionnaire was shorter and did not cover programme processes.

Only four participants and eight sponsors returned completed questionnaires, a response rate of 16 per cent and 32 respectively. The very low response rates may have been influenced by relocation of participants, holidays (the questionnaires were distributed in August) and survey fatigue (this was the fourth evaluation method requested of participants).

The small sample numbers made in-depth analysis inappropriate. It was, however, interesting to hear that, for some participants, the level of satisfaction and personal change as a result of the pilot programme had led them to become involved in the subsequent roll-out of the programme, either as sponsors or in training to be coaches themselves.

5.4 Detailed review of presenting the evaluation findings

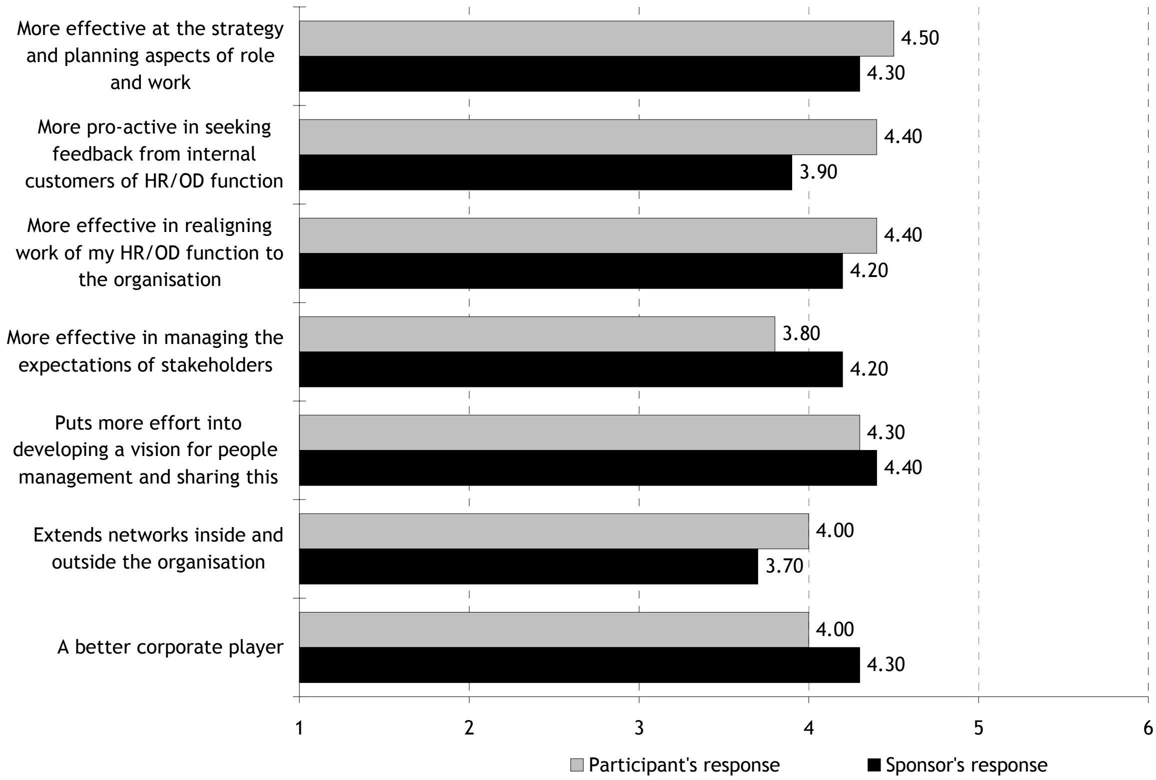
Using multiple methods for collecting evaluation does mean you should expect to generate a considerable amount of information. This can often result in a time-consuming and complex process to make sense of it all, so it is important not to use up all your time allocation in collecting the data. The vast majority of organisations have the capability to do this work themselves and, where they also have the capacity, they may well prefer to undertake all aspects of coaching evaluation in house. If you do use external resources it is useful to do what the EO did and be fully involved in the development of the evaluation framework and data collection methods.

IES brought together the issues identified through all the data collection methods into one report. In presenting the results from the end-of-programme questionnaires, the intentions were to:

- categorise and give examples of participant original objectives
- compare the average (mean) scores returned by participants and sponsors asked to assess changes in working or behaving as a result of the programme
- use direct quotes to offer further insights.

An example of presenting a comparison of average scores is shown as Figure 5.1. It was important to explain in the report that both groups had been asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements. The response options were 1 ‘disagreed very strongly’ through to 6 ‘agreed very strongly’. Thus an

Figure 5.1: Comparing average scores in LEAP



Source: IES, 2004

average (mean) score of 3.5 could be considered the mid-point representing neither disagreement or agreement. An average (mean) score of less than 2.5 could be considered very negative and an average (mean) score of more than 4.5 could be considered very positive.

Examples of direct quotes are shown in Figure 5.2. Rather than simply list pages of quotes, this example, taken from the programme processes section of the report, demonstrates how they can be pulled together to illustrate a point. For 80 per cent of the participants the LEAP coaching programme was their first exposure to coaching, so we used direct quotes to report in their own words on what they had made of the experience of coaching.

5.5 Applying the framework for the second time

The evaluation plans for LEAP phase 1 were much simpler than for the pilot and the cost of implementation was lower. This is in line with what you might expect after an ‘under the microscope’ examination of a new programme. As the programme format settles into a routine, the programme evaluation likewise becomes less onerous.

