



Coaching and mentoring skills for the workplace

**BA LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS FOR THE  
WORKPLACE**

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**KATAKAYA MAGANDAZI DANIEL**

Student No: 1605751

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### Abstract

The report aims at investigating the principles, skills, and practice of coaching and mentoring. Using various models, it evaluates the benefits that coaching, and mentoring bring to an organisation. It seeks to critically evaluate the necessity of coaching and mentoring within an organisation whilst analysing the behaviours, skills, attitudes, values and beliefs that an effective coach or mentor should have. It demonstrates the importance of coaching and mentoring and as well as discuss the similarities and differences between coaching and mentoring interventions.

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# Coaching and mentoring skills for the workplace

## Introduction

When assessing several approaches to management, the required skills set in developing staff, and ensuring the delivery of results, coaching and mentoring are of critical importance despite the difference of opinions among practitioners and academicians in terms of the implications of either intervention (Serrat, 2009). Furthermore, the failure of several organizations in the implementation of coaching and mentoring schemes, limited the opportunity of capitalizing on the experience of employees of an organization (Clutterbuck, 2008).

From the psychological perspective, coaching and mentoring have been viewed as appendages to therapy teams (Serrat, 2009). There are debates about what coaching and mentoring contributes in terms of value and business knowledge in the business sector (Grant, 2004; and Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001) whereas (Clutterbuck and Lane, 2004) argue that both experience and knowledge are critical in distinguishing between coaching and mentoring, with the mentor believed to be bringing business knowledge and career where as a coach introduces a new perspective into the sector.

### *1. Coaching*

With regard to the definition of coaching, Parsloe and Wray (2000) argue that being in the middle of an intellectual revolution has made it hard decide on the definition, however coaching is referred to as a kind of mentoring although emerging consensus characterize coaching as non-directive and mentoring as instructional with perforated boundaries between the two interventions.

Coaching is thought to originate from many disciplines such as psychology, education, organizational development and sports coaching (Garvey et al., 2009). As explained by Gibbs (2008), dealing with fundamental abilities, trying out unconventional ways of being and self-beliefs involves coaching, putting communication at the fore front of attaining total transformation through non-linear communication (Garvey et al., 2009). Hence, to facilitate an environment where the needs of the employees are met, Stewart et al., (2008) emphasizes the application of theoretical methodology.

### *1.2 Mentoring*

Mentoring is defined as a process where a more experienced professional takes on another employee, guides, helps and supports them with and aim of improving the mentee in their career (Weaver & Chellandurai, 1999). More than often mentoring is a one on one relationship as opposed to coaching which tends to involve teams at times (serrat,2009).

## Danone UK

Danone is a world leader among food companies, whose mission is to use food as a means of providing health to people all over the world. As one of the food companies with the fastest growing rate, the company's main market segment is the senior consumers and young adults in more than one hundred and twenty countries worldwide. By 2011, Danone had established over one hundred and sixty plants of production, employing over one hundred people all over the world, with revenues above twenty-three billion dollars coming from new markets segments. Danone now runs several of the world's famous brands such as Volvic, Badoit, Evian, Danone and Activia yoghurt. It is to a certain extent a lean and decentralized organisation with each unit having the authority to make their own decisions. In 2010 the best 10 performing company operations were, Spain, France, Germany, USA, Indonesia, Mexico, Argentina, China and the UK. In the following year 51% of the overall business in Danone Group was coming from Asia. Danone has been able to maintain same values from the inception of the company and has remained undeterred by the group's transformation. Some of these values include placing people at the heart of the business, Business growth and flexible leadership. Danone values people more than the processes. As a people centric workplace, Danone is very famous for leadership development, and many fresh graduates are recruited every year to develop into leaders. The company has been known to have an unbeatable record of talent development across the east and western Europe and as such anyone with a position in Danone is therefore well trained in effective leadership and management. For this reason, the western countries' generation Y recognises Danone as an incredible employer. In 2009, Danone started strengthening its management by proxy by empowering its employees through the launch of the DLC (Danone leadership College), a program for their diverse worldwide employees, that would run for many years through a common language. The idea was to turn Danone into a place where people work and grow by increasing their autonomy. A program referred to as CODE is used at Danone to disseminate managerial attitudes as well as create opportunities for career growth as opposed to simply having positions filled up. Contrary to other programs of leadership in most companies, CODE deviates its focus from the senior management level to the empowerment and promotion of leadership skills among its 15,000 team leads, with a practice of advancing common leadership behaviours across the entire organisation after a two-year period (Dejoux, 2013).

