

APPLICATION FOR RECOGNITION AND ACCREDITATION OF LEARNING

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7.	Reflective Essay	Uploaded to Turnitin in separate document
8.	Module Cover Sheet	Uploaded to Turnitin in separate document
9.	PL3b Claim Form	Uploaded to Turnitin in separate document
10.	Employer Letter of Support	Uploaded to Turnitin in separate document
11.	Evidence to Support Claim	Emailed to wappar@uwtd.ac.uk Cc: S.Loxdale@uwtsd.ac.uk

CURRICULUM VITAE

Personal Information

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About Me

I am a dynamic, deep-thinking, and thought-provoking professional whose roots are entrenched within the fields of Human Resources and Project Management. I have spent over 20 years in the field of project management, extending this to my passion for people development and helping them achieve their full potential within the human resources fraternity. This deep need for helping others realise their potential has expanded to an interest into the field of Coaching and Mentoring, which I believe are key developmental and support tools for employees in the workplace. This has led me to complete an ICF accredited programme in Coaching and further accreditation as an Enneagram practitioner, which I also continue to work with outside of the workplace. My strengths most certainly lie in my enjoyment of bringing structure and great organisation to the projects and work that I do, while carefully and methodically thinking through the clear definition of the problems we are solving, the crisp articulation of what we are trying to achieve and ensuring we get it done. I work best in a collaborative environment, brainstorming with my colleagues on continuous improvement. I believe there is always a better way!

Work Experience

Business Manager, People and Culture at Standard Bank Group| (2017- present)

- Plan, direct, monitor, and ensure the successful management and implementation of designed People and Culture business solutions, processes, and people and system changes across Africa Regions (18 countries) through collaboration and partnership with the Group People and Culture programme office resources and partners
 - *The Standard Bank Financial Services Group has business operations in 18 countries on the Africa continent, excluding South Africa which is its largest market*
 - *Africa Regions is the division of the organisation that supports these 18 countries, playing an integration role between the requirements and activities at a Group level and the execution of these activities at a Country level*
 - *My role as the Business Manager is to ensure that all people-related projects are successfully implemented across the 18 countries and to also represent the “voice” of the countries in the Group discussions where people-related initiatives for the Group originate*
- Provide support to the Head, People and Culture, which entails supporting on various responsibilities including reporting on talent and succession planning to regulators, co-ordination, and management of the Africa Regions People Days (talent and succession planning interventions), Africa Regions People and Culture annual conference and responding to various People-related requests from the office of the Africa Regions Chief Executive and Group Head of People and Culture
 - *In addition to the management of People and Culture projects, I also support the Head of People and Culture for Africa Regions in the daily, business-as-usual People and Culture activities that impact Africa Regions*

- *Some of these activities include the end-to-end management of the annual “People Day” discussions on talent and succession planning for the Country Executive Committee roles as well as the Country Chief Executive roles*
 - *This would be followed by a detailed submission to the banking regulator on the outcomes of these discussions which I would be required to prepare*
 - *Other examples of business management activities that I am expected to fulfil include facilitating the priority-setting discussions, the annual People and Culture conference for Africa Regions, regular Connect sessions with the country People and Culture teams and ensuring all reporting requirements are completed and submitted as required*
- Advise Africa Regions People and Culture leadership on project portfolio, status, and resource planning for delivering People and Culture initiatives and maintain communication with stakeholders both within and across organisations to ensure smooth execution of all projects
 - *Provide regular progress updates to all relevant stakeholders (Africa Regions Leadership team, Group programme office, Country People and Culture teams etc.) on all projects within the ambit of the Africa Regions People and Culture portfolio*
- Identify and develop processes and optimisation methods that are efficient, effective, innovative and which drive best business practice delivery
 - *Fulfilling an integrator role between Group and Country in a highly matrixed and complex organisation, it becomes easy to see areas of duplication, potential efficiency improvement and simply, where things can be done better*
 - *It is expected that the Africa Regions People and Culture team would both highlight these areas and provide solutions on how these could be improved e.g., more efficient, and less cumbersome reporting mechanisms, more effective communication strategies with countries, sharing best practices which often come from the countries we support*
 - *What I would highlight as significant achievements in this space would be the initiation of country champions that would be closer to the Group projects and assist in implementing projects in their respective countries. This created a more efficient and streamlined process and, in addition, gave the country champions more exposure to Group initiatives*
 - *Further to this, I initiated the expansion of the role of project managers within the Programme Office to Business Managers supporting the Regional People and Culture Heads. Again, this provided an opportunity for the project managers to get closer to the country agendas and understand the specific country nuances, which made them more effective in how they implemented their projects.*
- Lead, coach, and mentor People and Culture programme office team to deliver value to the organisation through the enablement of strategies and project implementation
 - *Having 3 team members requires me to provide ongoing coaching and mentoring support on career progression, learning and development and navigating obstacles and challenging stakeholders within the organisation*
 - *In my time in this role, I have also had to sensitively manage the poor performance of one of the team members. My coaching experience taught me the value of empathy and compassion in this process, and I was able to wade through a very emotionally tough situation with “success” where the team member improved his performance and has now moved onto a more successful role in another country*
 - *Additionally, I mentored a People and Culture graduate for 18 months while she completed the Standard Bank People and Culture Graduate Programme. This involved regular sessions every two weeks to assist her in navigating the workplace and the organisation and understanding the People and Culture landscape at the bank. She brought both personal and professional challenges*

to the discussions and I utilised my coaching knowledge to help her unlock some of these challenges

- *In 2023, I have both coached and mentored another People and Culture graduate where we have regular engagements again on how to navigate the workplace, building professional relationships, making decisions on her permanent role at the bank and managing the balance between work demands, studying requirements and family life*

Secondment: Acting Regional Head of People and Culture, Southern Region at Standard Bank Group| (January-June 2022)

- Oversee People and Culture activities within the seven countries in the region: Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe
 - *The activities included the full human capital value chain including Talent Acquisition (Recruitment), Onboarding, Learning and Development, Performance Management, Reward and Benefits and Talent and Succession Planning*
 - *This involved working closely with the People and Culture teams in these countries to ensure that all people-related matters related to the human capital value chain indicated above are effectively managed, and support provided to the Business Heads that lead teams within the organisation*
- Provide guidance and support to the Heads of People and Culture and the People and Culture teams on ground while also performing integrator role between Group People and Culture and Country teams
 - *A key aspect of this role is guiding and providing the necessary support to the Country Heads of People and Culture within the region to ensure that they can effectively partner their Heads of Business who lead the teams*
 - *This meant regular meetings to share relevant Group information with them and to provide any coaching and mentoring required where they may have been experiencing challenges*
 - *As an example, one of our Country People and Culture Heads was dealing with a tough ruling from the Banking Regulator that had severe people impact. This individual was feeling very overwhelmed and anxious about doing the “wrong” thing when it came to the employees in the organization and meeting the banking regulatory requirements of the country. In my role as the line manager, I was able to provide coaching support to her and help her navigate the various obstacles she was facing, both personally and professionally. I was also able to mentor her about the specific technical people issues and guide her on the best course of action to take.*
- Partner Regional Chief Executive in achieving business objectives in the region through people practices
 - *As a People and Culture partner for the region, I had to provide support to the Regional Chief Executive on people-related matters in the region*
 - *This included, as examples, finalizing recruitment contracts for new Country Chief Executives and leading on the annual salary increase and bonus process for the region*
 - *A further example is partnering on the new “Chief Executive Conversation Series” initiative with the objective of providing ongoing development to the Country Chief Executives in the region. To achieve this, we reviewed the results of the annual employee engagement survey to assess areas of focus and, in addition, reviewed the business priorities for the region to formulate a set of engagements with Chief Executives to assist in their development*
- Translate the group and business line's people strategy into operational plans for execution at business unit level

- *This required again working closely with the Country People and Culture Heads and helping them to create specific country people plans that looked at both the Group and Country business strategies and priorities and responding with appropriate people-related initiatives that would support the business in achieving its objectives*
- *Countries were provided with guidelines on how to put together a People Plan and a joint session was conducted where each country in the region presented their customized country plans*

Secondment: Acting Head, People and Culture at Standard Bank Angola | (August 2020-March 2021)

- **Oversee People and Culture activities within Standard Bank Angola**
 - *The activities included the full human capital value chain including Talent Acquisition (Recruitment), Onboarding, Learning and Development, Performance Management, Reward and Benefits and Talent and Succession Planning*
- **Guide the People and Culture team in effectively partnering with their business to achieve their people plans**
 - *This required coaching and mentoring the team members within the Standard Bank Angola People and Culture team*
 - *Many of the team members were left quite unsettled by the surprise resignation of the previous Head of People and Culture and it was left to me to pull the team together, help them to feel like a team again (while working virtually through the pandemic) and support and guide them in effectively delivering the people initiatives to the respective business units they supported*
 - *One team member was left particularly uncomfortable when hearing of the departure of the previous Head of People and Culture. He believed there were promises that were unfulfilled and he was not in a good space about the kind of work he was doing. I spent time mentoring this individual and helping him regain his confidence and find joy in his work again. This was through understanding his frustrations, his desired way of working and empowering him to again deliver in an independent way to his business. This individual continues to talk to me when dealing with challenges so there continues to be an informal mentoring relationship.*
- **Partner with Country Chief Executive and the Exco team in people-related matters and activities throughout the human capital value chain**
 - *As the Head of People and Culture, I partnered the Country Chief Executive and the Executive Committee in achieving the country people priorities which involved reviewing the current culture programme, initiating a culture journey better aligned to the country priorities, responding to people-related regulatory changes as prescribed by the banking regulator, completing the annual People Day discussion on talent and succession planning and managing the year-end performance and remuneration review process*
- **Translate the group and country's people strategy into operational plans for execution at business unit level**
 - *For the most part, the country priorities and related people initiatives had already been agreed at the time I stepped into the role, so I worked with the Executive Committee and People and Culture team in ensuring these plans were executed as agreed*
- **Partner with new Head of People and Culture and "hand hold" through settling-in period**
 - *The permanent Head of People and Culture joined the organisation in January 2021. She was external to the organisation, so I continued to work on the country initiatives until March while she completed her induction process and started to learn about the organisation*

- *I fulfilled this role virtually from South Africa, so I set up regular calls with the new Head to complete the handover of work to her while also providing support in meetings and working on some matters to completion e.g., annual performance management and reward process which runs to the end of March*
- *There was certainly an element of coaching and mentoring in this relationship as I helped the new Head settle into the role and in navigating the complex organisation, understanding the matrix way of working and easing her into the team dynamic with the People and Culture team and the Executive Committee*

Qualifications

- **Institution:** The Coaching Centre
Majors: Coaching
Degree: Integral Coaching Practitioner Programme (2020) (accredited by the ICF)
Modules: Module 1: Fundamentals of Coaching
Module 2: Coaching for Change
Module 3: Integral Presence
Module 4: Integral+ Coaching to Way of Being
Module 5: Coaching in Diversity
Module 6: Coaching Models and Frameworks
Module 7: Balancing Health
Module 8: Psychology of Coaching
Module 9: Coaching Others – The Interpersonal Space
Module 10: Resilience in Coaching
Module 11: Integral+ Systems Thinking
Module 12: Coaching in the Africa Context
- **Institution:** University of South Africa (UNISA)
Majors: Industrial Psychology
Degree: Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Industrial Psychology (2010)
- **Institution:** University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)
Majors: Psychology, Industrial Psychology
Degree: Bachelor of Arts (1998)
- **Institution:** Stanger Manor Secondary School
Subjects: English, Afrikaans, Mathematics, Physical Science, Geography, Accounting
Degree: Matric Exemption (1994)

Awards

- Standard Bank People and Culture Annual Mark of Excellence 2021
- Standard Bank People and Culture Annual Mark of Excellence Nominee 2014

Courses and Accreditations

- Five Lens Practitioner Level Certification Programme
 - *The programme provides access to a toolset of products and processes aimed at deepening awareness of one's behavioural patterns, specific strengths, and developmental themes*
 - *Modules covered are:*

