NOVICE EXECUTIVE COACHES' PERCEIVED SELF-EFFICACY

by

YOO RI HAN

(Under the Direction of Laura L. Bierema)

ABSTRACT

The executive coaching field is still new, and there are a number of novice coaches working in the field. Regardless of their backgrounds, coaches are expected to possess competencies to best help their client. In particular, what is required of novice coaches is their sense of self-efficacy that they can effectively apply coaching skills in highly complex real situations. However, few studies exist on novice coaches' self-efficacy and their development.

The purpose of this qualitative study of novice executive coaches was to explore incidents that positively or negatively affect coaches' perceived self-efficacy about their coaching skills. The following research questions guided this study: (1) what incidents influence the self-efficacy of novice executive coaches? (2) what were important lessons that novice executive coaches learned from those incidents?

A semi-structured, open-ended qualitative interview, combined with the critical incident method was used as a method to gather data from each participant in this study. One male and eight female novice executive coaches, aged between 32 and 58, were interviewed for this study. The constant comparative method was used to analyze the interview data.

The findings showed that novice executive coaches' self-efficacy increased or diminished when they experienced positive or negative feelings from five categories: (1) provoking critical reflection through questions, (2) managing a coaching session proficiently, (3) developing a good coaching relationship, (4) facilitating personal transformation to develop new possibilities for action and learning, and (5) creating the foundations for business coaching. Experience, reflection, and transformation of role perception were important things that the coaches learned from the practice.

Three conclusions were drawn about novice executive coaches' self-efficacy. There were: (1) novice coaches' positive experiences bolster their feelings of high efficacy, while negative experiences diminish it; (2) novice coaches develop high levels of self-efficacy when they understand a client's anxiety and resistance and are willing to push clients out of their comfort zones to confront and change their behavioral challenges; and (3) novice coaches develop high levels of self-efficacy when they make transformational shift of their role perception and actions from lay helpers to professional coaches when interacting with clients.

INDEX WORDS: Executive Coaching, Novice Executive Coaches, Coach Development, Self-efficacy, Helping, Human Resource Development, Adult learning, Experiential Learning, Reflective Practice, Career Development, Qualitative Study

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Coaching has gained popularity in diverse areas from life coaching to achieve personal goals to business coaching to increase organizational learning and performance Grant, Cavanagh, & Passmore, 2010). The usage of the term “coaching” in the place where usually “development,” “training,” or “learning” were used is increasing, for example, “employee coaching,” “parent coaching,” “emotional coaching,” and “animal coaching.” However, coaching is not a new practice. The concept of coaching has been discussed in peer-reviewed literature since the late 1930s (Grant & Zackon, 2004) and has since become one of the main ways of teaching in sports, the arts, business, and many other areas, both formally and informally. Images of sports coaches who train and encourage their players have often been related to the concept of coaching, and much research, especially in the 1970s and 1980s, focuses on their training techniques (Popper & Lipshitz, 1992).

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, coaching began to have an impact in the corporate world (Renton, 2009), and it is still receiving widespread attention. The growing number of business-related coaches and institutions for coach education reflect this trend (Grant & Zackon, 2004; Hamlin, Ellinger, & Beattie, 2009). Coaching is regarded as the “secret weapon of many outstanding organizations” (Burdett, 1998, p. 142) in today’s business world that is affected by downsizing, reengineering, multicultural work environments, globalization, and increasing employee developmental needs (Berlett II, 2007; Chapman, 2001; Flaherty, 2010). Developing competent employees is top priority in most companies as Ulrich and Brockback (2005) state, in this current business world, every company strives to hire talent; it is “what you do with them afterward” (p. 102) that counts.

In particular, executive coaching, which focuses on correcting clients’ dysfunctional business behaviors (Corbett & Colemon, 2006; Goldsmith, 2007), is critical considering the impacts of such behaviors on stakeholders. According to Goldsmith (2007), who has abundant coaching experiences with CEOs from nationally and internationally renowned companies, it is not unusual that highly successful executives have unproductive behaviors, or bad habits, that the executives obliviously have been doing for many years. Those executives believe that their behaviors, such as tendency to winning all the time or adding too much value on every employee’s ideas, contributed them to climb up the corporate ladder quicker than others. Therefore, these executives tend to maintain such behaviors without much self-awareness that it is actually such behaviors that are now blocking their future success. Therefore, executive coaching is often reserved for “top performers whose leadership and growth potentials are highly valued by the organization” (Morgan, Harkins, & Goldsmith, 2005, p. 25).

Despite its popularity, executive coaching is practiced and understood differently depending on the disciplines and context. Hamlin, Ellinger, and Beattie (2008) reviewed academic and practice-based journal articles and synthesized the definition of executive coaching as “a process that primarily (but not exclusively) takes place within a one-on-one helping and facilitative relationship between a coach an executive (or a manager) to achieve personal-, job- or organizational-related goals with an intention to improve organizational performance” (p. 295). This composite conceptualization explains what executive coaching is in general. However, when it comes down to details on what exactly is happening in coaching sessions, there is no agreement among scholars and practitioners yet because the goals, and methods used to achieve those goals, vary. There have been several attempts to provide an integrative coaching model (Kahn, 2011; Leedham, 2005; Orenstein, 2002; Passmore, 2007; Sherman & Freas, 2004). However, considering the multi-disciplinary nature of the coaching field, which includes psychology, management, and adult education (Law, Ireland, & Hussain, 2007; Renton, 2009), it is unlikely that a conceptual and methodological consensus that will satisfy all these disciplines will be reached some time soon.

Among such diversity, one thing that scholars and practitioners generally agree is the concern about coaches' quality (De Haan, Culpin, & Curd, 2011; Griffiths & Campbell, 2008). Due to the lack of common theoretical backgrounds and models for the best coaching practice, there are numerous self-taught coaches out there who have knowledge from various life and work experiences and who use their knowledge as the main resource for their coaching practice. For the coaching field to become professionalized, it is critical that those who wish to become coaches go through formal education, such as certificate programs, designed to meet intellectual, technical, and ethical standards (Bluckert, 2004; Grant & Cavanagh, 2004; Gray, 2011). Also, developing coaches who can provide satisfying results to their clients and stakeholders is imperative in the coaching field to establish trust with potential stakeholders who should invest considerable time and money once they decide to try coaching interventions in their organization (Gray, Ekinci, & Goregaokar, 2011). This is especially true under the current circumstances in which clients and stakeholders still have doubts about the process of the executive coaching and the values of it (Washylyshyn, 2003).

However, assessing coaches' quality is not a simple matter. First, among coaches who go through formal education, such as certificate programs, their practice, goals, and tools can be different based on the theoretical and philosophical background of the institutions. Second, as adult learners, it is inevitable that even those who go through the same program will have different understandings of the learning because each brings different expectations, life experiences, learning styles, and personal traits, among other factors (Dirkx, Gilley, & Gilley, 2004; Schön, 1987). Third, a direct study of coaches' attributes and effectiveness is difficult due to the nature of executive coaching that is mainly comprised of highly confidential one-on-one conversation in a private setting. Thus, it is no wonder that there exist few studies on coaches' behaviors and self-development (Newsom & Dent, 2011), and it is hard to measure the effects of a coaching intervention (Sherman & Freas, 2004).

Coaches also face difficulties. Coaches are expected to ground their practice in a firm empirical and theoretical base, and have belief in the process (De Haan, 2008a; Lee, 2008). At the same time, coaches need to know intuitively when to strictly follow the process and when to be flexible (Coultas, Bedwell, Burke, & Salas, 2011; Wycherley & Cox, 2008). Sensitivity to the organizational culture is required for coaches to maximize the coaching results (Glunk & Follini, 2011). Constant self-reflection and supervision are critical because coaches are the main tool in coaching practice (Bluckert, 2004; De Haan, 2008a; Gray, 2011; Hawkins & Schwenk, 2006; Lee, 2008). Most of all, it is fundamental to create rapport and good coaching relationships with their clients because among other things, the quality of the coaching relationships often determine the success of the intervention (De Haan, Bertie, Day, & Sills, 2010).

Thus, it is safe to say that an ability to balance the above challenges determines the degrees of skillfulness of executive coaches. As coaches gain more experience, they find it easier to manage unexpected factors that come out during the coaching sessions, to the extent that some may feel excited by a new challenge (De Haan, 2008b). However, newly certified coaches have to constantly apply what they learned in their formal training, and at the same time, they need to apply this knowledge in real situations that are more complex than they imagined. Thus, what seems critical for novice coaches to possess in order for them to persist and produce successful results are their confidence and sense of self-efficacy that supports their belief in their capabilities to “organize and execute the courses of action required producing given attainments” (Bandura, 1994, p. 3).

Perceived self-efficacy has been rigorously studied in many fields (Gist & Mitchell, 1992). Bandura (1986, 1994, and 1997) claimed that it is often people’s beliefs that they can perform, not their actual skills, that produces the desired results. Although the direct relationship between people’s self-efficacy and their performance outcomes has not yet been clearly proven (Lent, et al., 2009), self-efficacy is regarded as a powerful construct to predict high performance and persistence. In the counseling field, for example, the importance of novice counselors’ self-efficacy was well received and has been studied to better guide them and to “bolster novices’ morale during the ups and downs of clinical training, which requires mastery of a complex skill set” (Lent, et al., 2009, p. 317). Unfortunately, few studies exist on novice coaches’ self-efficacy or on their self-development (Newsom & Dent, 2011), except for De Haan's (2008a) study on critical moments of inexperienced coaches. Although Vieira and Palmer (2012) acknowledged the importance of coaches' self-efficacy and tried to construct a measurement of it, the tool is still in the experimental stage.

Problem Statement

Today, coaching is regarded as the powerful intervention to develop leaders and manager in a business world that is affected by downsizing, reengineering, multicultural work environments, globalization, and increasing employee developmental needs (Berlett II, 2007; Chapman, 2001; Flaherty, 2010). In particular, executive coaching, which focuses on clients' business behaviors (Corbett & Colemon, 2006; Goldsmith, 2007), is critical considering the impacts of such behaviors on stakeholders. Despite its popularity, executive coaching is still practiced and understood differently based on the disciplines and context. When it comes to coaches' qualities, scholars and practitioners generally agree that for the coaching field to become professionalized, it is critical that those who wish to become coaches go through formal education, such as certificate programs, designed to meet intellectual, technical, and ethical standards (Bluckert, 2004; Grant & Cavanagh, 2004; Grey, 2011).

Concern is growing among scholars and practitioners over how to maintain the professional standards of coaching, including executive coaching. Indeed, there are numerous self-taught coaches who have knowledge from various life and work experiences and who use their knowledge as the main resource for their coaching practice. However, it is inevitable that even those who go through the formal education or a certificate program will have different understandings of the learning because each brings different expectations, life experiences, learning styles, and personal traits, among other factors. Naturally, such differences influence their coaching styles. These differences may blur the demarcations between various disciplines and philosophies in the coaching field. In the end, it is the coach who is the most important tool in a coaching session and who determines the quality of the results.

Regardless of his/her style, what is required of new coaches is their sense of self-efficacy that they can effectively apply coaching skills in highly complex real situations. Perceived self-efficacy is regarded as a powerful construct to predict performance outcomes and people’s level of persistence in the face of obstacles. Much had been studied and written regarding self-efficacy, especially for novice professionals such as novice counselors or novice teachers. However, few studies exist on novice coaches’ self-efficacy and their development. Thus, my aim was to explore novice executive coaches’ perceived self-efficacy and their learning.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study of novice executive coaches was to explore incidents that positively or negatively affect coaches’ perceived self-efficacy about their coaching skills. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What incidents influence the self-efficacy of novice executive coaches?
2. What were important lessons that novice executive coaches learned from those incidents?

Significance of the Study

The coaching field has grown quickly in a relatively short period of time, and it will continue to grow because many studies prove that “it works.” However, it still has a long way to go to become a profession and provide standards upon which practitioners and scholars from various disciplines agree. Under these circumstances, it is critical that coaching education programs produce highly qualified coaches. Coaches themselves also need to constantly develop their practices through continuous learning and conversations with other coaches to broaden their perspectives. To novice executive coaches, this study can be a valuable source for obtaining vicarious experiences and reflecting on their own practice.

Moreover, the self-efficacy of novice executive coaches is important because it can play a key role in their performance and future careers. Efficacy beliefs influence how long professionals persevere in the face of obstacles and can contribute to or detract from their resilience to adversity (Bandura, 2006). Most novice executive coaches have not yet firmly developed their coaching skills, and they easily experience doubts in difficult situations (De Haan, 2008a). Thus, this study can remind novice executive coaches of the importance of a sense of self-efficacy from the early stages of their coaching career and can offer an opportunity for vicarious learning.

Coaching is time-consuming and requires investment from many stakeholders, such as executives, employees, and management. This study will help these stakeholders understand the overall coaching process. Also, by knowing the different challenges that each executive coach encounters during the process, stakeholders can be better prepared for selecting coaches who best fit their organizations. Firm trust in a coach's ability and understanding about the coaching process will increase commitment from all related stakeholders.

Finally, the results of this study will deepen the knowledge base of the coaching field, which is in its initial stage and needs more empirical data to strengthen the practice and its theoretical basis.

Definitions

I would like to clarify that throughout the study, I have used the terms "confidence" and "self-efficacy" interchangeably because conceptually, coaches' sense of self-efficacy often reflect their confidence levels and vice versa. During the interviews, I continue to employ the term "confidence" to minimize possible confusion between the researcher and the coaches who participated in the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this qualitative study of novice executive coaches was to explore incidents that positively or negatively affect coaches' perceived self-efficacy about their coaching skills. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What incidents influence the self-efficacy of novice executive coaches?
2. What were important lessons that novice executive coaches learned from those incidents?

This chapter reviews the literature on coaching and self-efficacy. First section discusses an overview of the coaching field, coaching in a business setting, and executive coaching. Second section examines the literature about self-efficacy in general and employees' self-efficacy beliefs and work performance.

Coaching

This part reviews the literature on coaching. The first section discusses an overview of the coaching field. The second section reviews coaching in business settings and subsections include organizational approaches to coaching, coaching as a HRD intervention, managerial coaching, and effects of coaching in the workplace. The third section discusses executive coaching. Subsections include the purpose of executive coaching, empirical studies, and characteristics of coaches, clients and stakeholders. The last section reviews the literature on mentoring and counseling as concepts similar to coaching.

Overview of the Coaching Field

Coaching is “an emerging cross-disciplinary profession” (Grant & Zackon, 2004, p. 12) and has gained popularity in diverse areas from life coaching to achieve personal goals to business coaching to increase organizational learning and performance (Grant, Cavanagh, & Passmore, 2010). The origin of coaching is not clearly known. Etymologically, the term “coach” came from a large carriage that “initially built from the mid-15th century onwards in the Hungarian town of Kocs (pronounced “coach”)” (Renton, 2009, p.2). A carriage can be compared to coaching in a way that it is a tool to help passengers move from A to B , as coaches help their clients to achieve goals (position B) by removing blocks and reducing gaps from current situations (position A). Starting from around 1830, the term “coach” indicated a person who carried a student through the exams at Oxford University, and the term was applied to the sports field in the 1800s (Bachkirova, Cox, & Clutterbuck, 2010, p. 2).

The concept of coaching has been discussed in peer-reviewed literature since the late 1930s (Gorby, 1937; Grant & Zackon, 2004) and has since become one of the main ways of teaching in sports, the arts, business, and many other areas, both formally and informally. Images of sports coaches who train and encourage their players have often been related to the concept of coaching, and much research, especially in the 1970s and 1980s, focuses on their training techniques (Popper & Lipshitz, 1992). Modern day coaching, that is, a client-centered and goal-oriented process to facilitate individual’s potential, is influenced mostly by the humanistic movement of the 1960s (Palmer & Whybrow, 2007). According to Grant, Cavanagh, Parker, and Passmor (2010), there were 93 papers about coaching published between 1937 and 1999. In a short period of time, from 2000 to May 2009, the number of published papers rapidly increased to a total of 425 papers (Grant et al., 2010, p. 133).

Definition of Coaching

The International Coach Federation (ICF) defines coaching as "partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential" (ICF, 1995). Popper and Lipshitz (1992) offer two components of coaching: (1) improving performance at the skill level to promote the self-efficacy of the one who is coached, and (2) encouraging self-confidence by establishing relationships between the coach and the client for the client's psychological development. As Morgan et al. (2005) explain, coaching does not focus primarily on problematic behaviors, as is frequently the assumption. Often, coaching is most effective for people with the potential and desire for growth. Therefore, coaching is best described as facilitating (Redshaw, 2000), and the role of coaches is to facilitate clients by helping them "develop specific action plans and then to monitor and evaluate progressions towards those goals" (Grant, et al., 2010, p. 126-127).

On the other hand, the definition of coaching by coaching psychologists, who base their practice on psychological orientations, such as cognitive behavioralism or solution-focused therapy, is slightly different from the ICF's definition. The most recent working definition by the Special Group in Coaching Psychology (the SGCP) is that "coaching psychology is for enhancing well-being and performance in personal life and work domains underpinned by models of coaching grounded in established adult and child learning or psychological approaches" (Palmer & Whybrow, 2007, p. 3). The definition of the Australian Psychological Society's Interest Group in Coaching Psychology (IGCP) is as follows:

> [A]n applied positive psychology, draws on and develops established psychological approaches, and can be understood as being the systematic application of behavioural science to the enhancement of life experience, work performance and wellbeing for individuals, groups and organizations who do not have clinically significant mental health issues or abnormal levels of distress. (Australian Psychological Society, 2007)

Coaching psychologists emphasize the use of various therapeutic approaches in coaching practice, and they set the bar for non-psychologist coaches (Palmer & Whybrow, 2007).

Current States of Coaching Field

The estimated global number of active coaches is around 47,500, and 76 percent of them are working in three regions — North America, Western Europe, and Oceania (primarily Australia and New Zealand) — where only 11% of the global population reside (International Coach Federation, 2012). The coaches can, again, be divided into specialized coaches based on their expertise and background as well as clients' needs. For example, there are career coaches, executive coaches, life coaches, relationship coaches, skills and performance coaches, team coaches, peer coaches, and cross-cultural coaches (Bachkirova, Cox, & Clutterbuck, 2010; Davison & Gasiorowski, 2006).

Despite its popularity, coaching is practiced and understood differently based on the disciplines and context. The goals, and methods used to achieve those goals, vary as well. Even a brief literature review shows the dilemmas that exist in the coaching field, and one such dilemma is the need to establish common ground among the many different perspectives and disciplines that all claim they contribute the most to the coaching field.

The necessity of accreditation has been clearly recognized by many coaching practitioners and scholars since the International Coaching Federation (ICF) was founded in 1995. As of yet, there is no one overarching accreditation body that is critical for coaching to be professionalized. Furthermore, as Hemphill (2011, p. 11) contended, a number of institutions with similar names are adding confusion to both coaches and clients, for example, the International Coaching Federation (ICF), the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC), the International Institute of Coaching (IIC), the International Association of Coaching (IAC), the Association for Coaching (AC), the International Coaching Association (ICA), and an increasing number of Coaching Psychology groups such as the Society for Coaching Psychology (SCP) and the Special Group in Coaching Psychology of the British Psychological Society (SGCP). According to ICF's survey in 2012, around 30 percent of coaches indicated marketplace confusion as an issue for the future of coaching.

The key issue that the largest number of coaches in the survey, around 43 percent, mentions as an obstacle is untrained individuals who call themselves coaches (International Coach Federation, 2012). Currently, there are no barriers to entry to coaching (Sherman and Freas, 2004). Practically anyone can receive certification as long as he/she attends classes, submits required assignments, and pays the requisite fee in one of the many institutions in the so called "veritable global 'coach certification' industry" (Grant, et al., 2010, p. 130). Around 53 percent of coaches around the globe answered that they believed that coaching should become regulated (International Coach Federation, 2012). However, it seems hard to decide whether coaching should be regulated or not at this stage considering the lack of common theoretical background and models for the best coaching practice.

Coaching in Business Settings

In business settings, coaching usually indicates a kind of HRD (Human Resource Development) intervention to high level executives, managers, and individual employees. The Worldwide Association of Business Coaches (WABC) defines business coaching as follows.

> Business coaching is the process of engaging in regular, structured conversation with a "client": an individual or team who is within a business, profit or nonprofit organization, institution or government and who is the recipient of business coaching. The goal is to enhance the client's awareness and behavior so as to achieve business objectives for both the client and their organization. (WABC, 2011)

Based on a literature review, Hamline et al. (2009) synthesized coaching as “a *helping* and *facilitative process* that enables individuals, groups/teams and organizations to **acquire new skills**, to **improve existing skills**, **competence** and **performance**, and to **enhance their personal effectiveness** or **personal development** or **personal growth** [emphasis in original]” (p. 18). The authors italicize “helping” and “facilitation” in the text to indicate the process, and use bold letters to emphasize the intended purposes of coaching.

If seen more broadly, coaching includes management style, such as managerial coaching. In this section, literature on organizational approach to coaching, coaching as a HRD intervention, managerial coaching, and effects of workplace coaching will be reviewed. Literature on executive coaching, a specific kind of a coaching intervention to executive level managers, will be discussed in a separate section below.

Organizational Approaches to Coaching

Today's business world is affected by downsizing, reengineering, multicultural work environments, globalization, and increasing employee developmental needs (Berlett II, 2007; Chapman, 2001; Flaherty, 2010), and coaching is regarded as the "secret weapon of many outstanding organizations" (Burdett, 1998, p. 142). Every company strives to hire talent, and as Ulrich and Brockback (2005) stated, the important part is "what you do with them afterward" (p. 102). Thus, developing competent employees and their capacities to learn is a pressing issue in any organization (Bierema, 1996; Fenwick, 2000). The growing number of business-related coaches and institutions for coach education reflect this trend (Grant & Zackon, 2004; Hamlin, Ellinger, & Beattie, 2009).