## 2. The necessity of coaching and mentoring in an organization

Coaching and mentoring are commonly used interventions in organisations all over the world for many reasons, although the most common reason is to do with the value coaching and mentoring add on the business in terms of profitability and productivity (Jooli & Doug, 2012). When it comes to business, individuals with a perceived talent tend to take different channels as far as learning and development of leadership is concerned.

Moreover, in situations where there is a limited talent pool, coupled with limited opportunities, the need for individuals to develop in preparation for their future whilst assuming their current role within the organisation becomes eminent (Wolfe, 1996).

As for the case of Danone UK, the necessity to engage in coaching, became more apparent when faced with a limited talent pool and inability to attract prospective candidates; Thus coaching is perceived to have created a platform for building a significant level of trust among the managers and their staff, considering the uncertainty that comes with taking a new

direction of business. Therefore, coaching created a sense of goodness, success, value and appreciation in Danone UK (Thomas, 2016).

Coaching provides opportunities for dependable assessment of leadership abilities in an individual, which is very vital in getting a person who is the right fit for the job at that time (Lewis & Murphy, 2008). Timely identification of individualised competences, work relevant experiences which come with reflection coupled with a chance to practice, personalised feedback, and support facilitates learning on the job (Rhodes *etal.*, 2008).

Coaching is seen to facilitate change management like in the case of Danone UK where personal development plans involved empowering managers to coach their subordinates, passing on skills and implementing learning in different forms and thus highlighting the possibility of managers covering more in a day through informed learning (Thomas, 2016). At the heart of coaching is learning and development. It is about passing on the ability to secure a future using models such as Egan's model of the skilled helper which is also a model to develop opportunities enabling useful relationships in coaching and excellent brand development (Hannah, 2004).

Coaching has been advocated as a positive mechanism for influencing both self-awareness and confidence (Quinn *etal.*, 2006). Although it is considered an indispensable part of mentoring (Fletcher, 2000a), it focuses entirely on the development of skills in so much as mentoring denotes a relationship of a professional nature where there is simultaneous enhancement of practice and empowerment on both a personal and professional level.

For Danone Uk, coaching is seen to create a profound relationship built on trust between the senior management and the employees throughout the entire company and an undeniable subtle and yet major effect on the aspect of identity within the company (Thomas, 2016). The existence of a shared vision between group members and their leader often contributes the success of the leadership; thus, effective leaders make their followers adapt their leader's vision as their own (Reicher *etal.*, 2007).

As advocated by (Crawford & Earley, 2011) people need help with confidence development when it comes to management and leadership capabilities on top of getting knowledge and skills. For Danone, the need to obtain a broader understanding when it comes to business has created learning opportunities for coaching and mentoring which in turn lead business growth within the sector. It enables Danone to focus on more internal recruitment and raising the staff promotion rate to 33%, creating a huge difference in the availability of opportunities within the company, recognising talent in a new way and empowering employees to take up new roles. In other words, coaching on its own has changed the ways Danone does business and has fostered creativity and innovation as employees bring more value to the business in more brilliant ways (Thomas, 2016).

Table 1: Reasons for coaching and mentoring

| Reason to Coach and Mentor                                                                  | Actions to Take                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Building Skills:</b> Set up opportunities for new skills to be learned and practiced.    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use coaching and mentoring to break up large-scale tasks into smaller ones, gradually introducing new skills.</li> <li>• Before selecting a training program, coach and mentor your staff to identify performance targets they want to achieve.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Progressing Projects:</b> Oversee progress and monitor any problems on projects.         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link coaching and mentoring sessions with progress reports over the life of the project.</li> <li>• Work through problems that could hinder the successful completion of the project.</li> </ul>                                                           |
| <b>Developing Careers:</b> Prepare staff for promotion or show them a clear career path.    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on coaching and mentoring goals that could result in recognition for staff achievements.</li> <li>• Focus on long-term projects that are challenging and bring out potential, rather than small-scale jobs.</li> </ul>                                |
| <b>Solving Problems:</b> Help staff to identify problems and possible routes to a solution. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage staff to define the problem and to come up with their own route to a solution.</li> <li>• Remain sympathetic to your staff's difficulties, while encouraging them to deal with problems robustly</li> </ul>                                      |
| <b>Brainstorming:</b> Direct the creative input of the team to keep projects on track.      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accentuate the generation of creative options rather than getting bogged down in problems.</li> <li>• In team coaching and mentoring, take a lead by offering creative ideas of your own, and then invite the team to assess them.</li> </ul>              |
| <b>Overcoming Conflicts:</b> Diffuse disagreements among team members.                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach and mentor staff to develop greater insights into others' perspectives and therefore avoid misunderstandings.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Remotivating Staff:</b> Restore enthusiasm and commitment within the team.               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish people's needs and aspirations and link these to performance targets.</li> <li>• Be prepared to dig for the issues that really concern the employee and be ready to talk them through.</li> </ul>                                                |