Figure 5.2: Key themes about the experience of being coached

Being coached can feel …

Challenging and refreshing

Exhausting, exhilarating, exciting and a real confidence booster

Safe because it is confidential and supportive

Strange at first, intense and tiring

Very privileged as it provides an opportunity to offload problems, work through issues, feel enthusiastic about the job, look to the future

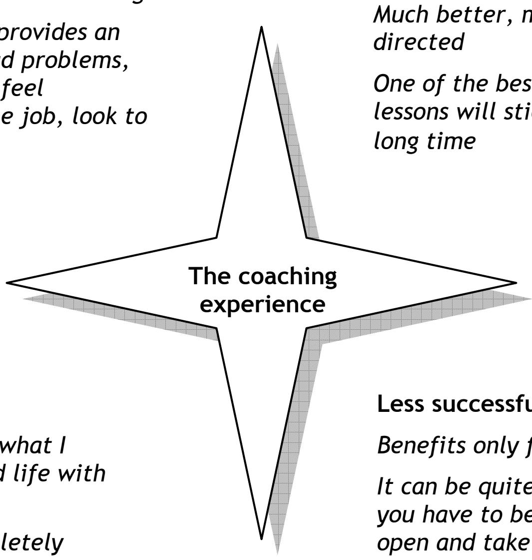
Coaching compares well with other personal development tools

Compares favourably. This was my first experience, I am very much sold on this

Proactive and continuous, not a one off event which is forgotten!

Much better, more personal, more directed

One of the best experiences, the lessons will stick with me for a long time



Successful elements

Being able to explore what I wanted from work and life with non-judgmental coach

Being able to be completely honest with no fear of comeback

No hidden agenda, undivided attention, setting personal objectives

One to one relationship, felt free to be honest and open

Time to reflect and clarify areas of strength and for improvement

Less successful elements

Benefits only felt over long term

It can be quite challenging and you have to be prepared to be open and take what is said constructively

Sessions too close sometimes, needed more info in advance

Source: IES, 2006

The evaluation framework for LEAP phase 1 is included as Table 5.2. As it shows there is less emphasis on programme processes with just one method selected. There was a reliance on participants to identify any areas where standards of delivery lapsed. The two rows of outcomes have been combined since the perceptual methods proposed were the same for both individual and organisational outcomes. This is likely to be a common occurrence where all measures are perceptual. It is less likely when business measures are selected.

Table 5.2: Evaluation framework for LEAP Phase 1

Areas of evidence sought	Sources of evidence		
	Documents	Participants	Sponsors
Individual outcomes and organisational outcomes	Records of objectives	End of programme impact questionnaires Mid-point impact questionnaire	End of programme impact questionnaires
Programme processes		End of programme questionnaire	

Source: Employers organisation/IES, 2005

You will notice that the mid-point telephone interviews are gone, replaced by a less resource intensive impact questionnaire. One option considered was to develop a pre-coaching questionnaire instead of one at the mid-point. However a pre-coaching questionnaire was ruled out along with the option of doing nothing. This was partly because of the benefits to participants in the pilot of some 'pause' at the mid-point. It seems having a mid-point evaluation focuses the mind on what has been achieved and how best to make use of the remaining sessions to achieve remaining or new objectives.

5.6 Applying the framework for the third time

Since the evaluation of phase 1 was cost-effective and successful, the evaluation plans for phase 2 would have undoubtedly looked the same had the programme resourced the coaches in the same way. However, because phase 2 included an additional stream of activity to train internal coaches, this meant the coaching framework needed to change to reflect the new circumstances. The evaluation framework for phase 2 is shown in Table 5.3.

Copies of participant, sponsor and volunteer coach end-of-programme impact questionnaires are included at Appendices 4, 5 and 6 respectively.

Table 5.3: Evaluation framework for LEAP Phase 2

Areas of evidence sought	Likely sources of evidence			
	Documents	Participants	Sponsors	Volunteer coaches
Individual outcomes and organisational outcomes	Records of objectives	End of programme impact questionnaire	End of programme impact questionnaire	End of programme impact questionnaire Focus group
Coaching programme processes		End of programme questionnaire	End of programme questionnaire	Focus group
Coach training processes				Focus group

Source: Employers organisation/IES, 2005

5.7 Lessons learnt about coaching evaluation

5.7.1 Consider the cost-benefit of each evaluation method

The literature encourages us to look for benefits well after the coaching experience has ended. Tracking participants' experiences and behaviours over time is really the only way of measuring the impact of interventions (like coaching) with a latent effect. It is also important for measuring the sustainability of effect. Without this tracking, any measured immediate or short–term benefit may be partial and therefore an under-estimate or may not be sustained and therefore may be an over-estimate.

In practice the EO found the costs and practicalities made this difficult: people move on in organisations; maintaining contact details can be tricky; and people's willingness to co-operate may lessen over time.

5.7.2 Get coaches to use a common tool for recording objectives

The EO was not looking to identify 'hard' monetary benefits from this programme, so it was not necessary for participants to express all their objectives in terms of added value to the local government sector in general or their council in particular. Nevertheless, in practice the briefing to coaches on the use of a common record of objectives proved very beneficial. It ensured that coaches and participants alike kept their eye on the outcomes they expected to achieve. It also ensured that objectives included a mix of personal and organisational ones. If coachees agree only personal objectives or no objectives at all, no evaluation of organisational benefit will be possible later.

