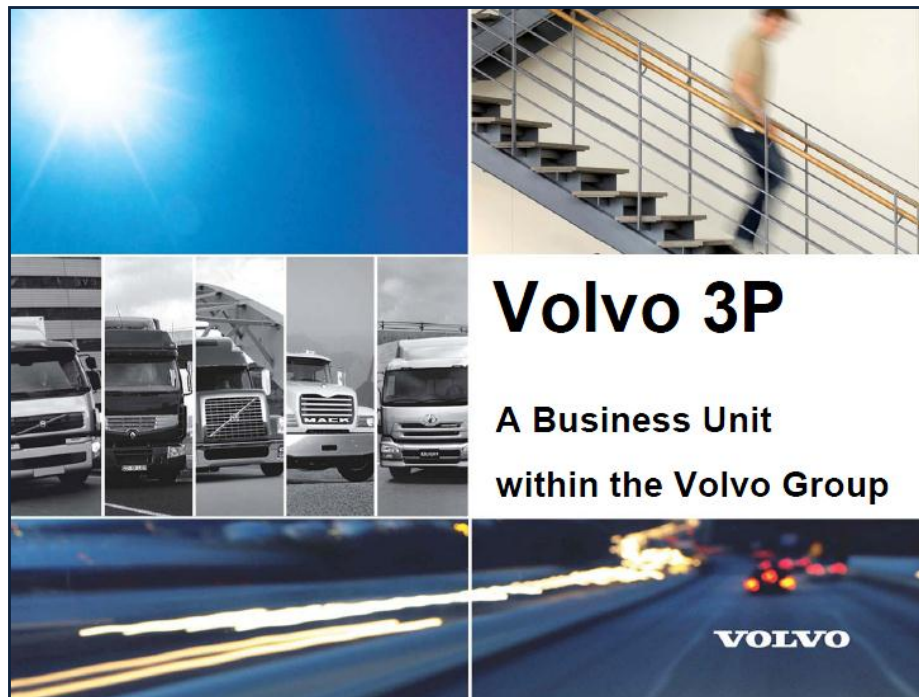


CHALMERS



Volvo 3P

A Business Unit
within the Volvo Group

COACHING AND LEADERSHIP AT VOLVO 3P

Master of Science Thesis in the Master's Program International Project Management

ELENA TAPIA CUADRA

Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
Göteborg, Sweden 2010
Master's Thesis 2010: 142

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Elena Tapia Cuadra

Gothenburg, September 2010

"BEHIND EVERY SUCCESSFUL PERSON, THERE IS ONE ELEMENTARY TRUTH. SOMEWHERE, SOMEWAY, SOMEONE CARED ABOUT THEIR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT."

Coaching and Leadership at Volvo 3P

Master of Science Thesis in the Master's Programme International Project Management

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Coaching and Leadership at Volvo 3P

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ABSTRACT

As an emerging discipline, coaching is increasing popularity in a wider business and academic community. Due to the fact that it is a relatively new profession in the present form and as an independent discipline focused on personal development, coaching has struggled with problems of definition. Both contradictions in its effectiveness and the lack of consensus on establishing a common framework of reference call for more research in the field.

This dissertation is a case study of coaching's effectiveness and the use of different coaching approaches in the same international company in two different countries. Based on the perception of the participants, outcome of the coaching usage is investigated and a comparative analysis between the two approaches is carried out to facilitate a knowledge transfer process between the two locations. Findings confirm the positive impact of the coaching activities within the company, that there is a need for sharing practises and for common framework of reference combining traditional coaching and inter-cultural aspects. The objective is not to emphasise on the cultural differences, but increase the awareness of those differences to give insights into a future improvement of the coaching system and in the creation of global and common leadership.

Key words: business coaching, leadership development, executive change, coaching program, organizational development, cross-cultural coaching.

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PREFACE

In this study, an evaluation of coaching effects and a comparison of coaching frameworks have been done. The investigation has been carried out from February 2010 to September 2010. This dissertation is a part of an MSc program in International Project Management, at the University of Chalmers of Technology (Sweden) and in Project Management at Northumbria University (England). This research is a thesis work developed for the Department of Human Resources of the company Volvo 3P, a business unit within Volvo AB. The participation of the author of this thesis in a mentorship program for female students performed by Volvo 3P during the period 2009-2010 prompted the contact for Björn Flood, the Human Resources global manager of Volvo 3P, to discuss and agree the scope and main points of the present thesis.

1 Introduction

In the constant innovative business environment, good organizations are more and more aware of the competitive pressure and consequently are developing new strategies to maximize results.

Modern organizations are flexible, require another kind of leadership and thus, the concept of leadership is undergoing changes and a more adaptive and innovative style is needed.

Organizational leaders are charged with establishing the vision and direction either at a micro level, leadership team, or macro level, organizational strategy. They are expected to motivate and inspire others. By self-managing and association of behaviours, leaders create the climate to obtain successful results. When leadership falters or fails poor performance and not so positive outcomes take place, since trust, enthusiasm, and engagement decrease without leadership and wisdom (Lazar and Bergquist, 2004, p16).

In this context, business coaching is emerging in organisations as a powerful and extensive tool for leadership development.

In spite of its increased popularity, there are some contradictions regarding the effectiveness and impacts of coaching (Armstrong 2005, Peterson 1999), so companies need to analyse the result and data more accurately (Wise & Voss, p.4).

The far too limited research carried out on the efficacy of coaching, (Leedham, 2005, p 30), points out the consequent need for more investigations in order to bring insights into the benefits of this relatively new practise.

The landscape of coaching shows that the variety of methods, models and approaches in the practise of coaching, has as a consequence the lack of consensus from the scholars and practitioners in establishing a common framework of reference.

In the theoretical scenario described above, this master's thesis is a case study of the use of coaching in an international company which develops coaching activity in two different countries with the same scope but with different approaches. This investigation aims to satisfy two main objectives: evaluate the coaching effects, from a global perspective within the company and to facilitate a knowledge transfer process between the two parts by developing a comparative study of the coaching practises based on the information provided by the participants in the coaching process.

1.1 Structure of this dissertation

The dissertation consists of eight chapters. The first chapter is a brief introduction to the topic and a contextualization of the subject in the theory and in the business world.

In the second chapter, a review of the literature relative to the topic will be developed. Relevant information connected to our case study will be presented.

The basic theoretical concepts concerning our topic and some more elaborated theories as well as some coaching models will be provided and linked to our case study. Afterwards, and developed in parallel, the third chapter will introduce the case study in detail with an explanation of the company context in relation to our topic. In chapter four the purpose of this investigation will be explained by means of defining the scope and the main objectives of the research. In chapter five the method used in this investigation is explained. In chapter six the results will be provided and the more particular findings will be discussed in the chapter seven. Finally, a conclusion based on the findings and the discussion will be given in the chapter eight. The structure of this thesis is graphically shown as follows:

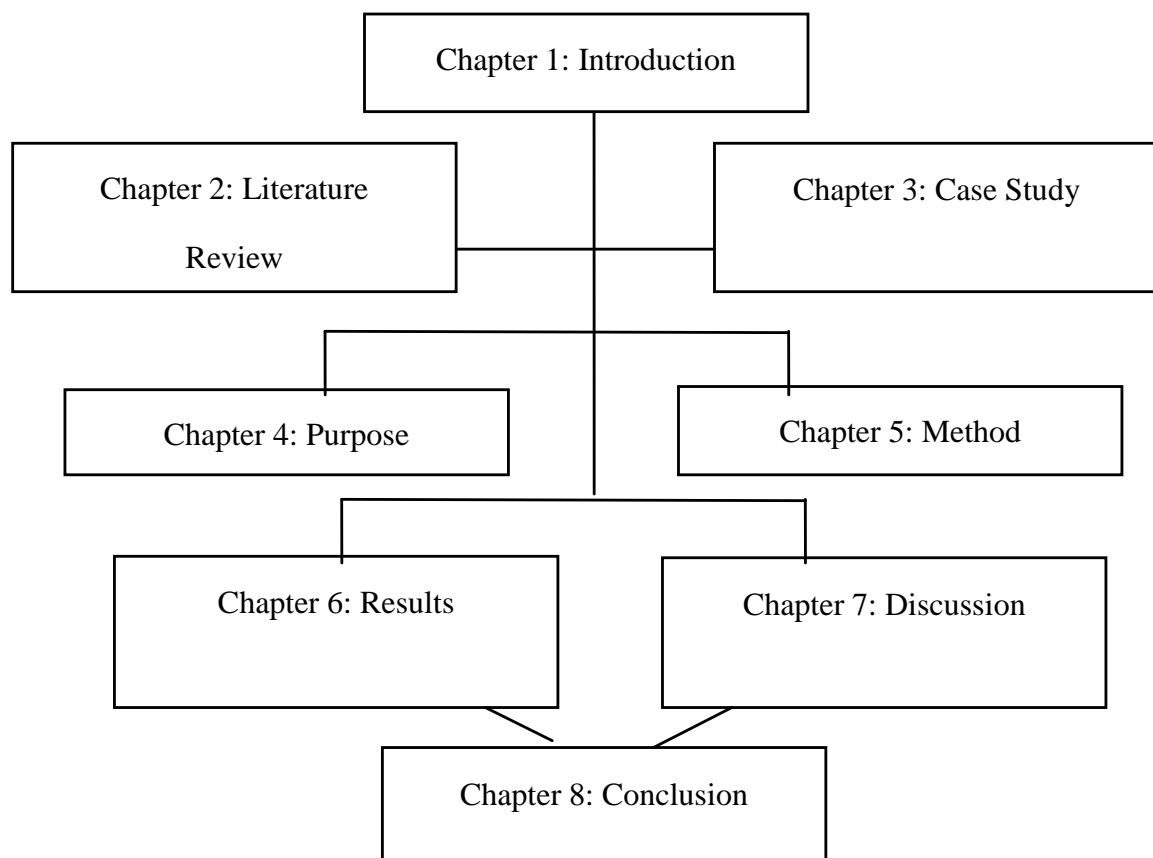


Figure 1-1: Structure applied to this dissertation

2 Literature Review

This chapter is intended to provide a theoretical framework of coaching methods. Due to the variety of approaches found throughout the literature review, to ensure the link between theory and case study, the criteria for selecting theories and knowledge generated by researchers in this field is based on the information obtained from interviews conducted at the beginning of the information gathering process.

The ambition of this chapter is not only to present the theory that supports the study but also to lead the reader through the logical and sequential structure along the thesis with the objective of expanding the knowledge of coaching and to get a better understanding of the application of coaching in the practical world.

2.1 Basics of coaching

Like many other emerging disciplines, coaching has struggled with problems of definition (Ives, 2008). Due to the fact that coaching has developed rapidly by an injection of new ideas and techniques of enrichment, the confusion has been heightened by the lack of consensus and, consequently, the training has been increasingly difficult to define (Stober and Grant, 2006, quoted by Ives, 2008). For this reason, many definitions of coaching have been found throughout the literature review conducted by the author of this thesis.

Ives, (2008, p.102) presents a summary of coaching approaches which can clarify the coaching landscape and give a primary idea about the concept of coaching.

Table 2.1: Quotes selected from Stober & Grant (2006), mentioned by Ives, (2008, p.103).

<i>Type of coaching</i>	<i>Objective of coaching</i>
<i>Humanist</i>	<i>“Coaching is above all about human growth and change” (Stober, 2006 p. 17)</i>
<i>Behaviourist</i>	<i>“The purpose of coaching is to change behaviour” (Peterson, 2006 p.51)</i>
<i>Adult development</i>	<i>Coaching is about helping clients develop and grow in maturity</i>
<i>Cognitive coaching</i>	<i>Coaching is foremost about developing adaptive thoughts</i>
<i>Goal-focused</i>	<i>“Coaching is a goal-oriented, solution-focused process” (Grant, 2006 p. 156).”</i>
<i>Positive psychology approach</i>	<i>“Shift attention away from what causes and drives pain to what energises and pulls people forward” (Kauffman, 2006 p. 220)</i>
<i>Adventure coaching</i>	<i>Stretching the client through entering into challenging situations and the learning that arises.</i>
<i>Adult learning</i>	<i>A learning approach that helps self-directed learners to reflect on and grow from their experiences</i>
<i>Systemic coaching</i>	<i>“Coaching is a journey in search of patterns” (Cavanagh, 2006)</i>

Far from providing a precise definition of coaching, the concept will be deeply analysed and finally understood throughout this thesis.

It seems clear that coaching is an increasingly popular practice of empowerment. Both the deeper understanding of how people learn and the performance benefits are becoming more widely known and accepted in the business world (Phillips, 1996, p.19).

2.2 Business coaching

Based on the general concept of coaching as being a powerful tool for improving individual development, Baker et.al, (2008, p.78) highlights the importance of coaching as a key element in success performance in the business environment. According to Liljenstrand and Nebeker, (2008, p.57) coaching is growing rapidly as a way of helping people to improve in their professional and/or personal success. It is an executive development tool, in terms of interpersonal skills, change management style and team effectiveness (MacKIE, 2007). The need for competent managers and the reported success of coaching have increased its use in the recent years, providing needed expertise, an objective viewpoint, and it is also integrated into the executive's routine (Lary, 1997. mentioned by Baker et.al, 2008, p.78). They also offer a concrete definition of business coaching as below:

"As a short term interactive process between coach and coachee aims to improve leadership skills by enhancing self- awareness and practicing new behaviours. The coaching process facilitates the acquisition of new skills, perspectives, tools and knowledge through support, encouragement, and feedback in the organizational context"

(Lary, 1997. mentioned by Baker et.al, 2008, p.78).

Lary's definition seems to be clear and good enough to summarize the coaching concept in a few sentences, but the business and organizational environment have a relevant role in coaching practises as well, therefore a wider definition is given as follows:

"Organizational and Executive Coaching is a development process that builds a leader's capabilities to achieve professional and organizational goals. A leader is an individual who has the potential of making a significant contribution to the mission and purpose of the organization. This coaching is conducted through one on-one and group interactions, driven by evidence/data from multiple perspectives, and is based on mutual trust and respect. The coach, individuals being coached, and their organizations work in partnership to help achieve the agreed upon goals of the coaching"

(GSAEC, 2007, cited by Perry, 2008, p. iii).

Similarly, Lenhardt (2004) offers an interesting approach to the coaching concept, which he called "integrative management", he extends the concept from individual perspective of individual coaching to collective phenomenon in team coaching

(support for the individual) and team building (support for the team). This perspective is connected to the managerial development and its individual and collective dimension, Lenhardt (2004, p.6). The interaction: leadership-context-followership (Hughes, Ginnett and Curphy, 2009), is also adopted in his approach, since he argues about the preliminary and necessary culture enveloped for individual coaching, team coaching and team building.

Lenhardt (2004, p.17) defines coaching as:

“Help, guidance and a co-construction that is offered to a person or team through timely intervention, or more often long-term support”.

For Lenhardt (2004), coaching is the major ingredient of creating Collective Intelligence which is the essential concept of “working on a vision”, (see figure below).

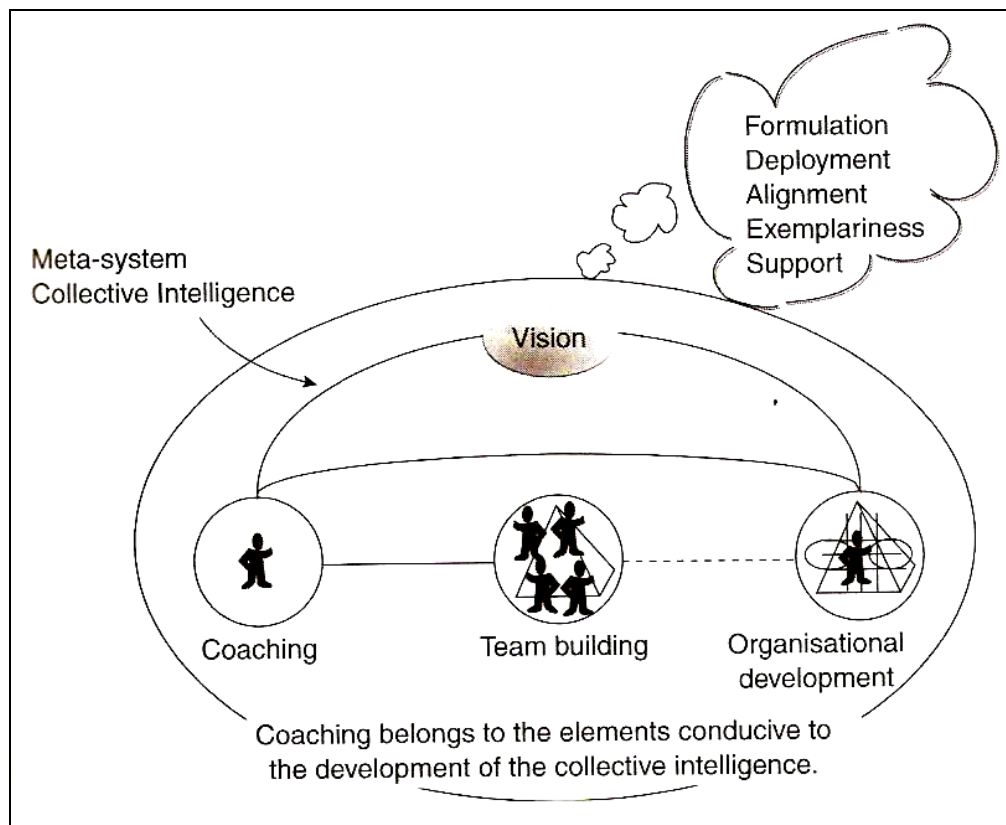


Figure 2-1: Constituent parts of Collective Intelligence linked Lenhardt (2004, p.xix),

According to Lenhardt (2004), organizations cannot be satisfied with the logic of objectives and planning, “meaning and process are of a prime importance compared with the contents”, (Lenhardt, 2004, p.xx).