Source: Eaton and Johnson (2001)

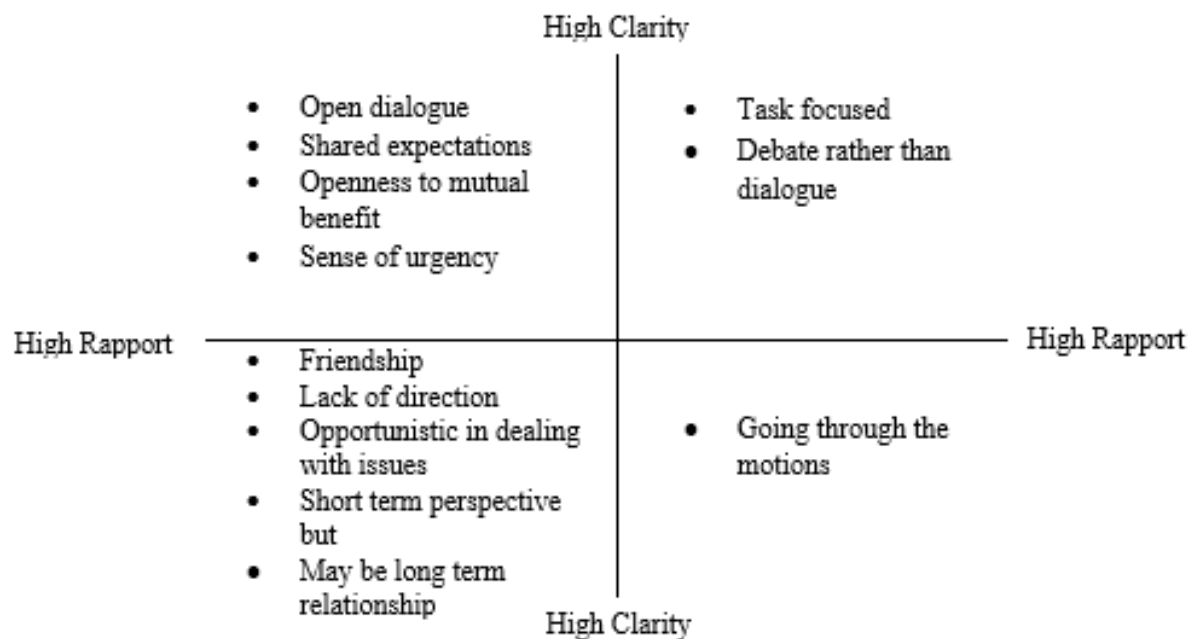
### 3. Similarities between coaching and mentoring

In principal there is no clear boundary between coaching and mentoring (Passmore, 2007) since both interventions are hinged on obtaining mutual consent and willingness as precursor in the relations management (Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2005).

Coaching and mentoring are used as management intervention to develop employees and ensure results. Fundamentally when it comes to activities, learning and development come from the same roots although practitioners and academics still debate the implications as much as the meaning of each word, (Serrat, 2017) emphasises the fact that a good coach can also mentor as much as the reverse is true depending on the scenario and type of relationship. Furthermore, both coaching and mentoring are processes involving reflection, analysis and actions with an aim of boosting employee skills and life through performance improvement as they attain full potential. Centrally to traditional training, coaching and mentoring are both

people focused rather than the subject; bring out the best in the person instead of putting in; aim at developing instead of imposing; encourage reflection as opposed to direction; they are on-going none 1-to-1 activities, facilitating change (Serrat,2017).

Figure 1. Relationship between goal clarity and Rapport in mentoring



Source: (Clutterbuck & Ragins, 2002)

### 3.1 Difference between coaching and mentoring

Coaching is focused on certain set of goals to be achieved, such as development of strategic thinking, a person with more knowledge on management and execution of the goals (coach) clearly defines what needs to be done to attain the goal while in mentoring focuses on human relations, where a certain level of competence is required to establish trust in the relationship (mentoring group, 2017). However, several dimensions are used the differences between coaching and mentoring with the key dimensions being Length of contract, formality level, outcomes focus, training, business knowledge, supervision and client (Pasmore, 2007) as showing in table 3 below.