5.7.3 There is a need for a comprehensive evaluation tool

IES undertook some additional data analysis. In comparing as a 'matched triad' impact questionnaire responses from participants, sponsors and coaches we were struck by the positive responses received across all impact items for all groups. This demonstrates shared perceptions of successful outcomes resulting from the coaching programme. Where differences in perception exist, these were minimal and related only to the degree of response. There were no conflicting views between the three groups.

Factor analysis was also performed showing that different elements of the programme are rated to differing degrees of positive response by each group, highlighting differences in objectives and methods of assessing the programme. This reinforces the appropriateness of implementing a comprehensive evaluation tool, taking into account a variety of viewpoints in a number of ways. The implications for evaluating future coaching programmes may include a keen appreciation of the differing viewpoints of stakeholders and participants.

5.7.4 Consider the scale on impact questionnaires

For all three evaluation 'rounds' we used a seven point scale ranging from *very strongly agree* to *very strongly disagree* to measure respondents' views on a series of statements. Longer scales like these can be useful in discriminating responses where they are all at one end of the scale. However in this case we found no measurable difference between *very strongly (dis)agree* and *strongly (dis)agree.* Given this, we would certainly have changed next time to using a five point scale instead ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree.*

5.8 Lessons learned about the design of coaching programmes

5.8.1 Organisation sponsors are important even for those at director level

A significant finding from the LEAP programme was the higher levels of positive response exhibited by participants whose sponsors had also returned questionnaires compared to those participants who had no sponsor or whose sponsor did not return their questionnaire. It seems that having an overtly supportive sponsor makes a difference to the extent of a participant's belief in their achievements. This reinforces the importance of employer engagement in the success of coaching programmes.

5.8.2 A careful 'matching' process doesn't always make a difference

The practitioner literature strongly promotes the idea that coaching scheme organisers should carefully match coach and coachee pairs in order to maximise the chances of building the rapport and trust upon which successful coaching relationships depend. Our findings indicated no difference in levels of general satisfaction, or levels of satisfaction with their coach, between those participants from the one region where coaches and participants were subject to a careful 'matching' process and those from the other region where coaches were allocated on the basis of geographical proximity alone. It may be that our findings were influenced by the high percentage of those being coached for the first time. Nevertheless our results challenge perceived wisdom about 'matching'.

5.8.3 360-degree feedback results are useful at the collective level

Undertaking a 360-degree exercise was an optional extra for participants in LEAP phases 1 and 2. There was a high take-up with participants reporting the exercise as helpful in identifying that some of the objectives they wanted to work on were also endorsed by others. An individual's results were confidential to the coachee and their coach. However individual results were anonymised and combined across all participants in each phase to produce a collective picture. This was very useful to the

EO in supporting wider research and shaping perceptions of issues for senior HR specialists across the local government sector.

5.8.4 Use of internal coaches

Even for the seasoned HR directors we trained as internal coaches within the sector, the support of an experienced coaching supervisor, in the early days at least, was considered essential.

We compared levels of participant satisfaction at the end of the programme between those coached by the less experienced internal coaches used in LEAP phase 2 and the more experienced external coaches used in the pilot and phase 1. Our findings indicated no significant difference in levels of general satisfaction or levels of satisfaction with their coach. This may be a surprise to some experienced and/or external providers.

Unfortunately we were not able to compare levels of participant satisfaction at the mid-point of the three cohorts as there was no mid-point impact questionnaire during phase 2. It might have been interesting to see whether or not there was any evidence of more experienced external coaches being perceived by participants as making progress more quickly.

The finding that there was no difference between the external coaches in the pilot and phase 1 and the internal coaches in phase 2 may be a reflection of the rigorous selection criteria we applied for access to the coach training programme. It may also be influenced by the fact that the internal coaches in the LEAP programme cannot be considered ‘internal’ in the usual sense as they were not employed by the same organisation as their coachees. Perhaps a more accurate term for them was ‘within-sector coaches’.

6 Conclusions

Since we began this research back in 2003 coaching as a development tool has become even more prominent, especially in the UK. The CIPD's annual training and development survey (CIPD, 2005) indicates that coaching by line managers is used by 84 per cent of UK responding organisations and coaching by external practitioners is used by 64 per cent. There is good news for companies in that now there is more practical advice available to them on how to implement coaching successfully in their organisations (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2005), and on how to make a business case for coaching investments (Jarvis et al., 2006). The UK has also followed the US in calling for more projects using RoI methodologies (Kearns, 2006). Worryingly though very little evaluation is yet being reported as taking place by companies (CIPD, 2004) and very little non-partisan advice on coaching evaluation.

In this final chapter we reflect on the research while discussing the factors which seem to help and hinder good coaching evaluation practice. By way of conclusion we then pull together all the learning from the literature, company illustrations and our early adopter case study to offer our final tips for would-be coaching programme evaluators.

6.1 Factors helping or hindering evaluation practice

During our discussion with employers we formed the view that coaching evaluation is an activity that almost all companies agree is important, but it is one which is often forgotten in the perpetual rush to get things done. Finding the time to evaluate is a bigger barrier, it seems, than having the capability to do it.

Where coaching evaluation is taking place it rarely looks like the neutral and objective exercise that practitioners feel academics describe and promote. In practice coaching evaluation seems to fall into one of three categories, based on what the organisation is doing: they are seeking to **prove** something, **improve** something or **learn** something.

6.1.1 If you are searching for 'proof'

Although much of the practitioner literature urges companies to go down the 'prove' something route, among our company illustrations in Chapter 3 only Bristol & West Building Society succeeded in this approach. The central government department initially had hoped to do so as well, but didn't have the baseline data in place to allow them to do so.