However, not all organizations utilize coaching to its full effects. Peterson (2009) presented four stages, on the continuum from ad hoc coaching to strategic coaching, of how coaching is implemented in organizations. The stages reflect the degree of acknowledgment of the necessity of coaching in alignment with an organization's vision and the talent pool it requires to achieve that vision. Broadly, the four stages can be reconfigured into three levels: individual, more than individual or group, and organizational.

Individual Level. Ad hoc coaching, Stage 1 for Peterson (2009), is usually driven by individuals “in response to a specific problem (for example, an abrasive manager) or sudden need (for example, on-boarding a key executive in a challenging role” (Peterson, 2009, 116). Organizational supports are not expected at this stage.

Group Level. Stage 2 is managed coaching. In this case, more than individuals are involved in implementing coaching intervention. A person is appointed to manage “all the external coaches running around the organization, including establishing selection criteria, defining coaching processes, and measuring participant satisfaction” (Peterson, 2009, p. 116). In this stage, managers are also expected to possess coaching skills.

Organizational Level. Peterson’s (2009) Stage 3 and 4, proactive and strategic coaching, belong to organizational level intervention. An organization in stage 3 (proactive coaching) is clearly aware of the importance of coaching for the success of its business. Thus, coaching is utilized in various areas such as “accelerating high potential development, on-boarding new leaders, driving a change in culture, or facilitating integration following a merger or acquisition” (Peterson, 2009, 117). Also, internal coaches are appointed and trained to provide coaching to employees. Peterson (2009) mentioned that currently very few organizations are at the next stage, strategic coaching. Coaching in this final stage is clearly aligned with business strategy and is regarded as a crucial investment to maximize an organization’s profit and develop its employees.

Coaching as a HRD Intervention

Modern HRD encompasses three areas: training and development (T&D), organization development (OD), and career development (CD) (McLagan, 1989). In business fields, the demarcation between T&D, OD, and CD is unclear as they are intertwined based on the contexts and characteristics of the organizations to which they belong. As Joo (2005) mentions, issues related to executive coaching, and coaching in business in general, such as“[l]earning, development, behavioral change, performance, leadership, career success, and organizational commitment [...] are all in the domain of HRD” (p. 463). Therefore, it seems clear that the use of coaching as HRD intervention continues to increase and that coaching plays a key role in modern HRD (Cummings and Worley, 2008; Hamlin et al., 2008; Ulrich & Brockback, 2005).

To look at more specifically, training and development (T&D) is “a process of systematically developing work-related knowledge and expertise for the purpose of improving performance” (Swanson & Horton II, 2009, p. 226). Those include division-level technical skill improvement training, management and supervisor training, leadership development, and motivational training. Ulrich and Brockback (2005) stress that the role of T&D is to cultivate and strengthen employees. For example, the job of an HR leader is to consider the objectives, design, contexts, delivery methods, and desired outcomes of a training program. To encourage development, he or she needs to make choices that maximize opportunities for employees to learn from experience. Coaching is individually tailored and thus considered better than training for this purpose (Atkinson, 2011).

Organization development (OD) is “a process that applies a broad range of behavioral science knowledge and practices to help organizations build their capacity to change and to achieve greater effectiveness” (Cummings & Worley, 2008, p.1). Change is the fundamental purpose of OD (Triscari, 2008), and various approaches are used for organizational change. Consequently, OD incorporates a number of interventions across individual, group, and organizational levels. These include whole systems changes using large group interventions, process design, survey feedback, appreciative inquiry, and action learning (Church, 2003). According to Cummings and Worley (2008), coaching is an activity that “involves working with organizational members, typically managers and executives, on a regular basis to help them clarify their goals, deal with potential stumbling blocks, and improve their performance” (p. 451). The authors add that coaching is involved in almost every OD intervention. However, they also point out that in order for a coaching intervention to be successful, it is crucial to be able to identify a good coach who has the skills and abilities to handle personal and complex coaching relations.

Compared with T&D, and OD, career development (CD) receives relatively less attention in contemporary HRD (Cameron, 2009). This is due to the changing perspective of career development. According to Chen’s (2003) comparison, traditional career theorists assume that a person’s life and career follow a linear and rational process and that individuals have developmental tasks in certain stages of their lives. Super’s (1990) life-span, life-space theory is one example. On the one hand, social constructivists view the career as “a complex, dynamic, and ever-evolving process” (Chen, 2003, p. 252), which is constructed based on social interactions. In today’s world, this is an accurate description as an individual’s career is less predictable and is influenced by multiple factors. Therefore, the responsibility for career development in this complex, dynamic, and ever-evolving society moves from the company to the individual. However, the need for career coaching becomes greater because HRD and CD face “an aging population and an aging workforce; skill shortages nationally and globally; the changing nature of work and employment; globalization and increased global mobility; emergence of the knowledge economy; and technological advances” (Cameron, 2009, p. 10). Developing the skills of existing employees and retaining talented workers by providing career opportunities are important for attracting talented people. Although uncommon, “the importance of developmental relationships and ongoing coaching appeared to be ingrained in the culture” of some organizations (Douglas & McCauley, 1999, p. 216) and use formal coaches or mentors for employees’ career development.

Managerial Coaching

Managerial coaching stems from the idea that “managers, who are involved with employees on a daily basis, are in a position to assist their employees in development” (Tansky & Cohen, 2001, p. 287). Contrary to hiring outside coaches, managers are in a better position to instruct and mentor employees because they understand the workplace, the key people, and the unique culture of the business (Wasylysyshyn, 2003). Gorby’s (1937) study of older employees coaching their subordinates is considered the first research in coaching in organization (Grant & Cavanagh, 2004). To improve performance and employees’ satisfaction by maximize human potentials was risen as an important issue in organizations in the 1960s, along with the development of humanistic psychology (Renton, 2009; Rogers, 1951, 1962). In the late 1960s, “rigorous academic research in the form of doctoral dissertations with a continuing focus on internal organizational coaching" started to come out (Grant & Cavanagh, 2004, p. 7).

Research indicates that effective managers are good at developing relationships with employees and possess proper coaching skills to facilitate and motivate rather than to control (Antonioni, 2000; Ellinger, Hamlin, & Beattie, 2008; Gilley, Gilley, McConnell, & Veliquette, 2010; Hunt & Weintraub, 2004; Longenecker & Neubert, 2005; Waldroop & Butler, 1996). Ladyshewsky (2010) explains that

> The MAC [manager as coach] does use a coaching approach with his/her staff, but this role is not their main function. The MAC who adapts this coaching role as part of their skill base rejects the command and control model of leadership. Instead, the MAC builds a relationship around trust and believes in the capabilities of the individuals who form part of his/her team. (Ladyshewsky, 2010, p. 294)

However, most managers are not ready or are unwilling to adopt coaching techniques as managerial tools for many reasons, such as time constraints, a lack of coaching skills, and training (Antonioni, 2000; Hunt & Weintraub, 2004). Waldroop and Butler (1996) state,

> Good coaching is simply good management. It requires many of the same skills that are critical to effective management, such as keen powers of observation, sensible judgment, and an ability to take appropriate action. Similarly, the goal of coaching is the goal of good management: to make the most of an organization's valuable resources. (Waldroop and Butler, 1996, p. 111)

Most literature about managerial coaching focuses on the manager' core competencies for successful coaching such as communication skills and the ability to motivate others (Gilley et al., 2010; Hamlin et al., 2007). However, lists of desirable behaviors are insufficient to educate managers who have control-oriented, traditional mind-sets and who have never experienced effective coaching themselves. Hunt and Weintraub's (2004) remark emphasized this problem.

> Coaching seems to be a different kind of activity for many managers, one that challenges how they make sense out of their role. The effective coaching manager may need to develop a different understanding of his or her role and learn how to integrate helping into that role. (Hunt & Weintraub, 2004, p. 40)

Thus, understanding what managers do day-to-day and what prevents them from coaching should be the starting point from which to educate and encourage managers to be coaches.

Effects of coaching in the workplace

Employee coaching for non-executives is necessary because regular employees have more direct contacts with customers and do the actual work based on managerial decisions. Research shows that workplace coaching not only enhances employees' self-efficacy, goal attainment, and interpersonal skills but also reduces stress (Grant, 2007; Grant, Curtayne, & Burton, 2009). It is also likely that the results of coaching are maximized when a client volunteers for an intervention (Waldroop & Butler, 1996), owns a problem (Whitmore, 2009), and has a good relationship with a coach (McGovern, Lindemann, Vergara, Barker, & Warrenfeltz, 2001).

Gyllensten and Palmer (2006) interviewed nine individuals from two large organizations and found that the participants experienced reduced stress as indirect results of coaching. The interview participants reported that coaching helped them to improve confidence and problem-solving skills, as well as endurance to stressful situations. However, Gyllensten and Palmer added that employees' unwillingness to be open to the coaching process or coaches' lack of skills could be potential causes of stress related to coaching intervention.

Grant (2007) studied the effects of attending a short-term managerial coaching training program. Twenty middle-level line and sales managers from two industries participated in the two-day workshop and showed improved goal-focused coaching skills. The participants' emotional intelligence, however, did not improve. Grant stated that managers may need a longer term and repeated interventions to develop emotional intelligence.

In sum, as seen from studies on coaching effects, it is safe to say "coaching—whether delivered by managers, HR, internal expert coaches, or executive coaches—is a powerful tool for performance management and for developing individual and organizational capabilities" (Peterson, 2009, p. 151). However, many factors need to be considered for coaching intervention to be most effective such as "differences in coach capability, the degree of match between the coach and coachee, how effectively coaching is integrated with organizational strategy or fits the organization's culture" (Whybrow & Henderson, 2007, p. 407). Furthermore, as Peterson (2011) commented, coaches, stakeholders, and researchers should be mindful that it is difficult to clearly pinpoint "the causal link between coaching activities and distal outcomes" (Peterson, 2011, p. 91). It is due to various outside events that co-occur during the coaching intervention and due to the lack of measures to gauge coaches' specific activities that cause or hinder clients' behavioral changes during and after coaching intervention.

Executive Coaching

Today's rapidly changing business environment requires executives to deal with multiple challenges. Valerio and Deal (2011) presented four general coaching challenges that have arisen in the past few years. They are "(1) competency attainment, (2) developing adaptability in leaders, (3) working in and leading virtual teams, and (4) work-life integration," (p.17) Executives and managers are expected to possess "big picture thinking and a global perspective, motivating and inspiring other, building relationships with diverse groups of people, and demonstrating teamwork across lateral as well as vertical relationships" (p. 107). Also, executives need to adapt changing environment skillfully and have to work with people from all over the world. Work and life integration, which often seems difficult for many executives, is a constant task that needs to be accomplished. Thus, executive coaching is considered important because executives' decisions, behaviors, stress level, and mental health have a strong impact on the entire company.

Defining executive coaching, however, is not simple, as the concept of coaching itself refuses a common definition due to its multi-disciplinary nature. Kilburg (2000) offers a detailed definition of executive coaching:

> Executive coaching is a helping relationship formed between a client who has managerial authority and responsibility in an organization and a consultant who

> uses a wide variety of behavioral techniques and methods to assist the client to achieve a mutually identified set of goals to improve his or her professional performance and personal satisfaction and consequently to improve the effectiveness of the client's organization within a formally defined coaching agreement. (Kilburg, 2000, p. 66-67)

Feldman and Lankau's (2005) definition is more succinct. Based on their literature review, the authors define executive coaching as "a short- to medium-term relationship between an executive and a consultant with the purpose of improving an executive's work effectiveness" (p. 829).

Peter Drucker (2008) stated that "[t]he years since 1950 have seen a boom in management development within the wider boom in management as a whole" (Drucker, 2008, p. 250). Since then, improving executive's work effectiveness has been a major concern in many organizations. Executives' poor leadership skills and lack of effectiveness, not their technical skills, were recognized as problems that hindered organizations from achieving further success (Feldman & Lankau, 2005), and in the 1990s, coaching gained attention as "an important management development method for senior managers in major global corporations" (Renton, 2009, p. 8).

Purpose of Executive Coaching

In short, executive coaching is aimed at increasing an executive's work effectiveness. Drucker (1993) viewed effectiveness as the only way for executives to convert their intelligence, imagination, and knowledge into results. He added that

> That one can truly manage other people is by no means adequately proven. But one can always manage oneself. Indeed, executives who do not manage themselves for effectiveness cannot possibly expect to manage their associates and subordinates. Management is largely by example. Executives who do not know how to make themselves effective in their own job and work set the wrong example.” (Drucker, 1993, p. vii)

One important way to develop executives’ effectiveness is to correct their dysfunctional business behaviors (Corbett & Colemon, 2006; Goldsmith, 2007), considering the impacts of such behaviors on stakeholders. A manager who sticks to traditional command and control style leadership is no longer welcomed in an organization where “a focus on teamwork and getting buy-in from subordinates” (Valerio & Deal, 2011, p.106) becomes more and more critical. According to Goldsmith (2007), who has abundant coaching experiences with CEOs from nationally and internationally renowned companies, it is not unusual that highly successful executives have unproductive behaviors, or bad habits, that the executives obliviously have been performing for many years. These executives believe that their behaviors, such as a tendency toward winning all the time or adding too much value on every employee’s ideas, contributed their climbing up the corporate ladder quicker than others. These executives tend to maintain such behaviors without much self-awareness that it is actually these behaviors that are now blocking their future success. Thus, helping leaders “achieve a positive long-term change in interpersonal behavior” (Morgan, Harkins, & Goldsmith, 2005, p. 5) is a main focus in coaching, especially behavioral coaching.

Coaches serve as sounding boards and thinking partners in addition to helping managers change dysfunctional behaviors (Kalungu-Banda, 2011; Lijenstrand & Nebeker, 2008). Grey et al. (2011b) conducted a study with small- and medium-sized enterprises managers to identify the factors that influence their decision to engage with coaching and their understanding of coaching and its benefits. The authors found that “the confidential and, at times, intense nature of the coach-coachee relationship allowed managers to divulge some of their innermost concerns, doubts and deficiencies” in a safer way than a traditional training program (Gray et al., 2011, p. 877).

Also, developing leadership abilities and managerial skills are common purposes when executives seek out or are referred for coaching (Feldman & Lankau, 2005). Coaching can help managers and executives to adjust in new positions and function well when they experience leadership transition (Bond & Naughton, 2011; Ellam-Dyson & Palmer, 2011). Supporting managers to improve managerial skills (Morris & Tarpley, 2000) and to effectively engage in goal setting and feedback seeking (Gregory, Beck, & Carr, 2011) also are often purposes of executive coaching.

So far, executive coaching is often practiced in large organizations, such as example Fortune 500 companies, rather than mid-sized or entrepreneurial companies (Wasylyshyn, 2003). However, broader applications of executive coaching have been suggested and have proved to be beneficial to leaders in other organizations (Fischer & Beimers, 2009). Coaching can be used as a strategic tool to help an organization “develop a cadre of leaders who are great coaches to help install leadership development programs” to facilitate organizational change by “work[ing] closely with a number of senior leaders (and their teams) to make the change initiative a success,” and “[to help]

top executives set the tone for the long-term direction of the organization" (Morgan, Harkins, & Goldsmith, 2005, p. 7).

Empirical Studies on the Effects of Executive Coaching

Employees' sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1994) is probably "the key psychological variable in coaching" (Popper & Lipshitz, 1992, p. 15) because it predicts that employees will perform competently under challenging situations. There are several studies that examine the relationship between managers' self-efficacy and executive coaching (Baron & Morin, 2010; Evers, Brouwers, & Tomic, 2006; Moen & Skaalvik, 2009). Baron and Morin (2010) conducted a pre- and post-test study of leadership development programs with 74 managers. The authors compared the effects of three training methods: classroom seminars, action learning groups, and executive coaching. Executive coaching was found to be positively associated with self-efficacy beliefs. Also, the higher number of coaching sessions was related to greater increases in the manager's self-efficacy beliefs.

Evers, Brouwers, and Tomic (2006) conducted a quasi-experimental study with 30 managers to investigate coaching effects on outcome expectancies and self-efficacy. The findings indicated that management coaching was effective regarding outcome expectations. Also, managers' self-efficacy beliefs that they could set their one's own goals increased.

Moen and Skaalvik (2009) explored the effects of executive coaching on several psychological variables affecting performance. Twenty executives and 124 middle managers participated in a pre- and post-test study. The results showed that external coaching significantly effects psychological variables such as self-efficacy, goal setting, and intra-personal causal attributions of success and need satisfaction.

Other studies examined general coaching effects on managers and executives. Fischer and Beimers (2009) conducted a survey and semi-structured interview with nine executive directors and five coaches to evaluate a pilot six-month executive coaching program in the nonprofit sector. The executive directors reported personal growth, primarily by increased confidence, and skill development in regard to strategic thinking.

Smither, Londing, Flautt, Vargas, and Kucine (2003) conducted a study to examine the effects of executive coaching on multisource feedback over time. 1,361 participating senior managers received multisource feedback, and 40 of them worked with an executive coach to review their feedback and set goals. One year later, 1,202 of the participants received multisource feedback from another survey. The results showed that mangers who worked with an executive coach were more likely than other managers to set specific goals and to solicit ideas.

Gray, Ekinci, and Goregaokar’s (2011b) study with managers in small- and medium-sized enterprises showed that coaching is sometimes more effective at helping managers reflect on and deal with deep-seated organizational or personal problems than at exposing inadequate business skills. The managers in the study reported that their ability to manage self-cognition and self-emotion were improved as a result of coaching. However, the managers’ skills in working with people were not significantly impacted by coaching. The findings showed that managers in small- and medium-sized enterprises needed a sounding board and therapeutic intervention rather than primarily business-focused approach.

Coaches, Clients, and Stakeholders in Executive Coaching

A coach, a client, and a stakeholder are the three main parts that make up an executive coaching contract (Joo, 2005; Sherman & Freas, 2004). Also, these three parts are closely related and influence one another directly and indirectly. Orenstein (2002) suggested four foundational premises to guide organizational consultants or coaches before engaging in any intervention as described below. Understanding the four premises also seems to prevent an individual client and stakeholders from falling into possible pitfalls and to maximize the results of a coaching intervention.

1. The unconscious plays a major role in individual and group behavior.
2. Executive coaching is an intervention with a specific individual within a specific organization for the purpose of improving job-related performance; it therefore must consider the individual, the organization, and their interaction.
3. Organizations are composed of groups and groups are composed of individuals; therefore, individual behavior in organizations (a) is embedded in organizational, group, intergroup, and interpersonal behavior and (b) influences and is influenced by intrapsychic, interpersonal, group, intergroup, and organizational forces.
4. The consultant's most crucial tool in the executive coaching process is the use of self. (Orenstein, 2002, p. 360)

In this section, details about coaches (the provider side), the stakeholders, and clients (managers or leaders) will be discussed.

Coaches

As Orenstein (2002) pointed out above, a coach is the most crucial tool in executive coaching. However, "executive coaching is currently an unregulated field" (Feldman & Lankau, 2005, p. 832). People of all types of professional and academic backgrounds are working as coaches.

Demographics. Grant and Zackon (2004) conducted a large-scale survey with a total of 2,529 coaches in executive, workplace, and life coaching. All of the respondents were members of the International Coach Federation (ICF). 73.1 % of the survey respondents were female, and the most common age group was 45-54 years of age (41.8%). 55.3% of the coaches had a post-graduate degree, and 10.8% of them held a doctorate or professional degree.

The Sherpa 7th annual executive coaching survey in 2012 was conducted with 1,100 executive and business coaches. In this survey, participants were asked to identify themselves as either executive coaches, "who work on business behavior," or business coaches, "who help clients develop knowledge and skills" (p. 18). 55% of coaches were female in executive coaching, while 48 % of the coaches were female in business coaching. 44% of executive coaches were at least 56 years of age, while 55% of business coaches were in the same age group.

Background. The backgrounds of executive coaches are diverse. Based on Grant and Zackon's (2004) survey, most coaches, 99.9%, were from a prior professional background. The respondents indicated that they were engaged in other careers as "consultants (40.8%), executives (30.2%), managers (30.8%), teachers (15.7), and salespeople (13.8%)… social work (4.1%), psychology (4.8%) or counseling (12.7%)" (Grant & Zackon, 2004, p. 6).

Lijenstrand and Nebeker (2008) conducted a web-based survey through a number of international organizations, associations, and Internet list servers, with 2,231 coaches participating in the survey. Among participants, 551 coaches came from a business field; 235 from education; 208 from clinical psychology; 154 from industry and organizational psychology; and 1,083 from other backgrounds. In this survey, 19% of the coaches indicated that they had doctorate degrees. More than half of the coaches with clinical psychology backgrounds held doctorate degrees (Lijenstrand & Nebeker, 2008, p. 62)

Credential (Training). Grant and Zackon's (2004) survey of 2,529 coaches who are members of the International Coach Federation (ICF) showed that most of the coaches had been classroom trained and certified or they were in the process of acquiring certification. Sixty-two percent of the veteran coaches with more than ten years of experience were classroom trained and certified because, at the time they started their coaching careers, training and certification was not regarded as necessary. Only 17.7% of the respondents had no credentials and did not plan to obtain any. (Grant & Zackon, 2004, p. 21)

In a survey with 2,231 coaches, Lijenstrand and Nebeker (2008) reported on differences in coaches' views on certification of licensure. The authors found that, compared to coaches who had industry or clinical psychology backgrounds, coaches who came from business, education, and other fields seemed to consider certification or licensure as a more important means for controlling the quality of coaches. The authors interpreted that such a difference seemed to exist because "licensure or certification is more helpful to coaches who come from academic backgrounds [that are] not as easily linked to coaching skills" (Lijenstrand & Nebeker, 2008, p. 65)

Bono, Purvanova, Towler, and Peterson (2009) conducted a survey with 428 executive coaches from various disciplines and backgrounds to examine the current state of executive coaching. The study aimed to compare the practices of psychologist and non-psychologist coaches. From the results, the authors suggested integrative views on executive coaching as follows.