Table 3: The differences between Coaching &amp; Mentoring

|                                       | <b>Coaching</b>                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Mentoring</b>                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Level of formality</b>          | <b>More formal:</b> Contract or ground rules set often involving a third-party organisational client.                                                                     | <b>Less formal:</b> Agreement most typically between two parties.                                                                         |
| <b>2. Length of contract</b>          | <b>Shorter term:</b> Typically, between 4-12 meetings agreed over two to twelve months.                                                                                   | <b>Longer term:</b> Typically, unspecified number of meetings with relationships often running over 3-5 years.                            |
| <b>3. Outcome Focus</b>               | <b>More performance-focused:</b> Typically, a greater focus on short term skills and job performance.                                                                     | <b>More career-focused:</b> Typically, a concern with longer term career issues, obtaining the right experience and longer-term thinking. |
| <b>4. Level of business knowledge</b> | <b>More generalist:</b> Typically, coaches have a strong appreciation of business or commercial realities.                                                                | <b>More sector knowledge:</b> Typically, mentors have detailed knowledge of organization or business sector.                              |
| <b>5. Training</b>                    | <b>More relationship training:</b> Typically, coaches have a background in psychology, psychotherapy or human resources, or have undertaken specialist coaching training. | <b>More management training:</b> Typically, mentors have a background in senior management, with limited coaching/mentoring training.     |
| <b>6. Client</b>                      | <b>Dual client:</b> More typically a dual focus on the needs of the individual and the needs of the organisation.                                                         | <b>Single client:</b> More typically a single focus on the needs of the individual.                                                       |
| <b>7. Supervision or support</b>      | <b>Formal:</b> Typically, the coach will be in (or be expected to be in) supervision as part of their CPD.                                                                | <b>Informal:</b> Typically, the mentor may have period discussions or briefings from HR, if based within an organisation.                 |

Source: (Passmore,2007)

Coaching and mentoring have different levels in the dimension of formality (Hawkins & Smith, 2006), besides the other factors like the assignment circumstances, coach/mentor's style with the humanistic coaching model being personal/informal in contrast with the psychodynamic or psychotherapeutic trained coaches operating within stringent boundaries. Also, mentoring tends to operate within culturally influenced organizational, contractual formality levels. Under normal circumstances the length of relationships in mentoring tend to last between two to five years (Megginson et al., 2006) way longer than coaching which in comparison tends to last between four to twelve months.

Both coaching and mentoring have an expected outcome which often overlap (Winum, 2005) when it comes to skills and careers discussions in both interventions, although mentoring is more career focused whereas coaching is skills and behavioural focused according to Field & Field (2006).

The training dimension of coaching has evolved, although matched with mentoring of recent, warranting the combination of coaching and mentoring interventions into a single program in the institute of leadership and management. However, there remains a difference in coaching training background in psychology or specialized training, whereas mentoring focuses on the seniority of the mentor (Passmore, 2007).

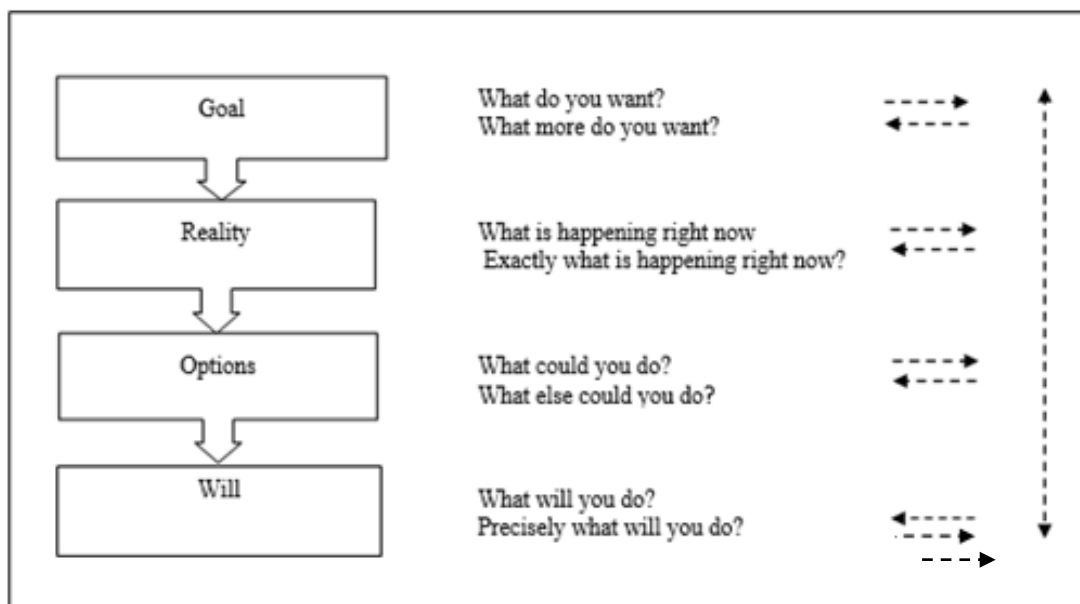
The need for both the organization and the client's needs 'being satisfied is paramount (Hawkins and Smith, 2006), despite the fact that these factors are often ignored is critical importance in organizational coaching; whereas mentoring takes on a less complicated relationship with an emphasis on addressing both the needs of the organization and the mentee. Supervision has risen in the coaching intervention especially in the UK to the extent that coaches are encouraged to implement supervision after every thirty-five hours during the coaching sessions (Hawkins and Schwenk, 2007) whereas it is not precisely the same with mentoring.