The Bristol & West illustration was a small scale example of intent to identify ('prove') whether an increase in sales, a key organisational performance measure, occurred when coaching was introduced to support sales staff after their attendance on formal training courses. We consider it to be such an interesting example because we understand the organisation did not attempt to evaluate the likely impact for any other staff group, although coaching was being considered for many such groups, or in any other context than post-course support. The approach was for the organisation to focus its energy where it was believed easiest to measure organisational impact (if there was any). The idea was then to use these findings as 'reasonable evidence' (not the same thing as claiming 'proof') that there might be benefit for other groups or contexts. This successfully avoided unnecessary additional expense and the complexity of measuring elsewhere where it might be less straightforward to identify an appropriate organisational measure of impact.

One might wonder why the Bristol & West evaluation team stopped short of a cost-benefit analysis or a RoI exercise. Our perception is that there was no need: everyone could clearly see that the increase in sales significantly exceeded the cost of the coaching.

Academics are well aware that problems of 'causality' can be viewed as a big barrier to evaluation, especially for those employers that might be seeking to 'prove' something. There is no logical causation between improved business results and the fact that there has been coaching and such links are interpretative. Many variables affect business results including line management actions and competition in the market. Just because sales went up by 27 per cent in Bristol & West does not mean it was because of the coaching. Indeed, some academics might argue that they may have gone up by more had there been no coaching. The four per cent increase in sales among the control group is fairly strong evidence in this particular case. However it would have been even stronger if it had been supplemented by qualitative data from participants explaining how the coaching had made a difference.

The in-house plus external coach partnership doing the evaluation in the Bristol & West illustration did not concern themselves as much with causality as researchers tend to. The search for 'proof' for the head of training and recruitment and her board of directors was a test of 'reasonableness' of the chain of impact being claimed. A scientific level of proof was not required. The use of a control group, comparing financial planning managers who received coaching with those who had not, was certainly a good idea in understanding the issues of causation. We would commend the organisation for this step. Interpretation was still needed though. For instance, one could argue that the group who were not offered coaching or training and the group not offered add-on coaching may have felt less favourably treated, and might have had lower levels of motivation than the coached group. This, one could argue, may explain the poorer performance of some groups. This reinforces the point that, while claiming business results are not proof in a strictly scientific sense, companies can remove the weight of the 'causality' barrier by adopting the pragmatic attitude of Bristol & West. The key question for would-be coaching programme evaluators is thus redefined as 'Do we believe the coaching helped achieve the business outcome?'

6.1.2 If you are looking to make improvements …

The local government case study is an example of the most common intent we encountered: to improve a flagship development programme utilising other learning methods but predominantly one-to-one coaching. The case study involved an in-depth evaluation using multiple data collection methods to identify behavioural changes that occurred in individual leaders on a pilot coaching programme. The idea was to use this information to assess whether the desired behavioural changes were being realised. It was also expected that any necessary incremental improvements to the programme would be identified, and these might increase the extent of behavioural change for individual leaders in future cohorts on the programme. Two of our company illustrations in Chapter 3, the distribution company and the central government department, were also looking for programme improvements with their primary point of interest being behavioural change.

Instead of evaluating direct business outcomes, coaching in the local government case study was measured through subjective judgements on whether participants had improved their effectiveness. This is what academics would call 'perceptual evaluation.' It is, of course, perfectly possible for in-house practitioners to carry out this kind of measurement in a standardised way and not have to hire external researchers. Structured questionnaires can be administered to participants before and after the coaching to compare their pre-and post-coaching perception of their own effectiveness. 360-degree feedback questionnaires can also bring into the evaluation process the perceptions of their line managers, customers, suppliers, peers and own staff.

Employers we contacted during our research had mixed views about perceptual coaching evaluation. On the one hand they found it much easier to conceptualise than measuring business outcomes because there were fewer methodological barriers or hindrances to overcome. One could still argue about causality, but if all parties agreed that the required behaviours were being displayed, as in the local government case study, employers tell us that evidence that the desired outcome had been achieved made the extent to which coaching was responsible irrelevant. Perhaps this is true if the only point of interest is behavioural change. However, most organisations are making intervention choices up against limited resources to allocate. They typically want to know that they have invested wisely (ie they have got a return on that investment), or at least that some tangible (as well as any intangible) benefits occurred as a result of the intervention. This may require the stakeholders to think and act differently. This may also demand that change agents (coaches) drive the conversation towards considering, let alone achieving, that possible end.

But while perceptual evaluation was easier to conceptualise, employers perceived it to be much harder to implement. Insistence from participants and coaches that collected data should be treated as confidential hindered attempts to get a good response rate, and cast doubts on the generalisability of the results.

The appendices of this report will be particularly helpful to those interested in perceptual measures.

6.1.3 If the focus is on learning …

In both the T-mobile and NHS in Wales company illustrations in Chapter 3 we would categorise the primary intent as being to learn about the potential of coaching as a tool for organisational learning and culture change. In both cases we would describe the illustrations as being primarily about collecting reactions to the coaching. The NHS in Wales hired an external evaluator to explore the issues arising for individual leaders participating in a coaching programme. However, an in-house team could just as easily collect and explore reactions as a result of using questionnaires, short telephone interviews or focus group interviews.

Response rates from 'reactionnaires', as questionnaires to assess participants' reactions are sometimes known, can be improved considerably by asking coaches or line managers to distribute and collect them. Sometimes forms are even completed as part of the final coaching session in the presence of the coach. However, our experience suggests the data may not then be as reliable as coachees may feel protective of their coach or under pressure to give positive responses.