> …it may be time to move the debate about whether or not executive coaches should have psychological training to a debate about what we can expect coaches of differing backgrounds to do *best* and what type of training would help *all* coaches be more effective. (Bono et al., 2009, p. 386)

The above studies show the diverse opinions regarding coaches' backgrounds and training.

Competencies. Regardless of their backgrounds, coaches are expected to possess certain attributes and competencies to best help their clients. Much had been written about coaches' competencies. Griffiths and Campbell (2008) conducted a qualitative grounded theory study with coaches among members of the International Coach Federation (ICF), and found five core competencies: establishing trust and intimacy with the client; active listening; powerful questioning; designing actions; and managing progress and accountability (Griffiths & Campbell, 2008, p. 28).

In Da Haan, Culppin, and Curd's (2011) study, clients mentioned that their coaches' listening, understanding, and encouragement skills were most helpful. Morgan, Harkins, and Goldsmith (2005), after presenting lists of coaches' attributes, such as "put[ting] the coachee's need ahead of his or her own ego" and "listen[ing] with nuance and sensitivity" (p. 28), stressed that coaches can develop those skills and they are "always learning, growing, and developing key behaviors as they are required"(p. 29).

Newsom and Dent (2011) listed "(1) establishing trust, honesty, and respect, (2) using open-ended questions, and (3) clarifying and understanding client concerns and challenges" (p. 18) as the most frequent coaching behaviors. Popper and Lipshitz (1992) stated the qualities of good coaches as follows.

> Good coaches are characterized by great devotion to their profession. They radiate love for their profession, and have a strong wish to excel. While their attitude towards achievements is uncompromising, their basic approach is non-punitive. What stands out consistently in good coaches is a pattern of not taking the credit for success or blaming others for mistakes. They are deeply committed to their trainees and to development of each of them. (p. 17)

A coach's authenticity also is critical in the coaching relationship because, as Lee (2008) states, "[f]inding and maintaining a good bond calls for genuineness from the coach—for being who she or he is as a person" (p. 207). Most of all, it is fundamental to create rapport and good coaching relationships with their clients because among other things, the quality of the coaching relationships often determine the success of the intervention (De Haan, Bertie, Day, & Sills, 2010).

Peterson (2011) distinguished the qualities of a great coach from a good coach. Peterson stated that while "listening skills, empathy, and a genuine interest in the person" (p.83) can make a coach good enough for his or her job, what is required for a coach to be great are qualities such as "'really gets the person to reflect,' 'inspires people to want to change,' 'takes people to higher levels,' 'gets results,' and 'has a passion for helping others'" (p. 83). Peterson added that having "an understanding of how people learn and develop" (p. 84) is important for a coach to be effective.

About the coaching process, coaches are expected to ground their practice in a firm empirical and theoretical base, and have belief in the process (De Haan, 2008a; Lee, 2008). At the same time, coaches need to know intuitively when to strictly follow the process and when to be flexible (Coultas, Bedwell, Burke, & Salas, 2011; Wycherley & Cox, 2008). Sensitivity to the organizational culture is required for coaches to maximize the coaching results (Glunk & Follini, 2011)

Seen in the literature above, the competencies that an executive coach is expected to possess as an effective helper are not related to or "are [not] derived from particular educational or work-related experiences" (Newsom & Dent, 2011, 18). Also, it seems safe to say that an ability to balance the above challenges determines the degree of skillfulness of executive coaches.

Internal and External Coaches

While many external coaches are not employed in specific organizations, some organizations "set up internal coaching roles or formalize the coaching expectations for their HR and leadership development professionals" (Peterson, 2009, 117). Pros and cons exist in both types of coaching (Washylyshyn, 2003). Internal coaches can help employees efficiently because they are easily accessible and have knowledge of the company and its culture. Effectiveness in observing changes in action and low cost are other benefits of having internal coaches (Underhill, McAnally, & Koriath, 2007).

On the other hand, although costly, external coaches can benefit employees as they are trained to offer objective feedback in a professional way, free from conflicting interests. A higher level of confidentiality is another advantage that external coaches can offer. Organizations can broaden the variety of coaching skills by hiring external coaches, who have coached in various other organizations (Underhill, McAnally, & Koriath, 2007).

Clients

Increased demands of coaching service reflect employees' changed perception on executive coaching. The stigma of receiving coaching and the perception that coaches are hired to help struggling employees have been changed over the past years (Lijenstrand & Nebeker, 2008). In fact, executive coaching is often reserved for "top performers whose leadership and growth potentials are highly valued by the organization" (Morgan, Harkins, & Goldsmith, 2005, p. 25). More recently, literature about developing authentic leaders, who are true to themselves and self-aware, has gained attention among scholars and practitioners (Fusco, Palmer, & O'Riordan, 2011; Susing, Green, & Grant, 2011).

According to Feldman and Lankau (2002), clients who tend to seek executive coaching are as follows:

(1) executives who have performed highly in the past but whose behaviors are interfering with, or not sufficient for, current job requirements;

(2) managers who have been targeted for advancement to the executive level but are missing some specific skills;

(3) entrepreneurs turning to executive coaches for advice on how to lead and how to handle rapid growth in their businesses (p. 834)

In a time of a massive re-allocation of resources and a climate of fear and uncertainty, coaching is often limited to “top-line executives and senior managers” (The Sherpa, 2012, p. 6), and they receive coaching “twice as much as middle leadership” (Morgan, Harkins, & Goldsmith, 2005, p. 260). Morgan et al. (2005) reported that the group receiving the least amount of coaching in an organization was middle management (31%) when compared to other groups such as entry-level management (53%), senior managers (52%), and executives (64%) (p. 260).

Coaching effects differ from client to client. Da Haan et al. (2011) reported that clients’ learning styles may impact the perception of their helpfulness on the part of clients. The authors state that “clients who have a more ‘abstract’ (theoretical) learning style perceive and value supportive coaching more, whilst clients with a more ‘activist’ learning style perceive and value directive coaching more” (Da Haan et al., 2011, p. 40). Clients, who have learning goal orientations (Scriffignano, 2011) and who are highly motivated (Washylyshyn, 2003), tend to place greater value on executive coaching. Also, clients’ commitment increases when a topic in a coaching session is closely related to their real life problems (Grant, 2007).

Although coaching is considered as a powerful intervention to help managers and employees, coaching is not effective with all clients. Redshaw (2000) states, “Generally, the more an individual (let us call him/her 'the learner') is involved in identifying problems, in working out and applying solutions for him/her and in reviewing the results, the more complete and the more long-lasting the learning is" (p. 106). Hudson (1999) stated the characteristics of clients who seem to benefit the most from coaching, for example those who are "willing to think beyond their own assumptions, mind-sets, and preferences" or who are "capable of disciplined and responsible planning steps" (p. 25). Goldsmith (1996) said that coaching might be a waste of time for a client who is "not willing to make a sincere effort to change," who has been "written off by the company," or who "lacks the intelligence or functional skills to do the job" (p. 13).

Peterson (2011), however, claimed that clients who are described as hard to coach are "often the very people most in need of professional coaching" (p. 84), and clients who are highly motivated, insightful, and committed to their development may not need a coach. Ellam-Dyson and Palmer (2011) also stated that, "the people that were likely to need the coaching to help them build the confidence to cope with their transition and the demands of a new role were those avoiding it" (p. 114). The authors noted that clients who lack unconditional self-acceptance and self-confidence might avoid being involved in coaching interventions. Also, a stigma attached to seeing a coach still exists and some leaders are reluctant to receive coaching (Ellam-Dyson & Palmer, 2011).

Stakeholders

Stakeholders in executive coaching are leaders and HR professionals who decide to implement a coaching intervention in their organizations, hire coaches, take care of the expenses, and evaluate the results. Although executive coaching has been widely used in many organizations, stakeholders are facing several challenges because "there is still a need for organization sponsors (boss and HR professional), as well as coaches, to be explicit about *what* it is, *why* it will bring value to the executive, and *how* it works [emphasis in original]" (Wasylyshyn, 2003, p. 95).

Moreover, the effects of coaching intervention differ according to the organization in which it is implemented (Peterson & Kraiger, 2003), and it is hard to measure the results of coaching in common business terms, for example, return on investment (ROI) (Grant et al., 2010; Sherman& Freas, 2004). McDermott, Levenson, and Newton (2007) conducted a survey to measure the organizational impact of coaching, and the authors stated that although "the survey results provide some evidence of the effectiveness of coaching, they also reveal that most companies lack a disciplined approach to managing the coaching process and measuring outcomes" (McDermott et al., 2007, p. 35). Peterson and Kraiger (2003) stress that stake holders need to consider three things: "the potential business impact," "effectiveness," and "efficiency" (p. 268) when they implement coaching interventions. The authors claim that

> The real question is not what is the ROI of coaching, but what solution is sufficiently effective at the lowest cost to accomplish the objective, whether that is coaching, a book, or a Web-based program. Too many conversations start from the wrong direction, with questions such as these: How do we justify the amount of money we are spending on coaching? Are we getting out money's worth? Searching for ROI is often an attempt to justify a decision that's already been made. Advocates of particular solutions, such as coaching, lose credibility with line executives when they cannot provide the necessary evidence of the program's

> value. In contrast, credibility comes from starting with the needs of the business and finding useful solutions. (Peterson & Kraiger, 2003, p. 269)

According to Morgan et al. (2005), “accomplishing agree-to-changes and objectives, and the satisfaction of coaches” (p.261) are currently the most important measurements. The authors added that producing observable results seems to be agreed upon by most of the stakeholders.

Coach selection, to find an executive coach who matches well with a coachee, is a much discussed topic among stakeholders (Gray et al., 2011; Peterson, 2009). Various factors can be considered in selecting coaches, such as gender, personality, and experience. The best coach may be the one “who has unique skills that fit the specific needs of the coaching client” (Morgan et al., 2005, p. 4), and who can coach any client (Wycherley & Cox, 2008). However, the more important factor in the relationship is a strong working alliance between a coach and a coachee throughout the coaching process (Baron, Morin, & Morin, 2011). Most of all, stakeholders’ efforts to create a coaching culture (Walker-Fraser, 2011) and to provide strong organizational support (Leonard-Cross, 2010; McGovern et al. 2001; Peterson, 2009; Tansky & Cohen, 2001) are critical for employees’ commitment to personal and organizational development through coaching interventions.

Similar Concepts to Coaching

Coaching can be classified as a developmental or helping relationship between a coach and a client. The purpose of having a developmental relationship is to enhance personal and professional development ((D’abate, et al., 2003, Higgins, Dobrow, &

Roloff, 2010). Helping relationships, according to Hill (2009), can be defined as “one person assisting another in exploring feelings, gaining insight, and making changes in his or her life” (p. 4). In a helping relationship, it is the client, not the helper, who decides what, when, and how he or she wants to change, and the helper works together with the client to achieve these outcomes.

Coaching, consulting, counseling, facilitating, and mentoring are examples of helping relationships. Although those concepts have their unique features and need to be implemented in the most effective context, much conceptual confusion exists in distinguishing these interventions (D’abate, et al., 2003). In this section, I discuss similarities and differences between coaching and two other helping interventions: mentoring and counseling.

Mentoring. Mentoring is “an intense, one-on-one relationship in which an experienced, senior person (i.e., a mentor) provides assistance to a less experienced, more junior colleague (i.e., a protégé or mentee) in order to enhance the latter’s professional and personal development” (Hezlett & Gibson, 2005, p. 446). Daloz (2011) said that,

> Mentoring is ultimately about cultivating a fruitful relationship, one that includes actions as well as words. This may begin between mentor and student, but must expand to include books and media, other students and authorities, and praxis with the world at large. (p. 78)

Kram (1983) states that “the mentor provides a variety of functions that support, guide, and counsel the young adult” (Kram, 1983, p. 608) about how to deal with work-related challenges. Coaching and mentoring are occasionally used interchangeably because of the dyadic relationship between senior and junior employees. Although similar, there are several differences between coaching and mentoring. For example, mentoring frequently lasts longer than coaching and often starts voluntarily. Mentoring deals with general objects and a mentor provides guidance by "modeling, counseling, supporting, advocating, introducing, and sheltering" (D'abate, Eddy, & Tannebaum, 2003, p. 376), while a coach focuses more on "goal setting, providing practical application, providing feedback, and teaching" (p. 376).

Regardless of the benefits, there are potential risks and dysfunctional aspects of mentoring as well. Mismatches, mentors' manipulative behaviors, lack of expertise, lack of commitment, distrust, and imposing hierarchy and power can all result in stressful, negative mentoring relationships (Eby, Butts, Lockwood, & Simon, 2004; Hansman, 2002; McCauley & Young, 1993; Simon & Eby, 2003). Higgins and Kram (2001) propose a "developmental network perspective" (p. 268) in order to deal with these potential problems. The authors, in addition to traditional mentoring, emphasized the importance of multilevel, mutual, relationships both and in and out the organization. This active networking and mentoring gives people different perspectives in which to better navigate their workplace and lives.

Counseling/Therapy. Coaching is not counseling or therapy. However, debates on the difference between executive coaching and counseling, or on the role of psychology in executive coaching, have been much studied (Bono et al., 2009). Augustijnen, Schnitzer, and Esbroeck (2011) said that "therapy and executive coaching may have some features in common, but that there are also considerable differences. The existing therapeutic models can certainly serve as building blocks for the development of coaching models, but they cannot replace it" (p. 151). There seems to be a general agreement on this among scholars and practitioners (Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001).

The ongoing debate on coaching and counseling is mainly derived from the similarities between the two. Both coaching and counseling are developmental and helping relationships. For example, "both seek to bring about behavior change and both involve a relationship between a professional (e.g., therapist, coach) and a client (e.g., patient, executive)" (Smither, 2011, p. 135) and "place an emphasis or value on the relationship as an important vehicle from which change/learning occurs" (Davison & Gasiorowski, 2006, p. 192). Also, clients' commitments are critical in both coaching and counseling (Bachkirova, 2007).

Hill (2009) introduced a three-stage model for helping in counseling (Table 1).

Table 1. Goals and Skills for the Three Stages by Hill (2009, p. 39)

Stage	Goals	Associated Skills
Exploration	• Attend, observe, listen	• Nonverbal behaviors, minimal verbal behaviors
	• Explore thoughts	• Restatements, open questions for thoughts
	• Explore feelings	• Reflections of feelings, disclosures of feelings, open questions for feelings
Insight	• Foster awareness	• Challenge
	• Facilitate insight	• Open questions for insight, interpretation, disclosures of insight
	• Facilitate insight into relationships	• Immediacy
Action	• Facilitate action	• Open questions for action, giving information, process advisement, direct guidance, disclosure of strategies

The three-stage model is, according to Hill, "a framework for using helping skills to lead clients through the process of exploring concerns, coming to greater understanding of problems, and making changes in their lives" (p. 34). As can be seen from the goals and associated skills in the three-stage model, there is much overlap between coaching and counseling such as attending, listening, challenging, and questioning.

Bachkirova (2007), while acknowledging those similarities, stated the importance of clearly understanding the differences between the two interventions:

> However, a need for a clearer differentiation between therapy/counseling and coaching remains important, not for the marketing purposes of coaching programmes but for other reasons that include for example, increasing use of psychological models and tools in coaching interventions. This distinction is needed for quality assurance in the coaching process, clearer orientation in the education and training of coaches and, therefore, for the further development of coaching as a profession. (Bachkirova, 2007, p. 351-352)

Table 2 presents Bachkirova's comparison of coaching and counseling according to various features. As can be seen from the table, there is much overlap between the two interventions, for example, both counseling and coaching strive for the development and well being of an individual. Noticeable differences can include an initial motivation to engage in coaching or counseling and the context of interventions. The initial motivation of engaging in counseling is to eliminate psychological problems and dysfunctions, and the context of intervention is open to any area of a client's life. On the other hand, clients often look for coaching to enhance personal and professional performances and the context of intervention is limited by the contracted goals and a coach's area of expertise.

Table 2. Differences and similarities between coaching and counseling by Bachkirova (2007, p. 357) [Emphasis added on the similarities]

Aspects	Counseling/therapy	Coaching/mentoring
Ultimate purpose and benefit	*Development and well-being of individual*	*Development and well-being of individual* (If sponsored—also benefit for the sponsoring organization)
Initial motivation	Eliminating psychological problem and dysfunctions	Enhancing life improving performance
Context of interventions	Open to any and potentially to all areas of client's life	Specified by the contract according to the client's goals, the coach's area of expertise and the assignment of a sponsor if involved
Client's expectations for change	From high dissatisfaction to reasonable satisfaction	From relative satisfaction to much high satisfaction
Possible outcome	*Increased well-being*, unexpected positive changes in various areas of life	Attainment of goals, *increased well-being* and productivity
Theoretical foundation	*Psychology and philosophy*	May include *psychology*, education, sociology, *philosophy*, management, health and social care, etc.
Main professional skills	*Listen*, *questioning*, *feedback***,** use of tools and methods specific to particular approaches	*Listening*, *questioning*, *feedback*, explicit goal setting and action planning
Importance of relationship in the process	*High*	*High*
Importance of the client's commitment	*High*	*High*
Role of the practitioner's self in the process	*Very important*	*Very important*

As for the implications from comparing coaching and counseling, Bachkirova (2007) provided three suggestions:

1. Coaches need to engage only in contexts that match their expertise.

2. Coaches need to work within the area that is specified by a client (if the area needs to be extended a different contract needs to be negotiated).

3. The degree of expectation for successful change leads to the responsibility of the coach to align his/her ability and his/her assessment of client's readiness for coaching within the outcomes expected by the client. (p. 359)

It seems important for both coaches and counselors to understand their expertise and limitations and to clearly communicate this with their clients. Also, the coaching field, as it is still in its beginning stage, can be benefit from studying psychology and using the knowledge to deepen its theoretical and practical base. (Day et al., 2008; Maxwell, 2009; Price, 2009)

Summary

Part one began with a discussion of the literature on coaching in general, then moved to coaching in business settings. Organizational approaches to coaching, coaching as a HRD intervention, managerial coaching, and effect of coaching in the workplace were examined. Lastly, executive coaching was reviewed. The definition and purpose of executive coaching and the characteristics of coaches, clients, and stakeholders were addressed. Mentoring and counseling were also discussed as concepts similar to coaching.

Self-Efficacy

This part provides a review of the literature on self-efficacy. The first section describes general concept of perceived self-efficacy. The second section discusses employees' self-efficacy and its relation to work performance.

General Description of Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required producing given attainments" (Bandura, 1994, p. 3). The concept derived from social cognitive theory that explains human functioning as dynamic of "behavior, cognitive and other personal factors, and environmental events all operate as interacting determinants of each other" (Bandura, 1986, p. 18). Currently, the self-efficacy literature is divided on the constituents of self-efficacy. While some have argued for a construct of generalized self-efficacy (Chen, Gully, & Eden, 2001; Scholz, U., Dona, B. G., Sud, S., & Schwarzed, R., 2002), others argue that the construct is task-specific (Bandura, 1994). General self-efficacy (GSE) focuses on "a broad and stable sense of personal competence to deal effectively with a variety of stressful situations" (Scholz et al, 2002, p. 243), for example, when a person believes that she has a good socializing skill, she may feel confident that she can easily make friends in any social event. On the other hand, Bandura (2006) denied the existence of all-purpose measure of self-efficacy and stated that "the efficacy belief system is not a global trait but a differentiated set of self-beliefs linked to distinct realms of functioning" (p. 307). In this study, I adhere to Bandura's notion of task-specific self-efficacy, and I will describe it based on Bandura's study.

Self-efficacy is an important variable in explaining different performance outcomes among peoples who have the same skills, “based on their utilization, combination, and sequencing of these skills in an evolving context” (Gist & Mitchell, 1992, p. 185). Self-efficacy is changing constantly even during the performance. According to Bandura (1994), perceived self-efficacy is “concerned not with the number of skills” (p. 37) one has but with what one believes he/she can do with what he/she has in a variety of circumstances. Bandura (1986) stressed the “both skills and self-beliefs of efficacy to use them effectively” are required for a person to function competently (p. 391).

Four sources are related to self-efficacy: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and social influences, and physiological and affective states. Mastery experiences are the most effective way of creating a strong sense of efficacy. Successes, especially in overcoming difficulties through rigorous efforts, build a sense of efficacy, while failure experiences undermine it. Guided mastery, according to Bandura (1994), can be an effective method to instill a strong sense of efficacy in people suffering from intense apprehension and phobic self-protective reactions.

Vicarious experiences can be provided by social models. The more one feels empathy with the role model, the greater the impact from the experience. Therefore, when one watches the success of the other, to whom he/she feels similar, it is highly possible that his/her self-efficacy will increase. Social persuasion is a third way to strengthen one’s perceived self-efficacy. However, social persuasion needs to be employed with sensitivity because unrealistic encouragement will be counterproductive in increasing self-efficacy. Finally, one can feel his/her lack of self-efficacy and stress from visceral reactions, such as physical tensions and emotional arousals. Thus, conscious efforts to control somatic and emotional reactions help in increasing self-efficacy.