#### 4. Coaching and mentoring models

##### 4.1 The GROW Model

Developed by Graham Alexander and John Whitmore, the Goal, Reality, Options and Way forward/wrap-up is the GROWs model (MTD training, 2010), which forms the structure benchmarking the discussions around coaching, ideally placing greater responsibility on the learners in this nondirective intervention.

Figure 2. Illustration of the GROW model



Source: (Whitmore, 2002; Performance Consultants International, 2018)

The goal in the acronym GROW serves to inspire and stretch the coachee, pushing them to establish a proper understanding of where they want to get to, what aims and objectives to

focus on to in light of their reality, prompting them to understand their limitations and internal obstacles. Furthermore, the coachee and coach explore the available options and decides on what needs to be done inform of a summary plan wrapping-up and high lighting the relevant milestones, see figure 2 above (Performance Consultants International, 2018).

#### *4.2 Using the Purpose, Perspectives, Process model to meet an employee's needs*

Having a structured approach to a coaching conversation in an explorative way with the employee in the organisation is very important. For this reason, Lane & Corrie (2006) designed the Purpose, perspectives and process coaching model as illustrated in figure 3 below.

Figure 3. The Purpose, Perspectives, Process of coaching and mentoring.



Source: Lane and Corrie (2006)

##### *Purpose: Where and why are we going?*

Its is important to understand where and why both the coach and the employee are going in the coaching journey, the set goal for the employee to achieve, and where they would like to go with their coach. The main job of the coach is to understand what drives and motivates the employees (Stout-Rostron, 2018).

##### *Perspectives: insight and views that determine the coaching journey?*

Here the attention is drawn on the experiences, backgrounds, value, expertise, assumptions and motivations of both the coach and employee to attain the perspective on the journey to take. What determines the type of intervention required for the journey is may be entirely dependent on the structural and cultural interpretations of the world of both employees engaged in coaching (coach and coachee). This is the overall summation of their education, family, qualification, learning, experiences, spirituality, expertise, faith, value traits, motivations, feelings, behaviours and assumptions. It gives employees an opportunity to get insight into their own perspectives (Stout-Rostron, 2018). In the case of Danone, assessment is done to identify potential leaders (Thomas, 2016).

##### *The process: How to get there*

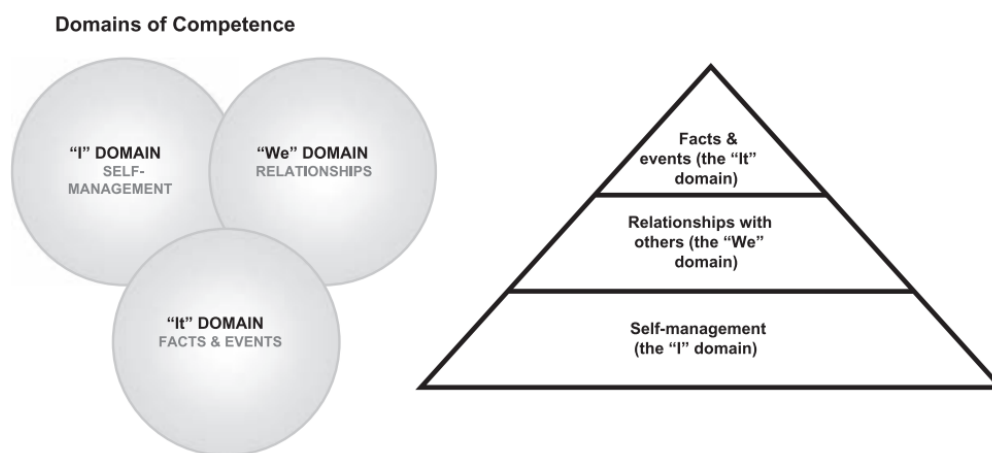
The model creates opportunity for the needs of the employee to be understood by the coach, build the rapport with their coach and having a structured way of attained their set goals mapped out. Necessary evaluations are set along the way to mark miles stones and motivate the employees to reach their set goals. At this stage, the direction, termination and exit from the coaching relationship may be discussed aswell as approvals from senior employees to confirm that the employee has attained the set goal (Stout-Rostron, 2018). For the case of

Danone, the 2year period was set after which the coached employees were confident to be able to coach other employees within the company (Thomas, 2016).