- *Personal Mastery*
 - *Emotional Resilience*
 - *Social Drives*
 - *Energy Centres*
 - *Enneagram*
- **Launch your Coaching Practice**
 - *The objective of the programme was to obtain the practical skills required to make your coaching practice a success*
 - *Modules covered:*
 - *The economic environment, opportunities and trends that are impacting coaching*
 - *Getting your message right*
 - *Getting your message out*
 - *The customer journey from brand agnostic to brand advocate*
 - *Case studies of successful coaches*
 - *Building your business model*
 - *Contracting*
- **MIT@SBG 2022 Digital Programme (Massachusetts Institute of Technology/Standard Bank)**
 - *The MIT@SBG 2022 Programme is a focused, interactive, and application-oriented online learning journey, designed to engage Standard Bank Group leaders with MIT faculty, and one another, to explore what it means to be future-ready, as well as to discuss the opportunities and challenges enterprises face in the digital economy.*
 - *Modules covered:*
 - *Building the next generation enterprise*
 - *Designed for digital*
 - *Digital Business strategy and Security*
 - *Marketing Analytics*
 - *Artificial Intelligence*
 - *Blockchain*
 - *Data monetisation*
 - *Charting our path forward*
- **Certificate in Behavioural Science (Standard Bank)**
 - *The programme provides participants with in-depth knowledge in the field of Behavioural Science by emphasising general principles that underlies economic and consumer behaviour*
 - *Modules covered:*
 - *Introduction to Behavioural Science*
 - *Nudging*
 - *Heuristics*
 - *How we make decisions*
 - *Reasoning by example*

Interests and Activities

Currently include running, exploring new restaurants/markets, and reading

References

Available on request

Job Description

Job title	Business Manager – People and Culture
Job reports to	Head of People & Culture
Other reporting relationships	N/A
Direct reports	3 Regional Business Managers
Level of Job	Senior Management
Job purpose description and key responsibilities	
Job purpose ○ Partner with the Head of People and Culture and other members of the People and Culture Africa Regions Leadership Team in operationalizing People and Culture strategic themes and associated initiatives for 18 countries across Africa Regions, with the headcount of employees that benefit from these projects numbering over 14000 in the region and the number of projects being managed ranging between 15 and 20 projects at any given time ○ Co-ordinate and facilitate effective and successful implementation of Group-wide People and Culture major projects for 18 countries across Africa Regions ○ Provide business management support to the Head of People and Culture ○ Provide People and Culture project management support (plan, drive, oversee, report & measure) to 3 Regional People and Culture Heads (through Regional Business Managers) whose scope of work spans across the 18 countries on the continent Business Management ○ Assist with the development and execution of activities designed to operationalise People and Culture Africa Regions focus areas/strategic pillars and associated initiatives ○ <i>Use Group People and Culture strategic priorities and amend these to align to the priorities of Africa Regions, as set by the Chief Executive, Africa Regions and taking into consideration the most significant priorities set by countries in Africa Regions</i> ○ <i>Once completed, socialise the Africa Regions People and Culture priorities with Country People and Culture Heads to allow for customisation based on country priorities</i> ○ Support creation of People and Culture Africa Regions Annual Calendar/Plan and facilitate the roll-out of the various activities/initiatives on the calendar (monthly meetings, annual conference) ○ <i>Create a calendar of People and Culture activities and processes for the year e.g., performance management, reward and talent and succession planning processes</i> ○ <i>Share the calendar with relevant stakeholders to allow for their planning; these would include the Regional People and Culture Heads and Country People and Culture teams (Head and Business Partners), Group Programme Office and Centres of Excellence (specialist) teams</i> ○ Produce People and Culture Africa Regions reports (regular/monthly or ad hoc basis) timeously for submission to the various governance/management structures ○ <i>Collate submissions from country teams for inclusion in the various reports</i> ○ <i>Include relevant information in the monthly submission to the Group Leadership Council, focusing specifically on what would be top of mind for the Group</i> ○ <i>Complete quarterly submission for People Risk committee by highlighting areas of concern and success within the Africa Regions People Risk arena</i> ○ <i>Complete quarterly submission for the Africa Regions Governance Committee by highlighting people-related governance matters of concern to the community</i> ○ Develop and deploy Programme Management Office communication channels/platforms with technical support from the Group Project Management Office team and input from other key stakeholders ○ <i>Plan the programme for the Africa Regions Connect session with the Africa Regions People and Culture Community, held 2-3 times per year in consultation with the Head People and Culture, Africa Regions, Regional People and Culture Heads and People and Culture Business Partner</i> ○ <i>Pull together all relevant data for the sessions and partner with the relevant teams to facilitate the sessions e.g., Brand & Marketing, Technology, etc.</i> ○ <i>Communicate with Africa Regions country teams on the session and where their involvement may be required</i>	

- Ensure engagement forums operate effectively with development of agendas circulated, action plans documented and followed through
 - *These include weekly team meetings, monthly Leadership Forums with the extended People and Culture Africa Regions team and quarterly sessions with the Africa Regions People and Culture Business Partner Heads*
 - *Ensure that initiatives are followed through, and actions completed as emerges from the various forums with support from the Project Management Office team*
- Conduct analysis and research on topical people issues in Africa Regions and help with business case development as and when required
 - *This would involve areas of investigation as suggested by Chief Executive, Africa Regions and People and Culture Stratco members based on priorities and activities within Africa Regions and in discussion with Head People and Culture, Africa Regions*
 - *Present business case findings to the relevant parties and take forward actions as agreed*
 - *Examples of this could include the possible implementation of a mandatory vaccination policy in all Africa Regions countries*

Program management

- Manage a portfolio of Africa Regions People and Culture projects from conceptualisation to benefits realization with projects emanating from Group or specific to People and Culture Africa Regions
 - *Using Africa Regions People and Culture priorities as indicated above, create the programme of work detailing the projects to be implemented in Africa Regions to meet the delivery of said priorities*
 - *Engage the Group Programme Office to understand the projects from Group People and Culture that will need to be incorporated into the Africa Regions programme of work and implemented in the countries*
 - *Ensure delivery of these projects in country within the agreed scope, quality, and timelines*
- Develop dashboard that monitors the delivery of projects in the portfolio
 - *Provide regular and structured progress reports to the relevant stakeholders on the delivery of projects across Africa Regions*
 - *Reports should be provided at the monthly Africa Regions leadership forum and updates provides to the Group Programme Office at the monthly People and Culture project session*
- Primary representative for People and Culture Africa Regions at various Group project forums and meetings
 - *Attend all project forums and meetings that involve Africa Regions projects and provide input on both Group and Africa Regions projects with regards to scope of projects, relevance to and manner of execution in Africa Regions*
- Engage key stakeholders like Africa Regions Group People and Culture Solutions Heads and Regional People and Culture Heads to ensure alignment and buy-in on projects
 - *Socialise projects with key stakeholders once agreed to by Africa Regions People and Culture Leadership Team*
 - *Provide detail to countries in Regional Manco sessions and ensure Project Management Office team provide regular updates at these sessions on progress of projects*
- Conduct training, information sharing session and support to facilitate successful implementation of projects
 - *Based on the nature of the projects, ensure that relevant upskilling is conducted with country People and Culture teams particularly on People and Culture systems*
 - *Obtain feedback on progress in countries and share this with Group project teams to ensure country requirements are met*

Stakeholder and line management

- Build a mutually beneficial relationship with key stakeholders (Group People and Culture Solutions, People and Culture Heads, working groups, project teams etc.)
 - *Conduct regular communication sessions with stakeholders to update on progress in Africa Regions and to understand what initiatives are underway that may potentially impact Africa Regions*

- *Schedule one-on-one sessions with Regional People and Culture Heads to understand challenges and successes in the countries within their respective regions; this would extend beyond people-related matters and would include significant business priorities*
- Develop an operational understanding of how the various Africa Regions country People and Culture teams operate to create context for effective execution coordination of the various projects/initiatives
 - *Maintain regular engagement with the Africa Regions People and Culture Business Partner to stay updated on People and Culture initiatives in country*
- Provide ongoing coaching and mentoring support to the Project Management Office team (3 Regional Business Managers)
 - *Conduct regular engagements on their employee experience and to help overcome obstacles within their jobs which may include difficult senior stakeholders, navigating country complexity, dealing with uncooperative colleagues and personal challenges that may be impacting their work performance*
 - *Have regular career progression conversations and assist in creating opportunities for them to achieve their career goals*
 - *Ensure ongoing learning and development by agreeing what is within their area of interest and facilitating these opportunities by attendance at formal programmes, on-the-job shadowing, and possible secondment opportunities*

Qualifications, experience, skills, and competencies

Minimum Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree

Preferred Qualifications

- Post Graduate Diploma
- Project Management qualification

Experience

- 10 years with operational and tactical experience in business management, project management (proven delivery of People and Culture related projects) in a multiple business units' and matrix environment

Knowledge and skills

- People and Culture value-add proposition, People and Culture value chain and macro trends shaping the profession
- Office 365 and other People and Culture systems
- Data collation and manipulation tools and methods to draw insights
- Change management and communication

Behavioral Competencies

- Establishing Rapport
- Execution and results oriented
- Attention to detail, methodical and high levels of accuracy
- Ability to shape and influence
- Purposeful collaboration
- Resilient and resourceful
- Decision making
- Strategic planning
- Relationship building
- Providing insights
- Team working
- Process thinking

Additional High-Level Job Descriptions

(Two temporary secondment opportunities within the last 5 years)

Job title	Country Head of People & Culture (People and Culture) (Period of 6 months)
Job reports to	Country Chief Executive
Other reporting relationships	N/A
Direct reports	3 People and Culture Business Partners, 3 People and Culture Operations Consultants, 3 Learning Consultants, 1 Talent Acquisition Consultant, 1 People and Culture Officer, 1 Employee Relations Manager
Level of Job	Senior Management
Job Purpose - To lead a country portfolio, using specialist knowledge, collaborating with senior stakeholders (Country Chief Executive and the Executive Committee), advising the different business units on crafting and execution of bespoke and pragmatic people solutions - To formulate a way forward for the country portfolio that is fit for purpose, advances the business agenda and people experience within a transforming organisation - To lead the country portfolio, change agenda, managing various stakeholders, ensuring visibility of the Business Partnering team in resolving highly complex people-related problems - As a line manager, provide coaching and mentoring guidance to the People and Culture team reporting into the role and ensure appropriate developmental opportunities are also provided to achieve the right level of performance	

Job title	Regional Head of People and Culture (Period of 5 months)
Job reports to	Head of People and Culture, Africa Regions
Other reporting relationships	Regional Chief Executive
Direct/domain reports	7 Country Heads of People and Culture
Level of Job	Executive
Job Purpose - Provides oversight and guidance to Country Heads of People and Culture in the cascading of Standard Bank Group People and Culture strategic priorities and articulating Africa Region priorities to ensure integration into each Country's People Plans - Lead, coach, develop and mentor a high performing team by providing thought leadership, support in reviewing resource allocations across the Region but particularly to the Country Heads of People and Culture - The role is an extension of the Head of People and Culture, Africa Regions role, assisting with the span of control and focused on the specific countries within the region - The role focuses on shaping the People ambitions of the Region, considering country nuances, and by acting as an integrator to ensure alignment of Group People and Culture and Africa Regions, Regional and Country agendas	

Title of Learning Area: Understanding the Enneagram Personality Framework and its value in the coaching journey

Amount of credit claimed for learning area: 40

Level at which credit is being claimed: 7

Learning Outcomes:

1. Reflect on the value of the Enneagram in my self-development and coaching journey, and assess and critically analyse my own personality and associated behaviours, using the Enneagram framework
2. Review and evaluate the application of the Enneagram in improving team effectiveness
3. Critically evaluate the use of the Enneagram as a tool in coaching

Introduction and Context

I was introduced to the world of coaching in 2009 when my organisation decided to pilot executive and team coaching as a part of their leadership effectiveness initiative. Our team was the pilot team to be exposed to this and I was intrigued from the first session. It felt like “psychology” but a simpler and more practical version that I could easily wrap my head around. Our executive coach used simple models and incisive questioning to unpack our effectiveness as a team, by helping us to increase the awareness of our individual selves.

I remember a specific incident when I came into the session and complained about one of my key stakeholders in the organisation who had effectively told me I lacked drive. It was hurtful to hear and very embarrassing, but I felt that I could share this in a safe space at the coaching session. Being very kind in his approach but also quite direct, the coach asked me to carefully consider if there was any truth to what I was being told. It was very difficult, but it led me to face up to the reality that I did indeed lack drive. Through further investigation and probing from the coach, I came to the realisation that the lack of drive stemmed from my belief that I wasn’t smart enough for the role, having had no previous Human Resources experience. I was hesitating and procrastinating because I was so doubtful of my ability to add any significant value. This may sound like a simple moment, but it was incredibly profound for me and ignited my interest in coaching.