Self-Efficacy in the Workplace

A sense of self-efficacy is critical in the workplace because employees with high self-efficacy will perform competently under challenging situations. Also, perceived self-efficacy influences "individual choices, goals, emotional reactions, effort, coping, and persistence" (Gist & Mitchell, 1992, p. 186) and motivates a person to consistently pursue a goal. Self-efficacy cannot be measured by performance alone. Many factors are weighed and considered in judging one's level of capability, for example people's

> preconceptions of their capabilities, the perceived difficulty of the tasks, the amount of effort they expend, the amount of external aid they receive, the circumstances under which they perform, the temporal pattern of their successes and failures, and the way these enactive experiences. (Bandura, 1997, p.81)

Thus, perceived self-efficacy provides a more accurate assessment of people's ability than the outcomes of past performance alone. Also, rather than a realistic assessment about one's ability, a slightly inflated sense of self-efficacy is reported to be more helpful to achieving higher goals (Bandura, 1994; Smither & Reilly, 2001).

Self-efficacy is closely related to the field of organizational behavior and human resource management (Gibson, 2004) in particular areas such as employees' goal setting, feedback, expectancy theory, intrinsic interest, and reinforcement (Gist, 1987). Stajkovic and Luthans (1998) conducted a meta-analysis of 114 studies to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and work-related performance. The findings indicate that self-efficacy was positively and strongly related to work-related performance, but task complexity and locus of performance weakened the relationship between the employee's self-efficacy and work performance. The authors stated that managers should provide accurate descriptions and difficulty of the task, available supports, and clear standards to gauge the accomplishment in order for employees to put adequate effort into completion of their work.

Karatepe, Arasli, and Khan (2007) examined the effect of self-efficacy on job performance, job satisfaction, and affective organizational commitment in hospitality industry. The authors reported that self-efficacy was a significant determinant of job performance and the job performance mediated the impact of self-efficacy on job satisfaction. Also, the finding indicated that self-efficacy was one of the predictors of affective organizational commitment.

Toms (2007) conducted a qualitative study to examine how people develop and maintain self-efficacy within the context of their everyday work. For the study, the author interviewed 74 people from management consulting, a brand design agency, MBA job search, restaurant service, telemarketing, and financial trading. Toms explained the findings from a constructivist view and stated that people actively constructed their self-efficacy from positive and negative cues. They maintained their confidence by transposing negative cues into alternative ones. These sources were drawn from many contexts beyond the immediate work places.

Summary

Perceived self-efficacy, or peoples' beliefs about their capabilities to achieve a desired goal, has attracted much attention. Self-efficacy is not a static construct, and it changes constantly based on performance outcomes and other variables such as the perceived difficulty of tasks and the amount of effort they require. Mastery experience, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and social influences, and physiological and affective states are four main sources of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is studied in a work context because it is closely related to employees' work performance.

Chapter Summary

Executive coaching is well conceived as an effective intervention for executives and high-level managers for them to successfully navigate through uncertain and difficult business situations and enhance their sense of personal and professional well being. Coaching is a mutual practice, and thus a strong working alliance between a coach and a coachee is critical. A coach is a fundamental tool in the coaching session. He/she needs to be sensitive to context, culture of the organization, and the coachee's needs and situation. A coaching-friendly organizational culture and stakeholders' firm understanding of coaching intervention are also important elements to bring about the best result from the coaching. Only when the coaching culture is ingrained in employees' minds, when it becomes a daily and automatic process, when it is supported by organizational leaders, and when managers and practitioner are equipped with coaching skills can it be effective and worthwhile (Leonard-Cross, 2010; McGovern et al., 2001; Peterson, 2009; Tansky & Cohen, 2001; Walker-Fraser, 2011). Self-efficacy, or beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce desired attainments, is also closely related to executive coaching. One of the important goals of executive coaching is to foster clients' self-efficacy in their work performance. Also, coaches' self-efficacy can be a critical competency in order for coaches to successfully help their clients achieve goals and enjoy personal and professional well being.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative study of novice executive coaches was to explore incidents that positively or negatively affect coaches' perceived self-efficacy about their coaching skills. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What incidents influence the self-efficacy of novice executive coaches?
2. What were important lessons that novice executive coaches learned from those incidents?

The sections in this chapter discuss the following aspects used in the methodology of the study: design of this study, sample selection, data collection and data analysis, trustworthiness of the study, researcher subjectivity statement, and a summary.

Design of the Study

The study used qualitative research design as a mode of inquiry to explore incidents which affect novice executive coaches' perceived self-efficacy about their coaching skills. Qualitative research is based on the epistemological stance that "reality is constructed by individuals in interaction with their social worlds" (Merriam & Simpson, 2000, p. 97). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) offer an inclusive definition of qualitative research as follows.

> Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of

> representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (Denzin, & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3)

Merriam (2002) explains four key characteristics that exist in any qualitative study, regardless of its type. First, qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people construct meanings about their world and experiences. From the constructivist's point of view, "each individual mentally constructs the world of experience through cognitive processes" (Young & Collin, 2004, p. 375). I wanted to know how novice executive coaches' cognitive, affective, and behavioral processes of making sense of their practices differed from and were similar to each other. I could capture an understanding of the experiences of the novice executive coaches by directly asking questions.

The second characteristic of a qualitative study, as stated by Merriam (2002), is the importance of a researcher's role as the primary instrument for collecting and analyzing data. As a human being, who inherits a historical and contextual background from the moment he/she comes into the world (Gadamer, 1975), it is inevitable for a researcher to have preconceptions that will influence his/her study to a certain degree. In qualitative study, a researcher's assumptions, previous knowledge, and positionality are regarded as resources to understand and interpret a phenomenon, instead of items that need to be suspended for the rigor of the study. As a researcher and also as a new executive coach myself, I used my previous knowledge and experience as useful resources for understanding the participants' accounts. At the same time, my assumptions and positionality were critically reflected and examined to formulate trustworthy results from the data.

The inductive process is the third characteristic of a qualitative study (Merriam, 2002). Instead of testing a hypothesis, a qualitative researcher gathers data, analyzes the raw data simultaneously as soon as he/she starts collecting them, and builds concepts based on the results from the whole process. In conducting this study about executive coaches, I did not have any pre-set theories that I wanted to test or results to compare. Instead, I kept myself open to any new ideas that, I believed, would help describe how new coaches developed high or low self-efficacy in their coaching practice.

The final characteristic of a qualitative study is that the product of the research is "richly descriptive" (Merriam, 2002, p. 5). Denzin (2004) paraphrases Geertz (1973) to explain the importance of interpretation by saying that "a good interpretation takes us into the center of the experiences being described" (Denzin, 2004, p. 449). A researcher presents his/her interpretation of the researched to readers through thick descriptions of his/her field notes, observations, interview data, and personal memos. In this study, the primary methodology to explore the coaches' experience was interviewing. I described the results by presenting interview transcripts, interpretations, and reflection memos that, I believe, were critical to understand the phenomenon.

Sample Selection

In a quantitative study, random sampling, which can represent a large and unbiased population, is highly emphasized. In contrast, it is typical that qualitative inquiry “focuses in depth on relatively small samples, even single cases (*N*=1), selected *purposefully*” (Patton, 2002, p. 230). As Patton (2002) explains, a purposeful sampling means using “information-rich cases…from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry” (p. 230). In this study, a purposeful sampling strategy was used for participant selection to maximize the effectiveness.

I chose to interview participants who were novice executive coaches, male or female, over the age of 25, and who had less than three years of experience. Executive coaches who had coached at least one client on their own (and not a practicum client) were welcome to participate in the study. Both internal and external coaches were included in the interviews.

Selection Method

After the committee and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the study, I began recruiting participants using several methods. First, I attended the Sherpa executive coaching conference held in Cincinnati from June 3rd to 5th, 2012. At the conference, I was able to interview two novice executive coaches who had about one year and two years of experience, respectively. My original purpose was to explore novice executive coaches’ process of developing practical knowledge and self-efficacy, especially during their first coaching practice after they became certified. After the two interviews, however, I became aware that I could not, and maybe would not, gain much understanding about practical knowledge yet from new coaches. It seemed too early for new coaches to develop practical knowledge or to describe such insight, if there were any, to me. Instead, I noticed that the two interview participants had no problem sharing their incidents when they felt the most and the least confident. In addition, when the participants talked about such incidents, they often mentioned cases derived from two or three clients whom they had coached so far.

Also, while talking with executive coaches who attended the conference, I realized that the years of coaching practice did not directly correspond to the number of clients. It varied from coach to coach, and this applied to novice executive coaches as well. For example, new internal coaches seemed to find clients relatively easily because their clients, when they were satisfied, seemed to recommend coaching to other coworkers. For external coaches and coaches who had other professions (i.e., coaching was not their primary job), recruiting their first coaching client seemed to take longer. If coaches' first coaching practice had to be ended before the contracted period for various reasons, they had to find another client and it took some time as well. In some cases, coaches could not meet with clients regularly, sometimes for months, due to clients' busy schedule. In sum, some new coaches, with only one year of experience, may have coached several clients already. Other coaches, with several years of experiences, may have coached only a couple of clients. One of my participants had coached ten clients within one year since she became certified, while the other had coached only one client. Thus, it seemed important for me to consider various factors that I had learned from the conference. I decided to focus solely on novice executive coaches' perceived self-efficacy, and to be more flexible about the criteria for participants and to include coaches who had up to three years of experiences in the study.

Second, I sent emails to some executive coaches I knew who went through the Sherpa coaching certificate program held at the University of Georgia in Fall, 2011 (October-November) together. Because of these contacts I found three participants. Third, I sent emails to some executive coaches whom I met at the conference. In those emails, I explained the purpose of my study and the criteria for the potential interview participants. Then, I asked them whether they knew of some novice executive coaches who might wish to participate, using “snowball” sampling (Patton, 2002). Snowball sampling is commonly used methods when studying “hidden or hard to reach participants” (Lichtman, 2010, p.142). I obtained four participants using this method.

In total, nine interviewees were recruited. Among them, seven coaches were certified from the same coaching institute and two coaches were certified from two different institutes. Most of the participants had less than two years of experience, except one participant who had around five years of experience and who had coached over fifty clients. Although I initially thought her case was not appropriate for the study, I decided to interview her to see whether her case was unique or not compared to other participants. I could not find any difference between her and other participants in terms of years of coaching experience based on interview results, so I decided to include her case to the study.

One thing I kept in mind throughout the interview was the confidentiality of the interview participants and the cases they shared with me. I was very conscious of this need to protect their identities for two reasons. First, some of the participants were working at the same company. Thus, it was possible that the participants' clients could be their colleagues, and it was also possible that the participants were not comfortable sharing cases in which they lacked confidence.

Second, as I continued the interviews, I realized that it was inevitable for the participants to talk about cases with specific clients in detail when there were critical moments related to those clients. Often I felt that the participants tried not to show any hint of a client's identity. For example, the participants sometimes used *he* or *she* interchangeably while discussing the same client. I also sensed that some clients' problems were too sensitive and unique for the participants to talk about comfortably in full detail in the interview. I respected the coaches' professional work ethic and the participants' potential uneasiness when they talked about their clients. Thus, I focused more on the participants' thoughts, emotions, and learning from the incidents, not on the details of the case itself.

I conducted face-to-face interviews with the first two participants whom I met at the conference. I interviewed the other seven participants on their own time by telephone. I recorded the interviews using my mp3 player and a microphone. Among the nine participants in this study, the age of the youngest person was 32 and the oldest was 58. There were eight females and one male participant. Eight were from the Eastern part of the United States, and one participant was from Canada. Four had fewer than five years of service; one, more than ten years before. Additionally, the other four participants did not identify their years of service. Two had already obtained doctoral degrees, five had obtained masters' degrees, and two had obtained bachelor degrees. All participants were certified executive coaches. Seven were certified by the same institute, and the other two were certified by CIT (Co-Active) and an ICF accredited institute, respectively. One participant was trained for PDI (360 feedback). Seven participants had coached fewer than five clients at that time, one participant had coached ten clients, and one had coached over fifty clients. Below (Table 3) is a demographic chart of the participants.

Table 3. Participant Demographic

Category	Details	No. of Participants (N=9)	Percentage (100%)
Age			
	25-34	2	22.2
	35-44	5	55.6
	45-54	0	0
	55-64	2	22.2
Gender			
	Female	8	88.9
	Male	1	11.1
Education			
	BA	2	22.2
	MS	5	55.6
	PhD	2	22.2
Years of Service			
	0-5 years	4	44.45
	6-10 years	0	0
	10 + years	1	11.1
	N/A	4	44.45
Prior Training or Certifications			
	Sherpa	6	66.7
	PDI (360 feedback)+ Sherpa	1	11.1
	CTI (Co-Active)	1	11.1
	ICF Accredited Institute	1	11.1
Number of Clients			
	1-2	2	22.2
	3-5	5	55.6
	6-10	1	11.1
	11+	1	11.1

Data Collection

I used interviewing as the main method for collecting data. Interviewing is often a primary method in a qualitative design study, and “the basic unit of interaction is the question-answer sequence” (Roulston, 2010, p. 10). As for the process, semi-structured interviews, lasting between 30 and 60 minutes per participant, were conducted face-to-face or by telephone. Before starting each interview, I informed the participants of the contents of the consent form (Appendix A) and explained interview process (Appendix B). The interview was audio-recorded with the participants’ approval in a highly confidential manner.

Semi-Structured Interviewing using the Critical Incident Method

The in-depth interview method used in this study combined the critical incident method (Flanagan 1954) with a semi-structured, open-ended qualitative interview approach. The aim for this approach was to go beyond straightforward and specific critical incidents and gain a more thorough understanding of novice executive coaches’ experiences which affect their perceived self-efficacy. Critical incidents are brief descriptions by research participants of significant events in their lives. According to Flanagan (1952), to be critical, “an incident must be performed in a situation where the purpose or intent of the act seems fairly clear to the observer and its consequences are sufficiently definite so that there is little doubt concerning its effects” (p. 61). However, critical incidents do not always have to be dramatic events in a person’s life. Rather, as Tripp (1993) explains, they are part of people’s routines.

> These incidents appear to be “typical” rather than “critical” at first sight, but are rendered critical through analysis […] It was an incident which passed entirely unnoticed when it occurred, but which was made into a critical incident by what was subsequently seen in and written about it. (Tripp, 1993, p. 24-25)

Critical incident technique was initially formulated by Flanagan (1954) and applied to the study of occupational psychology. The first use was in aviation. Flanagan conducted a large-scale study of disorientation while flying using critical incident technique and drew a conclusion that consisted of “a set of descriptive categories—‘critical requirements’—of effective combat leadership” (Chell, 1998, p. 53). Since then, critical incident technique has been used to study human behaviors in many disciplines, such as education (Lister & Crisp, 2007; Tripp, 1993), the service industry (Gremler, 2004), healthcare (Mallak, Lyth, Olson, Ulshafer, & Sardone, 2003), and entrepreneurship (Chell & Pittaway, 1998).

As mentioned earlier, a semi-structured, open-ended qualitative interview, combined with the critical incident method (Flanagan 1954), was used as a method to gather data in this study. The intended benefit of this approach was to obtain “richly detailed accounts of specific events and then move to collaborative, inductive analysis of general elements embedded in these particular descriptions” (Brookfield, 1990, 181). Brookfield (1990) stated that asking generalized questions can confuse or intimidate participants. Similarly, to ask novice executive coaches generalized questions about their perceived self-efficacy or level of confidence in their coaching skills did not seem to be the proper approach to extract rich data, especially when the incidents were related to low self-efficacy. Thus, I decided that the best approach might be to invite interviewees to talk freely about specific events that they had felt the most or the least confident about and to ask further questions.

To obtain fruitful results from interviews using the critical incident technique, a researcher is required to be mindful of several points: the researcher needs to skillfully manage interviews without losing the focus; he/she needs to actively ask questions when further descriptions are needed; he/she needs to establish a firm rapport with interviewees to draw out rich information; and finally, the researcher needs to make sure all the critical incidents have been captured (Chell, 1998). I followed an interview guide—a semi-structured, open-ended qualitative interview, combined with the critical incident method—(Appendix C) to start the questions. Instead of using a predetermined formula of precise questions posed in a particular order, once an interview started, I followed the interviewee’s thought process and tried to remain flexible and open in guiding her or him without losing the purpose of the study.

I conducted the first two face-to-face interviews at the Sherpa executive coaching conference. Each lasted around 60 minutes. The other seven interviews were all conducted by telephone considering the locations and work hours of the interview participants. I exchanged emails with each participant to set a date for a phone interview and called on the day that they were available. All interviews followed the same format. I explained the topic and the purpose of my study, and then I pointed out the information on confidentiality and explained their rights as participants. I began the interview by asking each participant to call to mind incidents in which she or he felt the most or the least confident when coaching clients. All the interviews were recorded on an mp3 player. After each interview, I asked the participants if it was all right to email them if I needed clarification. All participants were willing to accept my request. I exchanged an email with one participant to ask a follow-up question.

Data Analysis

To analyze the interview data, I used the constant comparative method (Glaser, 1965). The constant comparative method was originally developed as a part of Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory methods are “a logically consistent set of data collection and analytic procedures aimed to develop theory” (Charmaz, 2004, p. 496) and a researcher “start[s] with individual cases, incidents, or experiences and develops progressively more abstract conceptual categories to synthesize, to explain, and to understand [the] data and to identify patterned relationships within it” (Charmaz, 2004, p. 497). The constant comparative method is a central feature of grounded theory, and it offers systematic guidelines to qualitative researchers who have often been criticized as lacking scientific rigor and objectivity (Patton, 2002). Thus, the constant comparative method is now applied widely as the main tool to analyze qualitative data whether a researcher uses grounded theory as a methodology or not. This was an exploratory study and thus, developing theory based on the interview data was not my primary intention. For this reason, I found that the constant comparative method fit well with this study.

Before analyzing the data, I transcribed it verbatim as soon as possible after each interview was completed and before starting the next one. Recording allowed for listening to the conversation several times, which helped me to pay attention to details that I may have ignored initially. While transcribing, I modified the questions slightly when the participants seemed not to understand the question clearly or when I thought I failed to generate meaningful answers. My aim was to better guide future participants. During the actual interview, I solely focused on listening to the participant's stories and, thus, I was not able to jot down any notes. Instead, I jotted brief memos right after the interview or while I was transcribing. Memo-writing is critical in constant comparative methods and enables a researcher "to elaborate processes, assumptions, and actions that are subsumed under [the] coding" (Charmaz, 2004, p. 511). I did not edit my writing and just focused on getting my thoughts and emotions down on the paper without losing them during the process of editing. As I continued to write each memo, I gradually revised my ideas and reactions toward the raw data of the research and developed them into coherent concepts.

When analyzing the data, I followed four stages to carry out the constant comparative method as suggested by Glaser (1965). They are (1) comparing incidents applicable to each category; (2) integrating categories and their properties; (3) delimiting the theory; and (4) writing the theory (p. 439). In the first stage, I began the analysis by comparing incidents and generated tentative categories to cover the incidents. This process was conducted with the help of multiple readings of the data and memo writing containing reflections on each category. Often, the same incident was coded into multiple tentative categories. For example, "preparing questions" was included into two categories, "preparing sessions," and "questioning." Then, I compared each incident with the previous incidents that I coded in the same category. This process was repeated and thus, all the coding and categories were constantly compared and re-defined when necessary as interview data was accumulated.

In the second stage, similar categories were clustered and organized into a bigger theme to integrate categories and their properties. For example, “asking more questions” and “clients’ readiness” were integrated into one category, “asking more questions until clients were ready,” and placed under the broader code, “questioning.” This process of comparing codes with other codes was repeated constantly until I was able to naturally move to the third stage, which was delimitation of the theory. As a researcher, my job was not merely to present these results. Thus, I looked for inter-relations between categories and sought holistic understanding of the transcription by re-reading it several times. From the analysis, I identified several themes for two research questions. These findings are presented in detail in the following chapter using quotes from the interviews.

Trustworthiness

Validity and reliability, which ensure the trustworthiness of a study, are important considerations in any scholarly work (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Trustworthiness in a study is the way that a researcher can “persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth talking account of” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In qualitative research, however, the meanings of validity and reliability need to be understood slightly different than in quantitative research due to epistemological differences. Four ways through which trustworthiness of the study can be sought are Internal Validity (Credibility), External Validity (Transferability), Reliability (Consistency or Dependability), and Objectivity (Confirmability).

Internal Validity (Credibility)

A researcher needs to ask a question, "How congruent are one's findings with reality" (Merriam & Simpson, 2000), to ensure internal validity. In qualitative study, credibility can be used as a term that corresponds to internal validity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A researcher's tasks include "carry[ing] out the inquiry in such a way that the probability that the findings will be found to be credible is enhanced and […] to demonstrate[ing] the credibility of the findings by having them approved by constructors of the multiple realities being studied" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 296).

A primary strategy that I, the researcher, used to ensure credibility was triangulation, which uses "multiple methods, data sources, and researchers to enhance the validity of research findings" (Mathison, 1988, p. 13). Lincoln and Guba (1985) stress the importance of triangulation as follows:

> As the study unfolds and particular pieces of information come to light, steps should be taken to validate each against at least one other source (for example, a second interview) and/or a second method (for example, an observation in addition to an interview). No single item of information (unless coming from an elite and unimpeachable source) should ever be given serious consideration unless it can be triangulated. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 283)

Triangulation of this study was done through comparing interview data from all participants with each other to produce valid results. Also, I sought to establish the credibility of the findings by using my reflection memos. The findings were presented to the methodologist along with the data to corroborate them. When presenting the findings, I used as many quotes as possible to ensure triangulation, and to minimize the researcher’s bias in conveying the participants’ narratives.