6.2 Summary of tips for programme evaluators

6.2.1 Planning your evaluation

- Accept that the traditional model of training evaluation you may use elsewhere might not transfer easily to coaching evaluation. You may have to adapt it or you can use the evaluation framework developed as part of this research.
- Clarify why the evaluation is being conducted. Are you seeking to prove something, improve something or learn something?
- Clarify your budget, resources available and any time constraints and consider these in relation to your purpose eg do you have time to explore sustainable impact or RoI if this is your purpose?

- Define success criteria before selecting measures. Select evaluation measures that collect data to show whether success criteria have been achieved. Consider looking for benefits well after the coaching has ended but be aware that in practice this can be difficult.
- Consider the perspectives of different audiences for the evaluation and how you will access a range of viewpoints. Make sure in advance that your coaches are willing to use your evaluation tools when operating in your organisation. Designing evaluation in partnership with external coaches before the coaching begins can work well. Minimise resistance to the evaluation by letting participants and managers know before the coaching starts what evaluation measures will be used and how they will be expected to contribute.
- It is difficult to evaluate the potential of coaching for cultural or other systemic change.
- Effective evaluation is not just a one-off activity at the end of the process but it can be really useful as an interim stock-take of necessary improvements needed to a programme.

6.2.2 Methods for collecting information

- Consider the cost-benefit of each evaluation method ie assess the potential value of the findings with the risks in generating the findings and the cost of each evaluation method under consideration.
- Attitude surveys are a simple and non-resource-intensive method of collecting reactions to coaching. Climate surveys can be useful in identifying changes in soft-skill areas such as communication, and are especially relevant to organisations implementing coaching as a style of management. Keep survey questionnaires short to get a better response. Response rates will increase further with reminders and chasing. They can be improved by asking coaches or line managers to distribute and collect questionnaires. Be cautious in interpreting survey findings where the size of surveyed population is small.
- Face-to-face interviews enable behaviour change to be explored in more depth, although telephone interviews can also generate detailed information and allow probing and can be a less expensive alternative. Multiple viewpoints and multiple data collection methods are essential when it comes to measuring perceptions of behavioural change. When designing impact questionnaires that look at behaviour change make sure your ratings scale allows for the possibility that changes may be perceived as negative rather than positive.
- Don’t underestimate the power of a couple of impressive individual anecdotal ‘stories’ or learning ‘vignettes’ in persuading senior colleagues that coaching was a worthwhile investment.

- If bottom line business results are what you want, focusing on one key business indicator can be a simple approach yielding straightforward results. It is better to plan how to evaluate the coaching before starting the programme so 'hard' baseline data can be collected. It is not always necessary to complicate things by calculating RoI. Measuring where it is easiest provides 'reasonable evidence', meaning you can avoid the expense of measuring benefit elsewhere where it may be difficult to identify an appropriate measure. If you do go down the RoI route you will need significant financial resources and statistical competence at your disposal.
- Comparing the results among coached with a 'control' group of non-coached individuals can be a very effective approach. Being able to compare before coaching with after coaching results can also be seen by some as more credible than examining post-coaching data alone. If you don't have a 'control' you will need some form of benchmark for comparative analysis to assess whether the activity in question is relatively effective.

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Appendix 1: Example Record of Objectives

the **local government** HR **coaching** service

leading people
employing people strategy
aiming for high performance
highflying **people** managers

Record of **objectives**

name of **participant**: name of **coach**:

name of **organisation sponsor** (where applicable):

start date:

objectives for the programme	**success** criteria	**evaluation method** (e.g. observation, feedback, self-report, learning log)

institute for employment studies

NORTH WEST EMPLOYERS

east of england Regional Assembly

employersorganisation

the **local government** HR **coaching** service

leading people
employing people strategy
aiming for high performance
highflying **people** managers

objectives for the programme	**success** criteria	**evaluation method** (e.g. observation, feedback, self-report, learning log)

This record is for you and your IES coach to help you make the most of the programme by tailoring sessions to your personal requirements. One copy will be held at IES for pilot programme evaluation purposes, and then destroyed. You may wish to share a copy with your organisation sponsor or colleagues, but this is entirely optional.

ies institute for employment studies

NORTH WEST EMPLOYERS

east of england Regional Assembly

employersorganisation

Appendix 2: Example Mid-point Telephone Interview Discussion Guide

LEAP Discussion Guide: Telephone interview

Introduction:

Hello, my name is …. and I'm calling from the Institute for Employment Studies. You will be aware that the LEAP HR coaching programme you are half way through is a pilot and therefore there is an evaluation being undertaken. I am undertaking telephone interviews with all the participants in both pilot regions as part of that evaluation.

I was told that you would be expecting my call, I hope that this is still a convenient time to ask you a few questions. It will only take forty-five minutes at most.

It is important for you to understand that I am not evaluating you. I am evaluating the LEAP programme and whether there are any positive outcomes arising from the programme for either individuals or their authorities.

Please speak as frankly as you can. Your opinion is a learning opportunity both for you in terms of clarifying what you are gaining from the programme, and for the organisers in meeting your needs for the remainder of the programme.

Individual Outcomes:

Can I start by asking some questions about any outcomes for you personally, ie not your authority. First:

1. Which elements of the programme so far have been most useful to you personally?

- □ In what way was it useful?
- □ What did you learn? Explore knowledge about HR, strategic thinking, personal learning about self?