#### 4.3 Using the Habermas' Domains of Competence model approach in organisations

Every coach in business must be able to listen and observe the coachee. The observation skill involves being part of the conversation and observing at the same time. It is about being present at a micro level and yet observing the coachee from a meta-position (Stout-Rostron, 2006). A coach's ability to understand the right model to use and devise a structured approach or intervention, to enable the employee to achieve the desired behavioural change and self-awareness. Using Haberman's model the communication is structured in a way to enable employees engage in meaningful interaction (Wilber, 2000). He defined reality in three domains that concurrently exist (Flaherty, 1999). See figure 4. Below.

Figure 4. Habermas' Domains of Competence model



Source: (Weiss, 2004; Flaherty, 1999)

##### *The "I" domain: The individual's domain*

This domain like the purpose, perspective and process model, refers how one perceives the world from their point of view. Self-observation and knowledge development are the gateway into this domain. One requires self-correction, purpose, knowledge and persistence as the key competences at this level and a set of skills such as self-management, consistency, knowledge, daring and observation to operate in this domain. While the basis of this domain is not objective, it produces qualities such as, passion, vision, trust, curiosity and integrity (Stout-Rostron, 2006)

##### *The "We" domain: The community or collective domain*

The involves how a collection of individuals (employees) perceive the world and is often a basis for our sense of meaning, roles, social practices, rituals, values and narratives which rule our world of possibilities. This domain requires a dialogue approach by means of relationships and conversation where the coach must exhibit a set of skills such as speaking, listening, innovation, learning and setting standards (Braaten, 1991). Moreover, the required competences at this level include inspiration, communication, leadership and relationship; although the reality is this domain is subjective, the quality exhibited at this level include reliability, empathy, faith and openness.

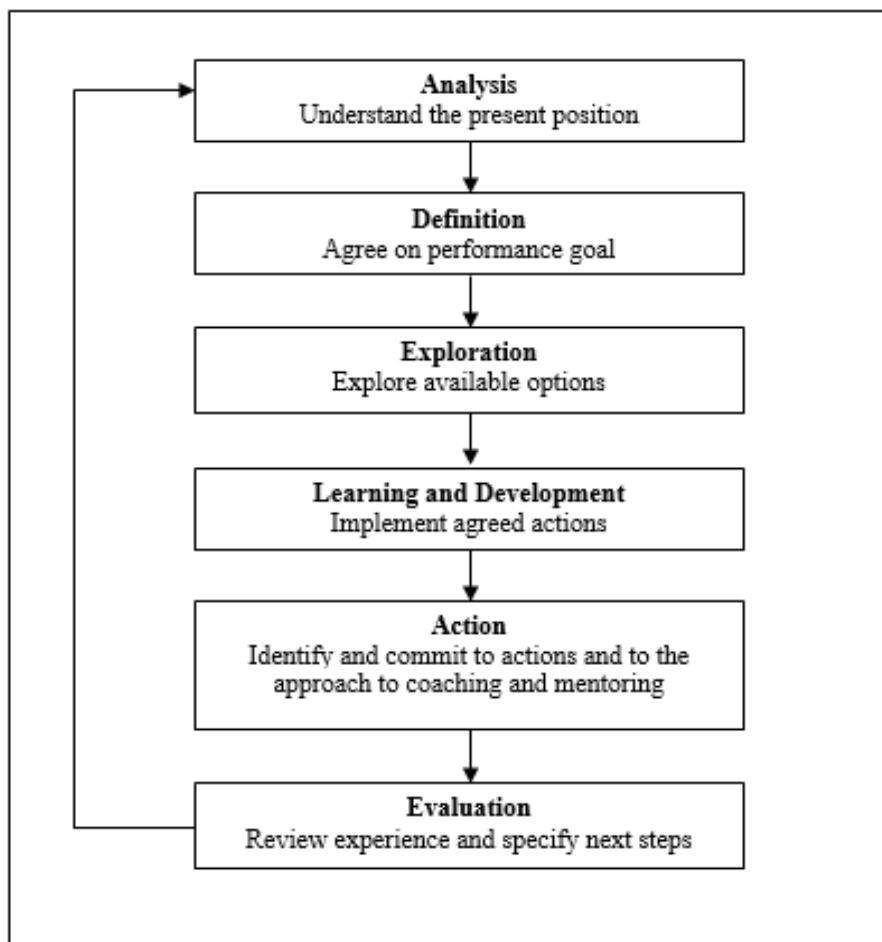
*The “It” domain: The objective or external world domain*