One of the most significant aspects of these coaching sessions was my introduction to Sigmund Freud’s Iceberg Theory. I learned about how one’s conscious thoughts and behaviours are only the “tip of the iceberg” and was truly informed by what was happening at a much deeper level “below the surface”, which were the unconscious fears and motives and

the real cause of most behaviour. (Freud, 1915) Working through this and trying to unpack what this meant for me started to unearth why I appeared to lack drive in my job, when it was really my fear of not being smart enough that was preventing me from being more proactive in how I approached my work.

The experience of being coached cemented my desire to become a coach myself. I had a psychology background from my studies at university and this brought me back into this world, although I was very clear that coaching was not psychology. The element of helping others to increase self-awareness, gain insight, and to increase their range of thinking and feeling to hopefully fulfil their potential, was what appealed the most to me. And while I had delayed it for many years, I eventually committed to a coaching programme with The Coaching Centre (TCC) in 2019.

Prior to the start of the coaching programme, my only understanding of coaching was as a coachee during the team coaching process at my organisation. I enjoyed being on the receiving end of coaching, but I had no idea what was involved in being a coach. I respected how the coach asked deep and probing questions and I was in awe of his knowledge of theoretical models and knowing when and how to apply it to the specific topic being discussed in the coaching session. He was an “expert” and I wanted that knowledge as well. My expectation was that the coaching programme would teach me all of this.

What also appealed was the element of elevated self-awareness woven throughout the programme. The programme referred extensively to building reflective practices, but I knew nothing about this, only being exposed to the “check-in” process when we would start our team coaching sessions. I was soon to learn that the reflective practice was the most intense aspect of the coaching programme and if I could do it effectively, it would allow me to not only be a great coach, but also a self-aware human being. Effectively, the belief is that one cannot be a good coach if one does not understand oneself. In the research article titled “Exploring the role of self-awareness in coach development: A grounded theory study” (Carden, Passmore and Jones, 2022), the researchers’ findings indicate that self-awareness is an important competency for coaches to develop. The benefit of this is that it forms the foundation for a deep and meaningful connection for the coach in terms of confidence and self-acceptance, and for the coachee in terms of the depth of the relationship. They further propose that the greater the self-awareness of the coach, the more effectively it allows the coach to work at a deeper level with their coachees. The data collected for the study was through exploring the lived experiences of coaches in identifying the role self-awareness has played in their development as a coach.

At the very start of the coaching programme, I was exposed to David Kolb's Model of Reflection (Kolb, 1984). This was done so that I, together with the students in my class, could better understand the stages in the learning process and how this applied to our own learning. The model focuses on four stages of learning in a cyclical manner which are concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active experimentation. The first stage refers to when the learner is exposed to the new concept or learning intervention. As an example, this could have been the classroom session I attended for every coaching module where I was presented with new information. The second stage refers to reflective observation where the learner reflects on their concrete experience to better understand it. In the coaching programme, I would have sessions with other students in my group, known as fishbowl sessions, where we would discuss and analyse the module and what we had learned and taken away from it. After the conclusion of every module, we would have module reflection forms that we were required to complete. These forms asked us to reflect on the module but also to consider how this could be practically applied in our coaching relationships. This describes the stage of abstract conceptualization because it provided me with the opportunity to think through what made sense for me, and how I would uniquely apply my learnings in the coaching sessions in a way that represented my ideas and how I had interpreted what I had learned. The final stage of active experimentation was then applied in the practical coaching sessions where I had the chance to "test out" my learnings and adjust my approach based on what worked and what did not.

Having the knowledge of Kolb's model was very beneficial to me as a learner because I could understand how I was learning, and I could give myself the opportunity to consciously work through all the stages to cement my learning.

Learning Outcome 1: Reflect on the value of the Enneagram in my self-development and coaching journey, and assess and critically analyse my own personality and associated behaviours, using the Enneagram framework

The TCC programme comprised twelve monthly modules with an additional one-day programme introducing the students to the "Enneagram". While I did not know much about the Enneagram, I was hearing others say things ahead of the workshop that sounded like it was assessing my personality type. This made me very sceptical because it reminded me of frivolous personality questionnaires one completed in a magazine that had no real substance. However, as requested by our supervisor, I read nothing of the Enneagram ahead of the workshop.

At the start of the workshop, we were presented with some of the history of the Enneagram and how it developed over time. The history and origin of the Enneagram was important to share because, I believe, it provided information on the credibility of the tool. As I conducted research later in my Enneagram journey and as discussed further in this document, I learned that the Enneagram has often come under criticism for not being a scientifically valid personality tool. As I read about the origin of the Enneagram, and the development of the tool often by philosophers, spiritual teachers, and adventurers, I could understand why many critics viewed it as such. (Riso, 1996) Having the history presented to us in the workshop and the facilitator, a psychologist herself, provided the right context for us to fully engage in the session and be open to understanding how the tool could be used to effectively coach our future clients.

After the history and context of the Enneagram was presented to us, we were given a set of cards that had a breakdown of different characteristics or traits on them. Looking in detail through the various traits listed on the cards, we were asked to, as objectively as possible, choose the card that most resonated with us. I took a very long time to decide which card was the right one because it felt that many of the traits on the cards described me. Later in the workshop, I learned from the facilitator that a person is never just one type and there will be various aspects of the different types that will resonate. There is, however, one dominant type that could best describe each of us.

I remember feeling a sense of discomfort about the traits because I had jumped immediately to the “negative” traits of my identified personality type or the “areas of low integration” as it is named in the Enneagram framework. I identified as a Type One Strict Perfectionist, but I was also denying this because the personality type sounded too rigid and stiff. In addition, we were taught about the connection between the types where Type Ones move towards Four in times of stress, which indicated moody and irrational, and ideally towards Seven in times of growth which is being more spontaneous and joyful. I left the workshop still not completely convinced of the value of the Enneagram – it felt like an esoteric and non-scientific tool – but it did trigger my interest to investigate further on my own to better understand the value of it. We were also encouraged by our facilitator to conduct our own research, considering how little could be covered in one day, together with her sharing some information with us after the session. In addition, we were required to write a short essay on our reflection of the experience, which helped me to further process the events of the day, and to think through how I would apply the learnings to myself as a coach.

As I searched online, I learned that the Enneagram was a very popular personality tool, used quite extensively in the world of coaching. Doing a quick Google search on “Enneagram”

brought up 12.5 million results with many of the websites offering the opportunity to take the Enneagram personality test. In the book *Personality Types: Using the Enneagram for Self-Discovery* (1996) by Don Richard Riso, an author of many books about the Enneagram, he writes of the value of the Enneagram in understanding personalities and associated behaviours, highlighting that the Enneagram can be used by psychologists and psychiatrists to diagnose problems more accurately while those in therapy can gain insight into themselves more quickly. Like psychologists and psychiatrists who can use the Enneagram in diagnosing problems, the Enneagram is valuable insight, to a coach, into the personality of a coachee when understanding why and how the coachee may be “stuck” or how to move them forward in a way that is best suited to their personality type. On the website, [Coaching - The Enneagram in Business](#), they state the following:

The Enneagram’s coaching application makes a dramatic difference in coaching because it allows coaches to identify the coachee’s coaching needs quickly, enables coachees to do a great deal of growth on their own, and provides specific development paths and activities for coachees based on Enneagram type. Coaching thus goes faster, deeper, and has longer-lasting results.

I also read more about my Type One traits, this time trying to focus more on the positive traits, which were there in abundance now that I had time to investigate for myself.

What was valuable about learning about the Enneagram was it raised my self-awareness, which was what was intended by the workshop. Again, if I refer to the research conducted on the value of self-awareness as a coach in the article “Exploring the role of self-awareness in coach development: A grounded theory study” (Carden and Jones, 2022), the feedback received from the coaches that were interviewed was that developing self-awareness as a coach enabled them to “remove their own ego” and “get out of the way” which allowed for increased presence and deeper connection with the coachee. This ultimately resulted in the development of the coaching relationship. Understanding more about myself through my Enneagram profile meant that my increased self-awareness would benefit my coachees in the coaching relationship. I would be able to “get out of the way” by knowing what my own profile was bringing into the conversation and not confusing it with that of the coachee. It also meant that having experienced the Enneagram for myself, I had more in-depth knowledge on what the coachee would be experiencing when they completed their own profile and had the debrief with the practitioner.

There were aspects of how I showed up in the world that were now being brought to my attention. In so doing, it helped me to understand how I respond in different situations which, in turn, becomes helpful in my coaching practice. As an example, being a Type One meant I

thrived in a structured and organised environment and was very action-oriented, driving towards results and outcomes as quickly as I could. At the same time, I was learning in my coaching programme that the process of coaching could be quite messy (not happening in a simple linear process), based on where the coachee was in their journey, and that trying to achieve a tangible result and an “aha” moment took a very long time, sometimes not materialising at all! Having greater self-awareness meant that I would not confuse my own emotions and reactions in a coaching relationship and more importantly, I could be more conscious of, and responsive to, the need of the coachee by being more patient and not expecting it all to go smoothly or perfectly. This was a significant learning for me and something of which I have had to remind myself throughout my coaching programme as I coached various people. I learned that coachees not necessarily achieving the goals they set for themselves at the start of the coaching relationship was not always through poor coaching technique and me being a poor coach but, often, due to the coachee not being fully committed to making the changes they initially set out to achieve. I knew that I was hyper-critical of myself, which also came to light as I completed my Enneagram profile, so I needed and appreciated this insight to persevere with my coaching practice.

The Enneagram workshop was conducted quite early in the coaching programme; three months into it, to be exact. I was, however, already starting to slowly coach willing volunteers and was understanding the need to firstly, learn to listen to the coachee and secondly and very importantly, to listen without judgement. This was not an easy task which is why the programme focused on spending as much time being coached as it did on learning to coach. As I was being coached, my personality traits and “blind spots” were coming into view, and it was helping me to distinguish my own thoughts and emotions from that of the coachee, while also remaining kind and caring in the coaching relationship. Being exposed to the Enneagram made me realise that I also had many areas of low integration that needed much work; this helped me to be more understanding of those that I coached, knowing that they also had areas of self-awareness that needed to be brought to their attention. In summary, going through the experience of understanding my own Enneagram type, I also learned how being able to administer the Enneagram to coachees could potentially assist them with their own self-awareness ahead of starting the coaching relationship.

One matter that made me feel a little sceptical about the Enneagram was how it appeared on the Internet as a general personality test without much apparent scientific or psychological basis behind it. It was on many different websites and in different formats and it felt again like it had no real merit behind it. I continued with my coaching programme but chose to not pay further attention to the Enneagram until I was reintroduced to it two years later as part of a team effectiveness session in my workplace.

Learning Outcome 2: Review and evaluate the application of the Enneagram in improving team effectiveness

The leader of our team was interested in increasing the effectiveness of our team. He was advised by our Leadership and Culture partner in our Human Resources team to consider completing the Enneagram process with each team member and to then bring us together for a joint team process. The team session would look at how well-represented we were as a team across the nine Enneagram types and to also understand the overall type of the team.

This process was run differently from how it had been shared with me during the TCC coaching workshop. The Enneagram practitioner facilitating the process sent us a link to a questionnaire that was very detailed. What was different in this process was I did not “choose” my dominant type but had to answer the questions indicating which responses best described me. As I provided my responses, I realised I had no way of telling what type I would turn out to be. This seemed to make more sense to me because it took almost all the subjectivity out of the process. I couldn’t choose the type that I believed sounded best; I had to accept what emerged from the report. I could not go back to ask my TCC programme facilitator why she had chosen a different approach to determining one’s Enneagram type so I will never have an answer to that, but I do think the questionnaire was a much better approach.

As indicated earlier, I believe the Enneagram tool can help unearth so much about oneself, so trying to determine one’s profile when having little to no self-insight surely cannot be very successful when reading and choosing it from a set of cards. When I received the detailed report after completing the questionnaire, it said that I was now a dominant Type Six – Cautious Investigator. This felt very confusing for me and more disappointing than the previous belief that I was a Type One. I had since made peace with this and had started to embrace what the positive aspects of Type One represented for me and of me. This Type Six seemed focused on managing risk and foreseeing what could go wrong in the world. In addition, I was now wondering which type was really me.