Taking into account the increasing management complexity which is derived from the constant changes that managers have to face in and matrix-based organization, it is in this proactivity where Collective Intelligence makes sense and coaching becomes a major ingredient in making Collective Intelligence.

The figure 2-1 shows the system of making Collective Intelligence aiming to make people agree in the reference framework. It is a continuous process of regulation and readjustment that makes the organization became more flexible.

However, although many organizations recognize the effectiveness of coaching in leadership development, some research points out the lack of empirical data to support the evidence of its positive outcomes (Baker et.al, 2008, p.78). As mentioned by Baron and Morin (2009), from the scientist perspective and in terms of empirical data, coaching has been poorly evaluated (Lowman, 2005; Sue-Chan and Latham, 2004) and it even is being over-utilized in organizations seeing the scarcity of research on its efficacy (McGovern et al., 2001).

The insufficiency of evidence base for coaching is commented by Dagley, (2006, cited by MacKIE, 2007), who even emphasizes the uncontrolled and anecdotal nature of this discipline.

2.2.1 Evidence of Coaching

The objective of this chapter is to provide a clear picture of the evidence of coaching from the literature review in order to find an outcome criterion to carry out the evaluation and impacts of this case study. Therefore, a brief exploration of the current evidence for coaching is needed.

As an emerging discipline, coaching has been enriched by new models, practises and use of technique from adult learning to behavioural change.

MacKIE (2007) provides in his article a useful review of the outcome literature in business coaching and claims the need for regular evaluation through case studies and controlled trails meanwhile he points out the lack of rigorous professional consensus and verified data to evaluate coaching effectiveness.

The following table shows a summary of the information indicated by MacKIE (2007).

Table 2.2: Summary of coaching evidences (MacKIE 2007, adapted by the author).

Review of evidence	Author	Findings (outcome of coaching)
<i>Surveys</i>	Chartered Institute of personal development (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance - Motivation - Behavioural change - Culture and leadership
<i>Case Studies</i>	Libri & Kemp (2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive changes in self-ratings of performance core self-evaluations
<i>Uncontrolled Studies</i>	Wasylyshyn(2003)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainability of changes - Behavioural changes
<i>Controlled Studies</i>	Hernez-Broom (2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coached people focus on leadership and coach others more than non-coached - Gained success in attaining objectives
	Brouwers and Tomic (2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acting in balanced way - Self-efficacy beliefs to set one's own goals
<i>Coaching Process</i>	Dingman (2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High rated in Interpersonal skills - High rated in communication style - Instrumental Support - Self-efficiency affected by the process.

Also, the following graphic can guide us in knowing the level of evidence of coaching result.

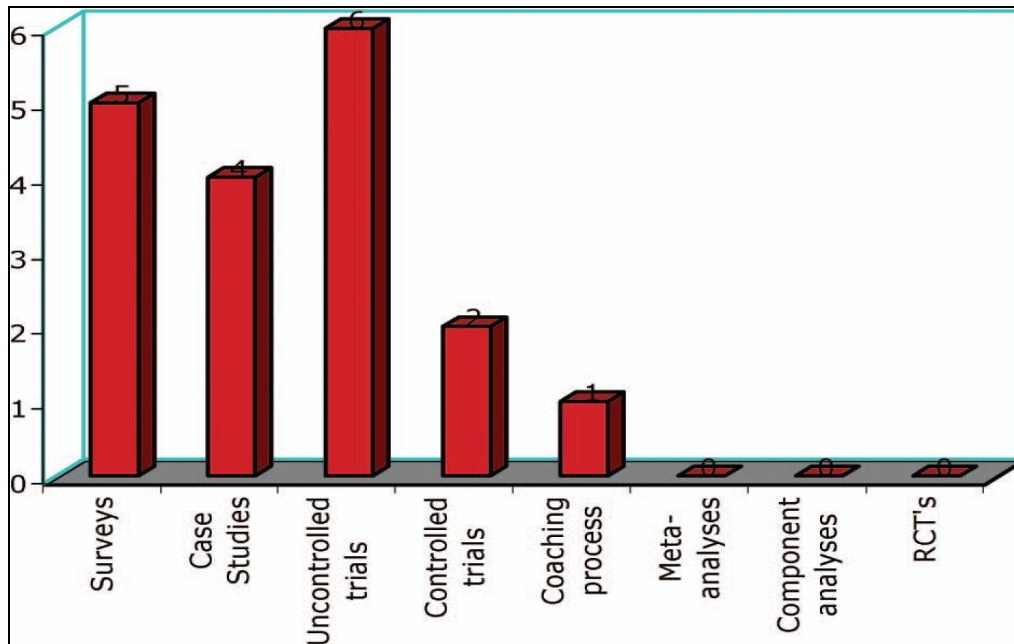


Figure 2-2: Levels of evidence in business coaching research. (MacKIE, 2007, p.311).

As illustrated, uncontrolled trials and surveys are the most published form of coaching evaluation. Though these data are useful, they are on the level of collective anecdotes and long away from being the controlled and verified data required in this relatively new discipline (MacKIE, 2007, p.311).

2.2.2 The Distinctiveness of Business Coaching

In the previous chapter both the difficulty in defining coaching and the lack of consensus of the different researchers and practitioners were discussed. In that context, a definition of competencies becomes necessary to distinguish coaching from other practises or disciplines that it can borderline with in order to have the most benefits from all of them (Feldman, and Lankau, 2005; Ives, 2008; McGovern et al, 2001; Parsloe and Wray, 2000; Rosinski, 2003; Wilson, 2007).

2.2.2.1 Coaching versus Mentorship and Instructing

The role of the coach is often confused with the mentor's role. Many authors have defined coach and mentor in different ways; some of them also claim that both are the same (Parsloe & Wray, 2000, cited by Ives, p.100), therefore coaching/mentoring dichotomy is more widely accepted.

However, the majority of authors highlight the differences. Though they both can overlap in certain situations, the idea of this chapter is to delimit them.

Rosinski (2003, chapter 1), defines the differences between both processes, coaching and mentoring. From his perspective, coaches act as facilitators by providing a framework to help coachees to support their own network, whereas mentors give advice and expert recommendation, open doors and provide contacts to the mentee. Coaching requires additional empathy and other skills are needed.

Wilson (2007, chapter 1) also emphasises the differences. In mentorship processes, the mentor's experience is crucial in teaching and advising to the mentee, who is less experienced in particular fields. Coaching processes deal sometimes with psychological issues to achieve the goal, while mentoring is about imparting facts (Wilson 2007, chapter 1).

Wilson (2007, chapter 1) states:

“Like coaches, they (mentors) may empower and motivate their mentees, but it is not their primary role to do so. In modern business, the practice of delivering mentoring in a coaching style is on the increase”.

A mentor-mentee relationship tends to be more informal in the first stages and can get redefined into collegial relationships after the mentee has become successful in his or her position (Wanberg, Welsh, & Hezlett, 2003, mentioned by Feldman and Lankau, 2005, p 831). By contrast, coach-coachee relationship is shorter in duration, formally contracted and structured in nature, (Sperry, 1993).

Instructing (training), coaching and mentoring differ. Instructors disseminate knowledge. Coaches help clients build skills. Mentors shape mentee attitudes. Alternately, instructors train to immediate tasks, coaches accompany achievements, and mentors provide whole-life shaping. Training is teaching people to do what they do not know how to do. Mentoring is showing people how the people who are really good at doing something do it.

2.2.2.2 Coaching versus Therapy, Counselling and Consulting

Therapy is conducted by a licenced psychologist who usually treats emotional and behavioural problems with focus on the person's history to identify the roots of the problem (Rosinski, 2003, chapter 1; Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001, mentioned by Feldman and Lankau, 2005, p 831). Although, it can help in the coaching process and be complementary, coaching is about “what” and “how to” not about “why” (Rosinski, 2003, chapter 1).

Counselling is also different from coaching. According to Feldman and Lankau (2005, p 832), it can be understood that the counsellor's role is normally more associated with assessing the strengths and weaknesses the individual to help in their career of development, while coaching focuses on the situation of their current job to enhance the individual's effectiveness in the current organization (Kilburg, 2000, cited by Feldman and Lankau, 2005, p 832). Therefore, counselling implies a more comprehensive examination of executives' job preferences, values, interests, and personal life concerns, while coaching focuses exclusively on executives' work-related skills and abilities (Feldman, 2001).

Also, *consulting* is not coaching. According to Rosinski (2003, chapter 1), consulting provides ready-made answers, while coaching builds the critical capabilities of coachees so that they by themselves can forge their own paths.

Although the limits are not tightly defined, since overlap can exist in the way that other disciplines can be potential contributors to coaching, it is important to work within the confines of one's competencies and mandate, (Rosinski 2003, chapter 1).

2.2.2.3 Leader as a Coach

In order to understand this thesis, it is necessary to clearly distinguish two concepts, the first the professional coach and the second manager who acts as a coach.

Coaching is a profession. It requires a concrete education and professional experience. To be a professional coach, specific abilities and skills that can be innate or acquired by personal experiences are needed as well.

In contrast, coaching leadership style or manager as a coach focuses on creating an atmosphere of trust and makes the employees feel valued (Parsloe 2000, Whitmore 2002, cited by Löbel 2005). Further, the coaching leadership style empathises on the developmental personal competences in employee to have more competent, participative and committed employees. It is not a profession, it is a role connected to the corporate coaching environment.

In the variety of ways to define this coaching leadership style, Carter, Giber and Goldsmith, (2001) provide the following table which highlights the differences between the coach, the mentor and the manager role. Good managers may use the characteristics of both coach and mentor when applying coaching leadership style, “the best of managers do some coaching and some mentoring as part of their management or leadership responsibilities” (Carter, Giber and Goldsmith, 2001, section 5).

Table 2.3: Distinctiveness of roles (Carter, Giber, Goldsmith, 2001, section 5).

Coach	Mentor	Manager
Has an individual perspective: provides insight and perspective aligning an individual's developmental goals with those of the organization.	Has a horizontal/systemic perspective: provides insight and perspective that matches the flow of business across several different functions.	Has a vertical perspective: provides key insights and perspectives about the function or department they manage.
Provides an external mirroring: models effective two-way communication and feedback in order to improve the performance of the learner.	Provides indirect authority: not responsible for managing the performance of the learner.	Provides direct authority: responsible for the learner's performance and success on the job.
Advice to further development: shares confidential and personal feedback but encourages learner to share development plans with others.	Advice to broaden viewpoint: allowed to share information to which the learner is seldom privy.	Advice on Performance Improvement: able to provide feedback on an on-going basis so the learner knows how he or she is performing in relation to goals and objectives.
Foster self-insight: concerned with helping the learner grow through introspection and feedback from others.	Foster self-responsibility: concerned with helping the learner take charge of his or her own growth.	Foster accountability: responsible for monitoring performance and progress through appraisals and other formal systems.
Concerns about personal growth: concerned that the learner is successful at learning and becoming a more effective leader.	Concerns about thinking: ultimately concerned that the learner gains perspective and is successful at learning.	Concerns with productivity: concerned with the learner's success on the job.

2.2.3 Brain-based approach to coaching

How can we link a hard science to coaching in order to be more supportive and give a deeper understanding of what coaching is and its impacts?

The brain-based approach for coaching has been selected in the present study due to the fact that it connects a hard science, which is neuroscience, with the social discipline, as coaching is (Rock, 2006).

As pointed out by Rock, (2006, p.32), it is not well explained yet why we need coaching, how it actually works and how to do it better. He offers an interesting brain-based approach to answer those questions. In his attempt to provide an explanation of why and how coaching works, he uses the neuroscience science to explain how coaching impacts our brain.

Leadership is about influencing and getting people to change, so we need to know how that change occurs in order to inspire people to behave differently. As the brain-based approach states, our behaviour is connected to neuroscience in the way that when a new behaviour is acquired, our neurons react by establishing new connections to each other, which results in a solid new "network" of connections.

The formation of new neuro-connections in our brain needs extra-work, extra-energy, since there is a natural resistance to change, people usually avoid change.

Therefore, if internal driving forces are stimulated, internal motivation will be encouraged as well and the resistance to change will diminish. Coaching helps to establish these new neuro-connections by stimulating new reflexions, new ideas, perspectives, and, in consequence, solutions to concrete dilemma are found.

This theory can be applied either to individual coaching or team coaching, since it is known that self-motivation comes also from responding to the environment and the responder is part of the environment, she or he can positively affect it. Leaders create the climate to impact team members and influence in the environment. Therefore, leaders who change their behaviour due to coaching experience can influence the response of their team members.

In correlation to what is pointed out above and connecting it to how coaching can impact our brain, Rock (2006) highlights two important aspects; on one hand, by focusing on some concrete neural networks are established and consequently a new behaviour is acquitted. "By paying enough attention to a certain set of brain connections, it keeps this relevant circuitry stable, enabling it to eventually become a part of the brain's hard wiring..."(Jeffrey Schwartz, cited by Rock, 2006, p. 36).

On the other hand, Rock, (2006) also found that a central feature of effective coaching was apparently connected with a kind of "insight" in the mind of the client. He developed a "Four Faces of Insight" model (Figure 2 3: "Four Faces of Insight") to define in a simple way what happens in a few seconds when this insight take place and how coaching can affect this process.

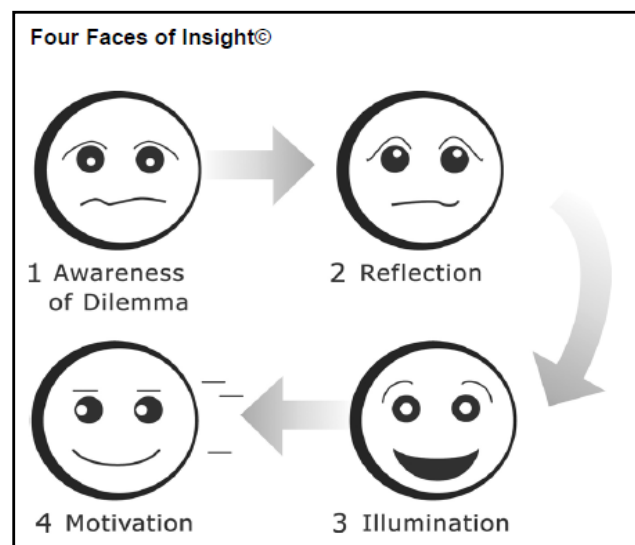


Figure 2-3: "Four Faces of Insight" (by Rock, 2006, p.42).

The four stages illustrated in the figure above are shortly explained as follows:

1. Dilemma: It is the recognition of having a problem. In the neuroscience perspective it means having a mental map of the conflict. Coaching can help the reconfiguration of the existing map.
2. Reflection: as a consequence of the dilemma, reflection time connected to our brain neural activity, take place. Some research shows that while reflecting, we are making links around the whole brain. In practical terms, while encouraging people to reflect, we help people to have insights.
3. Illumination: Studies show that at the moment of insight various neurotransmitters like adrenaline are released. So, when experiencing the insight we create a super map that link many map of the brain and this produce an amount of substantial energy. This can raise the level of engagement at the workplace (Rock, 2006 pp. 42).
4. Motivation: when people have an insight motivation increases, but it is necessary to capture that through the application of attention, it is the person who decides to focus her or his attention, not the coach. Thus, as Rock, (2006 pp. 42) suggests "If we want people to change, they need to come to an idea themselves, to give their brain the best chance of being energized by the creation of a wide scale new map".

2.2.4 Neuro-Linguistic programming model

Neuro-Linguistic programming model is another approach to understand how coaching works and also it is considered as being an important contributor to the coaching foundation. It shares certain similarities with the brain-based approach, since both have neurological ingredients.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) is based on the idea that behavioural change to accomplish some goals can take place by organising the connection between neurological processes, language and behavioural patterns learned through experience, in other words, our neurons, our personal psychology map and our culture.

In terms of communication, coaching is an advanced form of communication. Based on that, Rosinski (2003, chapter 2) uses the Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) model to explain this idea. In doing so, he provides a figure clarifying the model.

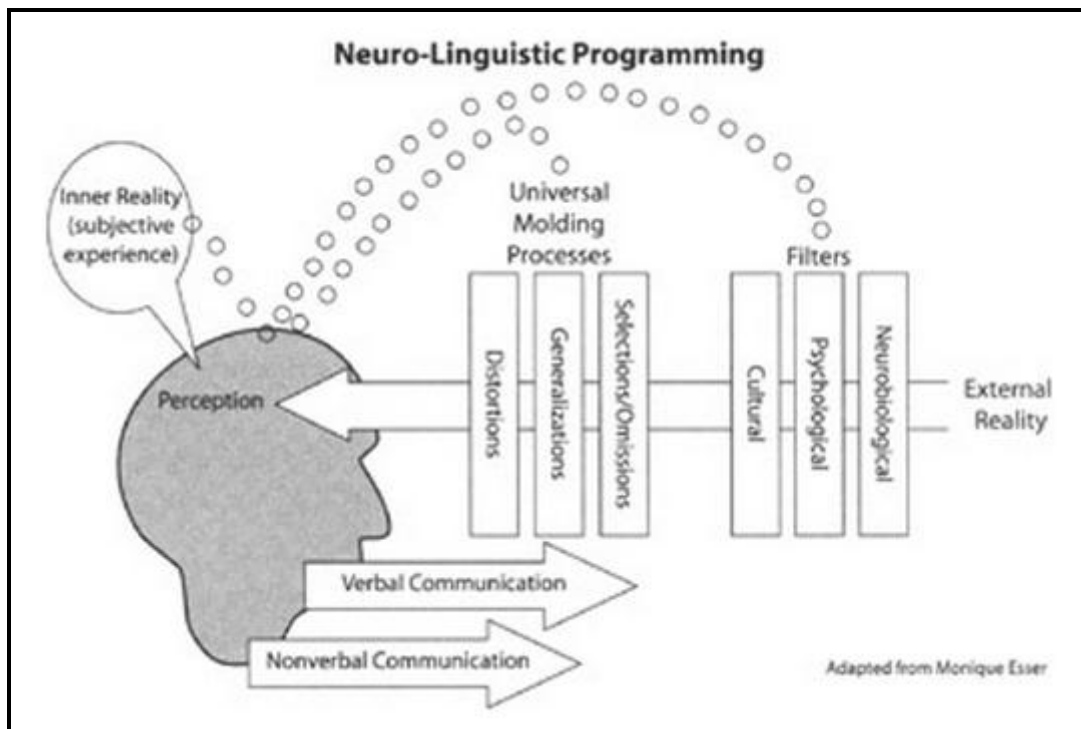


Figure 2-4: Neuro-linguistic programming model (Rosinski, 2003, Appendix 2)

The figure above shows how the conversion process, from the external reality to the inner representation, takes place (Grinder and Bandler, mentioned by Rosinski 2003, Appendix 1). It represents one of the major contributions for the practicing coach, since this process can be consciously altered once we understand it.

