

# **THE BENEFITS OF COACHING FOR EMPLOYEES AND THEIR ORGANISATIONS**

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## Abstract

The aim of this study is to gain knowledge on the influence of coaching on the performance of employees and on the performance of their organisation as a whole.

From the literature review it was expected that there would be a positive relation between the coaching styles 'friend', 'prophet' and 'expert' and the performance of the coachee and of the organisation, and a negative relation between the coaching style 'officer' and the performance of the coachee and of the organisation. From the empirical part of the study it became clear that the coaching styles prophet and friend both have a positive influence on the performance of the individual. This means that, by adopting these two styles the performance of the employee can be improved. Furthermore, the statistics show that the coaching styles expert and officer have no significant influence on the performance of the coachee; it has neither a positive influence, nor a negative one. This means that it makes no difference when a coach uses one of these styles. More specifically, it is a useless utilisation of one's time and energy when taking on one of these styles.

Furthermore, it becomes clear that only the coach as a friend has a significant direct positive effect on the performance of the organisation as a whole. This means that, by adopting this style in coaching an employee, the performance of his/her organisation can be improved. The significant relation between the prophet style and individual performance has an indirect (positive) effect on the performance of the organisation as a whole. The coaching styles expert and officer have, although expected otherwise, no significant influence on organisational performance. This can be logically explained by the fact that neither of them has a significant influence on individual performance.

These findings are discussed and reflected in recommendations for organisations and further research.

**Keywords:** *Coaching, Coaching styles, Individual performance, Organisational performance*

## **Introduction**

*The potential within people is greater when their own expectations and coaching can enable the person to 'tap in' to his or her hidden potential. - John Whitmore*

The demands of today's competitive business environment, coupled with customers' increasing expectations, put an emphasis on the performance of an organisation; to compete, organisations must continually improve their performance. Firms have increasingly recognised the potential for their people to be a source of competitive advantage (Pfeffer, 1994). Continually learning, adjusting, and developing an organisation is a way to continually improve performance (Van der Sluis and Schreiner, 2001). This, in turn, could be attained by promoting and stimulating the learning and development of an individual. Coaching offers optimal opportunities to achieve this. Creating competitive advantage through people requires careful attention to the practices that best leverage these assets (Wright *et al.*, 2003). Coaching can be seen as one of these practices; helping individuals realise their own potential and improve their performance (Edwards *et al.*, 2003). For decades, athletes have turned to coaches to help them perform better. A concept, which has been extremely popular in the world of sports for a long time, has made its entrance into the world of Human Resource Management (HRM). The rise of coaching into the world of business is emphasised by the fact that the first quantitative research to the acquaintance, the use, and the affectivity of the Human Resource Development (HRD)-instrument only recently took place (Klip and Matthijssen, 2004). According to this national research executed by TNS NIPO, coaching has conquered a place in the top five of the most effective HRD-instruments; as managers have shifted from controlling to empowering their employees, coaching has become a vital managerial tool (Wright *et al.*, 2003).

Glancing through the extensive literature, we can conclude that there are many articles on the relation between coaching and the performance of the coachee. However, there is rarely anything written about the effects of coaching and the performance of the organisation as a whole. In our study we wanted to fill this gap. In order to get more specific information on the influence of coaching on performance, the general concept 'coaching' is divided into four different coaching styles.

We defined the aim of our study as follows:

*Gaining an understanding of the influence of coaching, in terms of four distinct coaching styles, on the performance of employees and their organisation as a whole, and based on this, giving recommendations on how to optimise coaching as an HRD-instrument.*

From this aim follows our research model as showed in figure 1.

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The figure gives an overview of the main variables of our study. We will discuss the influence of four coaching styles on the performance on an individual employee (relation 1). And, we will explore the contribution of this relationship to the performance of an organisation (relation 2). To analyse these relationships, we did a literature study and an empirical research to investigate these relations in practice.

As derived from the aim of this study, which is described above, this study's main question can be formulated as follows:

*'What is the influence of coaching, in terms of four distinct coaching styles, on individual and organisational performance?'*

The main question is divided into the following sub-questions:

- 1) What is the relation between coaching, in terms of four distinct coaching styles, and individual performance?
- 2) What is the relation between coaching, in terms of four distinct coaching styles, and organisational performance?
- 3) What is the effect of coaching goals on these relations?
- 4) What is the effect of the relation between the coach and the coachee on these relations?
- 5) What is the effect of the co-variables 'age', 'gender', and 'educational background' on these relations?

## **Theory and Concepts**

### *Coaching*

Nowadays, coaching is a well-known concept in Human Resource Management (HRM). In the extensive literature there are many corresponding characteristics of coaching pointed out, but an all-embracing definition cannot be found.

Within this study, the following definition of coaching will be used:

*Coaching is an intern-organisation practice by which a coach (an expert in this line of business) aims to constantly improve the performance of an individual employee (the coachee) for the benefit of the*

*organisation, by motivating the coachee, helping him or her to develop job-related skills, and providing reinforcement and feedback* (Knippen and Green, 1989; Schabracq, 1998; Noe *et al.*, 2003; Cummings and Worley, 2004; Van der Sluis and Schreiner, 2001).

Coaching links up with the requirements needed to make an individual (employee) perform: the physical and mental abilities to perform, the motivation to perform, and the necessary feedback to be able to improve performance. Reasons to start a coaching relationship relate to this performance: a poor level of personal functioning, or (expected) function change / alteration, career-projects and change processes on departmental / organisational level (Schabracq, 1998).

Yet, one should not misinterpret this description of coaching; the aim of the coach is not to solve one particular problem, but to help the individual himself or herself so that he or she can cope better with present and future challenges one is bound to encounter. The coach acknowledges the potential self-sufficiency of individuals, and he / she increases the opportunities for them to confidently rise to new challenges (Chiaramonte and Higgings, 1993).

The importance of confidence in oneself is also stressed by the exponential learning curve. This curve (according to Chiaramonte and Higgings, 1993) states that with an investment of time and resources in the early stages of any growth process, each step along the way will require less effort and support to produce higher gains. It is a self-propelling force of nature that the high-performance coach strives to enhance and support. According to this curve, the level of self-confidence of the employee increases more dramatically as the individual's experience increases during each phase of development. Then, the coach is able to step back and let the high performer function more confidently and more effectively on his or her own.

Coaching as an approach to strengthen the self-improving and self-learning character of their proteges also returns in the research of Schabracq (1998). According to Schabracq coaching is aimed to achieve self-steering, which is aimed at the desired state. The advantage of this system is the increase in the level of effectivity, pleasure and personal development of the individual. Thus, one could say that the advantage of this method is in the maximum development of the individual's own talents and competencies.

### *Coaching styles*

In defining distinctive coaching styles, the research of Zielstra *et al.* (2001) is used. Within their research, four roles of change managers are mentioned. Although the research of Zielstra and his colleagues is focused on change managers, the roles these change managers adapt can also be used as coaching styles. The reason for this is that a coach can be seen as a change manager; guiding a change process of the motivation or the ability of an employee. Coaching is a commonly used intervention to assist change.