The Enneagram practitioner had an individual session with each of the team members where she went through the report in detail, talking more to my type and how I would be showing up in the world. This process felt more engaging and more credible than my first engagement with the Enneagram during my coaching course because I was being taught how my responses to the questions contributed to the overall type and I could see the connection. I enjoyed the process because the practitioner used the Enneagram report to also coach me, pulling aspects of my report into the session to ask probing questions and to better understand my personality and contribution to the team. I learned from this positive experience how I would choose to unpack the Enneagram profile for my future coachees and how I would

integrate coaching practices into the debrief. Rather than merely detailing the profile of the individual in the debrief session, I would pause and ask coaching questions that would delve deeper into the responses of the coachee. To do this, I would ask the coachee what emotions and thoughts were emerging for them as they were hearing about aspects of their profile. This would move away from the superficial learning about their profile towards better and more deeply understanding what impact it was having on them.

After a few weeks we were brought together in a team session where we unpacked the dominant types of each team member. This was then plotted onto the Enneagram framework where we could view an overall representation of the team. The practitioner unpacked for us where we had most representation and where we had gaps. Looking at this, we could understand how we performed together as a team and where we would have development areas. In our team, we were a dominant Type Seven Enthusiastic Visionary – this indicated that there was much “blue sky” and conceptual and creative thinking in the team, but we were lacking when it came to the actual execution of the projects, not having sufficient representation in the types that were focused on getting the work done. I was also the only Type Six in the team, and it drove home for me the reasons why I sometimes felt distant from the team and why I was often the “naysayer” when most of the others were excited and optimistic about big projects. It also showed me, however, the value I offered in highlighting the risks and realisms to be faced when the Type Sevens, as an example, started to excitedly plan an overly ambitious initiative.

Coming out of the team session, I could see the value in using the Enneagram in increasing team effectiveness. The team session showed me the value of using the Enneagram, as a practitioner, for individuals to better understand themselves in relation to others, particularly in a work context where we often operate within a team context and our actions have an impact on others. While I am aware that I will not always coach others in a team setting and more often as individuals, I could see the value of a coachee understanding themselves more holistically within a team or community construct. This is due to me having a perception of my Type Six after the individual coaching session but the perception shifting and seeing my strengths and weaknesses differently after the team session.

Before the team session, we were asked to individually connect with some of our team colleagues. Unpacking their profiles and my own was very beneficial in knowing why another person showed up in a particular way, but also in understanding how to more effectively work with them to achieve the team goals. We could also use each person’s “strengths” in different projects or situations to increase our chances of success. Once again, this understanding of my profile in relation to another enhanced my view of myself and helped me better understand

how we could work more effectively together for greater results. As a coach and future Enneagram practitioner, I could see how individual coaching may provide certain limitations for the coachee in fully understanding themselves. I am still not completely sure how I would do this, but I could see the value in one-on-one coaching being extended to the coachee having a view of themselves in a wider organisational or societal context.

While I had been somewhat trained on the Enneagram in my coaching programme, I derived greater value and substantially increased my knowledge on the tool through the team effectiveness session. I could see that I was now interacting with others in the workplace through the Enneagram lens in a way, trying to guess what type they may be but also trying to be more understanding of how they showed up if I did know their type. One of the significant examples where this played out was with a member of my team who reported to me. This team member was sadly not performing well in his job and was being taken into a formal performance improvement process. As the line manager, I was expected to lead the process. I was trying very hard to better understand what was happening with the individual and how we could assist him, but he seemed to shut down and not engage at all. The poor performance had arisen previously, prior to us completing the Enneagram profiles, and was now showing up again. In the first instance, I realised that I had been pushing him quite strongly to participate in the discussions and to provide me with detail on what was going on with him. This time, however, I was better positioned to understand how he was reacting. I knew that he was a Type Nine, and I now also knew that this type was all about creating harmony and very inclined to avoid confrontation. Type Nines also avoid expressing their own opinions because they believe it is dangerous to voice their needs and to act on them. Having this knowledge meant that I could engage him in a different way that was better suited to his needs. This meant giving him the space to speak when he needed to, but also understanding if he didn't. My role was to help him realise that this was a safe space for him and that we were trying to provide support, that his opinions and needs were quite important, and we really wanted to hear it. It gave me great pleasure to watch his performance significantly improve and to still have maintained a positive relationship with him. This illustrated how practically using the learnings I derived from the Enneagram sessions helped me be a better line manager and in so doing, improve the effectiveness of, and collaboration within, the team.

Learning Outcome 3: Critically evaluate the use of the Enneagram as a tool in coaching

Towards the middle of 2022, I decided to complete a programme to become an Enneagram practitioner myself. I could now see the value of the Enneagram profile in assisting my coachees after completing the team effectiveness session. The programme was very detailed

and taught me about every Enneagram type and increased my knowledge about the full tool. It started again with the detailed history of the Enneagram, how it evolved over time and how it was now being used in various corporate environments and extensively within the coaching world. What was particularly interesting for me this time was reading about the perspective on how we have each developed our Enneagram style. The facilitator shared with us in the classroom session that it is likely because of our genetic predisposition but, together with significant childhood experiences, it leads us to adopting one of the nine Enneagram styles as a safety and defence mechanism. This mechanism then works so well that we unconsciously exhibit the style through childhood and into adulthood. Also interesting is that we tend to display our dominant style more prominently when we are under stress or in a reactive situation

Again, I was asked to complete the questionnaire so I could first understand my profile before learning how to use the tool to coach others. I could not at all remember the questions from the previous time, but I also believed they were different in format, so I was not answering in the same way from memory. Interestingly my profile emerged once again to be a Type Six. This was proper confirmation to me that I was indeed a Type Six, even if I still wasn't thrilled by this profile. On the one hand, I was relieved to have a consistent profile. If I had emerged as another type, I would likely have lost faith in the tool, more so because the Enneagram course facilitator, the facilitator from the previous team effectiveness session, and the facilitator from my coaching programme all indicated that people likely have one type throughout their lives. I have since accepted that the first time I completed the profile using the cards was perhaps not the most objective approach in asking someone to determine their type. I believe the questionnaire is a more reliable and valid tool to administer the Enneagram and is what I used in my subsequent case studies and will continue to use in the future.

If, initially, I wasn't very happy to know I was a dominant Type Six, the second time felt worse because it was real confirmation. Interestingly, it is exactly the trait of my type to see how things can go wrong or to be quite negative, that focused on the less desirable traits of my type. I read words on my profile that said, "concerned and distrusting, cautious and safely advancing" and I struggled to see any positives in that. What did, however, help me through this was the debriefing on my profile by one of the accredited course administrators and reading through my detailed report. The administrator highlighted to me that there are points of high integration and low integration for every type, and I was likely at a point of low integration at this time, based on my high stress levels. It did not mean that there were no positive traits to my type and as I read further, I held onto phrases such as "Your well-developed observations skills...", "Your excellent imagination and ability to accurately predict outcomes allows you to discern future difficulties..." and "These skills allow you to...articulate

obstacles that need to be considered and or overcome, and providing ways in which said obstacles can be avoided.” I wasn’t completely satisfied yet, but I was starting to focus more on the positives.

Completing the practitioner course was a significant next step in my coaching journey because it cemented for me how the Enneagram could help in the coaching relationship. Being on the receiving end of the Enneagram again, meaning I was once again completing the profile and having the debrief from the practitioner, showed me another style of coaching while unpacking my report. This practitioner had a kind but quite direct style of questioning, which forced me to think about how and why I had responded to the questions in a particular way. I also had to pay attention to this debrief in a different way now, because I was learning for myself how to debrief, as opposed to just listening to better understand my profile. Interestingly, I took away from the session both things that I would do and not do in my debriefs with my coachees. I learned to be empathetic in providing the feedback and taking time to listen to the coachee because I could see for myself that I was processing the feedback as I was responding to the practitioner. I did not, however, enjoy the feedback being provided via an audio call where the person conducting my debrief did not switch on their cameras during the debrief. This felt very impersonal to me, and I noted that I would not provide feedback in that manner to anyone. If it had to be via an online mechanism, I would make it as personal and as connected as I could, because this is what would have worked best for me.

In obtaining my certification for the programme, I had to complete two case studies, which I did with two of my colleagues in the workplace. I was able to take all my learning from the programme as well as my own knowledge of experiencing the Enneagram in both an individual and team setting to administer the questionnaire and to confidently debrief the two participants. I further assisted a graduate trainee that had recently joined our organisation to complete the questionnaire and obtain insight into his profile.

Completing the two case studies was not a comfortable process. I felt unsure of how to practically provide the feedback without reading directly from the written report provided to the two participants. I tried to read and remember as much as possible so that I could ensure the discussion flowed easily but it still felt awkward and a bit stiff. I was fortunate to have two willing colleagues as case studies who understood that I was a student completing a programme and were very supportive and patient. When I completed the third feedback session with the graduate, I felt much more comfortable having learned from the previous two feedback sessions.

Before each debrief, I had a preparation session with the case study supervisor. The role of the supervisor was to guide and mentor me on how to analyse the results of the Enneagram

assessment. Her role was also to teach me how to provide feedback to the participants. She had first provided the feedback to me on my own profile; this was to give me exposure to the process and to illustrate how it should be done with my case study participants. She also advised that I needed to look at the main priority points and I didn't need to know all the detail for the session as the participant would have an opportunity to read the report in detail after the session. She shared with me how to access and interpret the summary view of scores so that I did not have to sit with the detailed report in the debrief. This allowed me to be more connected in the debrief and not to be reading from a report, which would have been distracting for the participant. While there does not appear to be a theoretical basis on how best to debrief a participant using the Enneagram profile, the supervisor was sharing with me the best approach that she had learned through her extensive experience in debriefing with her many clients over the years.

I also learned that it was more important to create a comfortable space for the person, listen to them (first rule in coaching), and really focus on the key stand-out points for them. The comfortable space was also a point of learning for me. The Enneagram report is a very personal and sensitive process, so creating a connection with the participant is vital. This is why I was surprised that the person debriefing on my report did not switch on her camera when giving me my feedback. Because this was my experience, I was determined to make the people to whom I provided feedback as comfortable and as safe as possible.

Once I made peace with not having to remember all the detail and being able to refer to the report as required, the discussion certainly flowed more easily. All participants found the process to be very useful and commented on insights that were brought to their knowledge now, that they did not previously have. Both case study participants were asked to provide feedback on the process and were very complimentary in their comments. The biggest learning that I took away from the various processes that I was exposed to on the Enneagram and helped to share with the participants that I assisted, is to first understand that the insight provided from the Enneagram was neither good nor bad; it was greater information for the participant about themselves. It was then up to them, with the assistance of a coach, to delve deeper into these insights and to unpack how they wanted to use them to enhance their lives. What was further learning for me after debriefing the participants through the report feedback was the recognition that I had spent a great amount of time attaching a good or bad status to my own Enneagram style, as I was encouraging them not to do this. I could also see this now as the tendency to focus on things that could go wrong, which is quite typical of the Six Enneagram style. I took the moment to remind myself that one of the transforming ideas for the Type Six is to consciously try to see the positive side to things and to notice positive outcomes, not only what can go wrong.

By the time I completed the profile for the graduate trainee, I felt much more comfortable in the debriefing process. I could feel that it was easier to interpret the information from the report and to share with him the more in-depth implications of what had emerged for him. I could also sense myself drawing on my coaching training and doing more than just interpreting the report for him. This means that I used my coaching skills, such as asking certain questions to better understand and to bring into awareness for him what the report was saying about him. The feedback from him was that the process was very insightful. He felt that the feedback was very accurate, and we spent some time discussing what he could focus on to address some of the aspects of the report that did not make him completely comfortable. I thoroughly enjoyed the debrief with him and it affirmed my decision to have completed the Enneagram course and to use it as an effective tool in the coaching process.