According to the model, three categories of filters can be defined in the conversion process from external reality to inner reality: Neurobiological filters concerns the limitations that humans have due to their concrete natural skills, psychological filters, which refer to several personality types and cultural filters.

Culture is the last filter pointed out in this model (figure 3). It refers to the number of infinite values, norms and behaviours which are fundamental characteristics of one culture or another and play an important role in an effective communication and in coaching process. Due to the intercultural nature of the ongoing dissertation, this category will be more profoundly analysed in the next chapters of this thesis.

Though both approaches attempt to link coaching to some evidenced discipline like neuroscience, critics from social science claim for the insufficiency of empirical evidence and its pragmatic nature.

2.2.5 Classification of coaching

Many models and different kinds of methods have been found during the literature review, as well as some summaries provided in articles and books. It is necessary to understand that coaching is strongly linked to the context and environment in which it takes place. In consequence, coaches adopt the model that fits best to the needs and circumstances of the company.

2.2.5.1 Coaching Styles: a learning process

Coaching has emerged from a synthesis of many fields including training and adult learning. Coaching is a learning and transformational tool, (Rock 2006, p.1). The brain-based approach is also an explanation of a learning experience at the brain level in scientific terms.

Focusing on coaching as a learning process, Parsloe & Wray, (2000, chapter 3) suggest two ways to conduct coaching, named "hands on" and "hands off" style in terms of the manner in which the coaching is performed regarding the coach style and the organizational context, also referred to as "push" and "pull" (Hay, 1999, mentioned by Ives 2008).

The organizational culture, the purpose and the maturity of the client determine the style of coaching used (Parsloe & Wray, 2000, chapter 3). Therefore, the "hand off" approach is based on self-instruction of the coachee and relies mainly on questioning and feedback, the coachee does all the work. By contrast, in the "hands on" approach, the coachee (learner) is a beginner to this developmental experience, so the coach will need to be more supportive at the beginning with the inexperienced coachee, controlling the process and helping in developing motivation and setting goals. The

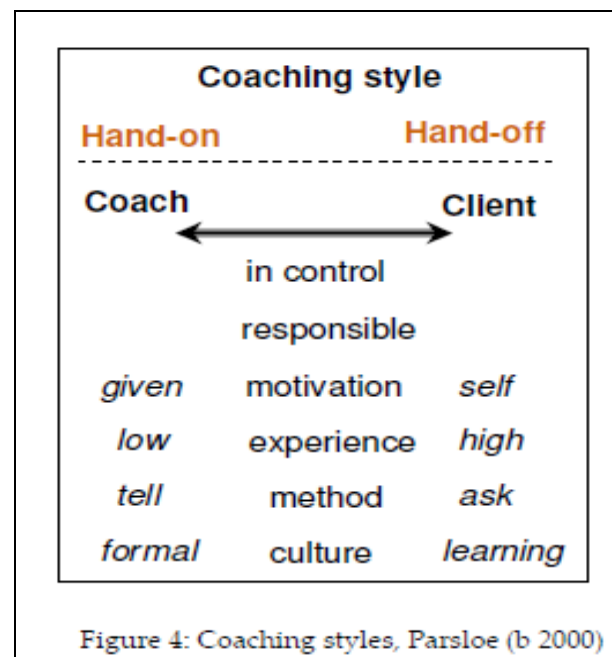


Figure 2 5: Coaching styles” shows graphically some characteristics of the two different styles

According to Parsloe & Wray, (2000, chapter 3):

“The experience shows that the more rapidly a coach can move from a hands-on to a hands-off style, the faster improvement in performance will be achieved”

It was argued that coaching takes place in an organizational context, therefore the coaching style adopted during the coaching process is linked to the organisational context. Coaches are not operating in an insulated way, especially when the organization pays the services to improve the manager's skills.

2.2.5.2 Internal Coaching and External Coaching

Coaching can be classified according to the relationship between the coach and the company. To describe the advantages and disadvantages of both, external and internal coaches is beyond our study, so, a short definition is provided to make the reader understand the case study.

External coaching is provided from outside of the company. External coaches are hired and the organization pays for the coaching intervention.

In contrast, internal coaching is a coaching system based on training leaders to be internal professional coaches within the company.

2.2.5.3 Coaching according to the model utilized

The second categorization is done according to the approach method applied by the coach.

Barner and Higgins (2005, p. 149-150) provide a classification of coaching activities as an attempt to identify a primary theoretical model that guides coaching actions.

Factor	Clinical model	Behavioral model	Systems model	SC model
What are the goals of coaching?	Help the client change self-perceptions and personality	Help the client change some problematic area of behavior	Help the client align personal goals and approaches with those of the organization	Help the client author new social realities how they and others experience their roles as organizational participants

Table I.
How the four models view the goals of coaching

Factor	Clinical model	Behavioral model	Systems model	SC model
Where does change come from?	From the inside; changes often extend across the workplace and personal spheres	From changing behavior; thoughts constitute another form of behavior; change is most potent when it has a limited target area	From changing interactions between the client, key "others," and the org. system; and supports and constraints within the contextual field	From changing the prevailing narrative; the way in which clients "story" themselves and are "storied" by others

Table II.
How the four models view the coaching change process

Figure 2-5: Different models used in coaching (Barner and Higgins, 2005, p. 149)

Table III. How the four models view the coach's role	Factor	Clinical model	Behavioral model	Systems model	SC model
	What is the coach's role?	Counselor and therapist	Advisor and trainer	Systems modeler	Ethnographer and narrative analyst

Table IV. How the four models view the focus of coaching	Factor	Clinical model	Behavioral model	Systems model	SC model
	What do we explore as coaches?	The underlying structure of the client's personality	Recurring ineffective behavior	Ineffective patterns and feedback loops	The client's story

Figure 2-6: Different models used in coaching (Barner and Higgins, 2005, p. 149)

2.2.6 Evaluation and Impacts

The challenge of this chapter is to define the process to evaluate the impact of coaching activity in the company. The way of evaluation will be on the base of the authors' suggestion and company context.

2.2.6.1 How to evaluate?

In order to evaluate and assess the coaching outcome, practitioners have carried out different researches in the area. Though many different approaches and models relative to measurement of coaching effects have been found, the outcome of coaching is connected to the three level in which the change take place: the individual executive level (intrapersonal), the interpersonal level and the strategic or organizational level. As a consequence of those changes in the three levels a positive business impact is expected (Wise and Voss, 2002).

There is a debate on how to define common criteria to measure the coaching impacts. While most of the investigations are focused on the change in managerial behaviours with expected increase in organizational effectiveness, others claims the lack of rigorous empirical investigation which associate the outcome of business coaching with business benefits (Feldman and Lankau, 2005, p.834). Grant and Cavanagh (2007) also state that "to determinate real efficiency of coaching, longitudinal studies are needed".

Other researchers suggest that a positive perception of a person's self-efficacy could be important to determine if the skills learned by coaching are being applied to the job and may be a good predictor of how well these skills will be maintained over time (Bandura, 1983; Kraiger, Ford & Salas, 1993; Marx, 1982: all mentioned by Leedham, 2005 p. 37).

McGovern (2001) provides a well-summarized criterion to evaluate the coaching impact by assessing it according to fourth traditional levels of evaluation (figure 2-8, below) proposed by Kirkpatrick (1996, cited by MacKIE, 2007, p.314). This criterion will be used in this investigation to evaluate the effect of coaching at the coachee level.

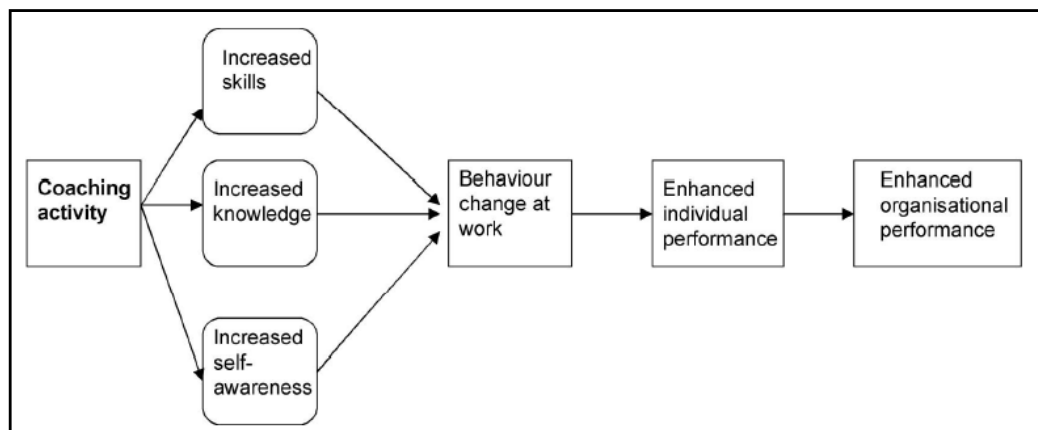


Figure 2-7: Training approach for coaching evaluation MacKIE (2007, p.314)

In such a model, levels of evaluation are established as follows:

- Level of satisfaction with the coaching process, participants' opinion
- Learning, competences acquired after coaching experiences. Level of assimilation of contents in terms of coachee's increased skills, knowledge and self-awareness.
- Behavioural changes, the things that the coachee is doing differently as a consequence of the coaching experience.
- Business results that refer to the enhanced individual and organisational performance linked to the tangible and intangible business results.

Phillips, (1997, mentioned by McGovern, 2001, p.5) suggests a fifth dimension in the coaching effects assessment process, called Return of Investment (ROI), and it is calculated as follows:

$$\text{ROI (\%)} = \frac{\text{Adjusted ROI} - \text{Program Costs}}{\text{Program Costs}} \times 100$$

Regarding the actor to take into account in a coaching evaluation, MacKIE (2007, p.317) provides an interesting approach in the process of evaluating effectiveness of coaching and identifying effective components of the coaching process that are needed to be considered in order to make a meaningful comparison of outcomes. He claims the need for developing a professional consensus of what the good outcome in the coaching environment should be and propose a model (Figure 2-9) with the overall picture of the main roles that take part in the coaching activities in an organization that are to be taken into account in an evaluation process..

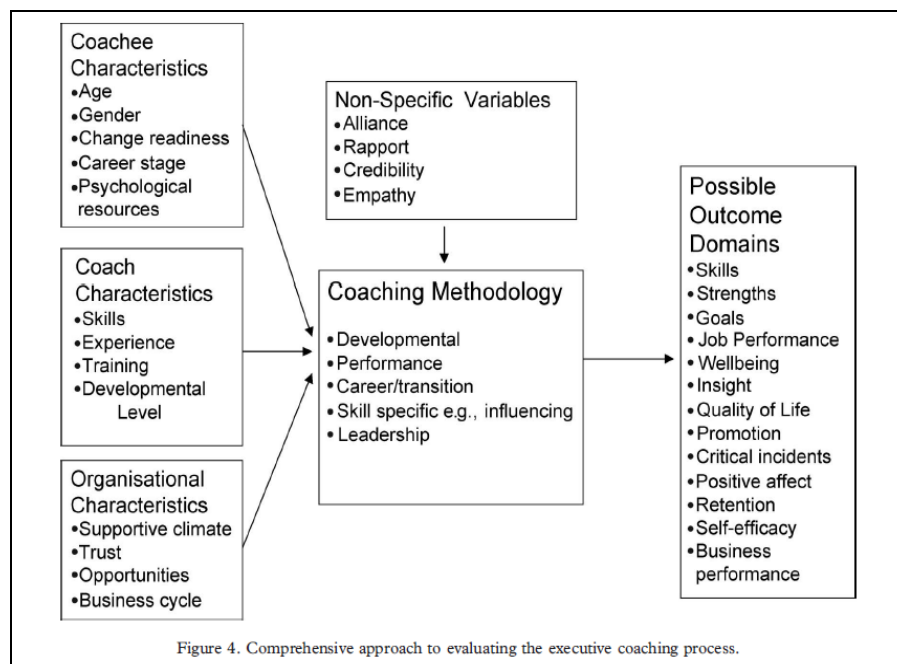


Figure 2-8: The main participants to consider in a coaching evaluation, (MacKIE 2007, p.314).

In order to fulfill the scope of this dissertation Kirkpatrick's (1996) framework will be applied to evaluate the effect of coaching with the focus on the level of knowledge and behavioural changes from the base of the qualitative information provided by the participants.

The comparative analysis of the two coaching approaches (Lyon and Gothenburg) will be carried out by using the model of MacKIE (2007, p.317) as shown in the figure 2-9 to have a clear overview of the organizational characteristics of each site.

2.2.6.2 What to evaluate?

According to the study carried out by Baker et.al (2008, p.83), the outcome of business coaching can be divided into five areas of executive change. The findings of its quantitative study show an improvement in the following areas:

- Engagement and productivity
- People management, dialogue and communication
- Goal-setting and prioritization
- Relationship with managers

This thesis will, however, base the investigation on qualitative information, so the evaluation will be focused on the assessment of the personal capabilities or behaviours that can be expected through participation of coaching activity in terms of competency-related outcomes (see table as follows).

Table 2.4: Personal gains in capability or behaviour targeted in coaching (Schlosser et al, 2006, p. 7)

Table 1. Capabilities and Behaviors Targeted in Coaching		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Big-picture/Detail Balance ■ Building Enthusiasm ■ Building Relationships ■ Building Team Morale ■ Business Acumen/Knowledge ■ Business Results/Execution ■ Career Advancement ■ Client Focus/Service ■ Collaboration/Teamwork ■ Communication Skills ■ Conflict Management/Resolution ■ Decision Making and Judgment ■ Delegation/Empowering Others ■ Developing Self ■ Developing/Coaching Employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Diversity Considerations/Sensitivity ■ Executive Presence ■ External Visibility/Image ■ Field Presence/Field Experience ■ Following Others ■ Fostering Innovation ■ Global/International Perspective ■ Goal Setting ■ Influence ■ Internal Visibility/Image ■ Interpersonal Skills ■ Job Satisfaction and Enjoyment ■ Leading/Driving Change ■ Listening Skills ■ Managing Performance Issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Meeting Facilitation ■ Negotiation Skills ■ Partnering across Boundaries/Silos ■ Personal Energy/Optimism ■ Productivity/Time Management ■ Project Management ■ Quality of Work Product ■ Self-Awareness/Self-Reflection ■ Self-Confidence ■ Sense of Urgency/Responsiveness ■ Setting Direction and Vision ■ Strategic Thinking ■ Stress Management ■ Technical Skills Mastery ■ Work/Life Balance

2.2.6.3 The Three Areas of Successful Coaching Engagement

The findings of the literature review confirm that due to the emerging nature of coaching as an independent discipline it is very difficult to establish a “best- practise” of the practise of coaching. Nonetheless, authors and practitioners agree that there are three key-points of the coaching engagement that most affect the coaching process. Those three key-points have to do with the answers to the questions: who is the client?, who selects the coach? and what is the role of Human Resources? (Harkins, Morgan and Goldsmith, 2005, chapter 2). Perhaps, when looking for the answers, two more questions should be considered: Why the coaching is being hired and who pays? The proper definition of the key-roles for all the actors of the coaching activity can be decisive in the achievement and success of coaching process in terms of both the individual and organizational effect.

It is argued by Harkins, Morgan and Goldsmith, (2005, chapter 2) that three key-areas in the coaching’s scenario, the ground rules and objective must be clear. They define the main actors in the coaching engamenet and argued about their roles and responsibilities:

- The client.
- The coach.
- The person who pay the coach.
- The HR role.

The way in which those actors are interelated to each other will be crucial in the success of coaching. On one hand the ultimate objective of the coaching activity is the achivement of the organizational goals, whereby the organization pays for the coach services to develop the leader’s competences and improve his or her performance. On the other hand this development is the result of a profaund psicological process that takes place in the coach-coachee realtionship where trust and confident are inviolable (Harkins, Morgan and Goldsmith, 2005, chapter 2), the commitment and willingness of the coachee to change are the roots of the a sucessful of coaching process, so “to create a real commitment the objective cannot be imposed the coachee”, (Rosinski, 2003).

Also, this coach-coachee relationship needs support from the organization since the coaching journey take place within the company context, so HR needs to be close to the process to step aside from this dynamic as well, while an inadequate participation of the HR deparment in the dynamic can affect negatively to the coaching journey since “they may be viewed as the de facto client”, (Harkins, Morgan and Goldsmith, 2005, chapter 2).