The four change roles Zielstra *et al.* distinguish ('friend', 'prophet', 'expert', and 'police officer' (from now on referred to as 'officer')) are based on a combination of two dimensions: respect-dominate and involve-control. In this way, the change manager can choose to play a waiting game, to be respectful, and thus adapt a more passive position, or he can act more action oriented and more dominant and steering. The other dimension shows the contrast that the change manager can either choose to focus on an emotional involvement with the employees, or to be more rationally in control.

These dimensions, and their accompanying roles, are displayed in the following figure:

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Although Zielstra *et al.* are talking about roles (a person's function within a situation), within this research the appellation 'styles' (a manner of doing something) is used. Although both notions are concerned with types of behaviour within specific situations, there is a difference in level. The person coaching employees takes on the *role* of a coach. In other situations he can take the role of a husband or a colleague. Within his or her role as a coach, the coach can choose a specific *style* of coaching. These coaching-styles are the ones Zielstra *et al.* distinguish; to coach as a friend, a prophet, an expert, or an officer.

Linking these styles and their characteristics as described by Zielstra *et al.* to the coaching practice, the following descriptions of the styles are used:

*Friend* The characteristics of a coach that takes on the style of a friend are 'respect' and 'involve'. In relation to the employee, the coach tries to listen to the other, encouraging him/her to give their own opinion, and involving him/her in the process. In this way, the coach empowers the coachee, focusing on soft performance and commitment. Other characteristics of the friend are: warm, harmonious, open, trustworthy, and interested.

*Prophet* The coach that acts as a prophet has the characteristics of being involved and dominant. This coach tries to persuade the coachee to see his/her own vision/ideal, and by doing so expanding and developing the coachee's vision. With his or her enthusiasm and 'selling'-technique, the coach tries to inspire and convince the coachee of his/her opinion. Besides persuasive and enthusiastic, the prophet can also be described as cheerful, dynamic, and energetic.

*Expert* The characteristics of the coach that acts as an expert can be described as 'respect' and 'control'. In this style, the coach tries not only to explain, but also to convince the coachee of his/her expertise and he/she explains how the coachee could use this for improving the performance. One can also describe the style of an expert as a concise, rational, detached, and reasonable.

*Officer* The coach in the style as officer can be characterised as being dominant and controlling. The officer wants to impose his/her own norms on others, thereby focusing on planned change and hard performance factors. They achieve this by forcing others to take specific actions.

According to Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983), it seems as if these styles are complete opposites. This does not mean, however, that they are empirical opposites, which are mutually exclusive; a person might combine styles. It is expected, however, that one of the styles will dominate.

The styles can also be described with the use of the coaching style continuum (Hay, 2003). This continuum consists of two different styles depending on the amount of work done by the coach in relation to the learner (the coachee). The style of an officer can be described as a 'push-style', where a large part of the work is done by the coach. Another name of this style is the 'authoritarian' style. In the most extreme form of this style the coach makes all the decisions and demands and the employee follows instructions without asking questions. This means that less emphasis is put on developing the thinking skills and personal qualities of the coachee. The style of the friend can be described as a 'pull-style'. In this style most of the work is done by the learner himself/herself. When adopting this style, one runs the risk that the coach will not help the employee to learn skills and values. The styles of prophet and expert lie between these two styles. These are more 'co-operative' styles in which the coach lets the coachee influence the decision-making process; expressing their opinions and making decisions. However, if both parties have different ideas on how to accomplish goals, a deadlock may be reached.

The coach can choose one of these styles depending on what a situation demands; different phases will ask for a different interpretation. However, most of the time a person will have a preference and a talent for a specific style (Zielstra *et al.*, 2001).

### **Career Development through coaching**

The desire for individuals to continue their growth and adaptation emerges from several reasons. Some people may not be using competencies they possess, and therefore, are not using their full resources or talent. Some people may be losing interest, vitality, productivity, commitment, or innovativeness, and there is a desire to stimulate or provoke them into regaining the excitement they once showed. Some people may not have certain competencies important for their current job, and there is the desire to help them find a path for the development of these competencies. Coaching is a manner in which those people can work on their career development.

Reviewing relevant literature about the influence of the coaching on the career development process, there are some suggestions in the literature that are directly relevant for our research. First, Tannenbaum (1997) suggested that support and feedback from supervisors, as part of the learning environment, improves performance and development on the long term. And, if supervisors coach and develop staff actively, this will have a positive effect on performance and job and career satisfaction.

Part of these suggestions were supported by Van der Sluis (1999) from which followed that new responsibilities supported by feedback, resulted in better perceived performance. On the other hand, both Arthur and Rousseau (1996) and Tannenbaum (1997) argued that a lack of learning opportunities hinders individual learning and, hence, individual effectiveness and development. And, a lack of managerial support and goals inhibited the application of new ideas and skills. This lowers the motivation to learn and reduces self-efficacy (Mathieu *et al.*, 1993; Mathieu *et al.*, 1992) and therefore career development. Apparently, if sub-ordinates are coached and mentored by their boss this results in their making learning and development plans with a focus on progress. As we already mentioned, this will have a positive effect on individuals' career development.

### **Hypotheses**

From an overview of the literature we detected that there are many writings on the relation between coaching and individual performance. None of these studies mention the link with organisational performance. However, the relation between coaching and individual performance could also have an effect on organisational performance. Against this background we build hypotheses as discussed below.

#### ***Link between coaching and individual performance***

When looking at the potential link between coaching and individual performance, the definition of coaching already shows that coaching has an influence on the performance of an individual employee. Namely, the performance of an employee is influenced by the motivation of this employee and by his abilities. Both are necessary conditions for individual performance (Ivancevich *et al.*, 1997).

#### ***The role of motivation and ability***

The literature in the area of individual performance seems to agree about the influence of motivation and ability on individual performance (Ivancevich *et al.*, 1997; Doorewaard and De Nijs, 1999; Tosi *et al.*, 2000; Noe *et al.*, 2003). Motivation can be described as the internal mental state of a person, which relates to the initiation, direction, persistence, intensity, and termination of behaviour (Landy and Becker, 1987). Ability is stated, according to Tosi *et al.* (2000), as the capacity to carry out a set of interrelated behavioural, or mental sequences to produce results. According to Ivancevich *et al.* (1997), an employee's motives lead to a given level of effort that, when it is being combined with that person's abilities, will lead to a specific kind of behaviour and subsequent job performance. This means that both motivation and ability are necessary conditions for a sufficient level of behaviour and performance. Thus, only having the mental/physical ability to perform in a certain job is not a guarantee for an employee to be able to perform successfully. Tosi *et al.* (2000) join this conclusion by showing how a football team with less ability, but with a considerably higher level of motivation, is able to outperform the team with more ability, but with less motivation. To improve team or individual



performance, one should work on the ability of the individual, on the motivation of an individual, or on both.