Now that I have completed the practitioner course, I can more clearly see the possible dominant types of people around me. In many instances, I have had the discussion with colleagues about their type and, in a previous role, knew the various styles of the team reporting to me through the team effectiveness intervention. This has greatly assisted me in knowing how to interact with them to better work together as a team, understanding in which kind of environment they would be optimally placed, and how to communicate with them to ensure they have a greater chance of success. In addition, it certainly helps for better team dynamics. Prior to completing the Enneagram team session and the practitioner course, I would sometimes feel quite intimidated or taken aback by people's style of communication or expectations in the workplace. Now when colleagues or my line manager behaves in a particular way, I can make sense of how they are showing up, knowing their dominant type, which creates a sense of comfort for me. As an example, my previous line manager was a dominant Type One which meant that he worked in a very structured and organised manner and was also very focused on the quality of work being produced by the team. Understanding this meant that I could deliver work in the ways that were important to him.

While it may be challenging to pinpoint the clear origin of the Enneagram, the work that has been done on developing the associated personality types over the years has been extensive and comprehensive, incorporating the research of philosophers, spiritual teachers, and psychiatrists. The Enneagram can be used by psychologists and psychiatrists to diagnose problems more accurately while those in therapy can gain insight into themselves more quickly. (Riso, 1996) This is similar to using the Enneagram in the coaching relationship. A key component of the Enneagram system is the development towards integration or disintegration while also covering descriptions of personality types from the highest levels of wellbeing to the lowest stages of neurosis; this means that the Enneagram can both describe

behaviour and predict it as well. (Riso, 1996) This is particularly useful in the coaching relationship, which is why it is a popular tool within the coaching fraternity.

Having first been exposed to the Enneagram in my TCC coaching programme, I was told that the Enneagram was a valuable tool in the coaching relationship. The Enneagram provides valuable insight to a coach into the personality of a coachee when understanding why and how the coachee may be “stuck” or how to move them forward in a way that is best suited to their personality type. As I subsequently learned myself, when I started my coaching journey, coachees often come to you with little or no insight into themselves. I would often try to delve into the “why” of a particular action or belief but the coachee would struggle to explain reasons for their behaviour. As my journey with the Enneagram has progressed and having had my own individual and team Enneagram interventions, I can now understand for myself the value of using the Enneagram in the coaching journey, particularly at the start of the relationship. The insights provided offer tremendous value to both the coachee and the coach, which assists in setting the direction of the coaching journey. So, while the Enneagram is a support tool to the coach in coaching more effectively, it also serves a very valuable purpose to the coachee themselves in obtaining self-insight.

It is important to note though that the Enneagram has often come under criticism for not having scientific validity and reliability as other psychometric and personality assessment tools. As I conducted my research into the Enneagram and, more so, while learning about the origin of the Enneagram, I started to feel quite disheartened by what I was reading. It seemed to have very spiritual and philosophical roots, but it seemed that no clear research was conducted to validate the different types and if it was an accredited tool. This bothered me greatly since I had now completed the course to become an accredited Enneagram practitioner.

I decided to conduct further research and I came across an article that has provided a glimmer of hope. In the article called ““But is it real?” A review of research on the Enneagram” (Sutton, 2012), the researcher sets out to prove that the Enneagram is a “real” model of personality. To prove this, three criteria need to be met in evaluating personality theories: The model needs to be scientifically rigorous, it must be useful, and it must be comprehensive. Scientific rigour means that it can make clear, testable predictions; usefulness refers to a desire for the theory to be useful rather than having abstract descriptions which cannot be applied to daily life; and comprehensive means that it can encompass all that researchers have discovered so far in the field.

The research conducted shows that the Enneagram can certainly fulfil all three criteria but there are some learnings. These include the Enneagram questionnaires being reasonably reliable, but we should be cautious about the validity; the personality types can be clearly

differentiated from each other using other personality measures; there is stability in the types once identified and there is good evidence that learning about the Enneagram has a positive impact on self-development and understanding about others. (Sutton, 2012) The author goes on to say however that further research is certainly required.

While this has not fully quelled my doubts, it has made me more comfortable in continuing my Enneagram journey and using it as a tool in the coaching relationship.

Conclusion

I have learned that having a better understanding of different personality types can be useful to anyone who is dealing with people. In my own personal experience, I have completed the Enneagram process in my workplace and with my team colleagues, to better understand how we work more effectively as a team to produce better outcomes for the organisation. I found the report and feedback session to be most enlightening into my own personality and provided very good insight into both why I may interact with the world in a particular way and how I was showing up. Having this awareness now helps me to course correct if I can see how the less integrated traits of my type are hampering my progress. I am clear on the strengths I possess and how this is of value to both my team at work and in my personal life. I have also learned how to administer the Enneagram tool myself to assist others in their development journey and to further support in their coaching journey and, finally, I do believe that the Enneagram is an effective support tool to help me, the coach, be a more effective coach.

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Learning Area 1: Evidence

- Appendix 1 TCC Schedule
- Appendix 2 TCC Enneagram Session Note
- Appendix 3 TCC Enneagram Session Reflection
- Appendix 4 Team Effectiveness Meeting Invites
- Appendix 5 Team Effectiveness Wheel
- Appendix 6 Enneagram Practitioner Schedule
- Appendix 7 Case Study Feedback
- Appendix 8 Enneagram Course Moderator Feedback
- Appendix 9 Enneagram Course Certificate
- Appendix 10 View Scores Graduate Trainee

Title of Learning Area: My self-development as a coach

Amount of credit claimed for learning area: 60

Level at which credit is being claimed: 7

Learning Outcomes:

My experience over the last five (5) years has enabled me to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Research and develop an integrative and reflective way of being as a self-aware coach, aimed towards enhancing the quality of the coaching conversation
2. Identify and apply an approach to coaching that enables me to create awareness and learning in the coachee aimed towards unlocking their potential and achieving a change in practice
3. Research and apply co-creation strategies that influence a more effective relationship with the coachee (being in the interpersonal space with the client) and implement effective communication strategies and practices when in conversation with the coachee
4. Research, critically analyse and implement my unique coaching model to reflect the learned and developed style of coaching in the coaching relationship

Introduction

In the introduction of my first learning area on the Enneagram, I wrote about how I was introduced to the world of coaching and how it ignited in me a deep desire to be a coach myself. I genuinely believed that this was what I wanted to do with the rest of my life and where I could make a difference in the life of others. At the same time that I was introduced to coaching via the team coaching intervention at my previous employer, my line manager also arranged for us to complete the Gallup StrengthsFinder assessment (<https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/en/strengthsfinder.aspx>). The value proposition of the StrengthsFinder assessment is that it would help a person to discover what they naturally do best and to learn how to develop their greatest talents into strengths. After completing the assessment, I learned that my number one strength, based on the Strengthsfinder model, was empathy. I remember feeling deeply disappointed with this “strength” because I couldn’t understand the value of empathy in the business workplace and how it would help me achieve my career aspirations in the corporate world. After then being exposed to coaching myself and

a few years of letting this information “percolate” at the back of my mind while I continued to work in a large corporate, I began to realise that being empathetic to others was what I did naturally, even in the very professional and businesslike workplace, and that coaching was the tool that I could use to maximise this strength. I also realised that while the workplace was not the only place that I could provide the coaching support, it certainly offered an opportunity for me to play to my strengths by coaching those around me and reporting into me, even if it was not my full-time role.

The “Integral Africa+ The Coaching Centre” (TCC) programme, in which I decided to enrol to fulfil my dream, consisted of twelve monthly modules and extended over a period of fourteen months, which would include the final assessment process. The modules ranged from the fundamentals of the Integral Practice of Coaching to Coaching in Diversity and all the way through to Coaching for Africa. It really did cover the length and breadth of the coaching practice! In contemplating the learning areas for the RAL module and knowing without a doubt that one of the learning areas had to focus on the most significant aspect of my coaching development, which was through the TCC programme, I found it very challenging to decide on which of the learning outcomes I should focus. I have narrowed it down to the outcomes that I thought were most significant to my coach development, by unpacking specific experiences that enhanced my learning but also focusing on specific modules within the programme that I believe were most beneficial to my coach development. I wish to emphasise, however, that this is merely a snapshot of the depth of learning I acquired through the programme.

Learning Outcome 1: Research and develop an integrative and reflective way of being as a self-aware coach, aimed towards enhancing the quality of the coaching conversation

I started the The Coaching Centre (TCC) programme in March 2019, after searching extensively for the “right” programme for me. At that time, I wasn’t sure what right meant but it certainly felt right when I spoke to the programme coordinator at the TCC. I hadn’t had any previous exposure to coaching except for being coached through a team coaching initiative at my workplace in 2009/10. What helped me make the decision on the TCC programme was how highly the programme was recommended by one of my work colleagues in Human Resources, the detailed content of the programme – I felt like I would be learning the full breadth and length of coaching practice, which is what I wanted, and how very warm and engaging the programme coordinator was when I met with her to discuss the details of the programme.

On reflection, I can say that while I thoroughly enjoyed the programme, I would have asked more detailed questions at the engagement session about how the modules were structured and executed and what the expectations of the student was throughout the programme. I would not have merely been carried away by the “spirit” of it all and how I felt after the introductory meeting. This was a significant learning for me about myself throughout the programme – how I wanted to be taught and how I desperately needed a structured, clear, and practical programme for me to learn effectively. I needed to be able to connect the dots and I needed to be clear on the end goal – in this case what the final assessment would entail – so that I could see how my work through the programme was leading up to that goal. If I was exposed to something in isolation or I could not make sense of how it all fitted together into an integrated and practical whole, it became challenging for me to “buy into” the learning.

Completing the Enneagram profile for myself early in the programme brought some of this to light for me but it became more apparent as I progressed. I often felt frustrated through the process because what I was working on, particularly the long and drawn-out module reflection forms after each module was completed, did not make sense to me and I could not connect this to the bigger picture. I knew I needed to “trust the process” and “sit in the discomfort”, as we were often told through the programme, but this was not my forte and I felt I needed to fully understand everything at the start. Thinking about it now has made me realise that this trait of being clear and structured in the process and learning through practical experience has become my approach to coaching and problem-solving at the workplace and in general, because it is how I better take in information.

I have recently come to understand my own preferred learning style through completing the VARK questionnaire. The VARK questionnaire (<https://vark-learn.com/>), developed in 1987, helps learners better understand how they like information to come to them and the way in which they prefer to deliver what they have learned. VARK stands for Visual, Aural, Read/Write and Kinesthetic and, upon completing the questionnaire, I learned that my preferred learning style is kinesthetic. This means that I best learn through action, practical problem-solving, using real-life examples and being able to measure the outcomes. Sadly, this is not something I knew about myself before starting my coaching programme, but through having a very effective mix of classroom sessions, written reflection processes and practical coaching sessions, I subsequently started to learn this about myself thereby increasing my level of self-awareness. I could see how much value I was acquiring through the practical coaching sessions, as anxious as I may have been about these at the start.

My predominant learning style preference has clearly contributed to my unique coaching style because I now see how practical I am in the coaching sessions, focusing on clear objectives

and goals and making sure the coachee can reflect on what they may or may not have achieved through the coaching intervention. I have, however, also learned that this is not necessarily how others take in information (more so after I completed my Enneagram practitioner certification and the VARK questionnaire) and therefore, it is important to first understand the need of the coachee clearly, to be empathetic and try to adjust my approach to also suit their way of taking in information and learning.

In the first introductory session to the programme, called the “container”, we had a chance to meet the other students on the Johannesburg programme and we got to share about ourselves. I was excited to start, and the session went very well, until close to the end. In addition to meeting the other students and some of the faculty members, we were also introduced to our “Developmentors”, who would be guiding us through the programme. The Developmentors were a group of mentors assigned to the students on the programme to provide guidance and support. Each student would have individual and regular sessions with their Developmentor where the student could reflect on the module they were currently covering, ask any questions and discuss any aspects of the programme. Towards the end of the container session, the facilitator put on some music and asked us to all dance quite freely. I remember the song being Natasha Bedingfield’s “Unwritten” which is about the pages of your life being unwritten and the future still being ahead of you for you write it out and determine it as you wish. The song felt quite soppy to me and dancing in front of all these new people made me feel deeply uncomfortable, so much so, that I wondered if I had made the wrong decision about this programme!

What I did start to realise however, in the months to come, was that it was the facilitator’s way of starting to coax us out of our comfort zones and to feeling less self-conscious of ourselves and our insecurities. This initial experience was just a glimpse of what was to come in the programme! The song was symbolic of the journey we were about to embark on but the exercise itself, together with a session of journalling, was already teaching me to be more self-aware of who I was and what part of me I may bring into my coaching sessions. I was associating it with a very esoteric type of activity and while I am still quite self-conscious of being in the spotlight when meeting new people, it was the start of a very liberating journey for me where I could be comfortable with being myself and be proud of what I now had to offer to the world.