The paradigm is that the coach must work with the inner motivation and values of the coachee, meanwhile the coachee has to take ownership of the coaching journey and be responsible of the own development at the same time that the whole process must fulfill the organizational scope and be aligned with the company goals.

To give insight into this paradoxical interaction, coach-coachee-organization, the successful coaching engagement process is also discussed in the document provided by the International Coaching Federation such as it is describe below:

“In order to clarify roles in the coaching relationship, it is often necessary to distinguish between the client and the sponsor. In most cases, the client and sponsor are the same person and therefore jointly referred to as the client. The International Coach Federation defines these roles as follows:

- Client: The "client" is the person(s) being coached.
- Sponsor: The "sponsor" is the entity (including its representatives) paying for and/or arranging for coaching services to be provided.

In all cases, coaching engagement contracts or agreements should clearly and establish the rights, roles, and responsibilities for both the client and sponsor if they are not the same persons.”

ICF: Ethics and Standards Committee (2008).

Harkins, Morgan and Goldsmith, (2005) state the following key-issues to consider in a best coaching practise:

- ✓ Since trust and openness in the coaching relationship are the pillars of the successful coaching process, the coachee must be protective and strict confidentiality ensured, no matter who pays for the process.
- ✓ The role of HR should be to support the process but HR should not be seen as the main client. This support should be given without influencing the process.

2.3 Cross Culture and Coaching

2.3.1 Introduction

Leadership is a complex phenomenon. Some leadership researcher focus on personal issues to define the leadership concept, others emphasise more on the leader's interaction with the environment (Hughes et al, 2009, p.4).

Leadership and subordinateship are inseparable from a coaching perspective. Coaching is about processes and human interaction. Hence, the improvement of leadership-followership interactions requires a more profound study of the leadership context. Relationships within organizations are based on common values (Hofstede, 2005, p.268). Due to the fact that this study involves two countries working within the same international company, a more profound analysis of the cultural differences is developed in this chapter. Note that the parameters used analyse through culture perspective do not describe the essence of the persons, since national culture is one part of our personal identity (Rosinski, 2003), so those parameters are just used to understand the cultural context from a global perspective.

The ambition of adding the cultural dimension to the comparison between the two coaching approaches is to have a deeper understanding of how the cultural aspect affects the management domain and in consequence coaching activity. Also, the ambition is not to focus on the cultural differences, but increase the awareness of these differences to facilitate a more effective communication as well as to encourage a more integrative approach to coaching, with an emphasis on linking the two domains, "coaching and cultures".

As Rosinski (2003) states, "traditional coaching tends to operate within the confines of your own cultural norms, values, and assumptions".

2.3.2 Cultures and cultural dimension

What does the word culture refer to? According to Hofstede (2005) and Rosinski (2003) culture is a group phenomenon having unique characteristics including observable behaviours, underlying norms, values and beliefs. Hofstede (2005, p.3) defines culture as, "the patterns of thinking, feeling and acting on a person which partially determine the person's behaviour and he termed it "mental programs".

He compares these "mental programs" with the way in which computers are programmed, so, in that analogy, the social environment in which one grows up, as well as the collected one's life experience, determine the "the software of the mind" (Hofstede 2005, p.3). National culture and organizational culture are of a different nature, national cultures are part of our mental software containing our based values which were acquired while growing up; whereas corporative culture is acquired at work and consists mainly of organizations' practices (Hofstede 2005, p.284).

Note that, corporate level is a subcategory of the layer of national culture based on the idea that management and leadership cannot be insulated, since they (managers and leaders) as well as people who work with them, are part of society.

Hofstede (2005) starts by defining the "culture dimensions" concept as the aspects of culture that can be measured relative to other cultures, and he uses this concept to compare cultures.

There are several cultural dimension defined in Hofstede's investigation, all of them should be used in this dissertation to provide the widest picture of the cultural differences, however, due to the time limitation and as a starting point, I will use the Power Distance Index, since Sweden and France were found to differ greatly from one another in this aspect.

Thought the cultural comparison is limited to two countries and considering other countries is beyond this investigation, more information about PDI relative to other countries where the company operates is shown in appendix C "PDI According to Hofstede, 2005", page 78 of this dissertation.

PDI (Power Distance Index) indicates how an organization's structure differs in concentration of authority.

Based on the statistical analysis of Hofstede, the following table shows a summary of the key-differences between small and large power distance in societies at work place. Note that the in France was 68, while in Sweden it was 31.

Table 2.2: Main characteristics at the workplace according the PDI (Hofstede, 2005, table 2.4, p.59).

Small Power Distance	Large Power Distance
Hierarchy in organizations means inequality of roles established for convenience.	Hierarchy in organizations reflects existential inequality between higher and lower levels
Managers rely on their own experience and subordinates.	Managers rely on superiors and on formal rules
Subordinates expect to be consulted.	Subordinates expect to be told what to do
Subordinate-superior relations are pragmatic.	Subordinate-superior relation are emotional
There are fewer supervisory personnel	There are more supervisory personnel
The ideal boss is a resourceful and democrat	The ideal boss is a benevolent autocrat

In spite of the popularity of Hofstede's investigation, some researchers like Verbunt (2001, mentioned by Rosinski, 2003, chapter 2) insist in the increasing tendency for people to identify themselves less and less with national cultures and feel more connected to a system of values.

As Rosinski (2003, chapter 2) argues:

“The fact that our behaviours depend in part on the particular cultural context further justifies the need for coaches to integrate the cultural perspective into their practice. In some cases the obstacle to someone's progress may be cultural, rather than psychological”.

Lenhardt, (2004) also connects the cultural aspect with the concept of meta-communication, as well.

Meta-communication is related to the way in which we communicate. The concrete definition given by Lenhardt, (2004, p.289) “the art of communicate over communication”. It is strongly linked to our culture and contains some permanent subconscious elements. In other words, it is the skill to communicate taking a distance from ourselves in order to better communicate with another person. According to Lenhardt, (2004) coaching develops this ability. Managers who have experienced a major cross-cultural experience are especially prepared for this concept of meta-communication (Lenhardt, 2004, p.46).

3 Case study

3.1 Introduction

Volvo 3P is a business unit responsible for product planning, product development, purchasing and product range management for the four truck companies, Nissan Diesel, Mack, Renault Trucks and Volvo Trucks within the Volvo Group.

Formed in 2001 in conjunction with the acquisition of Mack and Renault Trucks, nowadays, Volvo 3P operates in a global market with a notable presence around the world such as it is showed in the figure bellow.



Figure 3-1: Volvo 3P around the world (<http://www.volvogroup.com>)

Volvo 3P is a knowledge-based company that works in a project-orientated manners in a cross-functional structure to develop profitable products while ensuring strong competitiveness.

In the mentioned context, to ensure constant efficiency and improvement, business coaching is one of the main tools used at Volvo 3P to support the managers. Different coaching activities are carried out in both Gothenburg (Sweden) and Lyon (France).

This master's thesis is an initiative of the global manager of the Human Resources department of Volvo 3P. The main goals are assessing the impacts of coaching in the organization and studying the condition for developing improvement of future coaching activities by carrying out a comparative analysis between coaching approach in both sites, France and Sweden.

3.2 Case Study

According to Volvo 3P's documentation, the mission of the company is:

"Propose and develop profitable products to ensure a strong competitive offer for each truck company, based on common vehicle architecture and shared technology"

(Volvo document, 2010)

Energy, passion and respect for the individual are considered to be the key-principles of the company as well as business and customer focus, speed, agility and flexibility, diversity, teamwork, leaders as coaches, openness to change are the main values and behaviours (Volvo 3P Corporate Presentation, 2008).

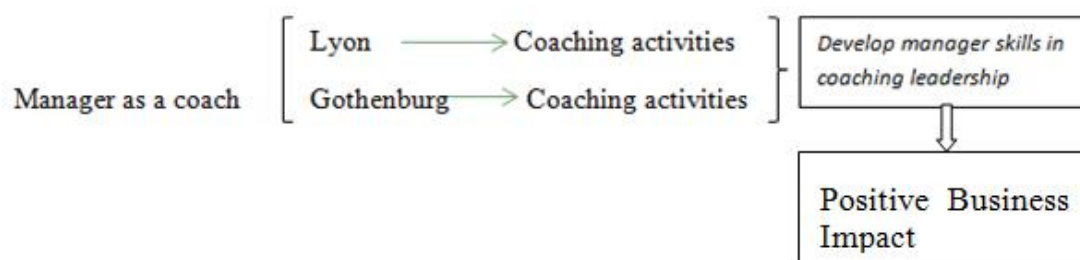
Leaders play a coaches role and they are the responsible for the success of the team.

Coaching at Volvo 3P, global scenario

Volvo 3P performs coaching activities in both Lyon (France) and Gothenburg (Sweden) to develop the company's leadership in order to have more effective teams and positively impact business results.

From the global perspective, Volvo 3P is using coaching either Lyon or Gothenburg with different approaches but the same global scope, that is developing a coaching leadership style and creating a coaching corporate culture.

In order to achieve those common objectives coaching is used as a tool of leadership development. The following figure represents graphically the scenario.



To understand the target of coaching activities within the company, it is important to take into account the different levels of management in which the organization is divided. The figure below shows the management population hierarchy for Volvo 3P, in Gothenburg and Lyon.

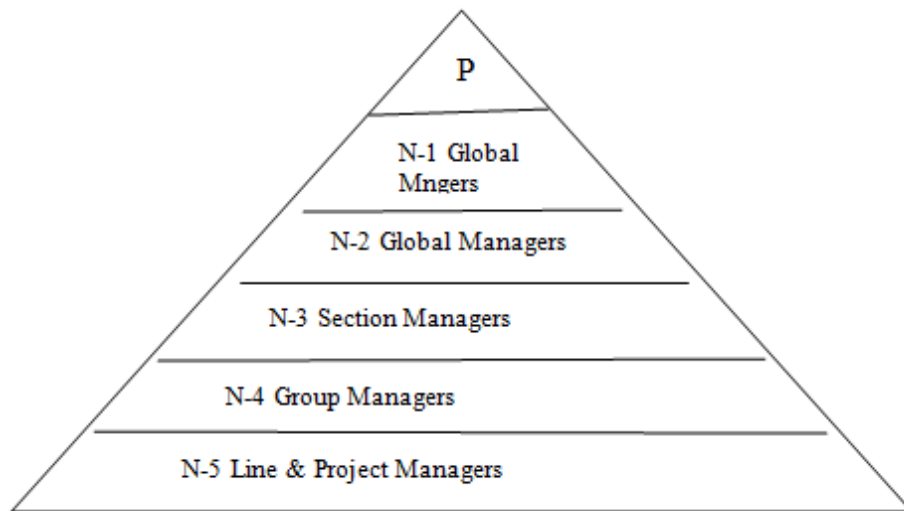


Figure 3-2: Company Hierarchy

In the mentioned framework, due to the differences in managing and using coaching together with the lack of sharing information between both sides, as well as the level of insulation regarding coaching found at each site, are having negative consequences when a constructive communication is needed. Although there were some attempts to highly cooperate, Lyon and Gothenburg operate separately from one another concerning coaching. This means that neither practises nor knowledge transfer is shared to the extent it could be shared.

In consequence, there is a need to assess and evaluate the impacts of the use of coaching in both, Lyon and Gothenburg, and then to make a comparison of their coaching practises in order to have a clearer picture of the consequences of coaching and the possibilities to use these practises as a tool to bridge the gap between the two sites in the short and long term.

3.2.1 History of coaching at Volvo 3P

To have a better comprehension of the actual situation, we need to go back to the starting point of coaching in each country.

3.2.1.1 History of coaching in Sweden

The main coaching activity in Sweden started in 2004 as an initiative of the Human Resources business partner in Gothenburg. The basic idea was to improve the leadership skills of high potential managers by providing them with a tool develop coaching skill in their leader role. In doing that, a coaching program was designed. Human Resources managers from Lyon contributed in the design of the program and in selecting the external coach, during that year.

Therefore, the coaching program was carried out each year from 2004 until 2008. Although the main framework was respected year to year, redesigns to improve the program were done.

According to information provided by the Human Resources global manager, 39 high potential managers went through the coaching program from 2004 to 2008. Eighty per cent (80%) of them are still working in Volvo 3P and using the coaching program learning. Therefore, the most of this human capital remains within the company.

The following table shows the participant distribution along the years.

Table 3.1: Participants distribution per year of the coaching program in Sweden (Volvo information, 2010)

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total
Participants	7	9	7	8	8	39
Left Volvo 3P	3	0	1	2	0	6

3.2.1.2 History of coaching in France

Coaching activities in Lyon started at the beginning of the 90's, when the matrix organization structure started to be implemented in the company and Project Manager role was applied. As a consequence of this change, new need for resources came up and the Project Managers, at that time, initiated a process of developing coaching activities in the company to support them. During the first 10 years, coaching activities underwent a developmental process partly connected to the amount of managers who used it there were both a gradual expansion and improvement. After ten years, concretely in 2001, the company already had achieved a certain level of coaching's maturity in terms of development and applicability. Having considered that the quality of the results were linked to the quality of management, as part of the strategy to improve business result there was a formal decision of using professional coaching in order to support the managers. Coaching acquired in this way a more formal recognition and further attention. It has been developed since then been.

In line with the information gathered from the company in Lyon, currently, coaching seems to have a well-established framework by which it is applied in a variety of situations and covers different needs of managers. It also seems to be integrated into the executive's routine.

4 Purpose

As mentioned in the literature review, it is a challenge to evaluate the benefits of this not yet mature discipline. Coaches claim with a united voice the tremendous advantages direct and indirect of this useful tool. Human Resource departments utilize coaching as a powerful tool, but rarely can they be sure about the organizational benefits. Therefore, the main purpose of this master's thesis is;

- To evaluate and assess the impacts of the use of coaching
- To carry out a comparison between both coaching frameworks, at an abstract level to facilitate and knowledge transfer process.

The following points define the scope of this thesis:

- ✓ To provide an overall picture of coaching activities at Volvo 3P, Sweden and Lyon, based on the different perceptions of the participants.
- ✓ To evaluate and identify particular results of coaching activities in Volvo 3P to bring insight to future development.
- ✓ To provide a comparison between coaching activities in both countries in terms of coaching practises as well as coachees perception.
- ✓ To identify any difference on effectiveness between the two different coaching approaches in developing coaching leadership style and create cooperate coaching.

4.1 Research Questions

In order to fulfil this purpose, the following research questions have been generated to guideline the direction of the thesis.

- What are the key-learning points of the coachees either Gothenburg or Lyon?
- Have the coachees perceived any link between their career development and the development achieved because of the coaching experience?
- What are the main similarities and differences in a global perspective between the coaching approach in the two locations?
- Is the coaching activity contributing in developing coaching leadership style and creating corporative coaching?

4.2 Delimitations

The shortage of time is considered the main limitation in this study, since the extension of this investigation and the coverage of all of the stages in this research require a design for a fast process.

According to the literature reviewed and the author's opinion, the coachees' subordinates and the nearest coachees' functional managers should have been considered when evaluating the impacts of coaching since they are directly affected by its effect. However, due to the time limitation some restrictions have to be established, so they will not be part of the investigation.

Most of the interviews in Lyon were carried out by telephone, whereas in Gothenburg, face to face interviews and time spent within the company allowed the author to be more deeply involved in the environment. In addition, since direct observation is used to support the results and the conclusion, it is necessary to mention that the author could spend one whole day per week during three months within the company in Gothenburg, while in Lyon, it was one day because of the different geographical location.

Although many studies claim the necessity for studying the business effects of coaching, it will be excluded from the present investigation, since it would require another approach and other methods, where the person-centered approach may result in non-significant relationships (Feldman and Lankau, 2005, p. 844). This thesis is a practical social research project using multiple specific sociological methodologies. Though some concept relative to the measurement of the business impact are mentioned along the literature review (Phillips, (1997, mentioned by McGovern, 2001, p.5) it will be beyond the investigation.

Finally, although some parameters are used to be able to understand the intercultural issues, it is necessary to be aware of the nationality is only one part of the personal identity, thereby, it should not be interpreted as an exact definition of the society and the work context but it can be used as a reference to increase awareness and a better understanding of the different contexts.

5 Methodology

This chapter covers the concerns applied in the selection of the research method used in this particular investigation; furthermore, the rationale of the design technique, the data collection methods and ethical considerations are explained.

5.1 Abductive Approach

Due to the nature of this concrete case study where different perspectives of the individual experience of the participants concern the phenomenon are studied, the qualitative data are the base of this thesis while direct observation “in situ” is used to validate the results.

To conduct this research an abductive approach was adopted as a research strategy. According to Alvesson & Skoldberg (2009) abduction refers to the development of a new flexible methodology. It differs from traditional approaches in the sense that the interpretation of the researcher while collecting the data is part of the process.

In induction the connection observed in a number of single cases is considered to be valid for all the cases, “the collection of single facts to a general truth” (Alvesson & Skoldberg (2009, p.4). On the contrary, in deduction the process is the opposite, as argued by Alvesson & Skoldberg (2009) “it proceeds from a general rule and assert that this general rule explains the single case”.

According to Alvesson & Skoldberg (2009, p.4):

“Abduction is probably the method used in a real practice in many case-study based research processes. A single case is interpreted from a hypothetical overarching pattern, which, if it were true, explains the case in question. The interpretation should then be strengthened by new observation. It is very important to keep in mind that abduction neither formally nor informally is any simple “mix” of the deductive- inductive approach; it adds new elements and differs advantageously from two others”.

5.2 Research Instruments

In the present study, several research instruments have been used to conduct the investigation. Creswell (2003) suggests triangulation as one of the primary strategies to validate the accuracy of the research findings. Aiming to increase the outcome's validity and reliability of the method and due to the complexity of the topic, where there is lack of investigations as commented in the literature review, triangulation will be applied. Different sources such as coaches, Human Resources managers and the coachees have been interviewed in each country, so the triangulation by means of cross-verification of data collected from the participant can be applied.