Coaching is seen as a method to influence these variables. This means that, if coaching is done in a proper way, it should have a positive influence on the motivation and ability of the individual and will enhance individual performance. It is expected, however, that different coaching styles have a different effect on performance. The success of an influence attempt by a coach is likely to depend on a number of things. However, little is known about the relationships between influence tactics (a coaching style a coach adopts) and influence outcomes (in this case: performance).

One of the few researchers who did study these types of relationships is Yukl. In his research (Falbe and Yukl, 1992; Yukl and Tracey, 1992; Yukl *et al.*, 1996) he found nine influence tactics, of which four had significant relations with influence outcomes. After comparing these four tactics to the four coaching styles discussed above, it becomes clear that there are similarities. Yukl's influence tactic 'consultation' seems to be similar to the coaching style 'friend'; by 'consultation' the agent involves the target into the process, modifying the proposal to deal with the target's concerns and suggestions. The influence tactic 'inspirational appeals' shows similarities to the coaching style 'prophet'; by 'inspirational appeals' the agent makes a request that arouses the enthusiasm of the target. The influence tactic 'rational persuasion' seems to be similar to the 'expert'-style; by 'rational persuasion' the agent uses logical arguments and factual evidence to persuade the target that a proposal is viable. Yukl's tactic 'pressure' shows similarities to the coaching style 'officer'; by 'pressure' the agent uses demands, threats, frequent checking and/or persistent reminders to force the target to do what he or she wants. According to Yukl's research, influence attempts are more likely to result in target commitment when the agent uses consultation, inspirational appeals, or strong rational persuasion, and not when he/she uses pressure tactics. Based on his study, target commitment occurs when 'the target person agrees internally with the action or decision, is enthusiastic about it, and is likely to exercise initiative and demonstrate unusual effort and persistence in order to carry out the request successfully'. When this request has the goal of increasing performance (the main goal of coaching) and the commitment of the coachee is high, the request should be successfully carried out. In this way, the request will positively influence the motivation and/or ability of the coachee to perform, thereby positively influencing the performance of the coachee. This means that there appears to be a positive relation between the coaching styles 'friend', 'prophet', and 'expert' and the performance of the coachee, and a negative relation between the coaching style 'officer' and the performance of the coachee. Information about the exact influence of these styles on the motivation and on the ability of the employee could not be found in the literature on these topics. This knowledge will be obtained from the empirical part of this study.

To find out how the performance of the individual can be improved, and to provide the individual with the information on this improvement and with information on the level of the goal achievement, performance feedback via coaching is a necessity. This feedback cannot only increase employee

performance (in an indirect way) and satisfaction, helping the learners quickly to correct any mistakes (Philips, 1995), but it also provides the organisation with a systematic way to monitor the development of human resources in the firm (Noe *et al.*, 2003; Cummings and Worley, 2004).

With reference to the theory as stated above, we expect that:

Hypothesis 1: *Different coaching styles have a different influence on individual performance.*

### ***Link with organisational performance***

Coaching cannot only increase employee performance (in an indirect way) and satisfaction, but it also provides the organisation with a systematic way to monitor the development of human resources in the firm (Noe *et al.*, 2003; Cummings and Worley, 2004).

There is growing empirical evidence that people are the pre-eminent organisational resource and the key to achieving outstanding performance (Peters and Waterman, 1982; Arthur, 1994; Huselid and Becker, 1994; Ichniowski *et al.*, 1994; Pfeffer, 1994; Huselid, 1995; MacDuffie, 1995;). An organisation's human resources can influence organisational performance by improving efficiency (Becker and Gerhart, 1996). According to Ivancevich *et al.* (1997) 'performance serves as the vehicle for judging the efficiency of individuals, groups and organisations'. This means that if a 'human resource' wants to contribute to the efficiency of the organisation (to influence the performance of the organisation), he has to work efficient himself, meaning that he has to work on his performance.

The effect of coaching on the individual performance will have an indirect effect on the performance of the entire organisation. The coach influences the performance of an employee by working on his motivation and abilities. The improved individual performance of an employee will enhance the organisational performance. One of the few studies about the relation between coaching and organisational performance is conducted by Manchester, Inc. (Cunningham and McNally, 2003). Although their research is focused on executive coaching, it shows the direction of the relation; a 6:1 return on investment. Among the benefits experienced by companies, improvements in productivity, quality, organisational strength, retention, customer service, and bottom-line profitability were noted.

As is stated in the paragraph on individual performance, it is expected that the different coaching styles have a different influence on the performance of the coachee. Since coaching can influence the performance of the organisation through the performance of the individual, one can also expect that these differences in individual performance (due to the different styles) affect the performance of the organisation. Therefore, we hypothesise:

Hypothesis 2: *Different coaching styles have a different influence on organisational performance.*

### *Coaching goals*

An other important part of coaching, which can be regularly found in the coaching-literature (Knippen and Green, 1989; Ball, 1999; Eaton and King, 1999; Cummings and Worley, 2004; Van der Sluis and Schreiner, 2001), is the drafting up of coaching goals; employees need to know what they must accomplish. Since coaching has the aim to stimulate the individual to improve his or her performance, this goal should be a ‘stretch’ goal: one that aims just beyond the coachee’s recent performance (Eaton and King). The coach and the coachee should draft up a plan together for achieving this main-goal.

This main goal can be divided into sub goals. Within their research, Witherspoon and White (1996) mention four roles that coaches can play. These roles are focused on coaching an executive. We, however, regard these roles more as goals to be achieved by coaching, and which cannot only be used for coaching executives, but also for coaching other employees. These roles (goals) are the following: coaching for skills, coaching for performance, coaching for development, and coaching for the person’s agenda. Although one of these (sub) goals is named as ‘coaching for performance’, they all have the ultimate coaching goal of positively influencing performance.

#### *Coaching for skills*

Coaching for skills is learning focused on a specific task. The term ‘skills’ represents basic concepts, strategies, methods, behaviours, attitudes, and perspectives associated with success in one’s job. This goal is focused on helping people to learn specific skills, behaviours, and attitudes. Furthermore, it can support learning on the job. The coach helps the coachee to assess skills-building needs and recommends learning resources.

#### *Coaching for performance*

Coaching for performance focuses on the employee’s present job. The coachee feels the need to function more effectively at work or to address other performance issues. This goal can be described as less urgent than coaching for skills. The specific goals may be fuzzy; lacking a clear definition of actual behaviour or root causes. Coaching for performance can help the employee to practice and apply new skills, clarify performance goals, and/or alleviate performance problems. In these cases, the coach helps the coachee assess his/her performance, obtain feedback on strengths and weaknesses, and enhance effectiveness.