Being through this programme that focused so intensely on me as an individual and not just the theoretical aspects of being a coach made me realise how deep self-awareness could make me a more effective coach. The more I introspected and learned about myself, the better I understood what I was bringing of myself into the coaching relationship that could affect my

objectivity when listening to the coachee. I needed to be able to separate my own thoughts, feelings, and judgments from that of the coachee. To do this, it meant that I needed to better know myself and the programme was indeed set up this way to meet this need. Again, this was not immediately apparent to me, and completing the module reflection forms that were 14 pages of questions to be answered after every module, was not always a pleasant exercise. What I did learn at the end of the programme, however, was that the repetitive action of self-reflection was “building the muscle” so that it became almost second nature to me by the end. Being reflective is something that I still believe holds true for me, almost four years after completing the programme.

Gibbs’ model of reflection (Gibbs, 1988) is one that well illustrates the process of reflection within the programme and represents what I experienced as I completed the various reflection exercises and, specifically, the detailed module reflection forms. The questions that I was asked to complete aligned to the various stages in the reflective cycle from describing what had happened, to articulating what I was thinking and feeling, and if this was a good or bad experience for me. As an example, one of the questions in the module reflection form would be “I became aware of the following aspects inside of me during the module...” followed by “The awareness I needed to develop inside of me in my development as a coach is... and will enable me to...”. These questions also allowed me to make sense of the situation and to ask myself what else could I have done and what would I do differently in the future. They also align to the stages in Gibbs’ model of description, conclusion, and action plan. As I continually and very frequently reflected throughout all the interventions in the coaching programme, I was very effectively completing Gibbs’ reflective cycle and learning the skill of reflection.

At the start of the programme, we were also introduced to Kolb’s Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984) together with the Learning Styles Inventory, which was meant to help me better describe and understand how I learn. As I look back through my notes now while writing up this learning area, I am struggling to remember if I completed the inventory because I cannot recall knowing what my learning style type turned out to be. Reading through the various descriptions, I can clearly see that my dominant learning ability would be that of the converger, but this is because of me now knowing myself so much better than I would have at the very start of the programme.

Being a practical learner, I can also feel the overwhelm again as I go through the thick file of theoretical documents shared with us throughout the course and I know that this led me to ignore much of the valuable detail. It felt too theoretical and there was too much information which didn’t help my learning preference. I can again see the value of the self-awareness in how I would take this into the coaching relationship. Being overwhelmed by too much detail

and learning practically rather than through a presentation or conversation is key to understanding my coaching style and how I would show up in the sessions with my coachees. Would I be disadvantaging them by not paying close attention to what was being said and would I miss significant points they would be sharing? One of the ways I could counter this, as I learned through the programme, was to bring more practical aspects to the coaching session by making it more experiential, taking the coachee outside for a walk, using creative methods to help them in their reflections and at the same time, ensure I stayed focused and engaged in what was being shared. This is a significant learning that also influenced aspects of my coaching model discussed later in the document.

With reference to the research article titled “Exploring the role of self-awareness in coach development: A grounded theory study” (Carden, Passmore and Jones, 2022), the researchers’ findings indicate that self-awareness is an important competency for coaches to develop. It affirms what I was learning through the coaching programme that coach self-awareness forms the foundation for a deep and meaningful connection for the coach in terms of confidence and self-acceptance, and for the coachee in terms of the depth of the relationship. The researchers further propose that the greater the self-awareness of the coach, the more effectively it allows the coach to work at a deeper level with their coachees. For me this meant that, as challenging as it was to work repetitively on long reflection documents, the greater the benefit there was for me in building my coaching skill and enhancing the coaching experience for the coachee.

Learning Outcome 2: Identify and apply an approach to coaching that enables me to create awareness and learning in the coachee aimed towards unlocking their potential and achieving a change in practice

After completing Module 1 on the Fundamentals of Coaching, we were told that we would be required to find volunteers to be coached, at no cost, and start the coaching process with them. I was panicked because I had no idea how to coach and I believed that it was a significant responsibility to take someone’s personal challenges and feelings into my care. We were, however, assured, by the facilitators that we needed to be clear that we were students and to start with merely asking questions and listening. An interesting pearl of wisdom shared with us at this point, and which certainly held true in my subsequent coaching engagements: People just want to be heard and were very grateful to have someone to listen. This made me feel slightly more comfortable, knowing that I didn’t need to go into the initial coaching sessions sounding like a professional coach. What I learned from these initial coaching sessions was

that, while I was concerned about not being a good coach, I was learning the art of listening which was essential to being a great coach.

As intimidating as it was, I believe that my greatest learnings throughout the coaching programmes came from the practical coaching sessions with my coachees. I now also know this to be true after completing the VARK questionnaire and confirming that my preferred learning style, being kinesthetic, meant that the practical aspects of the coach development process was best suited to me. I was learning how to be a coach through my often clumsy and awkward practical coaching sessions, but every session taught me how to do it better the next time.

One of the key deliverables during the programme was completing three case studies of my coachees. My first case study was of my first ever coachee who I felt unsure with, due to feeling very inexperienced. Initially, I felt comfortable to let her talk because I was trying to be a good listener and I also did not know what were the “right” questions to ask. As the sessions proceeded, I realised that the coachee was now talking endlessly through the entire session without pausing, while I was struggling to stay focused and interested. I was barely getting to ask any questions during the session or guiding her through a reflective process. During the programme, we were given guidelines to keep each coachee to a round of six coaching sessions; with this coachee, we had gone on for sixteen sessions! I was starting to understand that this had now gone on for far too long with little being achieved.

When I submitted this case study together with a video recording of one of the sessions for my midway review, the feedback received from my assessor was kind but harsh. He told me that I had let the coachee go on talking for far too long, and that I was not providing any kind of coaching in the sessions. He taught me that it was ok to pause the coachee and bring them back to their clearly-defined goals – this was the value of the intake process where the coachee needed to advise the coach of the specific goals they wanted to achieve in their coaching sessions. It was also important for me to create the space in the session to ask the coaching questions that were going to help the coachee achieve their objectives. I had been doing none of this and the feedback felt quite hurtful, but I knew he was right.

On reflection through completing the case study, I also realised for myself that my questions were sometimes too pointed as I started to become impatient with the coachee for not focusing on achieving her desired goals and talking more about what was wrong in her situation. The impatience, however, was also a reflection of my own fear of being inadequate as a coach and preempting the outcomes of the coaching session as opposed to allowing the coachee to discover these for themselves. There was a balance between being patient and allowing the coaching relationship to deteriorate into pointlessness. This was unpacked through my

debriefing session with my assessor and was a significant learning point for me on how to be a more effective coach and help the coachee with their own self-awareness. The analysis of the coaching conversation highlights in detail the challenging process that was experienced but also how much I learned about myself and the coaching process through this specific coaching relationship.

In learning how to coach at the start of the programme, we were taught to follow a clear process when working with our coachees. The first step was the intake process where I would have an introductory session with the coachee to understand their need, to assess if we could connect well and if I felt that I could coach them to meet their goals. In many of my case studies, the coachee was not familiar with coaching but was looking for assistance to achieve a goal or they were willing to give a new experience a try.

While in the process of clarifying the coach role at the start of the coaching process, it served as a great reminder to me not to step into a psychologist or teacher-type role, as we had learned in Module 1, and to remember to be a support mechanism or facilitator to the coachee in helping their thinking and achieving their goals. I had learned that the coachee must be willing to do the work and I was not there to provide the answers to them and certainly not to tell them what to do. The client objective form we used was the first step in creating awareness for the coachee because the coachee was forced to be clear and specific on their goals for the coaching intervention. They were required to have a clear topic and three measurable objectives to achieve by the end of our sessions. This was another interesting learning for me. Coming from a corporate work environment and spending many years in a project management role within HR, I did not expect the coaching intervention to be as specific and as goal focused as this process was turning out to be. I thought we would have a general discussion on why the coachee wanted the coaching sessions and we would go on from there.

The coachee also needed to think about and articulate their current way and what they envisioned their new way would be. This taught me how coaching was going to help the coachee achieve their goals, irrespective of what they were, and was not merely a therapy session where they would unpack their feelings. We were also required, halfway through the coaching sessions, to track the progress against the goals and every coaching session ended with asking the coachee what they were taking away from the session. Being forced to think about their goals, their current and future way of being and carefully tracking their progress, was a significant part of creating awareness and learning in the coachee without yet having started the formal sessions or using the incisive coaching questions that would help to further create awareness and learning. Using this clear process was helping me to learn how to coach

effectively by bringing structure and process into the coaching relationship and still achieve the desired results. This suited my desired approach perfectly!

Coaching model framework

We were introduced to the TCC Integral+ Practice of Coaching Framework (Dr Paddy Pampallis, 2005/18, TCC Tm) in Module 3 by Paddy Pampallis, the founder of the TCC and developer of the framework. The framework refers to the overall coaching process that is offered by the TCC and is Paddy Pampallis' unique application of Ken Wilber's AQAL model for perspective taking. (Wilber, 2006) The AQAL model or map simply refers to "All quadrants, all levels" and models human knowledge and experience within a four-quadrant grid along the axes of interior/exterior and individual/collective. The value of Wilber's model is that it provides an integrated and simple view of the key components of consciousness or the human experience. The key distinction of the TCC model is that it has been reoriented to the "Iceberg model" orientation rather than that of right (objective) and left (objective) that was preferred by Wilber's model.

Everything I learned in the programme revolved around this Integral+ coaching framework and it served as the basis on how we would be coaching our clients. At a very simplistic level, the framework consists of four quadrants through which our experiences can be plotted and subsequently how we then view the world. The upper quadrants refer to the exterior, observable and objective aspects which can be studied empirically, while the bottom quadrants relate to the interior, interpretative or subjective world. The left quadrants talk to individual experiences while the right to the collective experience.

The quadrants are only useful if they are viewed in an integrated and comprehensive manner. To view a person from the perspective of only one quadrant provides only a single perspective of them and their experiences, which limits the understanding of the whole person.

On initial introduction to the framework, I felt very confused, particularly around the collective quadrants and how this could be used in the coaching conversation. I was aware of myself wanting it to all fit in easily and simply so that I would know exactly how I should coach my coachees, but this sounded very abstract to me at the beginning, and I struggled to understand. What I was aware of however, was that the module reflection forms asked us to reflect on our own experience through the four quadrants so, once again, this was a muscle that was continually being built and I was learning without even realising it. Having to answer the questions in this way every month in the module reflection form was also showing me how I could be coaching using the framework. Examples of these questions were:

- Individual Interior: I became aware of the following aspects inside of me during the module? The awareness I need to develop inside of me in my development as a coach is...?
- Individual Exterior: I am noticing the following about my behaviours?
- Collective Interior: With regards to this quadrant, I notice the following about my response to each other in the group?
- Collective Exterior: What I notice about the environment and the impact this has on me and the group is?

Thinking about the coachee through these quadrants and using this as a guideline in the coaching was how I was learning the practical method of coaching, and bringing the model into the sessions helped me in creating the right awareness for the coachee. In many sessions, I would also physically draw out the framework itself so that the coachee had the context for the questions I would ask and would help them follow the process I was using. What was most valuable in using this framework, however, was the immediate realisation that the coachees were not just individuals behaving in a particular way, which means looking at themselves through one quadrant. As I coached using the framework, I brought to their awareness their whole selves i.e., they were also their thoughts and feelings (not just behaviours), and they were individuals in a wider context and always operating as part of a collective and within an environment. Therefore, in trying to be better version of themselves through the coaching process, they needed to understand themselves within all the quadrants. This was an extremely powerful learning for me as I better understood the coaching framework and as I continued to practice my coaching through the programme.

Learning Outcome 3: Research and apply co-creation strategies that influence a more effective relationship with the coachee (being in the interpersonal space with the client) and implement effective communication strategies and practices when in conversation with the coachee

One of the very significant modules covered in the coaching programme was Module 9 which focused on The Interpersonal Space. The objective of the module was to explore, through many different lenses, the nature of the relationship between the coach and the coachee. The module indicated that the coaching relationship is the cornerstone of a successful coaching intervention and had a significant impact on whether the coachee determines the coaching intervention to have been successful. In my view, this was one of the most significant modules covered in the programme because it focused on the coaching relationship and how the success or failure of the relationship could directly impact the perceived success or failure of

the coaching intervention by the coachee. It also tied back to my level of self-awareness as a coach, which was turning out to be my greatest learnings coming out of the programme, and why this module was so incredibly important to me.