External Validity (Transferability)

External validity is related to generalization of a research result. However, generalization is often not the purpose of a qualitative study in the first place, and instead, a researcher can “only set out working hypotheses together with a description of the time and context in which they were found to hold” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316). Thick description is the most often used strategy to facilitate transferability. Thus, I truthfully described the data presented by participants along with my interpretations and assumptions, to provide readers the widest possible range of information so that they can decide the transferability of the study to their own contexts. Also, I have accurately described the whole research process, from sample selection to data analysis, to allow readers to trace the steps I took in conducting the study.

Reliability (Consistency or Dependability)

Reliability is a criterion that concerns the possibility of replication of the study. In social science, however, replication cannot be obtained because “human behavior is never static” (Merriam & Simpson, 2000, p. 102). Instead, a researcher can demonstrate consistency or dependability by showing “whether the results are consistent with the data collected” (Merriam & Simpson, 2000, p. 102). To record traces of my study and my thought processes throughout the research process, I wrote a reflexive journal, which was a useful strategy to ensure both validity and reliability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Objectivity (Confirmability)

In qualitative research, where subjectivity and interpretations are assumed to be a natural part of the study, claiming complete objectivity is often problematic. However, it is a researcher's responsibility to make his/her whole research process transparent to readers. As Patton (2002) states, although the "absolute objectivity of the pure positivist variety is impossible to attain" (p. 93), a researcher in naturalistic inquiry and qualitative analysis needs "to convey a sense that [he/she is] dedicated to getting as close as possible to what is really going on in whatever setting [he/she is] studying" (p. 93). In this study, I used the audit trail to provide step-by-step evidence from gathering data to drawing conclusions. According to Lincoln & Guba (1985), the audit trail uses "methods analogous to those of the fiscal auditor, [and] the inquiry auditor carefully examines both the process and the product of the inquiry, in order to arrive at certain trustworthiness judgments and provide certain attestations" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 283). The possible categories of an audit trail are raw data, product of data reduction and analysis, data reconstruction and synthesis products, process notes, materials related to intentions, and information about instrument development (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 319-320). Based on the audit trail, audio recording, interview transcriptions, memos, methodological notes, working hypotheses, findings and conclusions, and a final report will be checked by the auditors.

Researcher Subjectivity Statement

In this section, I describe my position as a researcher. I am a recently certified executive coach. I received my master's degree in counseling psychology in Korea, but what I have always been interested in is helping employees. From over ten years of work experiences, I observed various types of managers. Most of the time, they were promoted to a manager's position not because of their leadership and managerial skills, but because of their work-knowledge and job experience. Some managers were good at interpersonal skills and showed leadership. For them, not much time was needed to become effective managers. However, some managers, who did not fully acknowledge their role as leaders, inevitably disappointed and confused their employees. Informal gatherings among employees, thus, were often turned into a place to vent their frustration towards their managers. Unlike a common conception that customers might be the number one stressor to employees in the service industry, I think my colleagues and I were spending more time letting out our resentment towards the managers than customers. Those experiences strongly influenced my desire to become a workplace counselor and to help managers and employees to release their stress and to fully enjoy the work lives, which in turn will positively influence their personal lives and their professional lives.

Thus, I assume that executive coaching and manager development are critical to the success of any organization. When I first started the coaching certificate program, however, I was somewhat skeptical about how much a coaching relationship could possibly help employees, especially high ranking executives who seem to know what they are doing. After two months, it turned out that those worries were baseless. I fell in love with coaching and most of all, I could not believe how much I had changed over the period. Thus, I have assumptions that coaching is beneficial to people and, also, that coaches learn, change, develop, and become mature throughout the coaching process when they stay open and genuine in coaching relationships.

From my educational background in counseling psychology, I assume that any behavioral changes in human beings are results of complicated dynamics of the mind, emotions, motivations, values, contexts, and many other factors. I consulted with several counselors who had various psychological backgrounds to deepen my study in counseling. I gained much insight into myself from those experiences. However, when I was coming out of a counselor's office after a session, I could not help but thinking that no matter how skillful was the counselor, and no matter how significant was my insight, I still had a choice as to whether I changed my attitudes and behaviors or not. Thus, I assume that the cause and the solution to the most problems cannot be sufficiently explained by any one psychological, educational, or managerial orientation or theory, alone. For the same reason, I tend to distrust any counselor or coach who is too certain that he or she could change other people's behaviors quickly and easily on a deep level.

I am also assuming that for novice professionals, it is critical to experience some successes as well as opportunities to learn from mistakes without feeling failure. Two mock-counseling experiences, when I was a master's student, formed these ideas. The first incident happened at an early phase of the program. For a classroom project, I met with one client who was a coworker of my friend. I conducted a one-hour long counseling session with her, and I thought it went well. For many months at those times, I was engaged in group counseling as well as a personal therapy. Thus, although I did not have any real experience as a counselor, I was a well practiced client and I had been observing my therapists in a session. Thus, I was quite confident when I was talking with my project client. She quickly became very open and shared her problem with me. After the meeting, however, I never heard from her again. I reported the overall process and transcriptions to a professor. In the following class, the professor picked my case as something worth noticing, and she commented that "First of all, your client, actually, seems to need a real therapy right now…As for a student, you did a pretty good job most of the time and made a substantial progress even on the first meeting. However, you made a typical mistake as a novice therapist. That's why you lost your client and the relationship ended…" The professor's comment confused me. I did not know whether I should feel confident that I made some progress even as a novice, or whether I should stop mimicking my therapists and start facing the reality that I was such a novice that I did not even know what I did wrong.

The second incident happened in the last semester of the master's program. I attended the annual intensive summer training program held by Korean Counseling Psychological Association. One day at a camp, a group of students were practicing individual counseling with an experienced therapist. Twenty minutes were allotted to each student. It was my turn and I designated one student as my client. She started to talk about her story and when she paused, I realized that I was in trouble. She had a strong accent and spoke very fast in an unorganized manner. In other words, I did not understand what she had told me at all. I could sense that the observers were quietly waiting for my reaction. Then, I remembered one question that my therapist at that time often used. I calmly but honestly said, "Thanks. Frankly, however, I'm afraid I don't understand what you've said at all. Will you kindly say the whole story again?" At this comment, my client seemed to think about it a little bit and she started to tell her story again more clearly. Then, some episodes with her father and a brother caught my attention. When she finished I empathized especially about that aspects. From my response, the client suddenly burst into tears and I could feel the observers' eyes were focusing on my next sentence. Then, my mind went blank. I could not say anything for several minutes, and I finally gave up. When I looked at the therapist who was sitting behind me and observing me, she looked a little bit disappointed that I had given up. She told me that I actually was very good until I could not say a word. That day, I was the only person who could not even finish my share of twenty minutes.

The second failure was a big blow for me and made me to lose my confidence as a wannabe counselor. Until that point, I had been one of the most confident students in the department because of my enthusiasm and multiple counseling experiences. I enjoyed classes so much and I never became distracted during the class. On the other hand, I did not experience a feeling of success to evidence my enthusiasm and inflated confidence. Furthermore, after the two incidents, I was too disappointed to learn from mistakes and regain my shaken confidence. I guess such incidents will be rather common for novice counselors and coaches although not openly discussed. Thus, my assumption that novice counselors' and coaches' self-efficacy is critical, and that more attention needs to be paid to increase it, will strongly influence my study.

It is important to keep in mind that several factors influenced my relationship with the participants. First, I am an executive coach, and I am acquainted with a couple of participants in this study. Thus, I acknowledge that my previous notions about coaching practices and the participants played a huge role during the research process. However, as a qualitative researcher, who is the main tool during the research process (Merriam, 2002), I actively engaged with my preconceptions and prejudices to better understand the research participants' experiences instead of making efforts to stay objective. One benefit of my position was that I needed relatively a short period of time to build rapport with the participants.

Second, I acknowledge that some participants had previous notions about me because we were classmates. In the class, I was the only Asian woman, and a doctoral student. My positionality and cultural differences might play a role, consciously or subconsciously when the participants whom I was acquainted with talked with me during the interviews. My changed position from a classmate to a researcher or an interviewer might influence the participants' feelings or thoughts because their positions also changed from classmates to research participants. To make the participant feel comfortable and maximize the research results, I tried my best to conduct interviews in a relaxed atmosphere.

Other participants, also, might have preconceptions about me, an international doctoral student and a coach. After transcribing the interviews, I was grateful to learn that all participants were very helpful to pay attention to my questions so that they could provide me rich data. Also, I was concerned that my education as a PhD candidate would be a barrier to my participants, but I did not find this to be so. Seven participants out of nine in the study had master's or doctoral degrees, and thus they seemed to sound comfortable and understandable during the interviews. However, I still acknowledge that the language barrier and cultural differences were possible limitations to the study.

Finally, the study is limited because I was not able to collect data from a diverse sample in terms of location, gender, and theoretical and cultural background. However, the insights gained from this study have prompted recommendations for future research that consider various demographic samples.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the research methods I used to study new executives' self-efficacy. I outlined the design of the study, the sample selection, the data collection process through interviews, and the data analysis. The constant comparative method was used to analyze the data. Trustworthiness of the study was established. Finally, the researcher's subjectivity was described in detail.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this qualitative study of novice executive coaches was to explore incidents that positively or negatively affect coaches' perceived self-efficacy about their coaching skills. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What incidents influence the self-efficacy of novice executive coaches?

2. What were important lessons that novice executive coaches learned from those incidents?

This qualitative study used semi-structured, in-depth interviews to collect data. Nine purposefully selected novice executive coaches were interviewed using a list of open-ended questions about their coaching experiences. This section is divided into two parts to answer the research questions that guided the study. The first part describes themes regarding the first research question which is related to the novice executive coaches' perceived self-efficacy. The second part focuses on the coaches' learning from the experience. I present findings from the interview transcriptions with rich verbatim excerpts from the interviewees vividly. Table 4 provides a description of overall themes.

Table 4. Summary of Findings

Research Question 1: What incidents influence the self-efficacy of novice executive coaches?	
Themes	Categories
1. Provoking critical reflection through questions	▪ Preparing and posing open-ended, challenging, and timely questions ▪ Asking questions in a neutral and non-judgmental manner ▪ Facilitating depth of understanding
2. Managing a coaching session proficiently	▪ Preparing for the session in advance ▪ Practicing and mastering the process
3. Developing a good coaching relationship	▪ Establishing trust and rapport with clients
4. Facilitating personal transformation to develop new possibilities for action and learning	▪ Promoting action and accountability
5. Creating the foundations for business coaching	▪ Referring to other professionals when appropriate
Research Question 2: What were important lessons that novice executive coaches learned from those incidents?	
Themes	Categories
1. Experiential learning	▪ Practice as a way of learning to be a better coach ▪ Being mindful of asking good questions and observing clients' subtle cues during the session
2. Reflective practice	▪ Learning from evaluating sessions
3. Transformation of role-perception	▪ Contributing a coach's knowledge, experience, and expertise without giving advice or disclosing personal stories ▪ Acknowledging the uniqueness of each client

Novice Executive Coaches' Perceived Self-efficacy

The following section presents findings from the interviews based on the first research question: what incidents influence the self-efficacy of novice executive coaches? Five main themes related to novice executive coaches' perceived self-efficacy were interpreted from the data. These were (1) provoking critical reflection through questions, (2) managing a coaching session proficiently, (3) developing a good coaching relationship, (4) facilitating personal transformation to develop new possibilities for action and learning, and (5) creating the foundations for business coaching.

Eight subthemes were identified from the two main themes. They were (1) preparing and posing open-ended, challenging, and timely questions practice; (2) asking questions in a neutral and non-judgmental manner; (3) facilitating depth of understanding; (4) preparing for the session in advance; (5) practicing and mastering the process; (6) establishing trust and rapport with clients; (7) promoting action and accountability; and (8) referring to other professionals when appropriate.

Before looking into each theme, I need to point out that those themes were not mutually exclusive but rather closely related to one another. For example, not only was the ability to ask powerful questions good in itself but it also seemed to increase other aspects such as developing good coaching relationships or vice versa. Also, the ability to manage a coaching session helped the coaches relax, which in turn helped them ask more focused questions. With these in mind, the following are the findings of each theme. Table 5 provides an overview of the major themes and categories.

Table 5. Themes Regarding the Perceived Self-Efficacy

Themes	Categories
1. Provoking critical reflection through questions	▪ Preparing and posing open-ended, challenging, and timely questions ▪ Asking questions in a neutral and non-judgmental manner ▪ Facilitating depth of understanding
2. Managing a coaching session proficiently	▪ Preparing for the session in advance ▪ Practicing and mastering the process
3. Developing a good coaching relationship	▪ Establishing trust and rapport with clients
4. Facilitating personal transformation to develop new possibilities for action and learning	▪ Promoting action and accountability
5. Creating the foundations for business coaching	▪ Referring to other professionals when appropriate

Provoking Critical Reflection through Questions

Most of the coaches mentioned that they felt good about themselves as coaches when they could help clients gain insight and see their problems from different perspectives. Often these incidents were considered as meaningful accomplishments as a result of coaches' improved questioning and session management skills. The ability to ask powerful questions that help a client to develop new perspectives and new possibilities for action and learning was the most often mentioned theme from the interviews as a critical component for a successful coaching intervention. The coaches mentioned that they felt confident when they asked good questions and helped their clients think more deeply. The coaches also reported that they felt the least confident when they did not ask good questions or enough questions. Next, I will describe three sub-themes related to provoking critical reflection through questions: preparing and posing open-ended, timely, and challenging questions; asking questions in a neutral and nonjudgmental manner; and facilitating depth of understanding.

Preparing and posing open-ended, timely, and challenging questions. The coaches' self-efficacy increased when they asked good questions. Coaches used various adjectives, such as *powerful, targeted, timely, neutral, many,* and *open* to characterize good questions compared to ineffective questions. Megan, for example, said that she tried to ask many questions, and for her, that meant she was asking good questions. "I probably had felt the best about it when I was asking a lot of questions...when I was asking good questions."

However, there were subtle differences among those adjectives. Open-ended questions implied that the coaches could help clients to clarify issues and think more deeply. Grace expressed her excitement when her client complimented her for asking open questions:

> What I am most proud of is when a client says to me, "That's a really great question!" … I think I struggled in the class kind of working on the open-ended questions. So that gives me confidence when a client says, "That's a really good question." and I can tell they really have to think.

As seen from Grace's case, the coaches evaluated their questioning skills based on their former performance. Thus, subjective improvement was an important guideline for the coaches to feel confident.

Also, similar to Grace, none of the coaches mentioned that questioning skills were his or her natural strength or tendency. The coaches responded that they invested time and effort to prepare proper questions before they met with clients. Terry emphasized the importance of preparing good questions in advance, especially before the first meeting:

> When I felt the most confident is when I had the opportunity to be well prepared with good questions […] and that I was well prepared for whatever the situation was […] So that in the first meeting, I am well prepared with powerful questions.

In Megan's case, she used questioning as a reminder for her to stay on track during a session. She said, "I find that sometimes if I'm not thinking about asking a lot of questions, then I just get sort of off track, or I might talk too much when I know I'm not supposed to." Thus, in addition to preparing questions in advance, the coaches were mindful of asking more questions and staying focused during the session.

Asking timely questions was related to clients' readiness. The coaches acknowledged that they should not hurry and should wait to ask more questions until clients were emotionally and cognitively ready to be challenged and move further. However, such acknowledgement did not mean that all coaches asked good questions. Rather, for many coaches, this realization came from hindsight and the regret associated with not having asked ideal questions. Mary said that she needed to slow down and ask more questions:

> Sometimes, I feel I rush through the process, or I don't ask enough questions…'Cause it doesn't seem, sometimes, clients are comfortable enough, or they don't get to where I think they should be. […] I don't' think that I push in the right way […] I just really need to sit with the client and dig deeper. For me, that means I found that if I think I know the answer, then I need to ask another

> question to be sure. I really need to focus on the words that clients are saying and using those words back and then asking more questions.

As Mary stated, in order for the coaches to ask good questions, it seemed important for the coaches, first, to listen well to what clients were saying and to understand how the clients were feeling at that moment. Jenny struggled as well in asking timely questions. She explained,

> I learned from the conference that it's asking the right sequence of questions… sometimes it's a matter of the right question at the right time. I feel like I'm a little bit better at asking good questions. But still the right sequence of questions…so letting that rhythm kind of evolve…I may focus on the wrong piece of it. So it's pulling out the right piece.

Jenny's comments indicated that although a coach could prepare some questions in advance, it was timing that actually matters. In other words, a coach's questioning skills were determined by how and under what circumstances he or she could pose the most relevant questions. Interestingly, however, Jenny expressed her confidence in asking challenging questions and helping her client to think more deeply:

> And then the second meeting, I really challenged him on some of the answers he put because they were very general. So I made him be a little bit more specific and he said that he really never had that experience. You know he knew the rules of finding a goal—has to be measurable, attainable, and all that. But he really never had anyone to really dialogue with him about. And that was a turning point, I think.

Jenny’s comments seemed to show that the coaches’ questioning skills might be manifold and that each coach had his or her own strengths and weaknesses. Thus, Jenny felt highly confident when she could ask challenging questions, and she felt the least confident when she could not layer her questions at the most appropriate time.

Asking questions in a neutral and non-judgmental manner. The findings showed that attitudes about how the coaches ask questions were as important as the content of the questions. The coaches stated that they felt confident when they asked open and neutral questions so that they could be emotionally detached and sound non-judgmental to clients. Mary said,

> It really was me being detached from the situation at hand and not being emotionally involved, but really…very targetedly asking questions and helping the client come to a realization of what was going on.

Mary was able to ask neutral questions and maintain emotional control, which gave her confidence. Mien also tried to form her questions in a neutral way like Mary. Mien, however, expressed her frustration at being unable to challenge her client effectively:

> Sometimes, I try to bring the connection. I try to do it in a way that it is a question. Like they say something, and it sounds related to something they said last week, I’ll say something like, “Last week, you were talking about this. Is that related to the thing that you’re talking about right now?” So, I'm still trying to bring in the connection, but I'm trying to do it in a neutral way… so it's not like "I'm seeing this connection. Do you agree?" It's more like a "Hey, this reminds me of what we talked about last week. Let me know more about that" kind of a thing. […] Um...I

> think…after doing that a couple of times, I realized that just because I see the connection doesn't mean that's how they meant it. So that's not necessarily a connection. So I think I had better be legitimately asking it in a neutral way because I'm not convinced they know the answer.

As can be seen from Mien's case, the coaches seemed not to feel less confident simply because they failed to ask good quality questions or as many questions as they should. Rather, their confidence decreased when the coaches sensed that the clients were not responding to their questions in the way the coaches had expected in terms of the directions and pace. Mien's case showed that coaches have to ask neutral questions because neither a coach nor a client could be sure of whether they were interpreting the situations correctly or whether they were seeing the problems from the same perspectives. Asking neutral questions, thus, seemed critical for a coach to synchronize the process with a client toward the mutually decided goal.

Facilitating depth of understanding. Mary stated that the moment her clients gained insight was the most critical incident for her as a coach:

> Probably it is when people make a big connection, or they have a breakthrough, or an a-ha moment that things really fall into place for them. That makes me feel good as a coach, like I did a good job… when they finally connect the dots so that they see the whole picture.

Similarly, Beth said that she felt a little anxious before a session but her client's positive reactions made her feel good as a coach.

> If I was ever anxious before our meeting them, I always walked away as an extravert very excited about what happened and what they said and in the result of pushing them on exactly words they had, you know, on what they were saying. And that was real significant for me. […] They praised me…they gave me gifts, so to speak. I had lots of evidence that they told me… that they were having a good experience and it was worthwhile.

Denny also seemed to be excited when he said,

> I guess I felt most confident about the client when we narrowed down his why-it-matters, that it just seemed like we really were on to something…it seemed like something that was new to him. So it felt that we sort of uncovered something that was there for a long time. And I felt some type of…sort of enthusiasm from him because it wasn't something actually he put a label on before…and it was quite clear, at that point, how that impacted or influenced the way he interacted…a lot of his work interactions[…] I just felt reassured…I felt excited.

Denny use the word *we* instead of *the client* when he described an incident in which "…we sort of uncovered something…." As could be inferred from his case, clients' insights seemed to be attributed to mutual effort between a coach and a client, even though insights cannot be forced.

Managing a coaching session proficiently

The coaches' sense of self-efficacy was closely related to their session management skills. Coaching is a time-limited intervention and a coach's effectiveness in managing his or her coaching session is crucial. The interview findings reaffirmed this aspect. The coaches mentioned that they felt confident when they prepared and carefully monitored their sessions so as not to become too distracted and to achieve the desired results within the contracted time. Also, the coaches' self-efficacy boosted as they gained more experience because they became used to routines and could perform repeated procedures with little effort. Next, I will describe two sub-themes related to session management: preparing for the session in advance; and practicing and mastering the process.

Preparing for the session in advance. The coaches in the study stressed that they felt confident when they carefully prepared the session before meeting a client. During the actual coaching session, the coaches said that they tried to keep long- and short-term goals in mind to stay on track. Beth's case was a good example of how the coaches' initial nervousness turned into confidence as they planned the session and controlled the session. Beth said,

> I found that I had methods of process...that I went through before meeting them and all…and naturally the first couple of hours, I was kind of nervous or anxious about it beforehand. But, once I was in that with them, and I was engaged with them, I didn't lose confidence. […] A couple of things I did were key for me in terms of thinking ahead… preparing…I really was thinking about the long-term process that I wanted to take them through. I did thinking in advance what things would be the kind of top two or three things that I need to do in the session. And having them in the back of my mind helped guide the hour…as well as not getting too far off track or whatever.