- What impact did this learning have on you? ie what are you now doing differently? Explore behavioural change

2. Please can you give me an example of how you are doing things differently?

- What did you do?
- How did others react?
- How was this different from their previous reactions?

3. Can you give me another example?

- Has this change in the way you are doing things been sustained? (If not, why not?)
- What has been the effect on those around you?
- What has been the effect on your job?

4. Which elements of the programme have been least useful to you?

- Why?
- What could be changed in the programme to make it more valuable to you?

5. If I was to ask you to summarise, what would you say has been your biggest personal achievement so far since you have been on the programme?

- To what extent did the programme contribute to this? Specifically what percentage (%) of the achievement would you attribute *to being on the programme?*

Organisation Outcomes:

I'd like to talk a bit now about the context in which you work, ie your HR team and your authority.

6. How supportive would you say your organisation is towards your ongoing personal or HR professional development?

- Who is supportive / unsupportive?
- What evidence is there?
- What kind of support would you like from your organisation?

7. How highly would you say your organisation rates the HR function?

- Who rates it highly / less highly?
- What evidence is there?

8. Do you believe that the programme so far has been useful to the HR function as a whole?

- In what way? Can you give me an example? Probe for change in HR function profile or people measures
- Who apart from you has benefited?
- How would you define the HR function benefit? Or expected benefit?

9. Do you believe that the programme so far has been in any way useful to your authority as a whole?

- In what way? Can you give me an example? Probe for change in people management practice or people strategy.
- Who apart from you or your HR function has benefited?
- How would you define the organisation benefit? Or expected benefit?

10. If I was to ask you to summarise what would you point to as the biggest achievement for your HR function or your authority so far since you have been on the programme?

- To what extent did the programme contribute to this? Specifically what percentage (%) of the achievement would you attribute to the programme?

LEAP programme processes:

I've covered two of the three most important aspects from my point of view. The final set of questions relates to your coach and the way the programme has been delivered. Firstly:

11. Can you briefly describe, in a couple of sentences, your feelings about the programme overall?

- Waste of time? Useful? Worthwhile?

12. How would you rate your coaching sessions, using a scale of 1-10 with 1 being low and 10 being high ie *'highly effective'*?

- Skills of your coach
- How comfortable you feel with your coach?
- Content of sessions?
- Care and focus of the coach on your needs?
- Amount of stretch and challenge from coach?
- Your ability to apply the coaching sessions within your work?

- Your commitment to applying your learning?
- Timing of sessions?
- Venue(s) of sessions?

13. What could be done to improve the coaching sessions?

- By the coach?
- By you?

14. How would you rate some other aspects of the programme, once again using a scale of 1-10 with 1 being low and 10 being high?

- Cost of programme?
- Administration of programme?
- First event?
- Support from your organisation?
- Support from your region?

15. Looking ahead to the rest of your programme, do you have any other suggestions for changes that you would like the organisers to know about?

16. Do you require any further support?

- Who should provide this? Your region, Employers Organisation, your coach?

17. Are there any other issues you would like to raise before we finish?

Thank You

Appendix 3: Example Vignette/ Success Story

Jan Souness – Head of HR, Warrington Borough Council

This vignette, produced by the Institute for Employment Studies for the Employers' Organisation for local government seeks to provide some illustrative examples of the overall impact of the HR Coaching Programme on some of the individual participants. These are intended to be 'success stories' and illustrate the experiences of participants at the mid-term stage of the Programme. Each of the participants named has given permission for their experiences to be made available for publicity purposes.

For Jan Souness, the HR Coaching Programme was identified as providing a vital opportunity to look at the support that is needed to achieve objectives and the long-term vision, both in relation to her role and that of the HR function as a whole.

Prior to participating in the Programme, Jan felt that the function *'all too readily jumped into operational activities'* and did not focus sufficiently on strategic matters. Jan's personal learning has focused on developing the ability to step back and enable others within the team to come forward, which ultimately was seen as changing the culture of the function.

Among her objectives, Jan was seeking to *'develop the capacity within the HR Community within the authority by developing the consultancy skills of staff within the division'*. Jan felt that the Programme had challenged the mindset within the HR function and helped to instil confidence to attempt tasks differently and more creatively, with the acceptance that sometimes this may not work.

Since beginning the Programme, workshops within the HR function have helped to identify the challenges that need to be faced, and also highlighted the strengths of the team and areas where they can and indeed are making significant strategic contributions to the authority as a whole.

One of Jan's most significant personal achievements was the securing of support to influence and change the senior management structure and work more collaboratively in a strategic manner. Jan noted that the Programme was seen as giving this process '*more gravitas'* and she was able to attribute approximately 25 per cent of this success to the Programme.

Appendix 4: Example End-of-programme Impact Questionnaire for Participants

the **local government** HR **coaching** service

leading people
employing people strategy
aiming for high performance
highflying **people** managers

LEAP PHASE 2: PARTICIPANTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

How do I complete this questionnaire? You can either complete the questionnaire on screen and email your response to jonny.gifford@employment-studies.co.uk or you can print off the questionnaire and send your response by post to Jonny Gifford, IES, Mantell Building, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9RF.

Please note: if you complete and post a *printed* questionnaire, it is important that you write your name on the questionnaire, so that we know that you have responded. Please return your completed questionnaire by 15 April at the latest.

If you have any queries, please contact Jonny Gifford on tel. 01273 873701 or Gwen Leeming on tel. 01273 678186.

The information provided in this questionnaire will be fully anonymised.