The module facilitator of The Interpersonal Space introduced us to Perceptual Position Theory, a theory used in neuro-linguistic programming and psychology which proposes that a system can appear different, and different information can become available, depending on how one looks at it and one's point of view. This theory was introduced by Fritz Perls (Perls,1973), the founder of Gestalt therapy, who used it on his patients to help them gain a different perspective on their challenges.

While there are many perspectives that can be taken, the three that are most useful for us in the coaching world is that of Self, Other and Observer. The Self position is looking at an interaction from your own eyes; Other is looking at the situation as the other person; and Observer is considering the interaction as a benevolent observer who is making no judgements but merely gathering information. While the Self position is about seeing, hearing and feeling my own perspective, the Other position is seeing, hearing and feeling from "your" perspective, meaning that of the coachee. Being able to take the Other position was teaching me to step out of only my own perspective and to be more empathic of the coachee's thoughts, feelings and beliefs. Being in the Observer position means that I can observe the coaching relationship from a third person perspective, in a detached way. It is valuable for a coach to have the ability to take this perspective because it allows the coach to notice patterns, similarities and differences between the parties involved and to watch the coaching relationship play out as if they are not in it.

We were learning about the interpersonal space so that we could understand the significant impact we, as coaches, have on the coaching relationship. This could be because of our own self-awareness, the awareness of the coachee and our awareness of the coaching relationship. Understanding and being able to "take on" these different perspectives would help us to see the coaching relationship from other perspectives than just our own, which could assist us in creating a more successful coaching relationship. I could see that I could use this when I encountered an obstacle in the coaching relationship or feel stuck and not know how to unlock for the coachee. This would allow me to take a mental time-out where I can take stock of the situation and gain new insights to try other options or strategies.

This module on the interpersonal was particularly important to me for an additional reason. Even though it was quite late in the programme, I was still feeling a great sense of discomfort in the coaching sessions, more so as we were getting closer to the final programme assessment. I was very anxious about the assessment and could sense how I was not

enjoying my coaching sessions at this time and feeling quite distracted by the impending assessment.

Further to this, I had experienced a challenge with a coaching client earlier in the programme which had made me doubt myself and my abilities. The client had asked the TCC if there were any students coaches willing to coach him and I had agreed, which was a deliberate attempt at being brave and pushing myself out of my comfort zone. My existing coachees were mostly people I had met at my workplace, and I was comfortable with them, so it was not so anxiety-ridden. This client was a stranger whom I knew nothing about, so I wanted to challenge myself. Another student in our class agreed to coach the client's business partner. My classmate used the business partner as a case study client so followed a highly documented process as we were asked to do for our case study coachees. My client was not one of my case studies (I had already found my three), so he was not taken through the same rigorous process. He objected to this and asked the TCC for a different coach. I was deeply upset by this and questioned if I had not done the right things for the coachee, so I discussed this with both Paddy and my Developmentor.

I realised that, while I had done nothing wrong in the process, I was always aware of not feeling completely comfortable with this client which I could see had an impact on our coaching relationship. The engagements never felt very authentic, and I had begun to feel that I did not want to coach him, but I was continuing with this to not let him down, to fulfil the programme requirements, and to ensure I had my coaching hours. I learned from this experience, as difficult as it was, that I should have taken more time to get to know him and to assess if we would work well together or not. I had learned that this was part of the intake process and that the fit and connection between coach and coachee is key to a successful coaching relationship. Being a student coach, however, I was intimidated by coaching an actual client and trying hard not to fail, so I continued with a coaching relationship that I should have been comfortable enough to decline after the initial meeting. This was a very hard but significant learning for me and, again, highlighted how much I was learning through experience and not through the classroom sessions.

In the article "How to Build Trust as a Coach and Identify Clients' Underlying Behavioral Issues" (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/?sh=3318ef3d16f1>) written by Dr. Rob Young, Founder and Board Chair of Trove, Inc. and a Forbes Council Member specializing in psychological coaching and transition consulting, the author writes about the importance of trust in the coaching relationship and being able to identify underlying behavioural issues. He goes on to quote the International Coach Federation which indicates that "the ability to create trust and intimacy in coaching relationships is a required minimum

skill” in the coaching relationship. In addition, he suggests the use of behavioural assessments to help coachees to identify underlying issues that may interfere with them achieving their desired outcomes.

As I reflect on the unfortunate incident mentioned above, and as I look back on the challenges, there were two issues I should have addressed. The first issue was that I was not comfortable and should have spent more time on first building the trust and intimacy required for a successful coaching relationship. Being a student, feeling inexperienced, and focused on completing my hours, I rushed into this relationship while ignoring the feeling of discomfort. The second issue was that the coachee was clearly dealing with more than work challenges and how to assert himself in the new role he had taken on. There was a history of problematic behaviour, and I should have identified these as deeper psychological issues, which meant I should have declined to coach him and should have suggested he see a psychological professional. The distinction between psychology and coaching was something we had learned in Module 1 already and we were told to not try and coach someone who was dealing with deeper issues for which we not qualified to address.

In addition, completing the Enneagram profile may have been a useful tool for him to have access to and would perhaps have provided greater insights to both me and to him. At the time, I was not yet an accredited Enneagram practitioner so I could not have guided him through this, but I can now see that he may have been at a point of very low integration, and it may have assisted me in better understanding his challenges and to refer him much earlier in the relationship. These have been very key learnings for me but have only come much later as I worked through the various components of the programme and acquired greater learnings in my coaching journey.

A positive reflection for me, however, is that I was courageous in volunteering to coach this individual, and there were extensive learnings that emerged for me, despite how the experience had turned out. When I think about it now, I feel proud of myself for trying.

Effective communication is a key component in a coaching relationship. There are more than words to communicate how someone is feeling or what they are thinking, and the way we communicate is greatly influenced by our world view and personality. This ties back to the triangulated nature of the coaching relationship – being the Observer can help the coach to see how their world view and beliefs may influence how they are showing up in the coaching session which could have an impact on how the coachee shows up. In addition, the coach could be listening to them through their own Self position lens which could greatly affect how the coaching intervention is shaped, suiting the coach more than meeting the real need for the coachee.

I learned in the programme that to build a strong coaching relationship, I need to recognise the different language preferences, meet people/coachees at the same level and help the coachee to access the appropriate language for the context. To do this, the coach needs to know the different languages of communication and have effective listening skills to determine which language the client is using and match the language accordingly.

Referencing Jung's "Languages of Communication" model (Jung, 1964), I learned that the different types of communication are:

- Language of emotions – relationship-focused where feelings are expressed
- Language of meaning – need for the bigger picture with lots of "why" questions
- Language of facts/information – focused solely on content and facts with "what" questions
- Language of control/power – forceful and dominant language that is serious, blunt and to the point

I could easily identify that my language of communication was the language of meaning. I needed to understand the big picture and to understand the purpose and meaning of what I was doing. This applied to both my life and within my coaching interventions. I had learned in the coaching programme that starting a question with "why" could come across as questioning in an accusatory manner. This was a challenge for me but also a great reflection because I realised that I started most of my questions with "why". While it was clear to me that I used "why" to better understand purpose and meaning, I could now also understand why this was not the best approach in coaching. I also learned through this process that it was what I often did in my personal relationships. I had received feedback from my family and my partner that I could come across as quite critical in my questioning of them. I could never understand why they perceived it that way when I was merely trying to better understand. Learning this in coaching now made it very clear to me! In my coaching practice, I was learning again how the Self position and using my preferred language of meaning could potentially compromise the success of the coaching relationship.

Together with the languages of communication, we learned how important the value of listening is in becoming effective coaches. While listening as a coaching skill may seem obvious, we learned that there are barriers and challenges to effective listening. In the coaching session, this could play out in different, potentially damaging ways to the coachee. Some of these are making assumptions about the coachee, having perceived ideas or biases, trying to mind read what the coachee really thinks, and trying to formulate a response rather than listening as well as the mood of the coach.

Ideally, a coach would be listening actively so that they create an open climate for understanding, increase interpersonal trust, listen to truly hear what the coachee is saying and they would not be concerned with only their own perspective. I heard this and realised that this was a very difficult skill to get right in the coaching relationship. On the one hand, we were taught not to interrupt the coachee when they were speaking but at the same time, my first case study coachee, as mentioned earlier, spoke for long periods without stopping. Because she was my first coachee, I was not sure how to handle this, so I let her speak without interrupting. I knew that this was not beneficial to her, and I remember ending the sessions feeling that I had not provided much value except to let her vent and share her feelings. While this may have been time well-spent for her, I did not think that she was being effectively coached. In addition, it was challenging to often stay focused in the sessions. At the start of the coaching programme, this was because I was anxious and kept thinking about the next question I was going to ask. I would worry that the coachee would stop talking and I would not have an insightful question to pose to them. Later in the programme, I became concerned with meeting my coaching hours and fulfilling the requirements of the programme that I could sense that I was distracted. Often, I would be stressed with work matters on my mind and struggle to pay full attention.

In the research paper titled “Active Listening: An Essential Skill for Coaching” by Claudia Meza Bellota (no date), the author highlights the importance of active listening in the coaching relationship. She indicates that active listening is paramount to be able to help the coachee have a successful coaching intervention. She goes on to say that the coach’s first step in helping the coachee is to understand and this is only possible if the coach is aware of the exact nature and meaning behind what the coachee is trying to resolve for themselves.

She further states that active listening is not an easy skill to develop but provides a few techniques to help the coach such as turning off the internal voice, having awareness of what body language may convey and adjusting accordingly, using affirmative nods, paraphrasing to show understanding, and expressing a natural state of empathy. These were techniques that I was also learning in the coaching programme particularly through the practical coaching sessions. During our classroom sessions and monthly supervision sessions, we would regularly be asked to coach another student in the class. This would often be in front of the class so that we could learn through example. I remember being very nervous to coach in front of everyone, but it would always serve as a very useful learning opportunity particularly for someone like me with kinesthetic learning preference that needed to learn through practical examples. The facilitator, who was always a qualified coach, and our supervisor, would provide feedback on the coaching session that we had viewed, and this would include not only feedback on the questions asked but also the body language, the eye contact, the affirmative

nods and how the coach showed understanding. While it may sometimes have felt like frivolous feedback on aspects such as eye contact, I gradually learned how vital this was in ensuring a successful coaching relationship.

Learning about the interpersonal space really made me reflect on my coaching style and general communication style. I realised that my need for meaning could often shut down the coachee, especially if the relationship had not yet been properly established. I could see that the approach could possibly work with some coachees who would not be doubting themselves and came into the coaching relationship with a high level of confidence, but with coachees that were low in confidence and trying to make difficult decisions or being in challenging situations, my natural approach would not be the best strategy to lead to a successful coaching relationship. Having the learning of the interpersonal helped me understand how I needed to shift my coaching style to be more present with the coachee, to actively listen and to shift my approach and perspective to ensure the best outcome for the coachee

Learning Outcome 4: Research, critically analyse and implement my unique coaching model to reflect the learned and developed style of coaching in the coaching relationship

A part of our final assessment portfolio to complete our programme was to create our own unique coaching model. This was no easy task because we had been exposed to so many models, frameworks and approaches throughout the year that it felt impossible to come up with something new and different. I felt stuck again and wasn't sure how to start but I was being coached myself at this time and my coach, who was also a TCC Developmentor, assisted me in coming up with my model.

In trying to put this together, I thought about a few things:

- What models had I seen and experienced through the year that had significantly contributed to my experience and learning about coaching?
- What kind of analogy could be used to best describe my model? Analogies and imagery were a key part of our learning throughout the programme
- What elements would I include in the model that would be representative of me and how I uniquely thought about the coaching relationship?
- Of the extensive learnings we had obtained in the programme, what would be the key elements that stood out for me that I would have wanted to bring into my model?