Mix-method, qualitative analysis and direct observation, are also used in order to increase credibility. While primary data are collected by the qualitative interviews carried out on the participants to provide in-depth understandings of the situation, secondary data is gathered through direct observation.

The author was involved in the real company context to understanding the context in order to confirm and support the primary data.

This model, “figure 4 1: Participants in coaching evaluation”, used as a main research instrument of this thesis is derived from the literature review applied to the case study. After carefully studying what the research highlight to be the key-points of "best-practises" in successful a coaching process (Goldsmith, Harkins and Morgan, 2005); both, the key-roles involved in coaching activity and how those key-roles interrelate to each other (MacKIE, 2007; Goldsmith, Harkins and Morgan, 2005), were taken into account to design the model (figure 4-1).

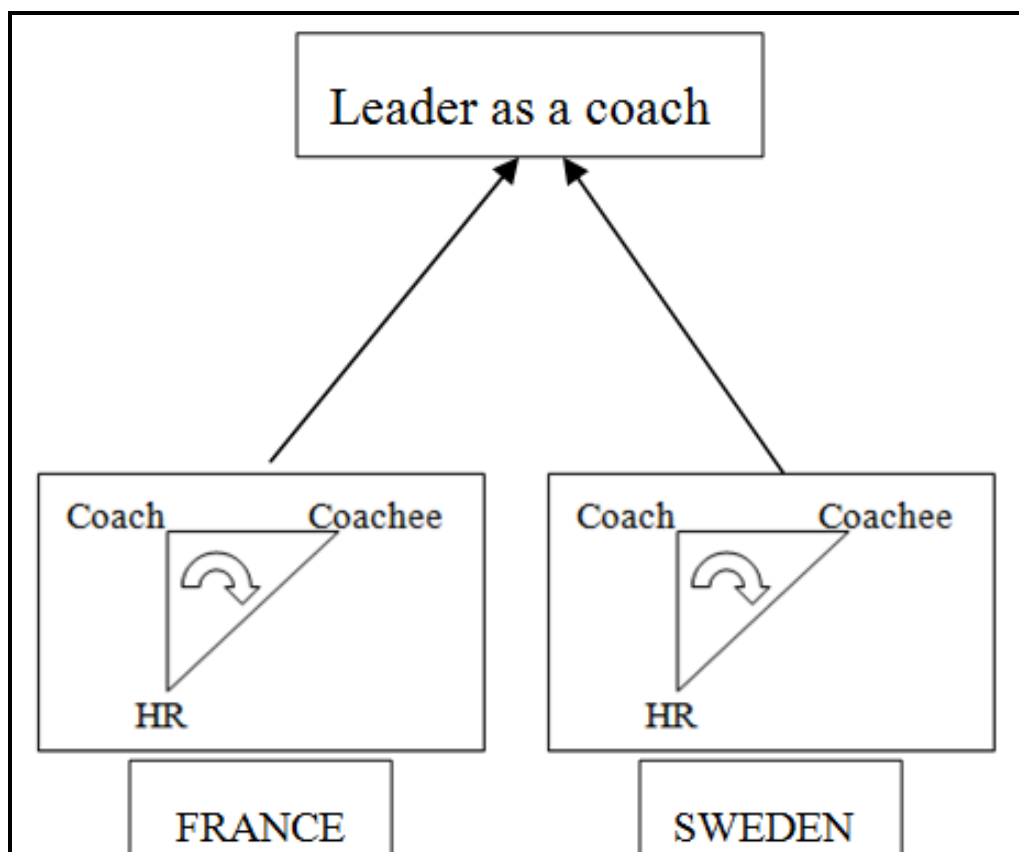


Figure 4-1: Participants in coaching evaluation (MacKIE, 2007, p.317, adapted by the author)

6 Participants

The participants of this investigation are managers of Volvo 3P, in both Lyon and Volvo 3P in Gothenburg.

As mentioned previously during the information gathering process, participants are grouped into three different categories as suggested by MacKIE (2007, p.314) in the model provided in the literature review “Figure 6-9: The main role to consider in a coaching evaluation”.

- HR business partner managers in Lyon and Gothenburg.
- Coaches in both locations.
- Coachees in both locations.

The global manager of HR at Volvo 3P, an important figure in this investigation, provides the structure of coaching in terms of global vision and main objectives.

Table 4.1: Distribution of participants in the thesis (the author).

PARTICIPANTS			
INTERVIEWEE	FRANCE (managers)	SWEDEN (managers)	N° INTERVIEWS
HUMAN RESOURCES UNIT	1	1	2F+1S
COACHES	3	1	4F+1S
COACHEES	6	7	6F+7S
HR VOLVO GLOBAL MANAGER	1		7

The above table “4.1 Distribution of participants in the thesis” shows the global manager of HR at Volvo 3P, an important figure in this investigation, provides the structure of coaching in terms of global vision and main objectives. The complexity of the French coaching system together with the fact that the majority of the French’s interviews were performed by telephone are the main reason why more interviews were carried out to the French coaches and the HR manager in Lyon.

6.1 Procedure

As a starting point in the information gathering process, an explorative study has been carried out to understand the coaching context in both countries. Firstly, several interviews with the global manager of the Human Resources department at Volvo 3P took place. From open to more structured interviews, the general picture of coaching of each country from a global perspective was established and the explorative study became more in-depth research.

6.2 Ethical considerations

Before starting the interviewing process, all the participants have been informed about the research project and its purpose. In Lyon, by personal e-mails sent to each one of them, and in Gothenburg, by a common e-mail sent to all the managers (see Appendix A, Presentation Letter).

Following Denzin and Lincoln's (2003) indications on the subject of the importance of ethical considerations, the involvement of the participants in the interview has been previously authorized by each one of them by emails, and confidentiality was ensured by presenting the results in an anonymous way.

Another ethical consideration to take into account according to Denzin and Lincoln's (2003) suggestions is the nature of the involvement of the researcher in the investigation and the participants. The motivation for carrying out this research is solely academic and it is conducted in a neutral way in all the phases of the investigation to achieve an objective results.

6.3 Data Collection

Once the general picture was established, more in-depth research was carried out, the manager of Human Resources in Lyon and Gothenburg were interviewed to set a more concrete coaching picture in terms of the concept, contents, methods and objectives; almost in parallel, interviews to the coaches were performed in order to clarify and verify the Human Resources information.

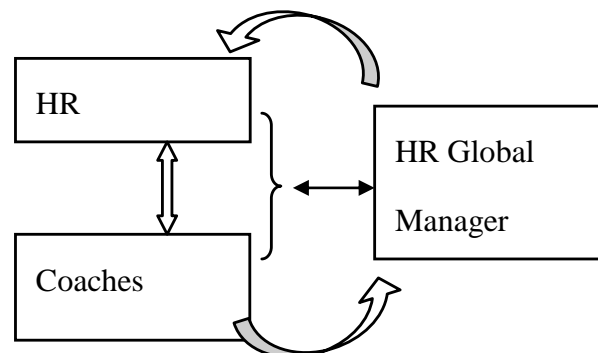


Figure 4-1: Interviews iterative process

The figure above shows how this iterative process of interviewing took place. Firstly more open interviews were carried out. After that, the theory was reviewed and the interviews readjusted and more concrete questions were done. The questionnaire of the interviews was the same in both countries, some adjustments were asked to adapt to some clear difference between coaching in Lyon and in Gothenburg (see appendix B). Note that, the interviews were semi-structured type, so it was possible to have more open questions in certain parts of the interview when required (i.e. some question were reformulated depending on whether she or he was a coachee from Lyon or from Gothenburg).

After collecting information from the Human Resources department and coaches, the interviews coachees were carried out to assess the effects of coaching activities as well as being able to compare the results in both Lyon and Gothenburg.

Data obtained from the iterative process of interviewing both the Human Resources managers and the coaches of each site, and the theoretical framework, were the base to design the structure of the questionnaire for the coachees' interviews.

6.3.1 Qualitative information: Interviews

6.3.1.1 Interviews to the HR managers and the Coaches

Due to the fact that the coaching activities in Gothenburg are centralized by the HR department, the main information about content, aims and processes of coaching activities was collected from HR managers, while in Lyon this information was provided by the coach who was in charge of coaching activities for many years and the HR manager in Lyon who is also a coach.

The interviews carried out with the managers and coach were based on more open question in order to enable gathering as much information as possible to define the two coaching scenarios and be able to later analyse similarities and differences. The main questions of the interviews were the same for both, Lyon and Gothenburg, and the key-questions were based on the best-practises proposed on the findings of the theory.

6.3.1.2 Interviews to the Coachees

The interviews were designed following the model of MacKIE (2007, p.314) presented in the literature review (Figure 2-8, p-26). Accordingly, the interview form (Appendix B) is divided in three main sections: Coachee's satisfaction, level of awareness, skill attainment and behavioural change and transfer to the environment. Each section consists of different questions to obtain the needed information to determine the coaching effect and have a deeper understanding of the two coaching scenarios.

The interviews were conducted without any obstacles. Each interview took around one hour. Due to the fact that the interviews were of the semi.-structure type, the process was not simply asking-answering questions, the communication was fluid and dynamic, where the interviewee had the possibility of expressing and focusing more on one issue than on another and even interact and share opinions with the interviewer. The author noticed a profound interest to help and learn for all the respondents. Even though the subject was sensitive, the respondents gave an impression of sincerity and proved willing to answer the questions in the best possible way.

Surprisingly, the author noticed that the Swedish interviewees concentrate their attention in the required coaching leadership style and corporate values in their answers while the French interviewees had a wider view of coaching advantages not only in their roles as a coach when leading the team but also in their role as a coachee when being coached by themselves. This indicates that the macro system and the mechanism of selection affect the final results of coaching, since the development process in the French coachees start from an internal need and the system is established under this premise. In consequence not only the initiative to ask for coaching comes from the coachee but also the coachee is pushed to have reflexions in the primary stages of the process, as a coach said:

“The coachee, the client, has a preliminary job since she o he has to write a first contract to have a well-description of the coachee business context and background as well as the link between the coaching and the company state. This is called the pre-coaching. The coachee has the responsibility of establishing the macro objectives of the coaching activity and he has to agree them with his manager”.

All this information is also specified in the document “contract between the company and the coached person” (January 2007).

Two samples of coachees were selected on for the purpose of keeping homogeneity and having as many similarities as possible between the two participants in order to have a better comparison. The following two tables show the summery of the main characteristic of the sample of coachees in each country. Note that, manager in Lyon are older and have longer experience in working in Volvo, while the managers from Gothenburg are younger and have shorter experience. They all have experience in individual coaching and group coaching.

Main characteristics of the sample of coachees

- *10 to 30 years working for Volvo.*
- *Mix of gender.*
- *Between 38 and 55 years old.*
- *Experience in different managerial position*
- *Coachee working on high level, top level of management.*
- *Direct reporting people.*
- *Experience in both, individual coaching and group coaching either team building or sharing experiences activity. Individual coaching experience took place between 1996 and 2007.*

Main characteristic of sample of coachees

- *5 to 20 years working for Volvo.*
- *Mix of gender.*
- *Between 38 and 45 years old.*
- *Experience in different managerial position*
- *Coachee working on high level, top level management.*
- *Direct reporting people.*
- *Experience in both, individual coaching, coaching program carried out every years from 2004 to 2008, and different training activities including coaching tools.*

6.4 Observations

Direct observation around the working context developed during the time spent within the company by the author of this thesis added some interesting information to increase the validity of the results.

7 Results

In the previous chapter, both the scope and the research methodology of this investigation were presented. This chapter's aim is to provide the results of the study.

First, the results of the qualitative analysis which are the main support of this investigation are presented. After that, additional data gathered from the direct observation is provided.

The results are presented in a way to allow to the reader to have a clear comparison between the coaching approaches in both countries. In doing that, firstly, a comparison between key-concepts, contents, methods and way of organizing coaching, is presented by giving an in-detail description, based on the Human Resources manager with the coaches' interviews (see figure below). Secondly, a comparison of coachees' perception, based on their experience of coaching and its impact is carried out (see "Figure 5-1: Two level of comparison of coaching").

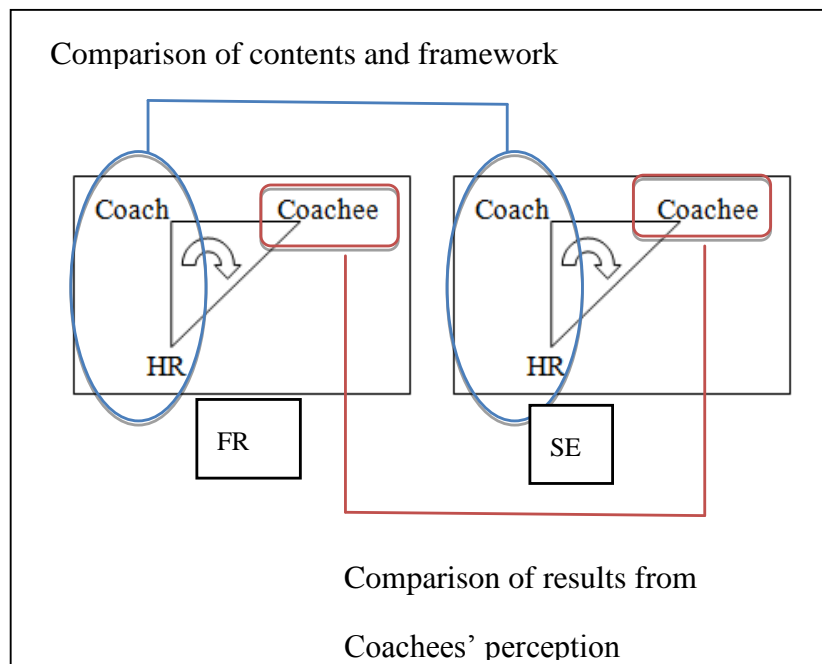


Figure 12: Two level comparison of coaching. Lyon and Gothenburg (by the author)

While the interviews carried out with HR managers and coaches enabled a deeper understanding of the two coaching approaches, the information collected from the coachees in the semi-structured interviews allowed us to evaluate the coaching effect in an individual level and give the perspective to assess the coaching effect at an organizational level, as well as to determinate in which way the HR managers and coaches vision affect the coachees' development. Note that, the effect assessment for coaching is mainly based on the individual coaching experience of the coachees plus the group coaching. The main and longest coaching activity in Gothenburg was the coaching program carried out each year since 2004 to 2008.

7.1 Result from qualitative interviews

7.1.1 Coaching in Gothenburg

The first results of this dissertation are an overall picture of coaching activities in both countries. This description is mainly based on the interviews carried out with the Human Resources managers, the coaches of each country as well as the Volvo documents provided along the interviews process. It is also the first step in developing the comparison between the coaching approach in the two locations.

According to the different answers obtained from the interviews, the coaching concept in Gothenburg is mainly associated to the training concept, where the coachees are beginners in the coaching experience.

Professional coaching is applied eventually by hiring an external professional coach when it is needed. There is an emerging network, but not very developed and currently not in use.

There are some overlaps between the concept of coaching and mentoring in both the people of the Human Resources department and coachees.

Coaching activity in Gothenburg is centralized by the Human Resources department “who has the role of coaching and be consultants for the managers, when professional coaching is needed, we hire a professional coach” (Swedish manager).

Coaching is applied to:

- Individual requests. Network around coaching (not in used at the moment) to ensure professionalism in coaching practises. A professional coach is hired.
- Coaching program, which is the longest activity developed in coaching.
- Management training contains coaching.

For the individual request there is an emerging network which consists of few internal professional coaches and eight external professional coaches. This network began to establish the same network existing in Lyon, “we tried to run the same concept here in Sweden”, (manager in Gothenburg). Currently, it is not in use and also, it seems to be in an embryonic state.

The coaching program is another part of coaching activity “within the network but a bit separated” (manager in Gothenburg) and it is carried out for competence development of the leaders. Due to the fact that this is the longest coaching activities in Gothenburg, the main organizational effects of the use of coaching in the company will be expected to come from this coaching program.

Coaching Program framework

As an initiative of Human Resources service centre at Volvo 3P in Sweden, an each year coaching program for young potential leaders from 35 to 40 year old was run from 2004 to 2008. Potentiality is defined in terms of ability and interest to learn as well as capability to move up within the organization hierarchy. According to the Human Resources manager, the main idea is to give them extra support by this program to better develop their leadership skills.

While in an individual level, the program is carried out for competences development of young potential managers, this development is expected to have more organizational effects when increasing the corporate coaching in the company and a coaching style of working with people.

During the selection process, the managers of the coachees and Human Resources managers collaborate with each other to establish a list of “high potential” managers who later, will be the participants of the program if they accept the proposal.

The strategy approach is to develop the leadership skills in the managers selected to improve their team effectiveness and impact positively in team business efficiency, “coaching is a very good development activity, it is a way of making the person to find the own strength and develop themselves and so, impact in business in a positive way” (Swedish manager).

The following figure represents the scenario.