#### *Coaching for development*

Coaching for development focuses on a person’s future job and prepares the coachee for advancement by strengthening needed skills, and addressing long-term development needs. Thus, this goal is focused on development and personal growth, involving more time to reach clarity and consensus. The coach helps the coachee to enhance skills and capabilities for future jobs.

#### *Coaching for the coachee’s agenda*

Because a person’s agenda can be broad and evolving, this type of coaching tends to involve comprehensive learning. The person could just need a confidant to offer insight, perspective, and constructive feedback on ideas. Therefore, the sub-goals can be broad and open-ended. The threat

tends to be low, as the coachee sets the agenda and controls its content. The coach helps the coachee to obtain valid data to address specific issues or concerns.

These coaching goals are based on the clients' needs. These needs are the key dimension for distinguishing between different coaching goals. It is important for both coachee and coach to recognise the distinctions among the various goals; to enable them to solve problems or seize opportunities. In practice, coaching goals may overlap. (Witherspoon and White, 1996)

Based on these differences between the goals, it can be expected that these goals have different influences on the coaching styles-performance relation. Therefore, we hypothesise:

Hypothesis 3: *The coaching goals have an effect on the coaching styles-performance relation.*

### ***The coach – coachee relation***

The relation between power (the agent's potential influence over the target person derived from the agent-target relationship) and influence outcomes (performance) is explained in the research of Yukl *et al.* (1996). The outcomes of this study show that power is positively related to influence outcomes. This means that strong referent power for example (one likes, respects and admires one's coach), makes it easier to gain co-operation from people, even for requests that cannot be considered essential or enjoyable.

The influence of power on influence outcomes could be traced back to the formality of the relation between the coach and the coachee; an informal or a formal relationship. Van der Sluis and Schreiner (2001) claim that in both types of relations, mutual trust and open communication between the coach and the individual are important components. To achieve this, there should be good match between the coach and the coachee. Situations, in which an informal coaching relationship develops, are usually the result of a good match between the two parties. Formalised relations, however, could lead to mismatches (Burke and McKeen, 1989, Kizilos, 1990). This could have the effect of mutual irritations, lack of understanding, displeasure and mistrust, which could have a negative effect on the performance of the individual. Therefore, the relation between coaching styles and performance could be influenced by the relation between the coach and the coachee.

Hypothesis 4: *The relation between the coach and the coachee has an effect on the coaching styles-performance relation.*

### ***Covariates age, gender, and educational background***

It can be suggested that several demographic characteristics of employees (age, gender, and educational background) do have an effect on the relation between coaching and organisational performance.

However, according to a wide range of researchers (Waldman and Avolio, 1986; McEvoy and Casio, 1989; Arthur *et al.*, 1990; Cleveland and Shore, 1992; Arvey and Murvey, 1998), there are no differences in the performance or the judged performance of younger and older workers. The results demonstrated that the greater effectiveness of older workers in some settings is clearly derived from their experience in related activities. This means that, when their experience is the same, there seem to be few differences in the performance of younger and older workers (Mangione and Quinn, 1975).

The same conclusion can be drawn for the variable 'gender'. Experience with task activities and responsibilities is the variable that explains variance in performance ratings. Although, gender differences can be the underlying reason for differences in the quality and quantity of experiences but this can only be suggested. There is no clear evidence for differences in performance of men and women (Hough, 1998; Hough and Oswald, 2000).

Ariss and Timmins (1989) agree with the conclusions of Douglass (1976), Sandberg and Hoffer (1987), Jo and Lee (1996), and many others that a relationship between the education and the performance of an individual, as well as a relationship between the education of an individual and the performance of the organisation has not been found. It is the utilisation of education that matters.

With reference to the theory as stated above, we expect that:

Hypothesis 5: *Age, gender, and educational background have no effect on the coaching styles-performance relation.*

Based on the relations between coaching, individual performance, organisational performance, and the intervening variables, the following research model could be drawn up. This model should be seen as a dynamic and cyclical process; one can continuously start over, provide feedback, and reflect on previous phases throughout the process.

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## **Research method**

### *Sample and procedures*

The study was conducted among N medium-sized Dutch consulting companies. We made no distinction between specific types of consultants (internal or external) or between the sector at which they work (finance, strategy, ICT, etc). We selected consultants that have been coached for at least

three months, either in the present or in the past. As respondents, the consultants were asked to provide information about themselves; their opinion, behaviour, etc.

Seven consulting centres, which were willing to co-operate, were contacted. These consulting centres were contacted by phone, by e-mail, or in person. The contact persons within these consulting centres have sent the questionnaire to a total of 139 consultants. The contact persons were contacted by phone, by e-mail, or in person.

The survey was, via the contact persons, sent by e-mail to 139 consultants. The e-mail contained a link to the survey. Within the time period of two and a half weeks, there was a response rate of 48.92% (n = 68).

It was communicated to the respondents that all data will be processed anonymously and that their confidentiality will be protected.

### *Measures*

To study the relation between coaching and individual and organisational performance, the respondents were asked to indicate their perception of the influence of being coached on their individual performance and on the performance of the firm they work in.

The measurement of the type of coaching style within this survey is based on a scale of Zielstra *et al.* (2001). The measurement of job performance and individual performance within this survey is based on scales developed by Emans and Radstaak (1990), to indicate the individual's perception of his or her own job performance, and scales developed by Delaney and Huselid (1996), to indicate the individual's perception of the performance of the firm he or she is working for. All three parts of the survey were measured on a five-point Likert scale.

### *Analyses*

The collected data of the survey was analysed with the use of SPSS for windows. Frequency distributions were used to analyse the distributions of coaching styles used within a coaching practice, to find out which coaching goal is used most/least, and to analyse the distributions of the start of the coaching relation and of the age, gender, and educational background of the coachee.

Multiple regression analyses were used to look for a linear (independent) relation between a dependent variable and various independent variables. The dependent variables are individual performance and organisational performance. The independent variables are the four coaching styles, and the intervening variables coaching goals, the coach-coachee relation, and age, gender, and educational background of the coachee. One-way ANOVA is used to study the interactions between the styles in their influence on individual performance and organisational performance. Within these analyses the standardised Beta-coefficients were used to indicate the relative importance of every independent variable. Correlation matrixes were used as additional information on the relation between the

coaching styles, individual and organisational performance, and the various intervening variables. Within all analyses, a significance level of 0.05 is used.

## Results

### *Coaching - individual performance*

The first hypothesis of this empirical research is stated as follows: *Different coaching styles have a different influence on individual performance.* This hypothesis will be tested with the use of indicators of coaching styles (friend, prophet, expert and officer) and with the use of the following indicators of individual performance, which were used in the survey (based on the work of Emans and Radstaak (1990)):

1. The references one gets when leaving the organisation
2. The ability to get along with one's colleagues
3. The level of pride of one's work
4. The amount of advice one needs to give his or her colleagues
5. The satisfaction of one's supervisor with one's work
6. The level of comfort one feels in his or her job
7. The importance of one's job
8. One's contribution to the realisation of company goals
9. One's motivation to perform
10. One's ability to perform

These ten statements all measure the variable 'individual performance' (*Cronbach's alpha = 0.790*). To draw even more specific conclusions from the results, this scale is subdivided into three factors. Factor 1, which can be labelled as 'one's performance according to others', consists of the statements 1, 4, and 5. Factor 2, which can be labelled as 'feeling', consists of the statements 2, 3, 6, and 9. Factor 3, which can be labelled as 'ability', consists of the statements 7, 8, and 10.