This domain involves technology and science, process, empirical forms and objective nature. It is mainly concerned with objects and the main gateway to this domain is through analysis, model building, observing and predicting. The main competences at this level include measurement, technology, statistics and processes; thus, producing qualities such as objectivity, focus, persistence and rigour (Wilber, 2001).

### 5. Structured Coaching and Mentoring

Whenever motivation and performance levels need to be increased, coaching and mentoring are the main interventions involved. These are carried out based on reasons such as career development, overcoming conflicts, staff re-motivation and problems solving ensuring that objective, factual and specific feedback is given in all instances (Serrate, 2009).

Figure 1. Structured Coaching and Mentoring



Source: (Eaton and Johnson, 2001)

The process of coaching and mentoring involves setting goals and working towards the achievement of the goals. The coachee & coach, mentee and mentor go through series of up to six stages involving, actively listening, effectively questioning and feedback sessions. The

first stages involve both parties creating rapport, setting goals and establish clarity through engagement. A reality check will be carried out between both parties and an agreement reached on the style of coaching and mentoring after which various options will be laid out on for the coachee and mentee to commit to. Agreed actions are taken and feedback is given back by the coach and mentor with a possibility of repeating the cycle (Serrate,2009).

## 6.Coaching and mentoring benefits in a workplace

Coaching and mentoring are proven to be the best means of training practices; supporting employees with self-awareness and subsequently self-actualization by enabling them to realize potential and strengths they can rely on to improve their individual performance (Edwards et al., 2003). On the other hand, practices in management have incorporated coaching and management for their ability to empower and inspire employees in today's global and competitive business environment, and hence boosting organisational commitment, productivity and success (McLead, 2003). Personal development is another trait that is developed under coaching and mentoring as agreed by (Hendricks, 1996), it contributes to employee performance as well, see figure 3 below.

Coaching focuses on enhancing individuals' learning abilities aswell as performance in an organisation with emphasis on the leaders' ability to win friends and influence their followers (Landsberg; 2015). Also, coaching creates room for delegation, generation of more time for self and achievement of timely results; this facilitates leadership effectiveness as one helps their sub ordinates grow. See figure 4 below.