Part one: How has the LEAP coaching programme impacted on you

1. Please indicate your primary objective(s) in embarking on the LEAP coaching programme:

   Assisting with personal development needs ☐

   Assisting in your own career planning ☐

   Support for changing HR/OD function ☐

   Support for organisational initiatives ☐

   Other *(please specify)*

2. How well did the programme help you meet this objective/these objectives? *(Please tick **one** box only)*

   ☐ Not at all well ☐ Not very well ☐ Reasonably well ☐ Very well ☐ Extremely well

3. Please put a tick in **one** box for **each** statement to indicate how you work differently as a result of the LEAP coaching programme.

Having gone through the LEAP coaching programme:	Very strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Very strongly agree
I give my own development more priority						
I am more aware of the impact of my behaviour on others						
I more aware of my strengths and weaknesses						
I more aware of my motivations						
I use a wider range of leadership styles for different circumstances						
I am more effective in dealing with difficult people and situations						
I tackle the management of the HR team better						

Having gone through the LEAP coaching programme:	Very strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Very strongly agree
I have improved my personal profile as a senior HR/OD manager						
I am more effective at developing strategy and planning						
I manage my own team better						
I have increased my personal effectiveness						
I am more confident in my ability to lead change						
I am more effective in managing stakeholders' expectations						
I put more effort into developing and sharing a vision for people management						
I have extended my networks inside and outside the organisation						
I make a greater effort to find innovative approaches						
I make a greater effort to find flexible ways of working						
I am better at encouraging managed risk taking						
I am a better corporate manager						

4. Please comment on the impact the LEAP coaching programme has had:

   On you: ....

   ....

   ....

   On your function: ....

   ....

   ....

   On your organisation: ....

   ....

   ....

Part two: The coaching processes

5. Was this your first experience of working with a coach? yes ☐ no ☐

6. The coaching programme offered six sessions over a period of six months. Please comment on:

   The number of sessions *(please tick **one** box only)*

   ☐ too many ☐ about right ☐ too few

The frequency of the sessions *(please tick **one** box only)*

☐ too often ☐ about right ☐ not often enough

Additional comments: ....

....

....

7. Would you recommend coaching sessions to other HR/OD managers?

Please share your reasons: ....

....

....

8. We are keen to improve the advance information that we give to HR executives on what coaching involves.

Please comment on the experience of being coached:

....

....

....

How does coaching compare with other development opportunities you have experienced:

....

....

....

Is there any other information that you think future participants might benefit from knowing in advance about how coaching works?

....

....

....

9. How useful did you find the 360 degree feedback for the coaching process? *(Please tick **one** box only)*

☐ very useful ☐ partly useful ☐ neutral ☐ not useful

Please comment: ....

....

10. Did you, or any of your colleagues have any difficulty using the 360 degree tool?

yes ☐ no ☐

11. Do you have any suggestions for improving the 360 degree feedback element of the LEAP coaching programme?

....

....

....

12. How would you like to follow-up the LEAP coaching programme? *(Please tick **one** box only)*

Further coaching for myself ☐

Networking events ☐

Train to be a coach ☐

Use coaching in own organisation ☐

Other *(please specify)*...

13. How would you rate the overall administration of the LEAP coaching programme? *(Please tick **one** box only)*

☐ very poor ☐ poor ☐ quite poor ☐ quite good ☐ good ☐ very good

14. Do you have any additional comments about the LEAP coaching programme?

....

....

....

....

....

....

Thank you for completing this questionnaire

Please return this questionnaire to: Jonny Gifford, The Institute for Employment Studies, Mantell Building, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9RF

Appendix 5: Example End-of-programme Impact Questionnaire for Sponsors

the **local government**
HR **coaching** service

leap

leading *people*
employing *people strategy*
aiming *for high performance*
highflying ***people*** *managers*

ies

LEAP PHASE 2: SPONSOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Your colleague is nearing completion of a six-month coaching programme (LEAP) and has named you as their sponsor. The programme is being run by the Employers' Organisation for local government (EO) in partnership with the Institute for Employment Studies (IES), which is also evaluating the programme.

As part of the evaluation, we would like you to complete this short questionnaire on changes in your colleague's awareness, behaviour and effectiveness since starting the programme. We would be grateful if you could return your completed questionnaire by 31 March.

How do I complete this questionnaire? You can either complete the questionnaire on screen and email your response to jonny.gifford@employment-studies.co.uk or you can print off the questionnaire and send your response by post to Jonny Gifford, IES, Mantell Building, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9RF.

Please note: if you complete and post a *printed* questionnaire, it is important that you write your name on the questionnaire, so that we know that you have responded.

If you have any queries, please contact Jonny Gifford on tel. 01273 873701 or Gwen Leeming on tel. 01273 678186.

The information provided in this questionnaire will be fully anonymised.

1. How long have you worked with the colleague in question? ☐ yrs ☐ mths

2. Please put a tick in **one** box for **each** statement about how you believe your colleague works differently as a result of the LEAP coaching programme.

Having gone through the LEAP coaching programme, I believe that my colleague:	Very strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Very strongly agree	Cannot comment
Gives his/her own development more priority							
Is more aware of the impact of his/her behaviour on others							
Is more aware of his/her strengths and weaknesses							
Is more aware of his/her motivations							
Uses a wider range of leadership styles in different circumstances							
Is more effective in dealing with difficult people and situations							
Tackles the management of HR team better							
Has improved his/her personal profile as a senior HR/OD manager							
Is more effective at developing strategy and planning							
Manages his/her team better							

Having gone through the LEAP coaching programme, I believe that my colleague:	Very strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Very strongly agree	Cannot comment
Has increased his/her personal effectiveness							
Is more confident in his/her ability to lead change							
Is more effective in managing stakeholders' expectations							
Puts more effort into developing and sharing a vision for people management							
Has extended his/her networks inside and outside the organisation							
Makes a greater effort to find innovative approaches							
Makes a greater effort to find flexible ways of working							
Is better at encouraging managed risk taking							
Is a better corporate manager							

3. On reflection, which aspects of your colleague's behaviour:

   Have changed most noticeably since starting the LEAP coaching programme?