When looking at the distribution of coaching styles as used within a coaching practice, it becomes clear that the coaching style 'friend' is most frequently used, followed by the prophet and expert styles. The officer style is least frequently used.

When looking at the influence of the coaching styles on individual performance, it becomes clear that there is no significant interaction effect between the coaching styles on individual performance. There are, however, some significant main effects of factors. There is a significant relationship between the friend style and individual performance (*sign. = 0.022, Beta = 0.297*), and there is a significant relation between the prophet style and individual performance (*sign. = 0.017, Beta = 0.322*). These relations are both positive. The prophet style-variable has slightly more influence on individual

performance than the friend style, as can be concluded from the Betas. It further becomes clear that both the expert style and the officer style have no significant influence on individual performance.

More specific results can be obtained from the analysis of the three factors of individual performance. Out of this analysis it becomes clear that there is a significant positive relation between the prophet style and the influence on the 'individual performance according to others' (thus, from the perspective of the organisation (when getting references), of one's colleagues (in giving advice), and of one's supervisor (how satisfied he / she is with one's work)) (*sign.* = 0.008, *Beta* = 0.355). Furthermore, the 'friend' style has a significant positive effect on the factor 'feeling' (the level of getting along with colleagues, of pride of one's work, of comfort in one's job, and of motivation to perform) (*sign.* = 0.040, *Beta* = 0.264).

Based on the findings, that the different coaching styles have a different influence on individual performance, hypothesis 1 can be confirmed. The expectation that there would be a positive relation between the coaching styles 'friend', 'prophet' and 'expert' and the performance of the coachee, and a negative relation between the coaching style 'officer' and the performance of the coachee, proved to be slightly incorrect; the expert and officer style have no significant direct influence on the performance of the individual.

#### *Coaching - organisational performance*

The second hypothesis of this empirical research is stated as follows: *Different coaching styles have a different influence on organisational performance.* This hypothesis will be tested with the use of indicators of coaching styles (friend, prophet, expert and officer) and with the use of the following indicators of organisational performance, which were used in the survey (based on the work of Delaney and Huselid (1996)):

1. The quality of the products/services of the company
2. The development of new products/services
3. The ability to attract essential employees
4. The ability to retain essential employees
5. The satisfaction of customers
6. The relation between management and other employees
7. The relation among employees in general

These ten statements all measure the variable 'organisational performance' (*Cronbach's alpha* = 0.784). To draw even more specific conclusions from the results, this scale is subdivided into two factors. Factor 1, which can be labelled as 'organisational performance in general', consists of the statements 1 to 5. Factor 2, which can be labelled as 'relation', consists of the statements 6 and 7.



When looking at the influence of the coaching styles on organisational performance, it becomes clear that there is no significant interaction effect between the coaching styles on organisational performance. There is, however, a significant main effect of the friend style on organisational performance (*sign.* = 0.002, *Beta* = 0.404). According to the correlation matrix, there is also a relation between the prophet style (*sign.* = 0.035) and the officer style (*sign.* = 0.045) and organisational performance. But since these relations do not come up in the one-way ANOVA, these are caused by the combinations of variables, and can not be considered independent influences. Therefore, it turns out that the prophet, expert, and officer style have no independent influence on the performance of an organisation.

More specific results can be obtained from the analysis of the three factors of individual performance. Out of this analysis it becomes clear that there is a significant positive relation between the coach as a friend and the organisational performance in general-factor (concerning the quality and development of products and services, the ability to attract and retain essential employees, and the satisfaction of customers) (*sign.* = 0.002, *Beta* = 0.404). Furthermore, there are significant positive relations between the friend style (*sign.* = 0.042, *Beta* = 0.265) and the officer style (*sign.* = 0.019, *Beta* = 0.375) and the factor 'relation' (concerning the relation between the management and other employees, and among employees in general). The last result has no effect on the total organisational performance due to the non-significant relation between this coaching style and the first factor of organisational performance.

Based on the findings, that the different coaching styles have a different influence on organisational performance, hypothesis 2 can be confirmed. The expectation that there would be a positive relation between the coaching styles 'friend', 'prophet' and 'expert' and the performance of the organisation, and a negative relation between the coaching style 'officer' and the performance of the organisation, proved to be slightly incorrect; the prophet, expert and officer style have no significant direct influence on the total organisational performance.

These similarities between the influence of coaching styles on individual performance and their influence on organisational performance can be explained by the relation between individual and organisational performance. The correlation analysis shows that there is a significant relation between individual performance and organisational performance (*sign.* = 0.000, *r* = 0.692). This means that when individual performance increases due to coaching, organisational performance increases as well. This relation can be described as moderately strong; 48 percent of the variance in organisational performance can be explained by the individual performance.

### Intervening variables

The following three paragraphs will discuss the influence of the intervening variables (coaching goals, coach-coachee relation, and age, gender, and educational background) on the coaching styles-performance relations. As becomes clear from the analyses, there are no differences in the influences of the intervening variables on performance between the four coaching styles. Therefore, the following paragraphs will only discuss the influences of the intervening variables on the coaching-performance relations in general.

#### *Coaching goals*

The third hypothesis of this empirical research is stated as follows: *The coaching goals have an effect on the coaching styles-performance relation.*

The frequency distributions show that the coaching goal 'development' is most often used within the coaching practice. According to the analysis, there is no significant interaction between coaching goals and the influence of coaching on individual and organisational performance at all. Even when looking specifically at the factors of performance, no significant relations can be discovered.

These findings, that there are no significant effects of the coaching goals on the coaching-performance relation, contradict hypothesis 3.

#### *The coach - coachee relation*

The fourth hypothesis of this empirical research is stated as follows: *The relation between the coach and the coachee has an effect on the coaching styles-performance relation.*

This coach-coachee relation is measured with the use of the following two variables:

1. The start of the coaching relation (in a formal or informal way)
2. The level in which the coach and the coachee get along with each other

As can be seen in the frequency table, 38.2 percent of the respondents are involved in a coaching practice that started in an informal way. 61.8 percent started in a formal way; the coach being assigned to the coachee. Out of the results it becomes clear that the influence of the start of the coaching relation on the effect that coaching has on individual performance is not significant. When looking at organisational performance, one can conclude that there is neither a significant relation between the start of the coaching relation and the influence of coaching on the general organisational performance. There is, however, a significant positive relationship between the level in which the coach and the coachee get along, and the influence of coaching on this performance (*sign.* = 0.038, *Beta* = 0.252). This means that the level of getting along, influences the effect coaching has on individual performance. When looking more specifically at the factors of this variable, it becomes clear that this relation has its origin in the factor 'others'. The level in which the coach and coachee get along has a significant positive relation (*sign.* = 0.026, *Beta* = 0.262) with the coaching-performance relation as

stated within this factor. There are no significant relations with the other two factors. In the area of organisational performance, the level of getting along with each other has no significant influence on the coaching-organisational performance relation or on the two factors.