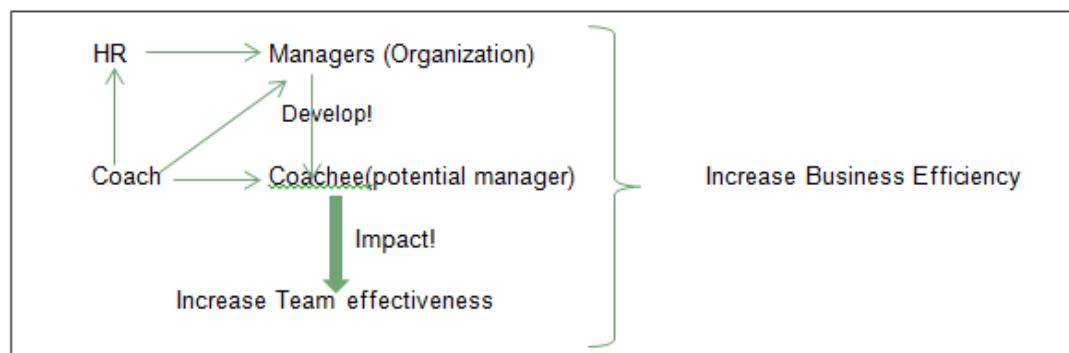


Figure 5-1: Coaching scenario in Gothenburg

In relation to the first steps of the start of the program and the roles of the different participants, important information was collected from Human Resources managers during the first interviews. Key-questions are summarized as below.

Who selects the coach?

The coach selection is done by the HR department according to their criteria and the program objectives. The coachee is totally outside the selection process. On long decision making process took place to select the coach when starting this coaching program activity with the contribution of the manager of HR in Lyon “in Sweden we wanted to learn from them since they have long experience, their coaching system is good” (HR manager).

Who is the client?

The three roles (HR, coach and coachees) were asked this question. According to the answers, the organization as a whole is clearly seen as the client, but not the coachee. The responses from the three areas claimed the client to be the Human Resources department, managers of the coachees, and even the top management of the company.

From the Human Resources perspective, “the client” is primarily the organization, since the coach is hired for a service to the organization in order to improve leadership skill to achieve better outcomes. From the Human Resources view, the client is the manager of the coachee who will be the first person noticing the benefits of the coachee improvement.

On the other hand, the coach agreed that the client is the organization, represented in this case by the Human Resources department, and the manager of the coachee.

The coachees’ opinion was crucial in that question. All of them agreed that the client is the organization, even some of them pointed out a clearer client... “was not the client the manager of the Human Resources partner unit in Gothenburg whose name is....?”. This means that the coachees are far away from the “feeling” of being “the client”.

Note that, from the coachee interview it is derived that trust, openness and good chemistry between coach-coachee was present during the coaching process as all the coachees answers show. Also there is a confidential agreement coach-coachee.

What is the role of the HR department in this coaching process?

According to the answers from the interviews, the Human Resources department seems to be quite involved in the design and development of the program. The manager of Human Resources in Gothenburg creates the adequate mix of coachees based on the different “mindsets”, and redesigns the program each year. She works in a partnership with the coach. Even the Human Resources manager plays a role in the group activity, “I was there to participate as a coordinator, as an owner of the program for Volvo 3P in Sweden and also to monitor the participants”.

Important findings regarding the purpose of the program need to be emphasised, such as a clear objective and fixed goals, although some contradictions among the managers views have been found. There is an unclear area concerning the main aim of the program. On the one hand, as one manager said, “The coachees are selected because they are high potential managers and we give them the opportunity to develop”.

On the other hand, another manager pointed out:

“They are selected because they are high potential managers, but there was also a purpose by putting them in the program to know what they wanted and to make an evaluation to know if they would work as a potentials leaders in high level in the organization...it is a good way to validate the potentiality within the person, so, some of them are very good in certain levels but it would be better to not try to push her or

him up within the organisation to more difficult position. It would not be successful for either the person or the company”.

7.1.1.1 Methodology and program structure

The program is based on the Viljekraft-method (willpower method), aiming to consider peoples different driving forces to release competence, thereby maximizing the company's strength. The idea is that the program will help both the participants and organisation to develop and furthermore achieve improved results. The coaching sessions are supposed to enhance the creativity and competence that the participants already possess.

Driving forces are conceived to be the individual's basic values and the personal motivations, stimulus and internal satisfaction which govern people behaviour and influence on a person's expectation and decision, consciously and unconsciously.

The content of the program is based on the book written by Larsten (2000). In brief, according to the author of this book, the will and energy to “let out” the whole potential of the employees is on the choice of themselves and the decision relies on the own person.

“Healthy leadership” is thus defined as being able to handle complexity and change, support rather than control employees, recognize personal differences and handle relations and conflicts, Larsten (2000).

The coaching program takes around five months during which there is one meeting per month. In total five two hours personal coaching sessions were carried out.

The coaching process has individual session and groups activities. The former is to discover the driving forces of each coachee, the latter aims basically to apply the concepts learned and practise the ability to discover driving force in others by working in pairs. It is important to remark that the Human Resources manager participates in the group's activities.

7.1.2 Coaching in Lyon

Once coaching activity in Lyon was historically contextualized in previous chapters, we are able to move on to an in-depth descriptive of it, in order to carry out a proper comparative study. The description will be done from a global perspective.

According to the information collected in the interviews carried out to Human Resources manager and the coaches, coaching and training are different to each other, “coaching is not training, in training you learn things and it is very good, in coaching you are stimulated in your own internal process to find the best of your internal energy”, (French coach).

From a French perspective, training is for people who do not have the competences and the knowledge, however, coaching is applied when the manager has the knowledge and competences but he or she is facing a situation in which he or she does not know what or how to overcome a concrete context (French coach). This manager (supposed coachee) has the solution in his brain but he or she does not have the possibility to see it at that moment, so coaching help them to find it. For a French manager, the big difference between training and coaching is that coaching does not bring knowledge or a way of doing something.

7.1.2.1 Coaching activity framework

Coaching office is a professional network in charge of all the coaching activities to support managers in Lyon. They process the entire coaching requests from managers.

Coaching office currently consists of about 10 people as internal coaches coming from different units within the organization and about 20 external coaches, coming from external organizations.

Type of activities carried out:

- Team coaching
- Individual coaching
- Coaching program for high potential managers (not in use anymore)
- Exchanges practises between managers

Main characteristics of Individual Coaching

In order to control the abusive use and addiction to coaching, when a coachee wants to repeat coaching, the coachee's request cannot be the same as it was in the past. As a coach in Lyon said, "generally, when a person come back to the Coaching Office and expresses the wish to continue, the answer is no, the person need to wait for a while and then ask again, and then, the request is studied again, maybe it can be accepted, may not be. In any case, the second request should be because of other need".

The possible dependency on coaching has been noted to be controlled, as a manager argued, "we have this in our mind, it is very important not create dependency between coachee-coach...it is very easy to rely on this dependency, if the coach give solution, but, as a coaches, we do not "provide solutions" to the client (coachee), we help them to find it by themselves".

When processing a request, first of all, the Coaching Office explores beyond the request to have a clear picture of the coachee situation. In individual coaching it is necessary make sure the coachee has a real willingness to be coached, either the request is a prescription of the coachee's manager or it comes directly from the coachee.

Two conditions are necessary to happen in order to be coached:

- The coachee is a manager
- The direct coachee's manager needs to accept to pay, (manager approval)

The Coaching Office operates independently on other departments in the company. The deontology established by the Code of conduct of coaching, (Société Française de Coaching) is the essential framework of reference. It aims to formulate ethical benchmarks, general principles, given the specificities of coaching. Therefore, they are operating under different standards which ensure quality and professionalism.

The relationship coach-coachee-HR during the whole coaching process have a very different dynamic than the Swedish one as it can be seen as follows.

The role of HR department and the relationship with the Coaching Office.

HR department has a supportive role in this scenario. They take part of the contractual process.

It is remarkable that the Human Resources manager is also part of the internal coaching network, since this person is a coach. Note that the person who is going to be coached will know in the preliminary meeting that this coach is the manager of HR department, so the decision lies on the coachee.

From the interview with Human Resources manager it becomes clear that, in Lyon, coaching is an essential activity since they take care of the human's relationship side of the company, "we are very good in contents (truck parts and technical issues), but we are not so good in process, that means the way in which human relationship occurs (manager in Lyon).

There are three key-characteristics of coaching approach in Lyon to be highlighted in order to better understand three important differences with the coaching approach in Gothenburg:

- The **request comes from the coachee** and it is processed by the Coaching Offices.
- It is offered to **all levels of management**.
- The meaning of **confidentiality**. The person will be able to contact the Coaching Office in a complete confidential situation in order to avoid "psychological games" of the direct and indirect persons around the coachee.

Confidentiality means to allow the coachee not to be under the control of the management hierarchy of the organization, "during the coaching process there is not control of the company about what you are doing", (manager in Lyon).

It is a key-issue in coaching practices to be able to operate with freedom, that means, no control from other unit or department within the organization; otherwise the "well-doing" of coaching activity could be contaminated.

Who selects the coach?

A key-point of the coaching process in Lyon is that the request comes from the coachee, then a mechanism of selection starts.

First, the Coaching office studies the purpose, after evaluating the coachee situation and the requests, pre-selection of different coaches, “a process to fit”, is carried out and the Coaching Office provides at least two names of two coaches who better suit the coachee request. The coaches in the coaching network are specialized more in some areas than in others, so the Coaching Offices carried out an adjustment process need to be by the two rules are followed when coaches are offered:

- ✓ At least, two coaches possible, external coach and another internal coach.
- ✓ The internal possibility will be a coach coming from a unit different from the coachee’s one.

Who is the client?

In this question the scenario is quite different than the Swedish one. All the parts, Human Resources manager, coaches and coachees confirmed that the coachee is “the client” and so, the coachee plays the main role in this scenario.

Similarly to the Swedish case, in Lyon, coachees’ answers confirmed that, trust, openness and good chemistry between coach-coachee was achieved, so, the coach selection was successful.

Collective Coaching in Lyon

Currently, the major activity of coaching for what Coaching Office is requested by managers is collective coaching. Managers request team building to more easily and faster overcome problems that interrupt the well-doing of the task or to increase cohesion in the team to work more efficiently. In the big picture, it increases collective intelligence and improves the “shared the vision”.

The leverage effect in team coaching is very high since it is a group of people increasing a coaching maturity, “in team building, as a team member, you realize how powerful team coaching is and you became client” (French manager). In team building, each team member will have the opportunity to take back by themselves to be able to see how they are functioning and how their interrelationship is working. As a consequence, the way of working as a team and cohesion is improved.

Team coaching is not done in a training perspective; it is developed in a business perspective. For example, according to a French coach, team coaching can be applied in specific moments of the different state of big project to invest in the team spirit and have support in difficult situations in the day to day work; it is not at all training. The concept is not based on bringing knowledge; it is more related to improving the ability to manage soft issues but with a non- instructive approach.

A new term “coaching maturity” needs to be defined to understand how coaching has been developed in Lyon.

Coaching maturity, in this thesis, is the personal state of the coachee. The internal situation that defines if the coachee is prepared to have the “coaching travel” which is the process of having internal change or an “insight” such as defined by Rock (2000). It is related to a level of understanding of what coaching is and how it works in a deep sense. It is also relative to the willingness to change to discover “yourself by your own” and face internal weaknesses.

It is supposed that for a team to be coach the request comes from the team’s manager who has achieved a certain level of coaching maturity. This maturity can be acquired in many ways, among them, by collective coaching experience, or by individual coaching experience.

7.1.3 Summary

The following table shows the main differences between the framework and processes between pointed out as a result of the interviews to the HR manager and Coaches.

Table 5.1: Coaching activity in Lyon versus coaching activity in Gothenburg (by the author)

LYON	GOTHENBURG
External & Internal Professional Coaching	External Professional Coaching, emerging internal coaching (using the French model as a reference)
Use of different models as a theoretical background.	Clinical model as a theoretical framework
All level of managers (from first levels to top one)	High potential managers (medium level)
Established professional Coaching Network	Emerging professional Coaching Network
Coaching Office to manage coaching issues	All coaching issues lie on HR department
Individual coaching, team building, team coaching, coaching program	Coaching program, most management trainings contain coaching. Eventual individual coaching
The request come from the coachee, the coachee is the "client"	The coachee is selected but HR and coachee's manager. The "client" is the organization or HR department
The coachee takes part on the coach selection	The coachee is not participating at all on the coach selection
French Professional Coaching Institute as a Reference	Company who provides the Coach
High quality required in the coach profile (professionalism)	High quality required in the coach profile,(professionalism)
High level of Confidentiality around coaching activity	Confidentiality agreement in individual session
No overlaps between coaching, mentoring, consulting and training	Overlaps between coaching, consulting, training and mentoring

Table 5.2: Three areas of successful coaching engagement: Mechanism of Selection.
(By the author)

Key-point: paradoxes coaching activity (from theory)	France	Sweden
Who is the client?	The coachee	The organization, HR department, top management team
Who selects the coach?	The coachee (Two offers, External & internal one)	HR department
What is the role of HR department in this coaching process?	Intermediary, in contracting process, part of the coaching network	Monitoring and evaluation the process (take part in group activities with coachees)

7.1.4 Coachees Interviews Result: Coaching Impacts

At this point of the investigation, the comparison in terms of contents, methods and processes in the use of coaching in both countries has been done in the previous chapter. Now the results of the coachees' interviews are presented to be able to compare and assess the coaching impacts from the coachee's opinion, based on their perception and experiences during and after the coaching activity. Similarly it will enable to discuss about the effect of the use of coaching in an organizational level.

MacKIE's model was the base to design the questionnaire used in the semi-structured interview carried out to the coachees. The presentation of the qualitative results will be done by following the same structure: level of satisfaction, level of assimilation of contents in terms of coachee's increased skill, knowledge and self-awareness and finally, level of behavioural change transferred to the work place (see figure 2.8, p.284).

Afterwards, the answers relative to cultural dimension will be provided.

7.1.4.1 Coachees Interviews in Gothenburg

Level of satisfaction and reaction to the coaching activity

The answers confirm that all of them have a very positive impression about the effects of the coaching program. However, there are different levels of satisfaction. Although all agreed that the method taught was extremely good tool to improve leadership, some of them got more benefits from it than other and even those, who requested more individual coaching session with coach to develop themselves more and get deeper in the concept; seem to have a better understanding of the coaching benefit, they seems to have acquired higher coaching maturity.

In general, they did not know too much about coaching before attending the program, some of them had in mind some ideas about what coaching could be, since they all went to other training session which included some coaching tools. Coaching is associated by all to a training concept, to develop leadership and to give benefits to the organization. Those who took more individual coaching session tend to see coaching more independently on training. In big picture, the client is mainly the organization and even as pointed out by someone... “the client is the top management team of the organization” (Swedish coachee)

The answers to assess the level of motivation and expectation before experiencing the coaching process are quite varied. All of them showed a high level of curiosity and were quite open and motivated to develop, but they did not have concrete expectations.

The relationship coach-coachee was a success for all of them, since they all agreed “she is very good” and “good chemistry”, good in building trust, listening and guiding the coachee to come to final conclusions.

Regarding the different activities developed along the coaching program, the majority shows special interest for the group activities where you can apply the method learnt and just only one of them preferred the face to face part of the coaching program. The mix combination of both, group and face to face activity seems to be the best, “the combination of the group activity and the face to face part was really good” (coachees in Sweden).

Concerning how they perceive the presence of the HR person in the group activity of the program, they seem to have a neutral opinion, though there seem to be a dilemma... “it has positive and not so positive consequences”.

Table 5.3: Participation of the HR manager in the group activities in Gothenburg.

HR participation in group activities
It has both, negative and positive side ... the negative... it can be sensitive to the group to really share. In my case, the positive thing is that it is good to have a HR person to show how I am acting, what my driving forces are and what I want.
HR manager was also doing the assessment on herself. I have no problem with that, I am who I am.
I knew this person already and I consider that this person is very professional, so I had no problems with that.
The presence of a HR person has good and bad side... HR person get the picture of the real work, get the feeling for the culture, how the manager really work. On the other hand.... maybe, the people who is involved in the program could unconsciously not say what they exactly want and not say what they exactly do, it is a line subject.
It was completely useless, it did not add any value for me, probably the explanation is that, they have been acting in the beginning and they want to check if it is executed in the expected way.
We discuss a little bit about that, the HR person in group activity... some people seem to have mix feelings about that, in my case, I did not mind. It is OK for me.
It was absolutely OK for me, of course you have to deeply speak and build trust in the group activities, so people could have some dilemmas, but it also have to be with the driving forces.

Key-learning points and skills attainment, self-awareness

All the respondents agreed that the main learning was to increase self-awareness and consequently to understand much better other perspective and be aware of differences. They all learnt about themselves and had a clear “insight”, all of them increase the understanding about their weaknesses and their strength, “suddenly, you understand so many things about yourself...” (Swedish coachee). Below the more repeated key-learning points in their answers:

Table 5.4: Key learning points of Swedish coachees.

Skill developed	Comments
Important improvement the method of interviewing people to hire.	<p>It definitely has influenced in my way of interviewing when hiring new employee, by asking open question and knowing better who I have in front of me.</p> <p>I have in mind a more global view, I am hiring people for Volvo AB</p> <p>One interviewer told me that it had been the best interview in her life.</p>
Listening skills, being patient and developing empathy	<p>This coaching helped me to know how to involve people more toward the goal; I developed my people-orientated approach.</p> <p>It is very important to listen to.</p>
Self-guidance, confirmation as a manager, increased self-confidence	<p>With coaching I got other angles of the situation which helped and help me to make some decision regarding to me team members. I also understood what I really need to do in order to be more comfortable in certain situations.</p>

Behavioural changes transferred to the workplace

Many of them confirmed that the coaching program was the start to develop a more people-oriented leadership style and adopt a more coaching aptitude,” With the program you learn the method” (Swedish coachee).

The majority replied that the learning from the coaching program was especially useful in conflict situations where they could get a better understanding about why things are happening in the way that they happens and as three coachees said.. “You understand that... this conflict is not about you, it is a common problem so we need to solve it together”.

The coachees who took extra sessions and continued with the coach, seem to have in mind what professional coaching is and how can it benefit them, they achieved a high level of coaching maturity. They highlighted the benefit that coaching can bring to the organization by creating a corporate coaching culture.