   ....

   ....

   Were already particular strengths?

   ....

   ....

4. What further changes would you most like to see in your colleague?

   ....

   ....

5. Do you have any other feedback about the impact the LEAP coaching programme has had on your colleague or your organisation?

   ....

   ....

   ....

   ....

Thank you for completing this questionnaire

Please return this questionnaire to: Jonny Gifford, The Institute for Employment Studies, Mantell Building, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9RF

Appendix 6: Example End-of-programme Impact Questionnaire for Coaches

LEAP PHASE 2: COACHES' QUESTIONNAIRE

How do I complete this questionnaire? You can either complete the questionnaire on screen and email your response to jonny.gifford@employment-studies.co.uk or you can print off the questionnaire and send your response by post to Jonny Gifford, IES, Mantell Building, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9RF.

Please note: if you complete and post a *printed* questionnaire, it is important that you write your name on the questionnaire, so that we know that you have responded. Please return your completed questionnaire by 15 April at the latest.

If you have any queries, please contact Jonny Gifford on tel. 01273 873701 or Gwen Leeming on tel. 01273 678186.

The information provided in this questionnaire will be fully anonymised.

Please assign the two participants you have coached to **Participant 1** or **Participant 2** (we do not need to know their names). Then take a moment to think about each of them in turn and indicate the extent to which you agree with the statements below about the impact of the LEAP coaching programme on them.

Part one: How has the LEAP coaching programme impacted on your participants

Participant 1

1. Please put a tick in **one** box for **each** statement about how you believe **Participant 1** works differently as a result of the LEAP coaching programme.

Having gone through the LEAP coaching programme, I believe that P1:	Very strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Very strongly agree	Cannot comment
Gives his/her own development more priority							
Is more aware of the impact of his/her behaviour on others							
Is more aware of his/her strengths and weaknesses							
Is more aware of his/her motivations							
Uses a wider range of leadership styles in different circumstances							
Is more effective in dealing with difficult people and situations							
Tackles the management of HR team better							
Has improved his/her personal profile as a senior HR/OD manager							
Is more effective at developing strategy and planning							

Having gone through the LEAP coaching programme, I believe that P1:	Very strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Very strongly agree	Cannot comment
Manages his/her team better							
Has increased his/her personal effectiveness							
Is more confident in his/her ability to lead change							
Is more effective in managing stakeholders' expectations							
Puts more effort into developing and sharing a vision for people management							
Has extended his/her networks inside and outside the organisation							
Makes a greater effort to find innovative approaches							
Makes a greater effort to find flexible ways of working							
Is better at encouraging managed risk taking							
Is a better corporate manager							

2. What are the **five** most noticeable improvements that you have seen in **Participant 1**:

   a. ....

   b. ....

   c. ....

   d. ....

   e. ....

Participant 2

3. Please put a tick in **one** box for **each** statement about how you believe **Participant 2** works differently as a result of the LEAP coaching programme.

Having gone through the LEAP coaching programme, I believe that P2:	Very strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Very strongly agree	Cannot comment
Gives his/her own development more priority							
Is more aware of the impact of his/her behaviour on others							
Is more aware of his/her strengths and weaknesses							
Is more aware of his/her motivations							
Uses a wider range of leadership styles in							

Having gone through the LEAP coaching programme, I believe that P2:	Very strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Very strongly agree	Cannot comment
different circumstances							
Is more effective in dealing with difficult people and situations							
Tackles the management of HR team better							
Has improved his/her personal profile as a senior HR/OD manager							
Is more effective at developing strategy and planning							
Manages his/her team better							
Has increased his/her personal effectiveness							
Is more confident in his/her ability to lead change							
Is more effective in managing stakeholders' expectations							
Puts more effort into developing and sharing a vision for people management							
Has extended his/her networks inside and outside the organisation							
Makes a greater effort to find innovative approaches							
Makes a greater effort to find flexible ways of working							
Is better at encouraging managed risk taking							
Is a better corporate manager							

4. What are the **five** most noticeable improvements that you have seen in **Participant 2**:

   a. ....

   b. ....

   c. ....

   d. ....

Part two: Programme processes, delivery and evaluation

5. The coaching programme offered six sessions over a period of six months. Please comment on:

   The number of sessions offered *(please tick **one** box only)*

   ☐ too many ☐ about right ☐ too few

The frequency of the sessions *(please tick **one** box only)*

☐ too often ☐ about right ☐ not often enough

Additional comments: ....

....

6. We are keen to improve the matching process of coaches to HR executives in future. Is there any other information that you think future participants might benefit from knowing in advance, regarding:

   How coaching works?

   ....

   ....

   Your coaching style?

   ....

   ....

7. As a coach, what further assistance or support would you like to receive from participants, the EO or their regions, or IES?

   ....

   ....

8. Do you have any additional comments about the LEAP coaching programme?

Thank you for completing this questionnaire

Please return this questionnaire to: Jonny Gifford, The Institute for Employment Studies, Mantell Building, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9RF