Furthermore, from the correlation matrix it becomes clear that there is no significant relationship between the start of the coaching relation and the level in which the coach and the coachee get along. Hypothesis 4, which assumed that the relation between the coach and the coachee has an effect on the coaching-performance relation, was confirmed by these findings. But although the level in which the coach and coachee get along is an important influence on the coaching-performance relation, this is not related to the start of the relation as was expected.

#### *Age, gender, and educational background*

The fifth hypothesis of this empirical research is stated as follows: *The co-variables age, gender, and educational background have no effect on the coaching styles-performance relation.*

#### Age

The age of the respondents ranged from 23 to 54 years, with a mean age of 37. There is a significant negative relation between the age of the coachee and the influence of coaching on the individual performance of the coachee (*sign. = 0.036, Beta = -0.270*). This means that the older the coachee, the less influence coaching has on his or her performance. This relationship can also be found in the factor 'others': there is a significant negative relation (*sign. = 0.003, Beta = -0.377*) between the age of the coachee and the influence coaching has on this factor of his or her individual performance. There are no significant relations between the age of the coachee and the influence of coaching on the other two factors of individual performance.

This significant negative relation between the influence of coaching on individual performance and the age of the coachee is not significant enough to affect the performance of the total organisation (or the two factors of organisational performance); there are no significant relationships between the age of the coachee and the influence of coaching on organisational performance.

#### Gender

When looking more closely at the distribution of male and female respondents, it becomes clear that 64.6 percent of the respondents are male, and that 35.5 percent are female. From the analyses, it becomes clear that there are no significant relationships between the gender of the coachee and the influence coaching has on his or her individual performance and the organisational performance.

## Educational background

It also becomes clear that the educational background of the coachee has no significant influence on the coaching-performance relation (with regard to both individual performance, and organisational performance).

Based on these findings, hypothesis 5, which assumed that the co-variables age, gender, and educational background have no significant influence on the coaching-organisational performance relation, can be confirmed. This does not, however, apply to the influence of coaching on individual performance; the age of the coachee can make a significant difference in this matter.

## Conclusions

### *Research question and hypotheses*

The main research question of this study to coaching was stated as follows: *‘What is the influence of coaching, in terms of four distinct coaching styles, on individual and organisational performance?’*

### Theoretical findings

The theoretical study shows that coaching has a positive influence on the performance of an individual by influencing the two dependent variables of individual performance: ability and motivation. But it appears that the general concept ‘coaching’ can be subdivided into four coaching styles: friend, prophet, expert, and (police) officer. These roles are based on the research of Zielstra *et al.* (2001). The coach as a friend can be described as involved and respectful. The coach as a prophet is involved and dominant. The coach as an expert wants to control, but also respect his/her coachee. The coach as an officer can be described as dominant and controlling. These four coaching styles show many similarities to the influence tactics of Yukl (Falbe and Yukl, 1992; Yukl and Tracey, 1992; Yukl *et al.*, 1996). When these two studies are combined, it becomes clear that there is a positive relationship between the coaching styles ‘friend’, ‘prophet’, and ‘expert’ and the performance of the coachee, and a negative relation between the coaching style ‘officer’ and the coachee’s performance. Although the coaching styles will influence both the ability of the employee to perform and the motivation to perform, information on the exact influence of the styles on these concepts could not be found in the literature. This information will be drawn from the empirical part of this study.

There is growing empirical evidence which suggests that people are the pre-eminent organisational resource and the key to achieving outstanding performance (Peters and Waterman, 1982; Arthur, 1994; Huselid and Becker, 1994; Ichniowski *et al.*, 1994; Pfeffer, 1994; Huselid, 1995; MacDuffie, 1995; Delaney and Huselid, 1996). Because of this, one can speak of a relation between individual performance and organisational performance. And since it is expected that different coaching styles

have a different influence on the performance of the coachee, the indirect influence of these styles on the performance of the total organisation is also expected to be different; being a friend, prophet, or expert is expected to have a positive influence on organisational performance, being an officer is expected to have a negative influence on organisational performance.

An other important part of coaching, which can be regularly found in the coaching-literature (Knippen and Green, 1989; Ball, 1999; Eaton and King, 1999; Cummings and Worley, 2004; Van der Sluis and Schreiner, 2001), is the drafting up of coaching goals; employees need to know what they must accomplish. The main goal of coaching (increasing one's performance) can be divided into four sub goals: coaching for skills, coaching for performance, coaching for development, and coaching for the person's agenda (based on: Witherspoon and White, 1996). These coaching goals need to be adjusted to the employee's needs. Based on the differences between the goals, it is expected that these goals have different influences on the coaching styles – performance relation.

The relation between the coach and the coachee can be classified as an informal or as a formal one (according to Van der Sluis and Schreiner, 2001). In both types of relations, mutual trust and open communication are important components. Sometimes formalised relations lead to mismatches (Burke and McKeen, 1989, Kizilos, 1990), which could have the effect of mutual irritations, lack of understanding, displeasure and mistrust (partly due to weak referent power (Yukl *et al.*, 1996)). Since these could have a consecutive effect on the performance of the individual, the relation between the coach and the coachee is expected to have an effect on the coaching-performance relation.

From the research of Douglass (1976), Waldman and Avolio (1986), Sandberg and Hoffer (1987), Ariss and Timmins (1989), McEvoy and Casio (1989), Arthur *et al.* (1990), Cleveland and Shore (1992), Arvey and Murvey (1998), and Hough (1998), and Hough and Oswald (2000), and many others, it becomes clear that the co-variables age, gender, and educational background have no effect on the performance of an individual, nor on the performance of the entire organisation.

### Empirical findings

Based on the theory about the influence of the four coaching styles on individual performance, we expected that the different coaching styles would have a different influence on the performance of the coachee. This hypothesis is confirmed in this research project. The expectation that the coaching styles 'friend', 'prophet', and 'expert' would be positively related to the performance of the coachee, and that the coaching style 'officer' would be negatively related to the performance of the coachee, based on the research of Yukl *et al.* (1996), is not completely confirmed, as is explained below.

As becomes clear from the analysis of the data, the coaching styles prophet and friend both have a positive influence on the performance of the individual. This means that, by adopting these two styles the performance of the employee can be improved. The prophet style seems to have slightly more influence on individual performance than the friend style. From the frequency distribution, it becomes

clear that the friend-style is used most often, followed by the prophet style. Based on the results, it should be the other way around, since the prophet style has the largest positive influence.