On the other hand, the coaches' confidence decreased when they were not prepared for the session. When asked when she had felt the least confident, Megan said that "probably, there have been a couple of times I didn't think that I prepared enough for the session."

Although planning and focusing on goals were helpful for the novice coaches, rigidly adhering to the plan without flexibility seemed to counteract and decrease the coaches' confidence as Jenny stated as follows:

> I felt like this…"meeting one has to do this, meeting two has to do this, meeting three has to do this..." And I wasn't being flexible. And if things didn't go exactly right, and you're off like a week or two, I would be really hard on myself "I did it wrong." […] You know as a coach, I have to realize that I'm dealing with people and flexibility has to be built into the process.

These findings revealed that the ability to intuitively balance between planning and improvising seemed to be an important competency that novice coaches should acquire to become better coaches.

Practicing and mastering the process. As the coaches gained more experience, they practiced routines, and their performance was enhanced, which in turn gave the coaches much confidence. Sienna seemed very confident when she told me her case:

> I've got three on the go. I'm at the same stage with all of them. So I'm going to refer with all of them. My other client…I found… I'm much more confident with her because I do the coaching on the same day even. So, by the time I do the third client, I already have practiced. Because they are all the same week. […] I'm way

> more comfortable and confident when I coach. Then, I will be with client number one.

Mien’s case is similar to Sienna’s:

> I feel most confident filling the kind of first phase of it. […] I think maybe, in part, because I found that that part is more comfortable than the other part. I'm with my third client, now. And I think, in part, because it's related to the rest of the stuff I do in my work, so it's not so brand new to me.

As Sienna and Mien mentioned, once they mastered the routinized process, they did not have to be conscious of the process or their skills anymore. Instead, the coaches could be more attentive to clients and become better listeners, which in turn could help them ask good questions.

On the other hand, the coaches’ lack of skillfulness in session management and familiarity with the material hindered them from focusing on the clients. Mary said that she felt less confident when she doubted her ability to manage the session and the materials:

> …familiarity with the material and confidence in myself that I can actually do this. […] I just need to get to the point where I could just let it go and be confident enough that I know the material and not focus on the material but focus on the client.

However, Mary added that she would like to practice more and to improve her coaching skills:

> I do want to take on another client. I would definitely like to continue. I really like helping people become better leaders and become more confident in their communication. I think for now I just need to have a few more clients so that I know what my own strengths are or what my own limitations are, so how I should proceed with learning more.

As she mentioned, it seemed clear that the novice coaches' confidence in the materials and process could be increased as they become more exposed to multiple coaching practices.

Developing a good coaching relationship

The findings revealed the importance of a good coaching relationship related to coaches' self-efficacy. Coaching is an intervention between two individuals, and a coach often needs to challenge a client to come out of his or her comfort zone. The coaches said that they felt confident when they could establish trust and rapport, while the coaches who experienced breached trust with their clients said their confidence was diminished.

Establishing trust and rapport. Jenny's case was an example of a good relationship between a coach and a client that directly increased the coaches' confidence. She built a trusting relationship with her client from the beginning of the coaching contract:

> After the first two meetings, the client, I felt like he was really looking to me like I was the expert. And I think that's what gave me some confidence. He loved our first session and that we had ground rules and everything is going to be confidential. So, I think establishing that relationship with him left me with some

> confidence. We met the first session and ran over his personality type results and then, you know, he appreciated the fact that I was flexible, I guess, with the fact that the personality test result wasn't 100% right on the money. And I told him that I was okay with that. I said, "Well, I want you to highlight the things that you like. And this absolutely means crossing out the things that you don't think relate to you." And I think that, you know…him…realizing that I don't need a piece of paper report to find who he was, was a very big turning point in our relationship.

Several factors could be identified in Jenny’s story as critical in forming a successful relationship between a coach and a client, such as flexibility, trust, and helpfulness. Jenny said that when she respected the client’s opinion about himself, instead of the personality test result, the client seemed to appreciate her for accepting him as he was. Also, the client’s positive response and respectful attitude toward Jenny seemed to be a significant gauge with which she could measure her competency.

However, some of the coaches said that the coaching relationship was not always perceived as helpful and trusting by their clients. Some of the coaches in the study shared incidents about times when they did not feel confident about the relationship with their client. Terry shared her experience in which her confidence was lowered as she failed to maintain a good relationship with her client:

> Well, probably the one that I felt the most bad about was a woman that left my coaching session crying. And I never heard from her again. […] And I asked pretty blunt, forceful questions that required her to think a lot. I think she wasn’t

> the type of person that could think spontaneously and quickly on her feet, and she needed more time to think about things.

As seen from Terry’s story, the relationship between a coach and client was susceptible to breaking or worsening when a coach failed to observe subtle differences in communication styles between the coach and the client or observe a client’s emotional reactions. Mien also shared an incident in which she had almost lost her client’s trust:

> …by the time I got enough confident to challenge her on things and say "I don't believe you," or "Can you give me evidence of that?" or "Why do you believe this?" … she then took it as I don't like her because I wasn't direct enough with her at the beginning, and I suddenly became direct three weeks after this. And we spent two sessions trying to decide if we were going to continue.

Mien actually added that the relationship with her client was not firm from the beginning of the coaching intervention due some misunderstanding. Her client did not have a good relationship with her boss. When she happened to find out that Mien had a meeting with her boss before the actual coaching intervention started, she strongly expressed her discomfort by saying, “You know something that I don't know that you talked about with the boss. Why didn't you share them with me?" Mien’s story was a good example to teach coaches the importance of trust and the brittleness of a relationship in a coaching intervention because it often deals with issues that are sensitive to a client, who is often situated in a complicated working environment.

Facilitating personal transformation to develop new possibilities for action and learning

The coaches' self-efficacy was related to their ability to facilitate clients' personal transformation. I will describe two sub-themes related to the coaches' ability to facilitate: facilitating depth of understanding; and promoting action and accountability.

Promoting action and accountability. The coaches, no matter how skillful they were, could not force insight and change behaviors on their clients when the clients were not committed to the coaching session, were losing interest, or were resisting changes. The clients' resistance was revealed in various forms—they did nothing or stayed at a superficial level without a real commitment for a long-term behavioral change.

Four coaches said that their clients' resistance frustrated them and affected their confidence negatively. The clients' resistance was expressed in various forms: The clients did nothing between sessions, showed no weaknesses, were motivated for the wrong reasons, and watered down the session by failing to look at issues deeply. The following are details of those incidents.

Doing nothing. Terry gave the example of one of her clients who did not commit to the coaching intervention. Terry said "…the most frustrating perhaps is when you feel that you're making progress and the person that you're coaching does absolutely nothing between sessions."

Sienna's case is similar to Terry's, and Sienna described her frustration more in detail as follows:

> We started to get there and she forgot her journal. And in retrospect, I should've just not met with her and canceled the meeting, but I didn't. And so, as a result, we ended up going backwards. We didn't move. We basically repeated the session from the last week. And I could tell that she just wasn't invested in that. She was not.

Not only did Sienna's client not make any commitment, but the client also resisted in another area as well: resistance to admitting weaknesses.

Resisting showing weakness. Sienna continued, "I can tell she is a bit resistant to this. She can't tell her weaknesses. She has NO weakness. […]So, the challenge has been to really unpack what those "weaknesses" are, and they were very hard to identify." During the interview, Sienna repeated "no weakness" several times and raised the speed of her voice as if she was re-experiencing that moment. I could feel how frustrated Sienna was as a novice coach when she had to challenge her client to broaden her perspectives.

Mien also stated that her client resisted seeing her weaknesses. Mien said "She didn't want to do her work, and she didn't want to look at weaknesses. She only wanted to focus on her strengths." Mien added more about the relationship with this client:

> She did not have a very good working environment and so she wanted to hang on to me as long as possible 'cause it was an hour where someone would listen to her. But she wouldn't...she wasn't all about [being] willing to just make a decision to stop doing coaching, even though it wasn't what she expected it would be…

As seen from Sienna's and Mien's cases, although a client agreed to work with a coach, it seemed that the client's understanding of coaching intervention and his or her motivation to participate could be quite different from a coach's.

Watering down the session. Some of the clients seemed to escape the unwanted commitment to long-term changes by diffusing the coaching session. Mien said,

> My client was a story teller and was talking about lots of things, but I didn't ask her deep questions to make her actually really analyze what she was saying. You know, she had a psychology background and was very good at…on the surface… things—what she thought I wanted to hear, and she would go on and on and on. ...it was like watering down the session, and I didn't feel like we were really getting to the heart of anything.

Mien seemed to clearly apprehend that her client resisted discussing deep-seated problems or serious issues regarding her work behaviors. Such resistance, however, was a major reason that Mien's confidence, as a coach, lowered.

Different from Mien's client who talked only about surface matters, Jenny's client tried to lessen the seriousness of the coaching intervention by making it funny as follows:

> This client was kind of a jokester. Even when he would learn things about himself, he would make it funny. So at one point I had to really be direct with him and say "This is not a joke. This is how people feel about you, and you're not taking it seriously." And that was really hard for me. And it was hard for the client to hear.

Later, Jenny added that it was a critical moment for her. She said,

> And it was a turning point for me because I realized at that moment, that I was kind of being a little bit of a doormat for the client. And I personally hate confrontations, so that felt like confrontation to me. So, I really had to channel that into a positive way. So that's why it's a good experience for me personally.

Jenny’s case seemed to show that an incident that once frustrated a coach and decreased his or her confidence could sometimes also be a turning point for a coach to develop skills and regain confidence.

The clients’ loss of interest and lack of long-term change. Some of the coaches had doubts about whether their clients would make a commitment to the coaching throughout the process or whether their changes would continue very long after the coaching intervention. The uncertainty about the clients’ enthusiasm and the long-term behavioral changes lessened the coaches’ confidence. Beth said,

> Well, there was a point in time which was predictable, and I knew it from the start in terms of her personality…you should go get her. I knew about the mid-point or just past the mid-point that it would have been tough for her to follow through. And that was something …that was one of her things ….she is excited, she is a good initiator…and all that other stuff. But after a certain period of time things are, you know, a little…not so interesting. So, I knew that was going to happen at a point in time. And it did. So what happened was...I pushed myself to have a frank conversation with her before it became a problem. […] So, that maybe… there was a shakier confidence...and that you're not taught what to say...how to have a frank conversation but we did. […] You notice someone sort of just in awe.

> Even if it's mentally…or whatever we kind of have to call…bring to the table saying "You know, I notice…is your enthusiasm waning?" or things like that. In order to have a frank conversation…because with her, I knew…I didn't wanted to lose her, you know, in any form.

As seen from Beth's case, the doubt that a client might lose his or her interest and enthusiasm sometimes started very early in the coaching intervention. As the coaching sessions proceeded, Denny seemed to notice that his client might go back to previous behavior patterns:

> I had some doubts as to whether…even though he knew the changes needed to be made, I wasn't sure that he would be able to sustain the changes a very long period of time because that's, in this case, what really needed to happen…That's when I started to be unclear about how things would, you know, progress from then on. […] I just felt…he has been operating in a certain way for a very long time and sometimes…some of the ways that he operated, sort of, will enforce some of the habits that we had […] So I didn't have confidence that he would make the necessary changes.

Beth and Denny showed their confidence in session management or in helping a client see the big picture. Thus, it seemed that clients' long-term behavioral changes might not always be related to the effectiveness of coaching sessions or the acquisition of insight into the problems.

Already successful clients. Although the effects of coaching have been proven to be helpful for many clients, coaching intervention cannot be beneficial to all clients.

When the clients possessed few problems to work on, and when they were already good at self-development, the coaches felt less confident. This was the case for Megan:

> Um…that's hard, I mean this client…she's actually quite successful at work and she's really just kind of ready to move up in her organization. And so, with her, it's a lot about her kind of working on, figuring out what it is that, you know, she wants. So…yeah, I would say that's a hard one, you know. She's just a hard…she had a few a-ha moments, but in general she's just really successful at work. And so, it's not like there has been a major problem that she had to work at.

For a novice coach, like Megan, clients who were already successful and highly self-reflective might be as difficult as those clients who were resisting coaching.

The clients' resistance and its causes were not discussed further mainly because of privacy issues. When I inferred this resistance from the coaches' stories, there seemed to be various emotional conflicts or anxieties that were ongoing with the clients. Also, although the coaches expressed their frustration about sessions with difficult clients during interviews, none of the coaches in the study mentioned that they shared their immediate feelings with the clients at the session. The coaches seemed to be trying hard to keep their emotions under control and to maintain their objectivity during the sessions.

Creating the foundations for business coaching

As novice coaches, the research participants' self-efficacy was influenced by their ability to deal with cases in which the boundary between coaching and other interventions was blurry. The coaches expressed their shrinking confidence when faced with coaching limitations and when they had to admit that certain clients' cases were outside of their expertise and that they could not really help them, which I will describe in the following section.

Referring to other professionals when appropriate. Two coaches in the study shared incidents in which they felt their clients seemed to need therapy or counseling rather than coaching. The coaches were fully aware of the differences between coaching and counseling, and they seemed to act properly and professionally by recommending counseling or legal help at an early stage of coaching intervention. The source of the decrease in their confidence, however, was more their disappointment that they could not help everyone rather than the fact that they recommended that the clients seek therapy, as Terry mentioned as follows:

> The least confident…is when the person in front of me that I'm coaching obviously needs therapy, and not coaching […] That the circumstances they were dealing with or the situations they were in were one that involved more mediators...or involved having two people together, or perhaps I could identify there were mental health issues involved. […] I just really want to help everybody, and I want to solve their problems with them. And then I can't. It does maybe impact my confidence a little bit.

Also, while listening to clients' stories, the coaches experienced emotional states, such as frustration, which negatively influenced their confidence. Grace said,

> I tried one client, in particular, who was in a very difficult situation. She was actually considering quitting her job and was wondering whether or not she should take legal action against her company. And I really felt that that was

> outside of the realm of the coaching. So I recommended that she go to a lawyer and get legal advice, which she ended up doing…she did do. So I think it was helpful to just think about what is in and out of my sandbox ...working with the client. And after she consulted the lawyer, she came back to me again and I felt that frankly she needed psychological counseling and I recommended that. Then she also needed some help from a doctor because she had trouble sleeping. But as it turned out, she kept coming back to me…so I started out being very nervous because they were big sections of her life that really weren't my expertise, but holding her accountable for making the appointments to go see a lawyer and a doctor and a therapist... […] In the first meeting, I just felt that I was way in over my head. So I suggested the direction of a lawyer and I just kind of said, "Come back to me after completing all that." And the reality is she came back to me sooner. And I think I missed the fact that I could still be helpful, and she decided to come back to me anyway. Probably, because I was frankly afraid because she had so much going on both legally, mentally, and physically, that...it just scared me.

It seemed that when the clients came to the coaches and when the clients' problems were in their workplaces, they did not know whether they needed counseling or coaching. Although further studies are needed, the clients may have preferred coaching to counseling because of their reputation as Terry said, "When clients come to coaches, they don't know. And also, there could be a perceived stigma in having a therapist versus having a coach."

However, difficulties during the coaching practice could, in retrospect, be perceived as opportunities for the coaches to expand their boundaries as Grace added:

> Because I think it was the highest stakes that I ever dealt with a client. And yet, I would tell you today, it's probably been most rewarding because she continued to work with me and told me that I'm kind of the glue that kind of got her motivated to work with a lawyer, a doctor, and a therapist. And she is making, I think, progress.

Grace's case above showed that a coaching relationship might not be limited to changing business behaviors or to developing leadership. Some clients might want their coaches to be a sounding board or a supporter during emotional difficulties. It seemed that coaches require good judgment about their capabilities to provide clients what they wanted. Also, it seemed critical for the coaches to keep positive attitudes so that they could learn valuable lessons even from risky situations.

On the other hand, coaches seemed to feel less burdened by that fact that they did not need to know the answers for the clients. Beth seemed to enjoy that she, as a coach not a counselor, no longer had to worry about having right answers for her clients:

> When I was in college, I was a counselor at a crisis center. Before a client meets with me at the 45-minute session, if I have to make a comment on a specific issue, I thought in advance "Oh, no, what can I say to this person? How can I help them?" But, similar to the coaching experiences, you never have to solve the problem for them. In counseling, you'll help them figure out how to put things in context or what steps they would take to solve the problem themselves. In

> coaching, it's similar, and then you never tell them exactly what to do. You always focus on what they are saying and you push them. It's similar but there's a little difference.

In sum, the findings showed that the coaches' confidence was not influenced by whether their clients needed coaching or therapy, but by the coaches' subjective feelings about how comfortable they were admitting the limits of their competence, and of executive coaching.

In this section, I presented incidents that were associated with the novice coaches' levels of self-efficacy connected to their coaching skills. Five themes and eight sub-themes were interpreted from the findings. All of the themes were related to both high and low self-efficacy, and, there was no area in which all coaches unanimously perceived themselves as having high self-efficacy or low self-efficacy—there was always a mixture of perceptions. Instead, in every stages of the coaching process, the coaches felt high or low self-efficacy based on their subjective evaluation about their performance and achieved results with their clients. The next section describes what the coaches learned from the overall experience.

Lesson Learned

In this section, I present findings from the interviews based on the third research question: What were important lessons that novice executive coaches learned from those incidents? Three main themes were interpreted, and they were (1) experiential learning, (2) reflective practice, and (3) transformation of role-perception. Five subthemes were identified from the two main themes. They were (1) practice as a way of learning to be a better coach; (2) being mindful of asking good questions and observing clients' subtle cues during the session; (3) learning from evaluating sessions ; (4) contributing a coach's knowledge, experience, and expertise without giving advice or disclosing personal stories; and (5) acknowledging the uniqueness of each client (Table 6).

Table 6. Lessons Learned from Incidents

Themes	Categories
1. Experiential learning	▪ Practice as a way of learning to be a better coach ▪ Being mindful of asking good questions and observing clients' subtle cues during the session
2. Reflective practice	▪ Learning from evaluating sessions
3. Transformation of role-perception	▪ Contributing a coach's knowledge, experience, and expertise without giving advice or disclosing personal stories ▪ Acknowledging the uniqueness of each client

Experiential Learning

The findings indicated that the coaches in this study were primarily learning by experience. During the actual session, the coaches mentioned that the more mindful and attentive they were to every detail mentioned by a client, the better the questions they could ask. Two sub-themes were interpreted from the data regarding the coaches' learning from experience: practice as a way of learning to be a better coach; and being mindful of asking good questions and observing clients' subtle cues during the session.

Practicing as a way of learning to be a better coach. When asked if they were considering getting more education to improve their coaching skills in the near future, most of the coaches in the study replied that they needed to take more clients and to practice what they had learned already, instead of taking classes and learning new skills.

The coaches mentioned that their insight and understanding mostly came from the actual coaching practice. All of them believed that getting more experience would make them better coaches. Sienna, who mentioned in the previous section that she gained confidence by coaching three clients in the same week, stressed the importance of practice as a way of becoming a better coach:

> I'm an experiential learner. So, for me, when we did a lot of the class work or went through the materials, it didn't mean anything to me. […] It's meaningless until you get older and you really start using it—that's the best learning. This just provides foundation. For once you start practicing it and learning what gets the best results. I think that's one real start to see if it's effective.[…] I think I was still intimidated to say, "Oh, I am an executive coach" without having more coaching training. But as I'm doing more clients and getting more experiences, I realized that I need more confidence just in [the belief] that the training I have had is really great.

Jenny responded similarly to Sienna. Jenny said that she was not confident in asking timely and layered questions, and she added, “It's the biggest key for me and picking up things, paying attention to the things they don't say as much as paying attention to the things they do say. I think they’ll come with practice and experience.” Sienna’s and Jenny’s cases showed that gaining more experiences was crucial for novice coaches. To put it more correctly, the number of experiences seemed to mean that not only had novice coaches dealt with many different clients but also those coaches had practiced enough with the materials and routinized procedures to establish a foundation of confidence.

The coaches' experience also seemed to deepen their self-understanding. Denny humbly mentioned that he learned about himself, especially his strengths and weaknesses, from his coaching experiences.

> I guess it reinforces that we all have weaknesses and if we can learn how to manage them, we can all be a little bit better. In other words, I really do think from the experience that we can all benefit from coaching. […] I mean…the only difference between a coach and a client is that a coach has learned the process. It doesn't mean that the coach doesn't have to put in just as much work as a client.

Denny's case suggests that coaches' increased self-knowledge could be helpful in coaching their potential clients.

Being mindful of asking good questions and observing clients' subtle cues. The coaches' learning actually happened while they were experiencing coaching practice at a session. In particular, questioning skills, which most of the coaches mentioned as the most helpful technique, seemed best learned and improved during the actual session because those skills are broader in concept rather than being a sequence of activities involving merely listening and asking. Questioning skills included preparing questions in advance, observing a client's reactions and body language, listening actively to both what the clients say and do not say, and asking more questions until the clients are ready to think more deeply. Thus, for the coaches, questioning seemed to be a major tool when they interacted with their clients. Beth said,

> …Asking questions. Focusing on what people are actually saying, I mean the words versus all their animation, sometimes body language, and also, as well as

> what I think that they're saying. […] You don't have to be a rocket scientist; you don't have to be terribly gifted to observe what the realities are. So people will tell you in the various different ways what they are thinking, and you can pick up on whether they are making progress or not. And ...maybe a time or two, if I felt well this didn't move as fast as I wanted, then it was for me to go back to the drawing board and say "Okay, what do I need to do differently?"