7.1.4.2 Coachees Interviews in Lyon

Level of satisfaction and reaction to the coaching activity

The first thing to highlight is that before being coached, all of the coachees interviewed had a good understanding about what coaching is and how it could help them. Some of them knew about coaching not only because they had participated in “team building” coaching or “sharing experiences” activity, but also because of what was spoken around managers, colleagues’ comments, etc. So, from their answers it is derived that coaching in Lyon is a well-known practise. Note that, according to one coachee...not everybody in Lyon has this positive image “ I have some colleagues who do not like coaching because they do not want to speak about personal things at job, personal mindset, etc..”.. (French coachee).

All of the respondents confirmed to be the one who requested coaching and also considered it as being essential for the successful of the process, “I was really prepared for that, before, no...” (French coachee). Although a wide variety of reasons led them to look for coaching, such as difficulties derived from changing position and promotion, bad feedback from the team members , over stress situation, need to develop some specific skills, etc... in all the cases, the initiative was the consequence of a deep need. For this reason, their aptitude to take coaching was extremely positive and open-minded.

Regarding the coach-coachee relationship, all of them agreed that it was very good in terms of trust built, openness and the coach’s skill to ask powerful questions. The coach-coachee relationship was successful for all the cases and as a coachee pointed, “well, it was my choice, was not it?” (French coachee).

In summary, we could say that the level of satisfaction for the coaching experience is very high.

Key-learning points and skills attainment, self-awareness

In this section of the interview, two kind of learning have been found. It was obvious that they achieved the attained objectives in the end of the coaching process, the direct learning, but it seems that many other things were understood during the coaching process and after it, “with coaching you understand many things” (French coachee), and consequently, a profound change took place. Below, a table summarizing the most relevant comments:

Table 5.5: Key-learning points in Coachees from France

Skill developed
Self-confident and trust toward direct reporters.
I learnt the need to focus more on developing my team members rather than on controlling them.
I accepted that I cannot be so perfectionist and I have the right to fail too, it even positively affected my personal life.
I confirmed myself as a manager.
I learnt how to analyse and understand different personalities to really understand my team members, to create good relationships and get what I needed for the project.
I learnt that when you have problems you need to ask for help!
I increased my adaptability to approach to different contacts and increased flexibility in my general aptitude.

In summary, we could say that they achieved a high level of awareness about themselves and others.

Behavioural changes transferred to the workplace

When they were asked about how they applied the key-learning and the acquisition of these new competences and behaviours in the work environment, a variety of answers were given, many of them were linked their current role within the company.

The majority claimed that they apply it to the day by day work process, acting as a reference for others. As said by one coachee, “it put you in a really position to act, the perspective from which you act”

It is also confirmed that after coaching experience a coaching leadership style was developed, they all developed a people-orientated style and a more transformational leadership style. The acquisition of awareness about themselves increased their empathy abilities and it had a clear impact in the way they interact with their team members.

It seems to be that the development of one's own potential creates an intrinsic desire of developing others too, (see some comments below).

Table 5.6: Leaders as a coach.

Coaching leadership style
I saw, I felt better and I could do a better job, so.... It should be the same for my team members".
I cannot look for solutions all the time for all the problems, but, I can encourage, support and help them to find the solution.
When conflicts come, now, I and my team have "coaching sessions" to solve some of them.
When I left that position, many team members approached me and asked me about coaching concept and how they can develop this approach.

7.1.4.3 Career development and general opinion

Regarding the career development, in both cases most of the respondents had difficulties to find a clear link between the development achieved because of coaching and their career development, but it was noticed that the concept of "career development" was defined in a variety of ways.

In general, the terms "career development" refer to the fact of moving up in the organizational hierarchy by promoting. In that sense, in both cases, Lyon and Gothenburg, coaching experience was more associated to the possibility of achieving better performance in the position that they already had in the company rather than the possibility of "jumping" into another position. Even though the majority have been promoted, it is difficult to establish a direct link between the coaching experience and the fact of being promoted. However, it they all agreed that it meant a clear acceleration of their leadership style and in consequence, they all could increase leadership effectiveness and the ability to apply integrative thinking. It is connected to a better performance of the team member as a consequence of the better guidance and leadership.

In both cases, all of them associated career development with acquisition of the ability to prioritize, and coaching helped them to know what they really want and need. It was not necessarily connected to the desire to "move up in the organization". As a French coachee said... "if I want to go or an upper position, of course, I will, but I am more interested in other things now". Therefore it confirms the successful of coaching practises in the sense that such as it was mentioned in the literature review the main

purpose of coaching is to connect the coachees with their own potential and develop their own path.

It was surprise that both highlight the positive impact of coaching to improve their role of “leader as a coach”, however, while the French coachees show a high level of knowledge about what coaching is and how coaching can benefit them in a wider sense and they also recognized it as an essential element of creating “collective intelligence” and Corporate Coaching approach within the organization; Swedish coachees seldom gave a clear unified view on how coaching can help them and they seem to have a narrower view of the use of coaching. This resulted in increased interest in the subject at the end of the Swedish interviews, indicating that in Sweden the current approach to Corporate Coaching is more tactical rather than strategic, whereas in French it is more strategic than tactical.

It was interesting that the majority clearly distinguished between the concept of being a leader and being a manager, and they empathised in the need to have both approaches. Leadership concept was associated to the fact of being more “people-orientated” person and “soft issues” of the team, while the role of manager was connected to a “task-orientated” and “hard issues” approach that is the management of the time and cost as well as the most important thing, the delivers; as a Swedish coachee said, “in the end you have to deliver on time and be profitable”. Surprisingly, in both, on a top management level, this distinctiveness “manager-leader” was less clear or even it was the same.

An interesting fact noticed was that most of the French cases, coaching, at the time that it took place, was more associated a remedial tool that was crucial to achieve a level of understanding and a clear vision of the situation and then to attain a better solution. Also, the possibility to have the individual coaching was essential fact at that time, where difficulties came up. It definitely helped them to go on in their career development. It was decisive in overcoming difficult situations and had a profound impact in their professional life and in some cases in the personal life since it meant a personal change. This reconfirm that the approach to coaching in Lyon is strategic.

Other coaching practises, concretely collective coaching and sharing experiences practise, are really valued by all in the sense that, it clearly helps to increase job performance, not only to share the vision, create collective intelligence and corporate coaching, but also to support each other by enabling the exchanges of ideas and exploring new possibilities to face problems, “it is extremely useful” (French coachee).

It is notable how all emphasise the high effectiveness of team building and individual coaching combination, “individual coaching is very good but it is not enough, in team building you really work on inter-relationship between people and it is really powerful...” (French coachee).

7.1.4.4 Summery

The following tables show a summary of the main effects of coaching for each locations in individual level.

Table 5.7: Main coaching effects in Lyon from the Coachees' perception (by the author)

Output Impact in Lyon			
Build enthusiasm Build relationship Build team moral	Delegation /empowering others	Job satisfaction and enjoyment	Self-awareness & self- reflection
Building trust in direct reporters	Developing-Self	Meeting facilitation	Stress management
Developing coaching leadership	Influence	Self -confident	Work/life balance

Table 5.8: Main coaching effects in Gothenburg from the Coachees' perception (by the author).

Output in Gothenburg				
Build enthusiasm Build relationship Build team moral	Decision making& judgment	Empowering others	Influence	Self- confident
Collaboration /teamwork	Developing coaching leadership	Global internal perspective	Internal visibility & Image	Self- awareness & self- reflection
Conflict management & resolution	Developing- Self	Interviewing skill	Listening Skills	Work/life balance

It is interesting that all the French coachees highlighted that self-confident and trust in their team members as well as the capability to not go into reviewing the details and not try to control everything, were dramatically improved after coaching. As a consequence, also a better management ability of conflicts was achieved either from individual coaching experience or team building.

It was clearly noticed that all the Swedish coachees experienced a profound change in the way of interviewing the futures employees "asking open questions" (Swedish coachees) and having a more global perspective, "we are hiring for Volvo AB, not only for the unit" (Swedish coachees).

It could not be determined any difference between the two approaches to develop coaching leadership style which is clearly developed in both location, consequently the main global objective is achieved, confirming that coaching is being effective in accomplishing the purpose and also all the coachees enhanced their leadership repertoire and transformational leadership.

Nevertheless, when considering how the different approaches to coaching could contribute to the organization in a global perspective to create corporate coaching, the findings confirm that in Lyon the impact of coaching seem higher and more sustainable since it seem to have a longer term and pro-active effect.

Particular Results

- In both the relationship coach-coachee was successful (trust, good chemistry and openness were achieved)
- All the coachees perceived a link between career development and coaching experience in the sense that they knew better their priorities and in some cases of “moving up” within the company hierarchy but
- For all, it was a clear acceleration in their leadership development
- All the participants support coaching, but it seems to be that:
 - In Lyon, it is perceived as being an essential activity for developing “Collective Intelligence” and sharing the vision (consolidated structure in creating corporative coaching).
 - In Gothenburg, it is a very good tool within the training concerns but not essential (the start of a formal strategy in creating corporative coaching)
- Swedish coachees perceive, a certain point, a lack of support within the organization.
- On top management level, in both location the respondents support coaching activities, but in Lyon, more awareness is shown about the general benefits and more attention to this issue has been detected, since, coachee in Lyon was not only better prepared to answer the questions and but also was more willing to allocate more longer time to the interview, while for the Swedish coachee, although the coaching program was quite valuable in terms of knowing the different kind of personalities, it was needed ten minutes to gradually remember the impact of the coaching experience. This fact reconfirm that the approach to coaching in Gothenburg is more tactical and in Lyon more strategic.
- The “insights” in coachees from Lyon seem to be deeper than in Swedish coachees.

7.1.5 Intercultural Aspects: Results

During the gathering information process carried out along the interviews, the intercultural issues have progressively become more important in this thesis. In the theoretical framework, different arguments from different researchers were commented. In this chapter, the main differences in the culture issues from the coachee's perception and the direct observation carried out by the author will be presented.

Below, two tables to summarize the main comments collected from the interview are shown. It provided an insight in how they perceive to each other and to themselves.

Table 5.9: Cultures differences from coachees perception in Sweden (by the author)

Answers for Culture Difference: LYON managers
Manager in Lyon focus on detail and on controlling what is happening all the time, it is the way of being considered to be responsible.
In Lyon, we are always very critical with ourselves... auto-checking.
Managers in Sweden have more support from the whole system when problems arise,
Managers in Lyon are expected to know all from their team members
I think in Sweden there are less transversal communication
Managers in Gothenburg tend to avoid conflicts and do not put things on the table to solve it.
The best is the mix between the two approaches, having the best from both.

Table 5.10: Cultures differences from coachees perception in Lyon (by the author)

Answers for Culture Difference: Swedish managers
The difficulty is the hierarchy structure; I cannot discuss new ideas with the other contact partner. I need the top manager permission in Lyon...
It seems to be less discussion in Lyon, more discussion and meetings in Sweden,
The decision making process is different. Learning the French way of managing people could be very good for us, there is a global initiative but it is not take into account the culture differences.
In general terms, I perceive that French managers are more detail-orientated, more controller in the sense that they want more information from the employees.
My leadership style is not really appreciated in France; they really want someone to tell them this is wrong and right.
In Sweden we have a long way to make the decisions but when we make it we go straight to it. While in France they can change in any state of the project. Nothing is worst or better, just different.

The answer from the interviews as summarized in the tables above partly confirm the findings of the literature concerning the cultural differences since it shows how the PDI different of one country to another is affecting the manager role having in the two context, Lyon and Gothenburg. It is proved that there is a link between the impact of coaching and the cultural context in which coaching is apply since It is observed that if we notice the more repeated impacts in individual level of the French coachees and the manager role described according to the cultural context as defined in the literature (Hofstede, 2005) it is note that coaching is mitigating the PDI effect.

Basically it can be affirmed that as a result of the use of coaching, the two location in terms of cultural differences are approaching to each other and an consequently standardization at least in leadership issues is occurring.

However it is important to remind the reader that the cultural dimension utilized is only an indicative to be able to understand how the cultural differences may affect the working context.

7.2 Direct Observation

When describing the work areas in Gothenburg, it is notices that the design is quite favourable to encourage communication and employees interrelation.

Most of the employees are located in a big building composed of three main blocks interconnected by bridges. The sensation is that the different departments are approachable by walking. Top management area is allocated in the first floor, but it is observed that people from different levels of management move around in. Therefore, there is a prevalent “community feeling” not only because of the environment but also due to the facilities. Each department has different areas to have a break with a tea and speak with colleagues and have “fika time”. It is culturally established to have a fika time every Friday to all the employees of the area independently on the level. It is remarkable that all the areas have many “meeting rooms” in the corridors, some of them need to be booked in advance, other are just “silent room” to use in case of needed more privacy or improvise a meeting.

Other significant characteristic is the distribution of the space, since all the departments (working area) are composed of desks, non-closed offices, managers and subordinates share the same areas. Openness and trust seem to be the base of the environment in Gothenburg.

By contrast, the distribution of space in Lyon is organized in a different way. Managers have the own private office so; they do not share the spaces with subordinates. There is more clear distinction between different levels of management and stricter control not only on the people who get into the area, but also on the people who going in the buildings. “Protection” seems to be the word to better describe the atmosphere in Lyon.

8 Discussion

In chapter 4 “Purpose” the scope of this investigation was defined and two main objectives were specified:

- To evaluate and assess the impact of the use of coaching in both an individual and organizational level.
- To develop a comparison between both coaching frameworks in order to facilitate a knowledge transfer process.

Both the comparison and the assessment of the main effects of coaching activity in Volvo 3P, have been partly performed by the information provided in chapter 5 “Results” in which a description of the coaching activities was presented, and the main answers of the coachees’ interviews were provided.

Although many of the research questions were generated to satisfy the scope of this dissertation and have already been answered, some concrete results need to be further discussed and some findings require a deeper analysis.

8.1 The Coaching Approach: A contribution to the Organization

In the description of the coaching activity in Volvo 3P, it was shown that there are significant differences in the way of understanding coaching issues and how coaching is applied within the two locations.

In the literature review (Ivees, 2008; Parsloe & Wray, 2000) it was argued that coaching has difficulties to be defined and the lack of consensus in establishing a common framework of reference was found. The evaluation and analysis of the description of the two scenarios confirm this lack of consensus.

In general terms findings confirm that the approach to coaching in Lyon is more strategic than tactical, “it was a strategic decision in 2001 to have coaching as a main developmental tool within the company here in Lyon” (French coach), so coaching is applied both at a micro and macro level. At the micro level (leadership team) by developing the leaders’ skills with individual coaching and by means of increasing the team effectiveness with the collective team; in a macro level (organizational strategy) by aiming to create collective intelligence and a shared vision.

In Gothenburg, the approach to coaching aims also to be strategic since from a macro level perspective, high potential managers are provided with a powerful tool to act as a coach in their role of leader and contribute to the creation of corporate coaching by focusing on competences development within the team members. In that sense, the development of coaching leadership style in those managers is very efficient to increase the team effectiveness and develop a self-managed team, however, the results show that the real impact of coaching in the Swedish coachees seems be tactical since as an HR person said “we hope that the skills acquired in the program will be kept

somewhere in their mind and will positively influence the organization”, it is very difficult to affirm that the leverage of the use of coaching in Gothenburg will have a sustainable and a long term impact in the organization. Note that, according to the table “Table 3.1: participants distribution per year of the coaching program in Sweden, p. 20”, six managers who took the coaching program left the company.

Although the coaching program is extremely effective, its effect seems to be limited and the program alone does not ensure the sustainability of the creation of corporate coaching. On the contrary, the coaching approach in Lyon seems to have a broader contribution to the organization than the Swedish one since there is an independent and defined entity (the Coaching Office) working on the coaching issues and ensuring the pro-activity to guarantee collective intelligence and “sharing the vision” within the organization. The fact that people agree in the reference frame by combining individual coaching and team building in the continuous process of regulation and readjustment makes the coaching system very powerful and useful. Moreover, the coaching approach in Lyon is the vanguard in term of knowledge and processes.

The coaching system in Lyon has some weaknesses since the results confirm that there is a need for having a more integrative coaching-cultural approach in the system. At a certain point, there could be a minor risk in case of using coaching to cover poor performance rather than developing because of the fact that there could be a tendency to “be addicted” to coaching. Although this possibility is uncommon since it is a “self-regulation” system (it is requested when required by managers), but also there are rules to control the “bad use” of coaching, and in spite of the fact that the main principle is to develop self-guidance; it seems important for all the participants in a coaching activity to keep a critical attitude in mind.

8.2 Instructive and non-directive approach to coaching.

In the literature review the two styles of carrying out the coaching process, named by the terms “push” and “pull”, were commented. These two terms refer more specifically to the way in which the coach conducts the coaching process. However, if these two concepts “pushing” and “pulling” are taken in a global perspective in Gothenburg, it can be seen that due to the organizational context and the lack of coaching experience of the coachees understanding of coaching in Gothenburg seems to have the characteristics of the “pushing” approach. In that approach the development of the coachee takes place in a more directive way. It is more instructional and the coachee is conducted “through the program”.

The process is more controlled and monitored by the Human Resources department who works in a partnership with the coach to carry out the program. Coaching is related to training. In others words, the way in which coaching is developed in Gothenburg is related to the understanding of coaching of the Human Resources department who are in charge of designing the process. The fact that the Human Resources department organizes and directs the coaching activity can affect the coaching process. Therefore, it seems to be important to reflect about how the macro level perspective of HR in Gothenburg impacts at a micro level (the development of the coachee).

As several authors postulate (Stober, 2006, cited by Ives, 2008, p.105; Parsloe's and Wray, 2000, p.47), performance from coaching is enhanced when control and responsibility is transferred to the learner. Hence, this fact could explain why the "insights" in the French coachees (non-directive approach) seems to be deeper.