When studying the influences of these styles in great detail, one can conclude that the prophet style influences the performance of the coachee by influencing factor 1; individual performance according to others. This means that the coachee, using this style, will get better references when leaving the organisation, will be more often asked for advice by his or her colleagues, and will have a more satisfied supervisor. The friend style, on the other hand, influences individual performance by influencing factor 2; feeling. This means that, by using this style, the coachee will get along better with colleagues, will be prouder of his or her work, will be more comfortable in his/her job, and will be more motivated to perform. It is interesting to see that none of these coaching styles has a significant influence on the third factor; ability. When linking this to the conceptual model of this research, these outcomes indicate that coaching has more influence on one's motivation to perform, than on one's ability to perform.

Furthermore, the statistics show that the coaching styles expert and officer have no significant influence on the performance of the coachee; it has neither a positive influence, nor a negative one. This means that it makes no difference when a coach uses one of these styles. More specifically, it is a useless utilisation of one's time and energy when taking on one of these styles.

Furthermore, it becomes clear that no interaction effect between these styles and their influence on individual performance can be found. This means that a combination of two styles has no significant impact on the performance of an employee.

#### Coaching styles – organisational performance

On the basis of the theory about the influence of coaching styles on organisational performance, we expected that the different coaching styles would have a different influence on the performance of the organisation. This hypothesis is confirmed in this research project. The expectation that the coaching styles 'friend', 'prophet', and 'expert' would be positively related to organisational performance, and that the coaching style 'officer' would be negatively related to organisational performance is not completely confirmed, as is explained below.

From the statistical analysis, it becomes clear that only the coach as a friend has a significant positive effect on the performance of the organisation as a whole. This coaching style has a positive influence on both factors of organisational performance; on the factor 'organisational performance in general' and on the factor 'relation'. This means that this coaching style, improves the quality of the products/services the organisation delivers, the development of new products/services, the ability to retain and attract essential employees, and the satisfaction of customers (factor 1), and it also improves the relation between the management and employees, and the relation among employees in general (factor 2).

It is interesting to see that the officer style has a significant positive influence on the organisational performance factor 'relation'. This style seems to have even more influence on this factor than the coaching style 'friend'. But since there is no significant relation between the officer style and the total organisational performance, the positive relation with factor 2 is cancelled out by the non-significant relation of this style with factor 1.

It is also interesting to see that the correlation matrix shows that there is a significant relation between the prophet style and organisational performance. This relation, however, cannot be found in the regression analyses. This means that this style has no independent direct influence on organisational performance. But since the prophet style has a significant relation with individual performance, and there is a significant relation between individual performance and organisational performance, one can assume that there is an indirect relation between the coaching style 'prophet' and organisational performance.

Although it was expected that the officer style would have a negative effect on organisational performance, this is not the case. Together with the coaching style 'expert', they have no influence on organisational performance. This can be logically explained by the fact that neither of them have a significant influence on individual performance.

Furthermore, it becomes clear that no interaction effect between these four coaching styles and their influence on organisational performance can be found. This means that a combination of two styles has no significant impact on the performance of an organisation.

### Coaching goals

On the basis of the theory about the influence of the four coaching goals 'skills', 'performance', 'development', and 'own agenda', we expected that the different coaching goals would have different influences on the coaching styles-performance relation. This expectation is not confirmed in this research project. First of all, there appeared to be no significant differences in the influence of the coaching goals on the coaching-performance relation between coaching styles. But also when looking at coaching in general, without subdividing the coaching practice into the four styles, there is no significant interaction between coaching goals and the influence of coaching on individual and organisational performance (nor on the factors of performance). Thus, whatever goal is chosen, the influence of coaching on performance stays the same.

### The coach-coachee relation

Based on the theory about the influence of the relation between the coach and the coachee on the coaching styles-performance relation, we expected a relation between these variables. This hypothesis is partly confirmed, because this research showed that the relation between the coach and the coachee has an influence on the coaching-performance relation. It cannot be completely confirmed, since it is not entirely the same as was expected based on the literature.

First of all, just as with the intervening variable coaching goals, there are no significant differences between coaching styles in the influence of the coach-coachee relation on the coaching-performance relation. Furthermore, there is no significant influence of the start of the coach-coachee relation on the relation between coaching in general and performance (both individual and organisational). However, when looking at the level in which the coach and coachee get along, one can conclude that there is an influence of this level on the influence of coaching on individual performance. It becomes clear that the better the coach and the coachee can get along, the more positive the influence of coaching on individual performance will be. The origin of this relation can be found in the factor 'others'. Furthermore, the level of getting along appears to have no significant influence on the coaching-performance relation.

It is also interesting to see that, although it was expected, there is no significant relationship between the start of the coaching relation and the level of getting along with each other. Thus, the assumption that the members of a coaching relation that is started in an informal way can get along better with each other is incorrect.

#### Age, gender, and educational background

On the basis of the theory about the influence of the demographic characteristics of employees 'age', 'gender', and 'educational background', we expected no relation between these characteristics and the perceived individual and organisational performance in relation to coaching. This expectation can only be confirmed with regard to the influence of these variables on the coaching-organisational performance relation. In the case of individual performance, other conclusions can be drawn, as will be explained below.

Just as with the other two intervening variables, there are no significant differences between coaching styles in the influence of the demographic characteristics on the coaching-performance relation.

When looking at individual performance, it becomes clear that the age of the coachee seems to have a negative influence on the coaching-performance relation. This means that, the older the coachee, the less influence coaching has on his or her performance. The origin of this relation can be found in the factor 'others'. This conclusion contradicts the theories in this field, where age is believed to have no influence on performance at all. Although the age of the coachee influences the coaching-individual performance relation, this influence is not strong enough to influence to coaching-organisational performance relation.

The demographic variables gender and educational background have no influence on the coaching-individual performance relation or on the coaching - organisational performance relation.



## **Discussion**

What did this study to coaching styles yield? In general, the results from the empirical research to coaching tie in with those from the theoretical study. The research findings correspond to the theory-based relation between coaching styles and performance; different coaching styles have different influences on individual and organisational performance.

Due to the relatively short period of time available to conduct a research like this, we were, unfortunately, unable to study other coaching practices than personal (one-on-one), face-to-face coaching. However, an in-depth research into other forms of coaching (like team coaching, or internet coaching) could be valuable.

In this explorative research we have approached a relatively small number of people, which is also due to the available period of time. To be able to come up with more valid and reliable relations, more samples are needed.

Another limitation of this study is that it is possible that descriptions of the influence of coaching on individual and organisational performance are biased due to the fact that some respondents fill out the questionnaire with their own implicit theory about effective coaching styles in mind. Although we do not think that implicit theories or social desirability threaten the validity of the findings, such biases cannot be ruled out in this kind of research.