Beth listed several factors that a coach should pay attention to in order for a coach to ask a client effective questions. Beth emphasized that coaches could improve such skills by deliberately focusing on every detail that a client expressed during a session. Thus, even well prepared questions were not enough—to be effective, a coach needed to be mindful during each session.

Not only did the coaches pay attention to clients' behaviors, tones, and facial expressions, they also seemed to be sensitive to the communication dynamics when they interacted with clients, recognizing the differences in communication styles and personalities. Mary was conscious of this fact especially with a client she was coaching when I conducted my interview with her:

> Particularly, the client that I am currently coaching, she has a very different personality than I do. And I really have to be very conscious in my communication with her of that… in how she prefers to be communicated with. So for me, that means that I have to slow down when I am talking. I have to be more precise in my wording. So I think when I am able to let concerns about those things go, then I will become a better coach.

Mary’s comment seemed to show that while the coaches’ sensitivity and mindfulness during a session were important, the novice coaches had not developed such skills yet. Thus, the idea that they have to be sensitive to many things simultaneously, such as clients’ words, behaviors, and the coaches’ own personalities, could impede the natural flow of a coaching session.

Reflective Practice

Some of the coaches stated that reflecting on sessions was helpful, and they learned much from it. One coach mentioned that she tried to put herself in a client’s position to deepen her understanding of coaching practice. The next section describes what the coaches learned from evaluating sessions in detail.

Learning from evaluating sessions. The coaches said that evaluating sessions after the coaching practice helped them prepare for the next session. Mien especially put effort between the sessions by evaluating previous sessions and actively seeking ways to deepen her understanding of her clients. Mien said,

> I'm constantly evaluating how the session went every time I have a session: "How did that go? What do I need to do better?" that kind of thing. I'm still spending time preparing for each session. […] I think it helps me to take notes after every session. I review them a week later, so that I can remember kind of what did we talk about, where we are at... It helps me to really take time to prepare....so preparing in the time and taking notes afterwards and reviewing them, I would say helps me a lot…The other thing that is helpful to me is reviewing those questions.

Mien’s self-developmental effort was not limited to actual coaching practice. She also volunteered as a practicum client for her colleague and expected to experience coaching practice from a client’s point of view.

> I'm going through a coaching process myself on the side of the client. One of my colleagues just got trained as a new coach, and I'm her practicum client. So yeah, I'm doing a lot of little stuff.

Grace said, “I try to evaluate each session. And I need to continue to push more and more open-ended questions.” When I asked her whether she practiced her questioning skills between sessions, she said, “No, I don’t practice them separately but I would say… I am mindful at the session and going in...trying to remind myself.” Grace’s comment was related to a point in the previous section that described the importance of being mindful during the coaching practice. In sum, the coaches seemed to learn best from experience and reflection.

Transformation of role-perception

The last theme that the coaches mentioned as being learned from the overall experience was redefining their roles as professional coaches. Many of the coaches stated that they became aware that coaching intervention was different from other helping relationships. The findings revealed that as the coaches gained more experience, they seemed to acknowledge more clearly that their job was not to give advice and that it was almost impossible to assume that they knew all the answers. Two subthemes were related to the coaches’ transformation of their role perception: contributing a coach’s knowledge, experience, and expertise without giving advice or disclosing personal stories; and acknowledging the uniqueness of each client. The following section presents those themes in detail.

Contributing a coach’s knowledge, experience, and expertise without giving advice or disclosing personal stories. Most of the coaches in the study stated that they were good at listening, problem-solving, and analyzing. These qualities seemed to attract others to them for advice and to naturally draw the coaches to the coaching profession. However, the coaches learned by experience that their job was not to solve problems for the clients but to facilitate the clients in solving their own problems. Jenny said she used to be very confident in her analyzing and problem-solving abilities. However, she realized that her job was not to solve clients’ problems but to help them solve their own problems:

> Sometimes your strengths are your biggest enemy in coaching because they're your filters. Some of my strengths are problem-solving, analyzing, and decision-making…and I can't do those skills for the client. So, I'd be on step five because I've processed everything they need to do, and I've left the client at step two. So I've got to bring the client with me.

Mien said that she had learned a similar lesson from her coaching experience:

> The biggest thing for me that I've learned so far, I would say, is that I'll let go a little bit of the idea that I know the right answer for people. […] My whole life has been the person who's really good at giving advice, and people would come to me with issues, and I'll give them suggestions for what they should do. And going through this process, then, seeing what happens when I do that versus when I just

> ask questions for my client to know, it made me realize the impact that it has versus giving them the power to do that. You lose something when you try to solve this for somebody...and I think that that's probably true in ....general. I'm still in the process of learning how to do that better but I see the worth in that much more.

Grace mentioned that she had been a problem-solver for many years at work, and she said, “I would say that I still revert back to problem solving and I think that is still something I need to work very hard at...”

In addition, some coaches said that they were conscious of the fact that they should not share their personal stories with clients in the coaching session. Denny said,

> …so, self-disclosure, I don’t think necessarily has much value or a role in a coaching engagement. Because then it becomes more than coaching. It becomes more of a sort of peer support type of thing. It was always my understanding that this is different than peer support. Even though… that I can go ahead and tell you that I can…there is a lot that I empathize, sympathize with this person, I think he is a very interesting person, but I didn’t really disclose much about myself because I didn’t think that was what the coaching engagement is about.

Mien also was one of the coaches who seemed to be very conscious of the need to minimize the sharing of personal stories with her clients:

> I actively avoid using my personal experience because I think that whatever their situation is, it is unique to them, and their strengths and limitations, and the environment they are in. So as much as my personal tendency historically has

> been to relate to what someone tells me and to say "yeah, something similar happened to me and this is how I dealt with it" I feel like I had it beat into my head through coaching training that doing so is not as helpful as asking people questions in order to help them figure out their own solutions that are right for them. So I'm trying to restrain myself away from sharing my personal experiences, and I am overly conscious of that aspect, since I think it is my natural tendency to do so.

In both of the about cases, Denny and Mien seemed to highly value the uniqueness of each client's case and to avoid imposing their personal ideas on the clients. These comments are related to the last section, which follows.

Acknowledging the uniqueness of each client. As the perception of the role changes, the coaches' understanding of their clients also changed. The more cases the coaches experienced, the clearer the understanding the coaches seemed to gain that each client was different and that each case was unique, although they all looked similar on the surface. This realization sometimes helped the coaches to be mindful not to make assumptions when meeting with a new client, as Sienna said:

> Especially now that I'm working without a practicum instructor, […] it's definitely hard because we talked about a lot of different case studies, but it's always different. Each person is always going to be different. Each person's weaknesses, even if their weaknesses may be the same, the way in which they...what that behavior looks like, […]underneath that may be different. And each person is so individual, that it's going to be challenging to apply it, and to always know how to

> apply it. […] I was trying to make a conscious effort with clients moving forward, to not make assumptions. But it is really hard. I’m still going with ideas about people...I don't know, it's hard to completely turn them off especially when you know, when you have their DiSC type, or things like that, that provided a bit of a guidance...

On the other hand, Terry dealt with each client by gathering as much information as possible to prepare herself to be of the best help possible to her client:

> The important thing is preparing the documents ahead of time for the client to fill out. They can give me really good information into their mental state, and issues and goals they have. And for me to have a very clear understanding of what I think I can help them with.

It seemed that the coaches needed to strike a balance between gathering as much information about the client as possible and bracketing their assumptions about the client, at the same time. The novice coaches in this study seemed to acknowledge the need to find balance in many areas throughout their coaching practice, although none of them mentioned that they were comfortable yet in doing so. However, I could sense that they were enthusiastic about progress they had made since they first became coaches and that they believed their self-confidence would continue to grow as they became better coaches with more practice and experience.

In this section, I presented what the coaches learned from their practice. They all stressed that they started to understand what coaching really was and what they were expected to do as they gained experience. Their learning continued when they were in a session practicing coaching intervention. They evaluated past sessions and learned from reflecting on them. Finally, the coaches realized that their perception of their role as coaches was redefined and transformed as they practiced. As a result, the coaches put effort into not giving advice or solving problems for clients, and they tried to see each case and client uniquely.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the major findings of this study. Three questions that were guiding this study were (1) what incidents influence the self-efficacy of novice executive coaches? and (2) what were important lessons that novice executive coaches learned from those incidents? Total of eight themes and various subthemes/categories were interpreted from the data.

The first part presented five themes related to the first research question, incidents that positively or negatively affect coaches' perceived self-efficacy about their coaching skills. Five main themes related to novice executive coaches' perceived self-efficacy were interpreted from the data. These were (1) provoking critical reflection through questions, (2) managing a coaching session proficiently, (3) developing a good coaching relationship, (4) facilitating personal transformation to develop new possibilities for action and learning, and (5) creating the foundations for business coaching. The second part focused on findings related to the second research question, lessons the coaches learned from their coaching practice. Three main themes were interpreted, and they were (1) experiential learning, (2) reflective practice, and (3) transformation of role-perception.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this qualitative study of novice executive coaches was to explore incidents that positively or negatively affect coaches' perceived self-efficacy about their coaching skills. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What incidents influence the self-efficacy of novice executive coaches?
2. What were important lessons that novice executive coaches learned from those incidents?

This chapter has three parts. Part one discusses the conclusions of the study. Part two presents implications for theory and practice. Part three offers recommendations for future research.

Conclusions and Discussions

Three conclusions can be drawn about novice executive coaches' self-efficacy and their learning. They are the following: (1) novice coaches' positive experiences bolster their feelings of high efficacy while negative experiences diminish them; (2) novice coaches develop high levels of self-efficacy when they understand clients' anxiety and resistance and are willing to push clients out of their comfort zones to confront and change their behavioral challenges; and (3) novice coaches develop high levels of self-efficacy when they make transformational shifts of their role perceptions and actions from lay helpers to professional coaches when interacting with clients. This section discusses these conclusions and explicates how each conclusion contributes to the existing research.

Conclusion 1. Novice coaches' positive experiences bolster their feelings of high efficacy, while negative experiences diminish it.

The coaches’ high and low self-efficacy beliefs were formed in the actual interactions between a coach and a client. The coaches did not mention that their confidence in their coaching skills was related to their previous work experience or their educational background. Only after they conducted actual coaching, without the help from a supervisor, did they know what areas they were good at and what areas needed more practice.

Most importantly, the coaches’ positive and negative experiences were the main sources of their high or low self-efficacy. When asked about incidents in which they felt most confident, the coaches’ responses were often related to positive experiences, in particular their mastery experiences. Bandura (1994) stated that enacting mastery experiences is the most effective way of creating a strong sense of efficacy among four major sources of self-efficacy: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states. For most of the coaches in this study, the greatest sense of self-efficacy came from a mastery experience such as managing a successful coaching session or establishing a good relationship with clients. Sienna, for example, strongly advocated practicing and mastering the coaching process to increase a sense of self-efficacy by saying, “by the time I do the third client, I already have practiced…I’m way more comfortable and confident when I coach.”

Besides mastery experience, a client's verbal and nonverbal reactions and the coaches' physiological and affective states were also related to a coaches' self-efficacy. For example, Grace said she felt confident when her client said, "That's a really great question!" and Jenny mentioned, "After the first two meetings, the client, I felt like he was really looking to me like I was the expert. And I think that's what gave me some confidence." In short, major sources of high self-efficacy mostly included mastery experience, and some positive client reactions, and a coach's emotional state from those reactions.

In addition, when they mentioned these experiences during the interview, I could sense the excitement and confidence in their speech. Often the tone of their voices was upbeat. The coaches, who seemed to experience several positive initial successes, often expressed enthusiasm about pursuing their coaching career more seriously and conducting coaching practice with as many clients as soon as possible.

The sources of a coach's low sense of self-efficacy came from similar sources in negative situations. For example, unpracticed questioning and session-management skills lowered the coaches' confidence. Negative client reactions, lack of insight, breached trust, fear of premature termination, and the coaches' emotional frustration from those incidents negatively influenced the coaches' confidence. When the coaches recollected the incidents in which they felt least confident, they often talked more slowly and in a low tone of voice. While talking about those experiences during the interview, the coaches seemed to think about those incidents and try to contextualize what had really happened to them and their clients. Interestingly, I could feel that after they talked about those negative experiences, the coaches seemed less confident as coaches in general, whereas when they talked about their positive experiences, the coaches seemed full of self-confidence.

Generally, the responses of the coaches in the study were not centered around any particular themes or stages. That means these competencies are equally necessary for the success of the coaching intervention, and coaches should develop all of them. For example, although a coach may have high self-efficacy regarding her questioning skills and session management skills, good coaching results cannot be guaranteed if she lacks confidence in other areas, such as the ability to facilitate action. In every stages of the coaching process, the coaches felt high or low self-efficacy based on their subjective evaluation about their performance and achieved results with their clients.

None of the coaches in the study mentioned that he or she had overall high or low self-efficacy, or that his or her self-efficacy level was consistent across various competencies. The coaches' clearly distinguished areas in which they felt the most or the least confident. Sometimes, the coaches felt both high and low confidence in one area, for example, as Jenny felt very confident that she could ask challenging questions but felt less confident when it came to asking timely questions and paying attention to what her client actually said as well as left unsaid. According to Bandura, "a high sense of efficacy in one-activity domain is not necessarily accompanied by high self-efficacy in other realms" (1998, p. 42). The results with novice coaches confirm Bandura's claim that self-efficacy beliefs are multifaceted.

As the coaches gaining more experience, their confidence increased gradually. The coaches expressed their excitement about the improved skills, and showed determination that they would continue to practice until they became proficient. This confirmed Bandura’s (1994) explanation that self-efficacy plays a role in the self-regulation of motivation.

The coaches in this study evaluated their self-efficacy based on subjective factors, such as their perceptions of past performances; their strengths or weaknesses; and the observation of immediate client reactions. This result yielded similar results to a study by Tams (2007). The author conducted interviews with 74 people from six different settings to understand how people develop and maintain self-efficacy within the context of their everyday work, and stated that “people constructed their mastery by referring to internalized criteria […] or by building analogies between their present situation and previous events in their lives” (p. 173). Similarly, Mien seemed conceptualize a coach’s professionalism as the ability to not inflict her personal stories on her client. Thus, Mien could perceive herself as a good coach when she could refrain from sharing her stories and instead, asked her client more neutral questions to help him or her see the issue clearly on his or her own. Megan, as for another example, said that she felt confident when she could ask many questions. She gauged her questioning skills based not on the number of questions or her client having insights but on how she was less talkative and stayed on track during the session because she thought she talked too much during the session. Grace, who received many compliments from her client for her questioning skills, said that she was actually very happy because while she was training, her instructors used to tell her that she needed to ask more open-ended questions, not try to solve a client’s problem. Thus, turning her weakness into strength seemed to substantially increase Grace’s self-efficacy.

In fact, the objective measurement of self-efficacy of coaching skills is not easy. Most of all, as Bandura (1998) explained, the concept of self-efficacy is subjective in nature:

> Efficacy beliefs should be measured in terms of particularized judgments of capability that may vary across realms of activity, under different levels of task demands within a given activity domain, and under different situational circumstances. Personal efficacy is not a contextless global disposition assayed by an omnibus test. (p. 42)

Thus, measurement of self-efficacy of coaching skills requires a “clear definition of the activity domain of interest and a good conceptual analysis of its different facets, the types of capabilities it calls upon, and the range of situations in which these capabilities might be applied” (Bandura, 1998, p. 42). However, executive coaching is practiced and understood differently depending on the disciplines and context, and there is no agreement among scholars and practitioners yet about a clear definition of activity domain of interest.

Furthermore, as Peterson (2011) stated, it is difficult to relate coaches’ specific actions to clients’ outcomes:

> ...the process takes place over an extended period of time, honest and systematic feedback is rare, and it is difficult to connect any particular coach behavior—or even particular coaching conversations—to specific outcomes that occur months later. There are also many other events and activities occurring at the same time

> as the coaching is taking place, and pinpointing the causal link between coaching activities and distal outcomes is problematic. (p. 91)

The coaches’ work consisted of face-to-face conversations with a client in a highly confidential manner. The opportunities to monitor their coaching sessions and to compare their skills with those of other coaches are rare. These difficulties lead the coaches to evaluate their coaching skills based on subjective standards.

Although the coaches clearly distinguished areas in which they felt most or least confident, the coaches who experienced more significantly positive experiences than negative ones in terms of quality or quantity, they regarded the negative incident as a mere episode or an opportunity for learning. These observations are similar to the study of Thériault, Gazzola, and Richardson (2009) with novice therapists about their feelings of incompetence. The authors reported that,

> Positive consequences included a sense of increased alertness and motivation for learning (when the experience was felt as temporary and controllable), while negative consequences included a feeling of hopelessness, separation, and detachment, both from the client and potentially from the counseling profession as a whole. (p. 116)

Proceeding from what has been stated above, it should be concluded that novice coaches need a resilient sense of efficacy (Bandura, 1994) in order to overcome early rejections or failures without becoming discouraged. The coaches may develop high self-efficacy by mobilizing their confidence “to work effectively with their current client” (Lent, et al., 2006, p. 462), while at the same time maintaining their level of self-efficacy on general coaching skills.

Conclusion 2. Novice coaches develop high levels of self-efficacy when they understand a client's anxiety and resistance and are willing to push clients out of their comfort zones to confront and change their behavioral challenges.

The coaches perceived well that they needed more practice when their low sense of self-efficacy was derived from their own performance, such as asking questions, studying the materials, and mastering routine processes. In these cases, the coaches' poor performance and subsequent lack of confidence could be explained by their status as novice professionals. Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) stated that it is not merely knowing things but know-how that is the difference between a novice and an expert. Expert know-how is highly situational and demands constant practice. Novices do not have enough experience to have a deep understanding of the relationships between separate events. Lacking experience, novices follow "context-free rules" (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986, 1988, p. 21) in order to finish tasks, making them appear inflexible. Thus, the novice coaches' responses seem reasonable that they might feel comfortable with their coaching skills once they gain a certain amount of experience and start to see similarities and differences across contexts.

On the other hand, while numerous studies emphasized that building rapport and trusting relationship build successful coaching intervention, the coaches in the study seemed unaware of ways to improve their low confidence when such improvement was mainly derived from interaction with their clients. Some of the coaches said that recognizing the differences in communication styles and personalities helped. Others mentioned that their clients needed therapy and other support. However, none of the coaches seemed to comprehend a client's deep-seated anxiety or resistance although the coaches sensed when their clients were not committed to a coaching session and were reluctant to change.

A client's resistance to or unwillingness to be open to change has often been the focus of studies about a client's readiness or personal traits and studies have debated boundaries of coaching and therapy. As for the former, findings of the studies often concluded that a highly motivated and goal-oriented client tends to engage in coaching intervention (Hudson, 1999; Redshaw, 2000); on the other hand, a client who truly needed coaching is often reluctant to make a commitment (Ellam-Dyson and Palmer (2011; Peterson, 2011). In terms of reluctance, findings often revolved around scholars and practitioners trying to demarcate coaching and therapy, and suggestions from them include that although coaching and therapy are different, "coaches would benefit themselves and their clients by therapeutically trained" (Price, 2009, p.147).

Although I value the importance of the above studies, I would like to use Shein's work about dynamics of change (2010) and helping relationship (2009) to point out a client's emotional anxieties in connection with coaching intervention, more specifically related to change and receiving feedback, and an asymmetric relationship with a coach. First, in a coaching intervention, a client's cognitive and behavioral changes are inevitable and thus, coaches need to understand the anxiety and dynamics that can accompany any human change. Shein (2010), based on Kurt Lewin (1947)'s original work about change, explained the psycho-social dynamics of organizational change.

Shein stated that change can occur when a person experiences three processes at the first stage. The processes include;

> (1) enough disconfirming data to cause serious discomfort and disequilibrium; (2) the connection of the disconfirming data to important goals and ideals, causing anxiety and/or guilt; and (3) enough psychological safety, in the sense of being able to see a possibility of solving the problem and learning something new without loss of identity or integrity. (Shein, 2010, p. 301)

A person can feel survival anxiety when the person feels that something negative will happen unless he or she changes. Learning anxiety includes fear of loss of power, position, personal identity, or group membership. Learning anxiety also includes fear of temporary incompetence or punishment for incompetence. According to Shein, change can happen when survival anxiety is high or when learning anxiety is lowered through the providing of psychological safely. However, Shein explained that increasing survival anxiety can be dangerous because a person tends to resist change through denial or passing the buck. Thus, reducing learning anxiety and providing enough psychological safety is ideal for promoting a change in a person. Psychological safety can be boosted by providing a compelling positive vision, support, adequate feedback, training, or coaching. From these support, a person can develop new perspectives and behaviors that are more appropriate in a new environment. Finally, in the last stage, new self-concept and behavior need to be internalized for long-term change and success both for a person and his or her organization.

Using Shein's change model to explain my findings, I claim that the coaches in the study could have reacted more appropriately to their clients' various expressions of resistance to coaching if the coaches had understood the clients' tacit learning anxiety whether the clients engaged with coaching intervention of their own accord or through their bosses' requirement. In other helping relationships, such as counseling or therapy, a client's sharing of his or her emotions is expected and is regarded as a natural occurrence that can be professionally addressed. Clearly, the main purpose of coaching intervention is to help a client achieve a mutually agreed upon goal, not to attend to the emotional difficulties that a client may encounter along his or her coaching journeys. Thus, a client in coaching intervention might have felt difficult to vent their frustrations and instead have displayed their feelings in subtle ways, such as failing to complete required homework between sessions. When a client does not feel understood and sufficiently supported, he or she might not trust their coaches and fail to remain open to self-reflection.