This non-clear coaching/mentorship dichotomy shown by the Swedish coachees, who usually mixed up the terms during the interviews, could be a consequence of this "hand on", "push" or "instructional" approach, as a coachee said, "you can attend a lot of trainings but you may not be a good manager".

In the literature review, coaching has been distinguished from practises or disciplines which border each other, though overlaps can exist, "the boundaries are not firmly set" (Parsloe & Wray, 2000, cited by Ives 2008), it is suggested by Rosinski, (2003, chapter 1) "it is important to work within the confines of one's competencies and mandate".

As suggested by Whitmore (2003, cited by Ives, 2008, p.105), "the pulling approach should be applied whenever possible", also John Whitmore (2003 cited by Ives 2008, p.105) states that "directive conceptions generally gave way to a clear non-directive understanding of coaching", the change from "pushing" into a "pulling" concept of coaching seems to be the proper way to continue the coaching development in Gothenburg.

In contrast, the situation in Lyon could be associated to a "hands off" or "pulling" approach, with more mature coachees in terms of knowledge of coaching and coaching experience. They have to manage more responsibility from the beginning of the coaching process, by starting with the search for help, the assessment of their own situation and the selection of the coach. Coaching is clearly defined and delimited from other disciplines and it is managed independently by the Human Resources department. This non-directive scenario seems to be more favourable in achieving a deeper change in the coachee during the coaching process and a more sustainable development.

The high level of confidentiality in coaching issues in Lyon has the mission of protecting the coachee and avoids the negative impacts on the "well-perceived image" of his or her manager role. When a Swedish manager is coached, it is due to the fact that he or she will be trained, further, she or he is selected. Nonetheless, when a French manager requests help from the Coaching Office, it is on the base that he or she has a problem or a need. Also, if the matter is analysed from a cultural perspective, this protecting attitude can be due to the high PDI, as the French coachees said, "managers in Lyon are expected to know all", so the coaching request in Lyon is a sign of weakness.

8.3 Three areas of successful coaching engagement: Mechanism of Selection

After deeply analysing the information obtained from the interviews and summarized in three areas of successful coaching (Table 5.2, p.59), some important points need to be discussed.

The different approaches to coaching in the two locations were discussed. The fact that the concept of coaching in Gothenburg seems to be closer to a training concept, could explain the role of the Human Resources department in the overall picture and its participation in the group activities.

From the literature review it was confirmed that the role of HR department, the definition of the “client” and the process to select of the coach are the key-points in making coaching successful. On one hand, according to Goldsmith, Harkins and Morgan (2005, chapter 1), the coachee knows that his or her agenda and the organization agenda should be aligned. On the other hand, trust and openness in the coach-coachee relationship will determinate the success of the coaching process. Meanwhile the coach is being hired for a service to the organization. The participation of the HR department in the group activities could have negative consequences on the coaching process of the coachee since:

- The coachee could see it as an opportunity to promote.
- The coachee can feel observed or controlled.

The presence of HR in a group coaching activity also could influence the progress of the coachee, “consciously, perhaps by not sharing, or, unconsciously, if the coachee do not say exactly what they want to say” (Swedish coachee).

There are positive aspects of the Human Resources participation since, they may be well informed about the leaders’ need; as a coachee said, “the HR person gets the picture of the real work, gets the feeling of how the manager really works”. However, HR may be viewed as the de facto client (Goldsmith, Harkins and Morgan 2005, chapter 1). The question would be: is this the desired role that HR wants to have in relation to the coaching activity?

As Rock (2006) argues, the environment affects the leader in the sense that self-motivation comes from responding to the environment and the responder is part of the environment. In other words, the leader behaviour and his or her mental processes are connected to the environment in which this behaviour and the mental process take place, so unconscious alteration can happen in the coachee as a consequence of the HR person in the group activities.

On the other hand, the coachee knows that he or she is being observed and at a certain point could conscientiously manipulate the process by focusing on the benefits rather than on his or her development, “The positive thing is that it is good to have an HR person to show how I am acting, what are my driving forces and what I want” (Swedish coachee).

The objective of the presence of HR person in the group activities is also to get to know the manager's needs and expectations "HR wanted to know what the manager wants" (anonymous). There, it seems to be that coaching in Gothenburg is conducted under a double agenda. Is coaching used to develop potentiality? Or is it utilized to validate the potential of the managers?

This paradox "develop-validate" leads us to the question, is the use of coaching to validate the potential of the coachee ethical? To answer this question I would turn to the recommendations provided by the International Coach Federation. The federation aims to give insights to this controversial situation as presented in the chapter "2.2.6.3 The Three Areas of Successful Coaching Engagement", page 20 of the present document.

If a similar analysis is done for the French situation, it can be observed that these "psychological games" are avoided by means of confidentiality and independence, since Coaching Office is not directly linked to Human Resources department. Formally, the Human Resources department acts in the contractual process. However, the Human Resources manager is part of the internal coaching network, since he is a coach. Due to the fact that the coachees are notified about this before selecting the coach, this "double agenda" is avoided. Nonetheless, the mentioned "psychological games" can take place if we think about the advantages that the coachee could have from selecting a coach who is also an HR manager.

In Lyon, the coachee is the main role of the coaching process at the same time that the way of checking up or reviewing the progress cannot affect the progress in itself, since, "there is a clear distinction between operational objective of the coached person and process objectives of the coaching work" (French coach).

8.4 Coaching and Intercultural Aspects

Although the development acquired is quite similar at both locations, it is demonstrated that both are operating within the same Volvo values, some significant differences should be deeply analysed. For example, building trust in direct reporters, delegating and empowering others, improving job satisfaction and enjoyment, meeting facilitation, and stress management skills, they all are the most repeated effects from the individual coaching experience that the French coachees have perceived. If those results (table 5.7 and 5.8, pp. 66-67) are compared with the main characteristics at the work place pointed out by Hofstede (2005) given in the theoretical framework (table 2.4, p. 30) we can see a clear relationship between them.

For instance it can be deducted that before coaching, both the lack in building trust in direct reporters and stress management could be two consequences of the role that a manager has played and the relationship manager-subordinate, in the high PDI index in France according to Hofstede's investigation. The theoretical manager scenario in France (defined by Hofstede, 2005) which is characterized by its large-power distance could imply a major difficulty for the manager to develop a coaching management style, based on trust, delegation, empowering, distributing influence and developing others more than having a supervising aptitude and centralize all the responsibility in the manager.

By contrast, Sweden is considered a low-power-distance country, where the subordinates are in theory more consulted and the manager is more democratic and resourceful. As a French coachee said, “Managers in Sweden have more support from the whole system when problems arise”.

It could be assumed that managers in France need to invest more energy in creating coaching culture in their team member, than in Sweden. As Hofstede (2005, p. 271) postulates, distributing influence comes more naturally to low-than high PDI countries. Consequently, coaching, either individually or collectively and the collective intelligence approach can be mitigating the negative effect of the power distance consequences.

9 Conclusion

9.1 Coaching effects in the Organization

The first main objective of this investigation was to evaluate the coaching effect within the company both in the coachees' development and the creation of coaching culture.

Concerning the effect of coaching on leadership, the first conclusion is that the use of coaching to develop coaching leadership style within the company is being effective in both Lyon and Gothenburg; in consequence, the concept of leadership within the company is being standardized by coaching practises.

Other positive effects of coaching were verified, since the majority of coachees perceived a clear acceleration of their leadership development and an improvement in their leadership repertoire (improved relationships and better communication, better conflict management, stress management, etc...).

Regarding the creation of coaching culture, it was observed that, in the global perspective, the different understanding of coaching in the two locations and the way it was applied, could negatively affect the effective creation of coaching culture. Experience and knowledge transfer processes between Lyon and Gothenburg are necessary along with special attention to the needs of the manager who works "in between" with a multicultural team. It was proved that there is a need to organize learning and knowledge-sharing activities globally.

Standardization of the terminology used in the communication process of the top management team (HR representative and directors in charge of competences development) is required in order to have a more effective decision making process regarding coaching issues and a shared vision of the coaching activity. Distinctiveness of coaching from other disciplines is crucial to gain from its great potential, therefore the Human Resources management team should agree on its definition.

9.2 Coaching in Lyon versus coaching in Gothenburg

The second main objective of this dissertation was to carry out a comparison between the coaching activities in Lyon and Gothenburg to facilitate a knowledge transfer process.

Firstly the scenarios for each location were intrinsically described along with the results received from the interviewing process. It is confirmed that the development of coaching in Lyon in terms of knowledge, processes and vision is very mature and well established; therefore it could be a good reference for other units within the Volvo group. Note that it is also confirmed that both coaching approaches have valuable things that can be learned from them.

It is demonstrated that coaching is a very good tool for development, and well used in Gothenburg and Lyon, nonetheless, from a constructive and also a long term perspective, the discussed paradoxes regarding the role that HR, coach and coachee play in the whole scenario, call for prudence and judgment. A need to rethink and reflect about the three areas of successful coaching engagement is suggested.

Along the comparison, increased attention on the cultural aspects of coaching activity is suggested based on the fact that both the manager's role and need are associated to the inherent norms, values and subordinate's expectation of the cultural context. It was revealed that the coaching effect is being influenced by the intrinsic cultural context. A more integrative culture-coaching approach is needed. Note that the cultural issue is analysed from an abstract level and intrinsic generalizations should not be interpreted as stereotypes.

In general terms the investigation shows that coaching is a very useful developmental tool for the organization and can positively affect the company. The lack of consensus regarding what coaching is and how it is applied in the real business environment calls for a deeper investigation of the subject about coaching. It was clearly apparent from the initial literature review that little or no consensus is present regarding coaching, thus this thesis is concluded in hopes that further investigations follow both within this company and at a broader academic level to ascertain a clearer picture of coaching and its proper uses and benefits.

9.3 Reflections by the Author

This dissertation has expanded my knowledge and understanding of this complex discipline and I have had the possibility to deeply discuss leadership and organizational strategy with different participants in this investigation both in Lyon and Gothenburg. The research and process have allowed me to get a deeper global insight into the company and to further understand the underlying complexity of the organizational matrix structure particularly in a heavy industry company where normally "hard-points" and task-oriented approaches are highly preferred.

Perhaps the comments given by different managers can better summarize the needs of the company.

- "we are very good in contents, in the product but we are not so good in processes and human relationships" (several managers in Lyon).
- "I doubt about if we have enough coaching aptitude as we should have" (manager in Sweden).
- "The company is composed of people, we spend a long time here" (Swedish manager).
- "Many times the problems are concerned with the relationships between the team members" (French manager)

After being able to see the whole picture and the practical use of coaching offered by this concrete case study, it became clear that there is an interesting paradox in the use of coaching in business. On one hand, coaching is based on human's factors, since it helps to identify the skills and capabilities that are within the person, and enabling them to use them to the best of their ability. Therefore a people-focused outlook is required for the success of coaching.

On the other hand, companies aim to achieve more benefits with the use of coaching and thus providing coaching to employees. In consequence a business focus is necessary to have a meaningful use of coaching.

Concerning the cultural aspect of this thesis, the approach is not to create a division between the parts, but increasing awareness to help to generate reflections in the process of "building a global view". As one of the global managers at Volvo said "the faster the company can move from a local way of thinking to a global one, the better it is for the company". This global-learning activity requires "driving commonality where it makes sense, but in a way that provides sufficiently flexible solutions that meet the cultural and unique priorities of geographies and solution areas." (Kathy Iversen, 2002, CLO of Andersen).

To conclude this thesis I would express my wish that the people who take the time to read it, find it interesting and valuable and that it encourages new ideas and reflections.

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Appendix A (Presentation Letter)

Göteborg, 2010-04-04

Dear Managers,

My name is Elena Tapia Cuadra and I am student of the master “International Project Management” which is being taught at Chalmers University of Technology (Sweden) in cooperation with Northumbria University (United Kingdom).

As a last part of the education period, the programme is completed with a Master’s thesis which is an individual research in a related topic to project management.

Currently, I am also participating as a protégé in the mentorship programme, started by Volvo 3P in April 2009 for students at Chalmers University, with the objective, among others, of giving to the protégé the opportunity to get an insight in the practical working life.

In this context, during the last year, my interest in leadership issue has increased and that is the reason why I am developing my Master’s thesis in coaching leadership.

Volvo 3P carried out a coaching programme during the last years to help Managers, to provide support to enhance skills and high performance within the organization. Thereby, those Managers, you all, are the perfect part of the scenario to develop a study with the ambition of providing an overall picture of the coaching programme, benefits and impacts in a long-term, as well as to identify significant results which could contribute to improvement to possible future coaching activities. As you see, your contribution represents the key element of this study.

In the next days, you will be contacted by e-mail to ask you for a meeting to be carried out a semi-structure interview which will take around one hour.

Confidentiality is ensured and the result will be presented in an anonymous way.

I am looking forward to contacting you again!!

Sincerely

Elena Tapia Cuadra

eletacu@gmail.com

Appendix B (Semi-structured Interview Form)

Semi-Structured interview to Coachees (Sweden and France)

Name: _____ Time working for Volvo: _____
Gentle: _____ Year of the coaching experience: _____
Age: _____ Type of coaching in France (internal, external): _____

Background

1. *Can you explain your role in the organization before and after the coaching experience?*
2. *Can you describe your company culture relative to coaching?*
3. *Can you describe very briefly the program (only for Sweden)?*

Coachee's reaction

4. *What did you know about executive coaching before participating in the coaching activities?*
5. *How many coaching sessions did you receive?*
6. *What was your level of motivation/expectation and general attitude to coaching before taking coaching?*
7. *What components of the coaching process did you perceive as especially relevant, (what fit you less and what fit you more?)*
8. *What was your perception concerning the dialogue in the coaching relationship (ability to **listen** and **ask powerful questions**, together with the ability to support learning and the ability to create **trust**)?*
9. *What was your perception concerning the performed groups activity of the coaching program? (Only for Sweden)*
10. *How did you perceive the presence of HR in the group's activities of the coaching programme? (Only for Sweden)*

Level of awareness and skill attainment

11. *What are your key-learning or attained skills acquired from coaching activity (in terms of increased skills, knowledge and self-awareness)?*
12. *Can you describe your leadership style?*
13. *How have those key-learning affected your leadership style?*
14. *Can you describe what a "good leader" is for you?*
15. *Do you perceive that coaching has helped you to develop a "coaching leadership style"? If yes, how?*
16. *Can you define the difference between leader and manager from your understanding?*

Behavioural change and transfer

17. *How do you apply the attained skills from coaching to your work environment?*
18. *During the time after participating in coaching activities, have you faced situations in which the learning or attained skills from coaching has been especially useful and have they even affected the success of the outcome?*
19. *Do you think that you have transferred the learning in anyway to your work environment (team)? If yes, how if not, why?*

20. *During the time after the coaching program, have you faced a situation at work in which you think that coaching could have been important support or key-tool to overcome? (Only for Sweden)*
21. *How has the coaching activity affected your career development, promotion or career transition? in what sense?*
22. *Who was the client in the whole coaching scenario from your point of view?*
23. *Do you have contact with your coaching group very often from coaching activity took place? (Only for Sweden)*
24. *What is your general opinion about coaching after that experience, do you perceive coaching as an essential tool in successful management?*

Culture issues

Could you tell me the main differences that you have perceived between Lyon and Gothenburg in terms of working style, management style or any other notable facts?

Appendix C (PDI According to Hofstede, 2005)

TABLE 2.1 Power Distance Index (PDI) Values for 74 Countries and Regions

COUNTRY/REGION	SCORE	RANK	COUNTRY/REGION	SCORE	RANK
Malaysia	104	1-2	Colombia	67	30-31
Slovakia	104	1-2	Salvador	66	32-33
Guatemala	95	3-4	Turkey	66	32-33
Panama	95	3-4	East Africa	64	34-36
Philippines	94	5	Peru	64	34-36
Russia	93	6	Thailand	64	34-36
Romania	90	7	Chile	63	37-38
Serbia	86	8	Portugal	63	37-38
Suriname	85	9	Belgium Flemish	61	39-40
Mexico	81	10-11	Uruguay	61	39-40
Venezuela	81	10-11	Greece	60	41-42
Arab countries	80	12-14	Korea (South)	60	41-42
Bangladesh	80	12-14	Iran	58	43-44
China	80	12-14	Taiwan	58	43-44
Ecuador	78	15-16	Czech Republic	57	45-46
Indonesia	78	15-16	Spain	57	45-46
India	77	17-18	Malta	56	47
West Africa	77	17-18	Pakistan	55	48
Singapore	74	19	Canada Québec	54	49-50
Croatia	73	20	Japan	54	49-50
Slovenia	71	21	Italy	50	51
Bulgaria	70	22-25	Argentina	49	52-53
Morocco	70	22-25	South Africa ¹	49	52-53
Switzerland			Trinidad	47	54
French	70	22-25	Hungary	46	55
Vietnam	70	22-25	Jamaica	45	56
Brazil	69	26	Estonia	40	57-59
France	68	27-29	Luxembourg	40	57-59
Hong Kong	68	27-29	United States	40	57-59
Poland	68	27-29	Canada total	39	60
Belgium Walloon	67	30-31	Netherlands	38	61

continued

COUNTRY/REGION	SCORE	RANK	COUNTRY/REGION	SCORE	RANK
Australia	36	62	Ireland	28	69
Costa Rica	35	63-65	Switzerland		
Germany	35	63-65	German	26	70
Great Britain	35	63-65	New Zealand	22	71
Finland	33	66	Denmark	18	72
Norway	31	67-68	Israel	13	73
Sweden	31	67-68	Austria	11	74

Scores for countries or regions given in **bold type** were calculated from the IBM database. Scores for countries were based on replications or estimates.

1. The data were from whites only.