Within this study, the influence of coaching styles on performance is measured from the perspective of the coachee. Due to the lack of time, a more objective view on the coaching-performance relation could not be obtained. This lack of time also made the use of a multi-rater feedback method impossible. Within this multi-rater feedback method not only the perspective of the focal person is taken into account, but also the perspective from bystanders (Jansen and Vloeberghs, 1998). With these additional perspectives and objective information, a more in-depth study can be conducted, to find with more valid and reliable relations.

Another recommendation for future research is to study whether or not personal characteristics of the coachee ask for a certain coaching style. This knowledge can be used to adjust the style of a coach for a specific coachee, in order to have the largest effect of coaching.

Since this study is directed at the consulting industry, and are not randomly assigned, the results cannot be generalised. To be able to generalise the results among the entire population of employees, a more in-depth study should be conducted, including a wide range of employees from all kinds of professions.

As it becomes clear from the theoretical and empirical results, coaching (as a prophet or as a friend) is an effective method for increasing individual and organisational performance. However, by using the (above stated) recommendations for a future study, richer data can be obtained and more valid and reliable relations can be found.

## **Recommendations**

As mentioned in the first paragraph, the goal of this study is not only to gain a clear understanding of the influence of coaching styles on individual and organisational performance, but also to make recommendations on how to optimise the coaching-performance relation. From the explanation and interpretation of the results of the research, as stated above, one can conclude that there is indeed a relation between coaching styles and performance.

Based on the outcomes of the research, the following recommendations can be made:

The coach should take on the coaching styles prophet or friend. Both have a positive influence on the performance of the individual and on the organisational performance. In both styles the coach is also involved in the process. Besides involved the prophet-coach is also dominant, while the friend-coach is respectful to the coachee. The influence of the prophet style on individual performance is slightly stronger than the influence of the friend style. Coaches that are not familiar with these styles, or have not mastered them well enough, should develop more skill and confidence in using these tactics to improve the effectiveness of their coaching. This also means that it is of no use to the coach to take on the coaching styles expert, or officer. The coach is controlling in both styles. The expert-coach is besides controlling also respectful, while the officer-coach is dominant. Using these styles in the coaching process is fruitless. It does not harm the performance of the coachee, but it does not improve it either, which means that taking on one of these two styles would be a waste of time and energy for both the coach and the coachee.

The choice of the goal of the coaching practice will be made by the coach and the coachee. Of course, both should agree on the goal to make it work, but the choice has no significant impact on the influence of coaching on performance.

It is important that the coach and coachee can get along. This does not mean, however, that the coachee should choose his or her coach in an informal way. It is maybe even better to set the practice up in a formal way, since an informally started coaching relation could negatively influence the individual performance. A reason for this could be that the coachee will accept less from a coach who is informally chosen than from a coach who is formally assigned. The most important factor to take into account when assigning a coach is that the coach and coachee can get along with each other.

The age of the coachee could negatively influence the effect of coaching on individual performance. A logical reason for this could be that a younger person is more open to the coach's comments and ideas for improvement than an older person. A younger person will not have his or her own specific way of working and will be easier to influence. Thus, the influence of coaching on individual performance is greater when the coachee is younger.

The choice to start coaching an individual should not depend on the gender and/or educational background of the employee. These co-variables have no influence on the effect of coaching on individual and organisational performance.

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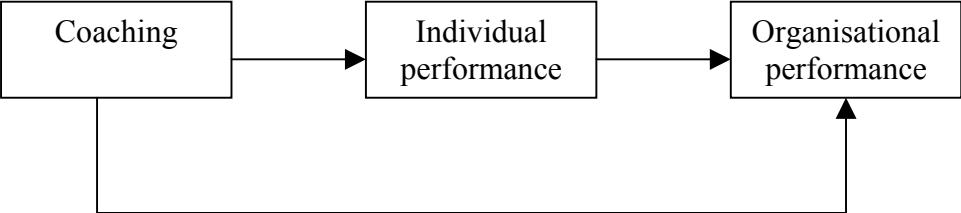
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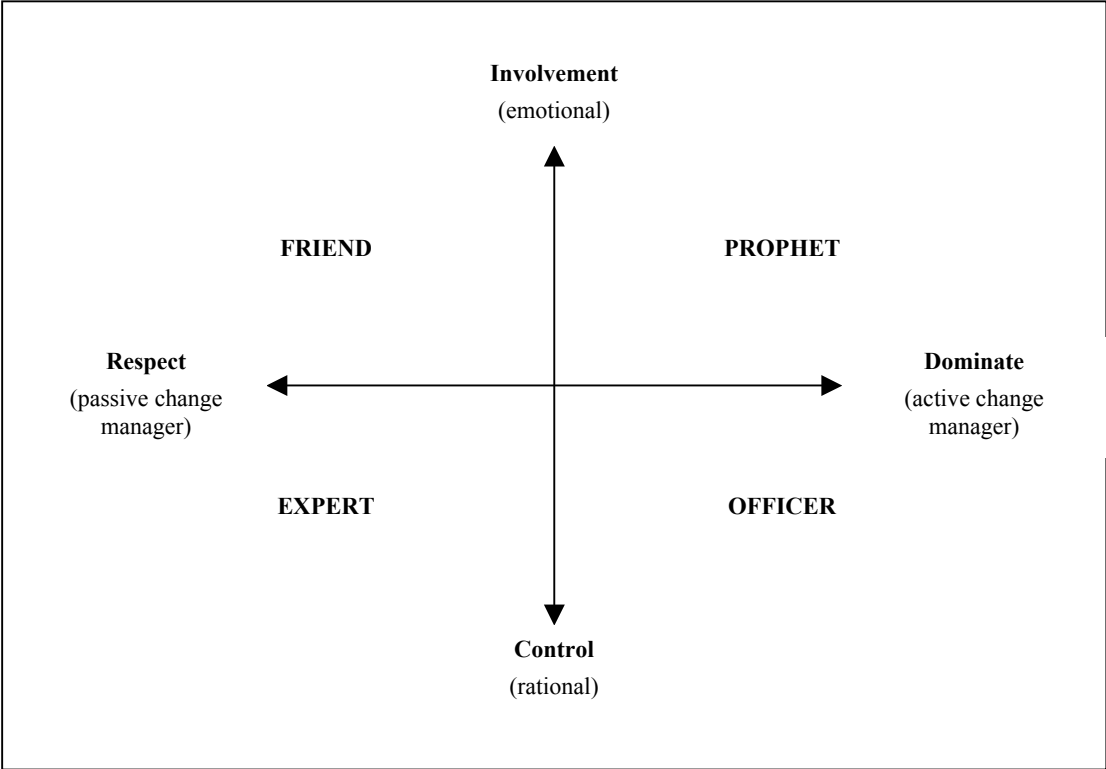
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**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**



*Figure 2: Roles of the change agent*



**Figure 3**