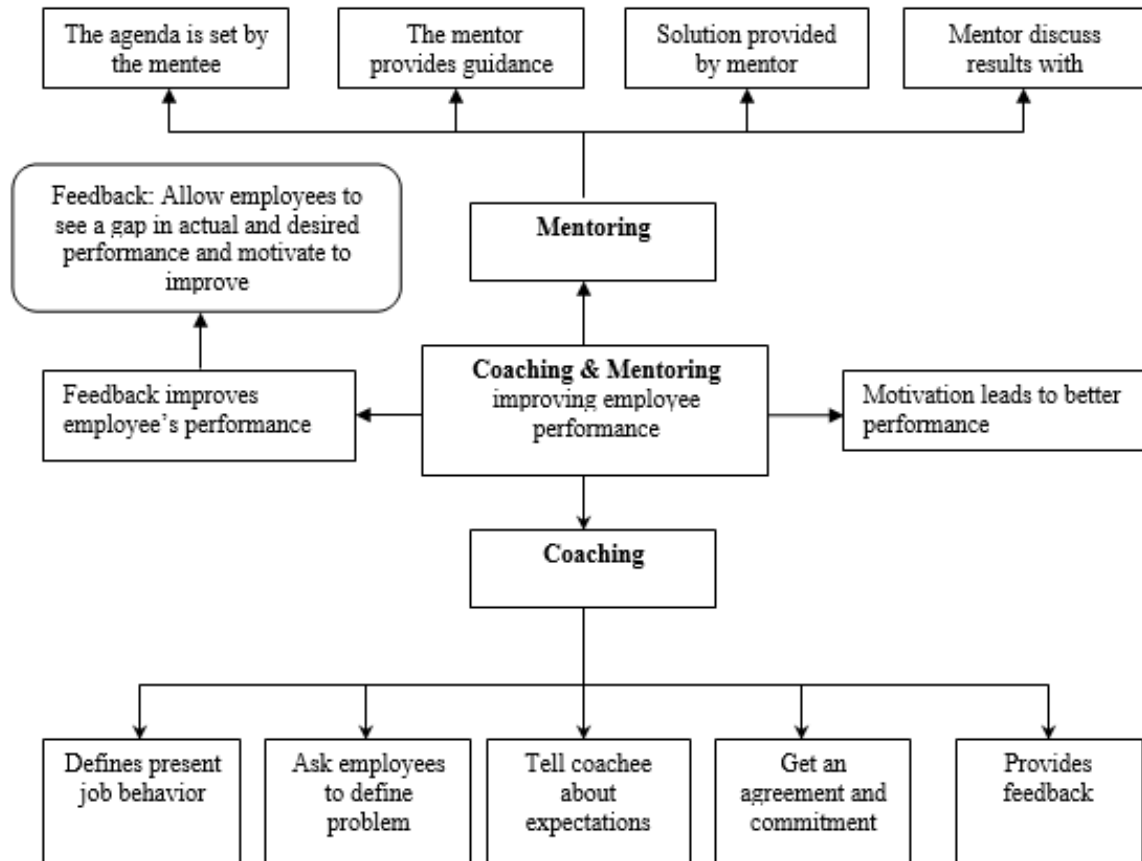
Figure 4: The Tao of coaching



Source: Landsberg (2015)

## 7. The coaching and mentoring process illustrated

Figure 3. Conceptual Model of How Coaching and Mentoring Increases Employee Performance



Source: Sherish et al (2011)

### 7.1 How coaching and mentoring impacts individual performance

Coaching facilitates performance improvement on a long-term basis (Peterson, 1993) as learning and development takes time and a long process of feedback after practice, and transfer of knowledge and skills in a supportive relationship between the coach and the employee. When an employee manages to complete their entire coaching program, their possibility of maintaining the skills acquired is very high (Thompson, 1986) and even after the program, the coachee is likely to continue learning and exhibiting more skills. Furthermore, significant improvement in behaviours is often manifested in the coachee even long after the coaching program has ended, and the employees overall work effectiveness also tends to improve.

(Peterson, 1993).

### 7.2 Knowledge skills and behaviours needed by an effective workplace coach

Coaching and mentoring are a challenging intervention yet vital to the success of both employees and the organisation, and therefore it is important to ensure quality in the standards, process and people designated for the role (Exforsys, 2010). Furthermore, the

designated personnel for the role must exhibit the expected professional and personal qualities and skills and effective coaches. More than often mentors and coaches are senior members within the organisation and must therefore have the commendable leadership qualities to inspire their subordinates. In 2010, Exforsys came up with the following primary effective coaching skills below;

#### *Building rapport*

Good interpersonal or people skills is key in coaching since without this, it become almost impossible to establish a connection and later a relationship of trust between the coach and the coachee. Therefore, rapport become a necessity to create an understanding between both parties to facilitate learning.

#### *Ability to listen*

Good and active listening is a fundamental skill in coaching. Listening involve more about understanding what is being said rather than understanding hints and suggestions. Active Listening involves giving the coachee and opportunity to open up to the coach who is at that moment actively listening, without interruptions.

#### *Ability to question*

Asking intelligent questions with the right technique is a crucial skill in coaching, such as open ended or close ended question. Open ended questions enable the coach to invite the learner to open up and elucidate more on what they are saying. It is also good to ask the right follow up question to give the learner reassurance that the coach is interested in them.

#### *Communication skills*

The coach's ability to communication messages across in a clear and understandable manner is also very important especially during the feedback sessions. Giving constructive feedback in a way that does not damage the learner's self-esteem is very vital to the coach and learner's relationship.

#### *Analytical skills*

Working on important tasks within the organisation facilitate development, and therefore for anyone playing the role of the coach, accuracy in assessing both the needs of individual and the organisational needs is of paramount importance to the overall success of the organisation. During the course of the program, the needs of the coachee and the organisation may change from time to time and so do the expectations of both the company and the coachee and yet business must go on as usual. It is therefore imperative that coach can analyse the changes and needs as they arise and at the same time demonstrate these analytical skills to the coachee (Hicks and Peterson, 1997).

## 7. Conclusion

Coaching and mentoring are a necessity to the success of an entire organisation although selecting the correct person for the job is as vital as the results expected from the intervention as this defines the quality and standard of the services offered and consequentially the performance levels. However, further research on the subject both coaching and mentoring is inevitable to match the evolving needs of both individuals and organisations.

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