Although coaches need to understand clients' anxiety and resistance, they also need to feel confident and be willing to push clients out of their comfort zones to confront and change their clients' behavioral challenges. Corbett and Colemon (2006) introduced a coaching zone, which is "right on the edge of the learning zone, and not quite into the panic zone" (p. 244). The authors stated that clients usually prefer staying in their comfort zone, the place in which they feel comfortable exactly where they are, and thus resist change. Outside the comfort zone is the learning zone, a place in which clients are in control but learning something new. The panic zone is a place in which clients are terrified because they are not in control and cannot learn new things because of overwhelming fear. Corbett and Colemon (2006) claimed that coaches' job is "to facilitate change, and to do it quickly. That requires taking the client out of their comfort zone" (p. 244). For novice coaches, however, pushing clients out of their comfort zone can be a tall order.

Peterson also warned about coaches' reluctance to push their clients further, saying that "some coaches reach a point where they value the relationship to such an extent that they are reluctant to challenge the client's perspective, raise sensitive issues, or discuss negative or difficult feedback" (Peterson, 2011, p. 89). Coaches' lack of willingness to push their clients may be explained by their avoidance to make a commitment to delve into the difficult parts of the coaching process. Peterson (2011) stated that,

> Certain parts of the coaching process are relatively easy and generally result in immediate, positive feedback, making them rather seductive in nature. Thus they may dominate a coach's attention, preventing her from working on the difficult and less rewarding aspects of coaching that are part of the broad repertoire of skills and tools which characterize expert coaching. For example, asking powerful questions, giving feedback, and offering advice are relatively quick, straightforward behaviors that can provide tangible value to the participant . . . Other parts of the coaching process, in contrast, are slow, tedious, and often frustrating. Translating insights into action in the real world, for example, is much more difficult, as is working through the process of changing old habits and replacing them with new, more effective behaviors. (p. 94)

Actually, it was my impression that the coaches in this study seemed to put greater emphasis on asking a powerful question to foster a client's insight but did not care as much about asking as a humble inquiry (Schein, 1990) and promoting a client's position to "one up" (Schein, 2009, p. 33) by making him or her feel good about asking for needed help. I think novice coaches can benefit from learning to humbly inquire and control their urges to impress clients with powerful questions.

In addition, novice coaches may lack sufficient confidence to push clients out of their comfort zone, as in the cases of the coaches in this study. To sum up, novice coaches have two challenges that they have to overcome in order to be confident coaches. First, they have to understand clients' anxieties connected to changes and need to provide sufficient psychological safety. Once they established a strong working alliance with clients based on mutual trust, the coaches should learn to challenge their clients while remaining confident. The novice coaches' high self-efficacy may depend on their ability to successfully master these processes.

Conclusion 3. Novice coaches develop high levels of self-efficacy when they make transformational shift of their role perception and actions from lay helpers to professional coaches when interacting with clients.

Coaching is a helping relationship. However, being helpful, according to Schein (2000), is not as easy as people might think it would be. Borrowed from the concept of social economics, Schein (2009) explains helping as the fundamental human relationship in which a reciprocal process is expected between two parties based on trust and equality. However, in modern society, the cultural expectation of individuals is to be independent.

Thus, according to Schein (2009), being in a position of needing help puts a person “one down” (p. 32) as to admitting one’s inability to do his/her job. This asymmetric power relationship is intensified in that it automatically promotes the status of a helper to “one up” (p. 33) as someone who has a choice to offer help. As long as the initial power imbalance and consequent anxiety and tension continue, it is hard to attain a true helping relationship based on trust and equality.

Furthermore, in such a situation, a helper and a person who has asked for help may encounter possible pitfalls. Schein (2000) explained five possible traps for a client and six possible traps for a helper. A client (1) can have initial mistrust, (2) look for attention, reassurance and/or validation instead of help, (3) resent and defend, (4) depend on a helper, and (5) have stereotypical, unrealistic expectations and transference of perceptions. Also, a helper may ruin the helping relationship by (1) dispensing wisdom prematurely, (2) giving support and reassurance, (3) meeting defensiveness with more pressure, (4) resisting taking on the helper role, (5) accepting a problem and over-reacting to the dependence, and (6) having stereotypes, a priori expectations, counter-transference, and projections. Shein (1990) suggested “humble inquiry” as a desirable communication style for a helper. Through humble inquiry, a helper can acknowledge a helper’s ignorance about a client’s inner thoughts, promote a client’s position to “one up” (Shein, 2009, p. 33), and help a client to own his or her problems.

The findings support the notion that novice coaches develop a strong sense of self-efficacy as professional coaches when they transform their role preconceptions and stop their tendencies to act as lay helpers, for example, “over-involvement, excessive advice-giving, and boundary problems” (Schwing, LaFollette, Steinfeldt, & Wong, 2011,

p. 59). These outcomes yield similar results to those in a study by Schwing et al., (2011) with novice counselors. The authors observed that novice counselors went through a transitional period and demonstrated “an understanding of the therapeutic relationship as being less directive than lay helping and friendship relationships” (p. 59). Similarly, the novice coaches in this study mentioned that people used to look to them for advice and these experiences naturally drew them to the coaching profession. However, as they gained more experience, the coaches realized the gap between their images of a helper who provides advice and solves problems, and the real job of professional executive coaches. Thus, the coaches developed a sense of efficacy as they could control their wish to side with clients and a desire to give advice or be liked by their clients.

Becoming professional coaches was also different from remaining as lay helpers in exerting helping skills. When the coaches first entered the coaching profession, they seemed to have confidence in their helping skills such as listening, communicating, and forming rapport with others. However, using these skills alone is not sufficient to achieve a desired goal in a coaching session. The coaches required high order coaching skills such as “timing, appropriateness of intervention, understanding of client dynamics, and self-confidence” (Nutt Williams, Judge, Hill, & Hoffman, 1997, p. 390). Indeed, many of the coaches’ negative low confidence in the study were related to their lack of high order coaching skills, for example, the timing of layering questions or maintaining self-confidence when they coached a resistant client.

Another transformational shift from lay helper to professional coach was the coaches’ ability to control the level of self-exposure. The coaches in the study were conscious of the need to minimize their sharing of personal stories, giving advice, and solving problems. They realized that they do not and cannot have the right answer for people. These realizations sometimes discouraged the coaches because they could not use their strong skills in a coaching session. However, gradually the coaches acknowledged that their perceptions about the coaching role needed to be changed. Some coaches seemed to enjoy their changed perceptions because they were free from the burden of providing a good answer.

Although the purpose of a helping relationship is to meet a client's needs, not those of the helper (Okun & Kantrowitz, 2008), coaches can be "susceptible to flattery or suffer from a 'helper's syndrome' (Miller, 1979/1987)" (De Haan, 2008a, p. 104) and stay in the profession for those reasons. Thus, a coach should critically reflect on his or her deep motivation to help others because a person can have unconscious desires when he or she enters a helping profession such as projecting his or her own problems onto others or satisfying a deep-seated need to be wanted by others (Schuyt, 2004). Novice coaches' ability to transform their role perceptions to that of a professional coach determines the quality of their coaching skills and boosts their self-efficacy for further success.

Summary

This section discussed novice executive coaches' sense of self-efficacy and their learning. Three conclusions were explained in detail. There were (1) novice coaches' positive experiences bolster their feelings of high efficacy, while negative experiences diminish them; (2) novice coaches develop high levels of self-efficacy when they understand a client's anxiety and resistance and are willing to push clients out of their comfort zones to confront and change their behavioral challenges; and (3) novice coaches develop high levels of self-efficacy when they make transformational shifts of their role perceptions and actions from lay helpers to professional coaches when interacting with clients. The implications of this study on theory and practice will be discussed in the next section.

Implications for Theory and Practice

The executive coaching field is still new, and there are a number of new coaches working in the field. As Eraurt (1994) claimed, "the first two or three years after qualifying are probably the most influential in developing the particular personalized pattern of practice that every professional acquires" (p. 11). Thus, based on the findings, it was my goal to provide novice executive coaches with some useful guidance on their coaching career. In particular, novice coaches not only have to obtain and practice relevant coaching skills, but they also need a belief in their capabilities "to organize and execute the courses of action required producing given attainments" (Bandura, 1994, p. 3). According to Bandura (1986),

> There is marked difference between possessing subskills and being able to use them well under diverse circumstances. For this reason, different people with similar skills, or the same person on different occasions, any perform poorly, adequately, or extraordinarily....Competent functioning requires both skills and self-beliefs of efficacy to use them effectively. (p. 391)

Also, Bandura's (1994) explanation of efficacy-activated processes indicates that people with high self-efficacy set a higher goal and show resilience in achieving the goal (cognitive process), exhibit persistence and efforts to achieve the goal (motivational process), and better control their stresses and anxiety (affective process). These qualities are critical for novice coaches to perform successfully in spite of their lack of experience and to become “great coaches” (Peterson, 2011, p. 83) who obtain results in challenging situations with perseverance and confidence. Of course, certain situations are unfavorable to coaching in the first place, as Peterson (2011) stated:

> Some situations are so complex (for example, multiple stakeholders with different expectations, highly political environment, or overwhelming business challenges that other shave failed to overcome), so urgent (for example, there is simply not enough time for the person to develop what is needed), or so unfavorable (for example, a hostile, competitive environment where the boss or others are setting the person up to fail, significant substance abuse, or cognitive impairment) that the odds of any coach being successful are small. (p. 86)

It is easier for a coach to blame lack of progress elsewhere, such as “the participant’s low level of motivation, the organization’s half-hearted support, or the lack of clear feedback and accountability from the boss” (Peterson, 2011, p. 90) when the coaching is not effective in such situations. However, as Peterson (2011) added, “there are a number of situations that may be beyond the capabilities of a competent coach that an expert coach might handle quite capably” (p. 86) Therefore, it is critical for a novice coach to develop his or her coaching skills; to broaden the understanding of a client’s resistance and anxiety at a coaching session; and to make conscious efforts to increase his or her self-efficacy.

Currently coaching is practiced and understood differently depending on the discipline and context, and given such diversity, it is difficult to assert which approach is the best to coaching and developing novice coaches. Even a direct link between coaches' specific actions to clients' outcomes is not clear because various factors can influence both actions and outcomes (Peterson, 2011). Under these circumstances, coaches' high self-efficacy beliefs are among the reliable factors that ensure the quality of coaching and determine the future of the coaching field.

Indeed, the results of this study did not find any significant differences among the novice executive coaches' critical incidents in terms of their educational backgrounds, formal coaching training, gender, age, status as in-house or full-time coaches, and the number of clients they had coached by the time of the interviews. In addition, none of the coaches in the study wanted more formal training at this point; instead, they all placed an emphasis on gaining more experience. Thus, it would be safe to say that the coaches' previous training backgrounds only provide a foundation for their practice, and the coaches' actual experience, deliberate practice, and level of self-efficacy can differentiate their future performance, success, and years of commitment to their coaching career.

For the same reason, novice coaches who lack confidence may not put extra effort into confidently persevering under difficult coaching situations, not satisfy clients, and abandon their coaching careers sooner than confident coaches. The findings are consistent with the results of Gyllensten and Palmer's (2006) study, in which employees' unwillingness to be open to the coaching process or coaches' lack of skills could be potential causes of stress in a coaching intervention. What stands out in this study in complement to Gyllensten and Palmer's (2006) study is that employees' unwillingness to be open and coaches' lack of skills also work to the detriment of a coach's sense of self-efficacy. A diminished self-efficacy can prohibit a coach from showing perseverance for a successful coaching result which in turn can increase a client's stress. Thus, this study highlights the importance of understanding novice executive coaches' self-efficacy, its sources, and its developmental process to better guide future coaches and coaches who are already working in the field.

No matter what the profession, all people begin as novices and become more proficient as they gain knowledge, experience, and skills. Gaining more experience is critical in the developmental process from novice to seasoned professional. Novice coaches also need deliberate practice and experience to upgrade their skills and foster a high level of efficacy. According to Morgan, Harkins, and Goldsmith (2005),

> Given this complex matrix of skills, attributes, and capabilities, it might seem that a best practice coach is born, not made. The hard truth, however, is that every coach learns through doing. The coach often begins his or her calling because of a passionate desire to take a leadership role in a particular area of expertise or interest. This passion carries the coach through a sometimes painful growth of skills and abilities in the service of his or her calling. A coach is always learning, growing, and developing key behaviors as they are required. (p. 29)

Few exceptions exist to the fact that a person has to pass a novice stage, a period when he/she depends heavily on abstract knowledge and rules without much flexibility, to move into competence, proficiency, or the expert stage. As the coaches in the study mentioned, novice coaches need practice, gaining more experience and reflecting on their experience to prevent those experiences from remaining merely as “a process of incidental accrual and drift” (Regehr & Mylopoulos, 2008, p. 22) of actions without a deep understanding.

De Haan (2008a) said that “by very careful experiential learning and ongoing supervision can coaches translate experience into more effective action or even retain their initial involvement and open mindset” (p. 104). Coaching is often practiced in a confidential manner between a coach and a client, and thus coaches are susceptible to becoming isolated. Novice coaches need to actively seek supervision to critically examine their practice and learn from it (Day et al., 2008).

Coach educators and scholars will benefit from understanding the variables and dynamics of novice coaches’ self-efficacy formulation and development. Thus far, relatively little attention has been paid to novice coaches’ self-efficacy about their coaching skills and their learning in practice compared to coaches’ knowledge and skill acquisition. Unfortunately, as Cummings and Worley (2008) stated, “despite growing professionalism in the coaching field, the process can be technique driven, especially when formulas, tools, and advice are substituted for experience, good judgment, facilitation, compassion” (p. 452). Furthermore, among novice coaches, their learning needs can be different. Nutt Williams et al. (1997) stated that “relatively inexperienced trainees may need more basic skills training as well as techniques to help them deal with their anxiety and negative self-talk, whereas more experienced trainees may need more help with confidence building” (p. 397). Thus, coach educators should personalize their coaching training based on the needs of the trainees and novice coaches, make sure they master basic coaching skills, and attend to the individual situations in which they fail to utilize basic coaching skills in a more organized and integrative manner during their actual coaching practice.

Theoretically, the five major themes related to novice executive coaches' perceived self-efficacy confirmed the existing studies about the major components of a successful coaching intervention such as coaches' skills, clients' commitment, good relationships based on trust, and clients' cognitive and behavioral changes for success of personal and professional life. This result yielded similar results to a study by Augustijnen, Schnitzer, & Esbroeck (2011).The authors conducted a semi-structured interview with ten clients who had been through the executive coaching process in 2008-2009, and extracted an experimental based model of executive coaching. The six themes are divided into two areas: the coaching process and the central variables that direct coaching to be successful. The authors found four stages in the coaching process: (1) defining formal organization-bound objectives between coach, client and employer; (2) self-reflection; (3) self-awareness, and (4) changes in behavior and personal changes. Two variables that facilitated the coaching relationship were (1) clients' openness to introspection and (2) a relationship based on trust between coach and client. Although Augustijnen et al.'s (2011) executive coaching model was formulated based on clients' point of view and the model from this study was based on coaches' self-efficacy, it is worth-noticing that more similarities than differences are found between the two models. Thus, it can be concluded from the results that coaches and clients perceive the critical stages of executive coaching similarly.

My personal take-away from the study is twofold. I think certified coaches may perform poorly unless they exert constant effort in practicing coaching and changing their perceptions as professional coaches, and uncertified coaches may perform effectively with confidence, experience, skills, and ability to critically self-reflect. Second, as a novice coach myself, I gained tremendous vicarious learning from the other coaches' stories. I thank all interview participants for sharing their experiences with me and I would like to share my learning with many others as well.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study has answered some of the questions about novice executive coaches' positive and negative senses of self-efficacy. As a methodology, I conducted interviews and asked the coaches about their critical moments related to high or low confidence. Thus, my study explained the overall patterns of their self-efficacy experience. Further research should be directed at investigating how each individual novice coach develops, changes, or modifies their self-efficacy using in-depths interviews.

Generalization of the findings should be tempered by several considerations. This study was limited to novice coaches, and seven of them had been recruited from the same coaching institute. Although I could not identify any significant differences among the coaches in terms of their educational background, future research can expand the scope of the study and may include numerous novice coaches from different institutions throughout the nation or overseas. Comparing self-efficacy of between certified and self-taught coaches will be desirable to broaden the knowledgebase of the field.

More research is needed to differentiate the conditions under which coaches develop the highest self-efficacy and determine the most effective ways to train them. Also, comparing similarities and differences in levels of self-efficacy between experienced and novice executive coaches will help coach educators guide coaches based on their more confident and less confident areas.

The educational experiences of the participants can potentially restrict the range in the efficacy of sample. Seven coaches in this study (77.8%) had obtained more than masters' degrees, and thus it is possible that the coaches in the study were already at average-to-above-average in efficacy when they first began their coaching careers. Also, it is possible that only novice coaches who possessed some level of self-efficacy had agreed to participate in the interviews in the first place, and therefore the sample could not fully represent the population of novice coaches.

As yet, there is no tool to measure executive coaches' coaching skills except the work by Vieira and Palmer (2012). However, their work is still in an experimental stage. Development of a reliable measure to gauge coaches' self-efficacy will be useful for coaches to assess their skills and identify areas that need improvement.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative study of novice executive coaches was to explore incidents that positively or negatively affect coaches' perceived self-efficacy about their coaching skills. Guiding questions for this study were (1) what incidents influence the self-efficacy of novice executive coaches? and (2) what were important lessons that novice executive coaches learned from those incidents?

Qualitative interviewing was used as the primary method for collecting data. The in-depth interview method used in this study combined a critical incident method (Flanagan 1954) with a semi-structured, open-ended qualitative interview approach. Nine novice coaches were recruited using snowball sampling. Two face-to-face interviews and seven phone interviews were conducted to collect data. Each interview lasted around one hour. The constant comparative method was used to analyze interview data.

As for findings, five themes were interpreted as competencies to increase or diminish the coaches' self-efficacy. There were (1) provoking critical reflection through questions, (2) managing a coaching session proficiently, (3) developing a good coaching relationship, (4) facilitating personal transformation to develop new possibilities for action and learning, and (5) creating the foundations for business coaching. As for the coaches' learning three themes, experiential learning, reflective practice, and transformation of role perception were interpreted.

The last chapter discussed three conclusions that were derived from the findings. There were (1) novice coaches' positive experiences bolster their feelings of high efficacy, while negative experiences diminish them; (2) novice coaches develop high levels of self-efficacy when they understand a client's anxiety and resistance and are willing to push clients out of their comfort zones to confront and change their behavioral challenges; and (3) novice coaches develop high levels of self-efficacy when they make transformational shifts of their role perceptions and actions from lay helper to professional coach when interacting with clients.

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Appendix A

CONSENT FORM

I, _____________________, agree to participate in a research study titled "NOVICE EXECUTIVE COACHES' PERCEIVED SELF-EFFICACY" conducted by Yuri Han from the Department of Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy at the University of Georgia (706-542-3343) under the direction of Dr. Laura Bierema, Department of Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy, University of Georgia (706-542-9121). I understand that my participation is voluntary. I can refuse to participate or stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I can ask to have all of the information about me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

The purpose of this research is to explore novice executive coaches' perceived self-efficacy about their coaching skills. The benefits that I may expect from the research are contributing to the understanding of executive coaching practice and reflecting on my experience as a new executive coach.

My part in this study will last for one 60-90 minute interview. During the interview, I will be asked about the experiences and reflection related to my coaching practice. No risk or discomfort is expected from my participation in this research.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with me will remain confidential unless required by law. I have the right to review or edit the audiotapes of my interview. Only Yuri Han (Co-Primary Investigator) and Laura L. Bierema (Primary-Investigator, Doctoral committee Chair, as well as Methodologist) will have access to the audio recording. The audio recording and all other identifying information will be destroyed after one year.

The researcher will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project, and can be reached by telephone at (310) 903-9345.

I understand that I am agreeing by my signature on this form to take part in this research project and understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form for my records.

____________________	____________________	__________
Yuri Han	Signature	Date

Co-Primary Investigator (310) 903-9345, yuri.uga@gmail.com

____________________	____________________	__________
Laura L. Bierema	Signature	Date

Primary Investigator (706) 542-6174, bierema@uga.edu

____________________	____________________	__________
Name of Participant	Signature	Date

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 629 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu.

Appendix B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

"Novice Executive Coaches' Perceived Self-Efficacy"

Laura L. Bierema, Primary Investigator /
Yuri Han, Co-Primary Investigator

Interviewee: ____

Interviewer: ____

Date: ____

The purpose of this study is to understand novice executive coaches' perceived self-efficacy about their coaching skills. To facilitate the note-taking, I would like to record our conversations today. For your information, only the researcher on the project will have access to the recording, which will eventually be destroyed after being transcribed. Please sign the consent form, which states that: (1) all information will be held in a confidential manner, (2) your participation is voluntary, and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) we do not anticipate any harm of discomfort being experienced by you. I have planned this interview to last no longer than one hour.

Thank you for agreeing to participate.

Appendix C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview Questions

1) Think of a time when you felt the most confident in working with a client.

- Tell me about it.
- What was your role/involvement in the incident?
- What were your thoughts and feelings at the time of this incident?

2) Think of a time when you felt the least confident in working with a client.

- Tell me about it.
- What was your role/involvement in the incident?
- What were your thoughts and feelings at the time of this incident?

3) What was the most important thing you learned from your coaching practice?

4) What future learning needs have you identified as a result of this incident?

5) Is there anything else you would like to talk about?

Thank you.