I had previously indicated that the TCC Integral+ Framework (Pampallis-Paisley, 2006) formed the foundation for all the coaching theory, models and practice that came to me through the year. We had also learned about the Iceberg model (Freud, 1915) which was not new knowledge for me but seeing it integrated with the U-process (Scharmer, 2018) which was

moving from current reality to desired reality and the integral quadrants of the TCC framework was significantly new. I was fascinated by the TCC framework because I believed it beautifully encompassed the spectrum of human experience in one holistic model. I could immediately see the value of the various quadrants in providing an expansive thinking experience for my coachees. What struck me the most was the consideration of myself within this model and it immediately provided me with an additional lens or perspective through which I could view my own way of being. Looking at the U-process within the framework comforted me because I saw coaching as a somewhat structured process and this made sense to me, even if I was to find out very differently later that the practical coaching sessions could easily become unstructured. Humans do not necessarily express themselves in a structured manner, particularly when these are emotionally charged conversations as coaching conversations usually are. What was the important learning for me as I moved through the programme was that coaching does not follow a linear process, can sometimes move “back and forth” and can be messy, as I had found out many times. However, having the process and goal of the coachee (moving from current reality to desired reality) was hugely beneficial. The TCC Integral+ Framework was a continuous thread throughout the coaching programme, and it served me well to always come back to it, when I had found myself sometimes lost in my own processes.

The second model that had significant impact on me and which I had referred to many times in my own coaching sessions was the Conscious Competence Learning Model (Robinson, 1974) that explains the psychological states that arise whilst developing competencies. The stages are sequential and would help the coachee develop competencies as they achieve their goals. While I was learning about this model in the context of the coachee’s development, I could also easily apply this to my own learning during the coaching programme.

The learner moves from having Unconscious Incompetence, where there is limited knowledge on the subject and the coachee is unaware of their own incompetence, to Conscious Incompetence where the coachee now has limited abilities through the coaching intervention, but the confidence may increase as the person starts to learn new skills. Stage 3 refers to Conscious Competence where the coachee has now acquired new skills and knowledge and can put their new skills into practice to gain more confidence. The fourth stage is Unconscious Competence where the coachee’s new skills or levels of awareness are becoming habits and tasks performed without conscious effort. It would also be a point of reflection on the impact of their newly discovered skills and abilities and to focus on how they will continue to use these skills in their lives. For me, this is how I now feel about being a coach. As I coach now, I don’t think about the process and the steps to follow but I know what to ask and what to listen out for in the conversation. It feels like there is a repository of tools that I have acquired through

the coaching programme and through continuous practice, I have now internalised these tools and can draw on them for deployment in the conversation, based on what is being said or what I am observing.

What I found most significant about this model for my own coaching was the coachee going from a place of not knowing to a place of new awareness. It highlighted the role of the coach in this process to partner the coachee in achieving this new awareness. Being a part of the process where the not knowing shifts to starting to know is what coaching is all about for me. It is also a simple sequential model which fits in well, I believe, with how I process information and it made it very clear to me and easy to understand.

The first proper coaching model that we were exposed to, that also ran a continuous thread through the programme was the GROW model. For me, I related much more to the extended Connect To GROW Practice model (adapted by TCC from Whitmore, 2009; TCC IPCP Module 1, 2019) because the concept of “connect” resonated strongly with me and certainly has informed parts of my own model.

The model itself provided a great, simple introduction to understanding coaching models and the overall coaching process. Connection, I have found in my own experience, is a vital aspect for a successful and fulfilling coaching relationship. It is about more than just initially making contact but extends to the chemistry that may or may not exist between the coach and coachee. I have learned, in my own challenging way, that if there is the absence of a comfortable and relaxed connection, it may not work out for both coach and coachee, making the sessions challenging work for both. When I think of connection, I also think about creating a safe space for the coachee where they feel like they can trust and be as open as they need to think through their challenges to achieve their goals. The “To” in the model refers to the topic that the coachee brings to the overall coaching process and to the individual session as well. “G” in GROW model refers to the goal that the coachee hopes to achieve, again across all the sessions and in individual sessions. Unpacking the “R” for reality for the coachee forms the biggest part of the session as it is trying to understand what is going on for the coachee and here is where I see the importance of the connection created between coach and coachee. Being able to explore issues in a deep, reflective, and authentic way for the coachee is dependent on them having a safe and non-judgmental space for such reflection. The “O” for Options focuses on what is possible for the coachee to try and resolve the challenge i.e., what solutions may potentially be available. The last part of the model which is the “W” for Wrap-up which helps the coachee to prioritise the options they have identified and provides them with a plan of action. Lastly, Practice asks the coachee what will they put in place to develop a new habit aligned to their coaching goals and topics.

The GROW To Practice model is an incredibly accessible model for me to follow and I think it outlines the most important components of a successful coaching model.

The final model that I that had a profound impact on my experience and on my coaching, model is Nancy Kline's Thinking Environment which talks about developing the thinking partnership through the ten components of a thinking environment (Kline, 1999). It speaks to the components of attention, equality, ease, appreciation, encouragement, feelings, information, diversity, incisive questions, and place. These components are all key to providing the most conducive environment for thinking and I could easily see how this would influence my own coaching model.

The Thinking Environment strongly resonated for me because it firstly, spoke to "thinking" and I knew that I mostly operate in the cognitive space myself. I enjoyed the concept of creating a space that is conducive for a coachee but for me, it also spoke so strongly to creating the kind of space in the workplace which I think is desperately missing for employees to do and be their best. When going through the various components, each of them felt better than the previous because all of them speak to the respect and care you would provide to a person who is in need, to work through their challenges and creating a wonderful space for reflection.

Understanding these models through the programme was a very valuable experience in connecting it to the coaching practice however, I was also aware of feeling quite overwhelmed by the many models to which we were exposed. As I have written about this quite extensively in this learning area, I may not have had the actual words to technically describe my learning preferences at the time, but I was acutely aware of how much information I was being exposed to and how overwhelming it was feeling. This was certainly the case as I was reaching the end of the programme and I needed to develop my coaching model.

In trying to develop my model, I sought the help of my coach who was also a TCC Developmentor. She asked me a series of questions that was done in a coaching session context, so she effectively "coached" me on my model. While I did feel overwhelmed by all that had happened in the year, I was able to articulate to her which of the models had most resonated with me, as I have shared here. In addition, I could answer her questions on what aspects of coaching felt most important to me and were both representative of my coaching style and what I thought was important for a successful coaching relationship. This was broken down into components of purpose – why I wanted to coach, and process – how I would go about coaching. I also needed to outline my coaching meta-model which spoke to the various components of the model and the micro-model which was how I would use the model in my coaching sessions. Lastly, we talked about analogies that could best represent my coaching

model and for me, this was the concept of fire which signified the willingness to “sit in the fire” to be transformed and “renewed” through the coaching process.

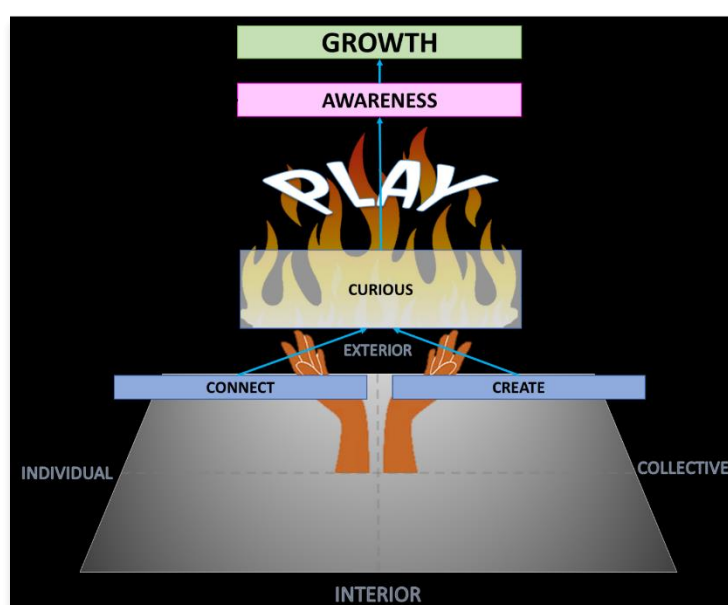
All of this contributed to the coaching model that I eventually created and am now exceptionally proud of. Having the ability to develop my own coaching model was a very valuable and significant way to end the programme. Through the process of developing my model with my coach, I learned how to critically analyse the various models to which I had been exposed and to extract what was relevant to me and what I believed I may not necessarily use in my coaching practice. As I went through this analysis, I also realised that while there was an extensive amount of theoretical knowledge and models that had been shared with me throughout the programme, I was not meant to adopt and integrate all of it into my future coaching practices. These models were being offered to me as various perspectives, but I needed to extract what was relevant to me and create my own unique style of coaching.

As I developed the model, I also came to understand what components of coaching were representative of me and what would resonate for me when coaching. As an example, I introduced the concept of “Play” and “Create” into my model. This represented the practical and creative aspect of coaching and creating awareness for the coachee. Understanding that I learned better through practical means and that thick theoretical documents overwhelmed me rather than helping me, I knew it was critical to include these concepts in my coaching practice. I also knew, through my many reflections through the year, that it was a significant aspect of what would make me an effective coach. Through some of my challenging experiences with my coachees through the year and mentioned earlier in this document, the concept of “Connect” needed to be included. I had learned the hard way how important it was to build trust in the coaching relationship and to have the right kind of “chemistry” before taking on the coachee as a client. I was now also feeling quite assertive about declining the coaching request if I did not feel the connection with the coachee in the initial intake session. Because this had such an impact on me through my learning process, it was also a non-negotiable aspect to be included in my coaching model.

Finally, I included the components of awareness and ultimate growth, which I believed was the entire purpose of coaching. If I was not able to bring greater awareness into the perspective of the coachee, I would deem this an unsuccessful coaching intervention. Through the coaching programme, the self-awareness that was created for me was an invaluable part of the process and in ensuring I became an effective coach which is why it was included in my model. Of course, awareness is insufficient if it does not lead to a better place of growth and that is the ultimate reason as to why I coach – it is meant to help the coachee improve their

lives by elevating their self-awareness, growing as an individual and becoming valuable contributors within their communities and environment.

Developing an approved coaching model that truly represented me cemented my belief that I was now ready to successfully take on the role of coach. It also served as an excellent way for me to synthesise all the learning I had obtained through the year and to produce this in one unique coaching model that was my creation. Below is the diagrammatic representation of my coaching model that eventually emerged out of my internal development process. In addition, included in the Appendix is the detail on each of the elements that make up the model.



Conclusion

As I indicated at the start of this learning area and as this is reinforced now while I type this conclusion, the very extensive learning that was acquired through my coaching programme cannot possibly be covered in a single learning area. I went from having no knowledge whatsoever of how to coach, having only been on the coachee end of the discussion, to becoming a qualified and accredited coach that fulfilled a significant number of requirements to achieve my certificate. In addition to developing my own coaching model at the end of the programme and producing my portfolio of evidence from the year's work, I was also required to complete a live coaching session in the presence of an esteemed coaching panel. This was terrifying but I got through it successfully, even though we had just gone into the first lockdown during the Covid-19 pandemic.

I cannot overstate the learning that I acquired which collectively has led me to the point of now being a confident and competent coach. The learning happened in so many ways – through

classroom sessions, supervision sessions, peer coaching sessions, coaching strangers, being mentored, developing my own model, and completing reflections for all of them! In addition to learning how to coach, I was taken along on the self-discovery experience of my life. I have great admiration for how the programme juxtaposed both elevating the student's self-awareness and teaching the challenging skill of being an effective coach. I had been properly immersed and was not aware at the time, being so focused on meeting the programme requirements, of the full depth of what I was learning. I have been reminded once again as I complete this learning area and am going through my files of course notes, reflection forms, case studies and my own notes. It's been quite a journey, one of which I am very proud to have completed. It has not only provided me with a fantastic new skill, which will lead me to the living the life I have dreamed of, but it has positively and profoundly changed me as a person.

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Learning Area 2: Evidence

- Appendix 1: TCC Schedule
- Appendix 2: Module Reflection Form
- Appendix 3: IPCP Container Building
- Appendix 4: Learning Styles Inventory
- Appendix 5: Case Study Analysis
- Appendix 6: Client Objective Form
- Appendix 7: TCC Integral+ Coaching Framework
- Appendix 8: Module 9 Interpersonal Space Purpose
- Appendix 9: Course Notes – Conscious Competence Model
- Appendix 10: Course Notes – Connect To GROW Practice Model
- Appendix 11: Course Notes – The Thinking Environment
- Appendix 12: My Coaching Model