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## INSPIRED MOMENTS – POSSIBILITIES BEYOND MANAGEMENT THROUGH INTEGRAL COACHING

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**Purpose:** The primary purpose of this paper is to investigate whether an integral coaching intervention underway in a multinational, fast-moving consumer goods organisation can support the creation of an environment that encourages new ways of thinking and learning. This would be underpinned by increased self-understanding amongst leaders and managers. Such self-awareness is argued to lead to enhanced relationships within the workplace for both managers and their subordinates.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** A qualitative research methodology was adopted using the grounded theory approach to data analysis. Open coding was utilised to identify the emergent themes. These themes were in some cases self-reported and in other cases reported by middle management on the changes noted in the behaviour of senior management. The research findings are based on a high internal generalisability as the sample was drawn from a cross-functional sample. Because this survey was carried out within a single organisation, these results lack external generalisability.

**Findings:** Firstly, the individual managers themselves express a greater sense of commitment, fairness and purpose both from each other and their line managers. Secondly, managers claim an improved ability to delegate, trust, communicate, and to operate effectively in team contexts resulting in improved team and cross-functional dynamics. The final impact observed was a shift in the cohesion, freedom and openness to diverse inputs in the organisation.

**Implications:** This research highlights the key contribution that integral coaching can make in helping managers see beyond the limitations of traditional management towards the inspiring possibilities of powerful conversations and human connections in the workplace.

**Originality/Value:** Whilst the results of this paper are specific only to the South African organisation under study, the research nevertheless shows a strong direct link between a coaching intervention and subsequent changes in behaviours and organisational outcomes.

**Key words and phrases:** coaching, culture, innovation, climate, management, transformation, trust, teamwork.

### INTRODUCTION

“Thoughtful organisational leaders are hungry for a new paradigm that will enable their organisations to flourish in the complexity of a rapidly evolving global culture. They are searching for something beyond conventional understanding. They want learning that will produce deep and sustainable change, which includes the necessity for *recurrent adaptiveness* in an increasingly unpredictable and competitive environment.” (Sieler, 2003a:xiv).

South Africa faces a unique set of challenges in the business environment, with issues such as global competition and volatile local socio-economic conditions existing in parallel with Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) requirements and the need to acknowledge the imbalances of our past history. Scholars such as Adizes (1999), Holbeche (2005), Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, Roth, Smith and Senge (1999) and Sieler (2003a) support the contention that in today's business environment, change-as-an-event has transformed to change-as-the-norm. They argue that it is imperative that organisations build leadership and managerial capacity in order to ensure a sustainable approach to change. Such an approach will enable organisations to remain flexible and adaptable, thereby ensuring their continued survival and future growth. Holbeche (2005:7) postulates that organisational adaptability should be rooted in “organisational culture and reflected in the management and employee behaviour and practice.”

These debates raise a number of questions with respect to leaders and their styles of leadership within organisations. For example, what kind of individuals will be required to lead organisations of the future, and what personal qualities, skills and knowledge will they need to demonstrate? (Sadler, 2003). Furthermore, how will these potential leaders learn to cope with future business challenges? Sieler (2003a:xiii) presents a compelling argument in favour of focussing on the individual in the workplace: *“The human soul is the hidden side of business. Coaching the human soul is about supporting people to be at their best in living, learning and working. Coaching the human soul makes good business sense, for when people are at their best, organisations benefit from their enhanced performance, productivity and creativity.”*

Coaching as it is discussed in this paper has been framed within a philosophy of coaching that has been variously called ‘generative’, ‘ontological’ or ‘integral’ coaching. These words are used to describe a perspective on coaching which has both academic and philosophical advocates. Flores (Winograd & Flores, 1986) is a key figure in the formation of the discipline. Flores, a Chilean academic and modern management philosopher, was greatly influenced by the novel, yet biologically grounded ideas of philosopher Maturana (1987) on perception, cognition, language and communication. These ideas were a key inspiration for research in which he particularly focussed on the existential philosophy of Heidegger (Polt:1999) and the linguistic work of Searle (1969). Flaherty (1999) has expanded these roots over the last ten years, into a category of integral coaching which powerfully blends the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty (2002) and the work of modern philosopher Wilber (2000). A coach, from this perspective:

*“Observes and works with key aspects of how the coachee (in our context, a leader or manager) has structured their reality and the nature of their existence i.e. their perceptions and ways of participating in life”* (Sieler, 2003:1).

Integral coaching is a skilful methodology for developing the self and others towards increasing effectiveness and fulfilment through building the ability to observe, reflect and select appropriate action (Flaherty, 1999). It is *“...(a) professional relationship grounded in mutual trust and respect and directed towards a set of clear outcomes, guided by presence and informed by broad models of what it means to be a human being”* (Flaherty & Handelsman, 2004:2.)

Scholars should note the similarity between the coaching philosophy and methodology and intended coaching outcomes advocated by Sieler (2003a) and Flaherty (1999). At the core of both approaches is increased self-understanding, which results in new ways of viewing personal and professional life situations. Viewing these situations differently creates new possibilities for individuals in terms of how they relate to themselves and others. Both authors argue that improved self-understanding and enhanced personal and professional relationships can lead to greater fulfilment for individuals, which in turn leads to greater workplace productivity. It is within the context of needing to monitor integral coaching outcomes through examination and evaluation that this research has been undertaken.

It is exciting to be able to report that the findings of this research support the anticipated outcomes of an integral coaching intervention – namely, that coaching creates an environment for new ways of thinking and learning in which leaders and managers are able to develop greater self-understanding and enhanced relationships with others. This suggests that South African organisations have at their disposal an intervention through which they can better equip themselves to be able to perform to their fullest potential.

This paper has been structured into four key sections. Firstly, the purpose and context of the research is outlined. Secondly, the methodological approach is explained. The third section discusses the findings and finally, the implications and value of this research to the South African context are explored and the encouraging results placed in context.

## **PURPOSE AND CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH**

Limited empirical research has been conducted to support integral coaching's theoretical foundations. Sieler (2003a:xi) highlights the potential dangers associated with the continuation of such a lack of

research: "In the absence of sound theory and practice, [and empirical evidence to support the theory] there is a risk that coaching could be marginalised and trivialised, and it will be seen as a fad..."

During 2003, Grant and Zackon (2004) conducted an on-line survey amongst members of the International Coach Federation (ICF). Their conclusions, based on 2,529 responses from coaches, were that coaching is evolving into a new cross-disciplinary profession. Sieler (2003b) reminds coaching scholars that the emerging coaching profession needs to be informed by rigorous and substantive theory. Grant and Zackon (2004:1) suggest that different professional groups entering the coaching profession naturally err towards their own knowledge base. They recognise that each professional group can make a significant contribution to the emerging discipline of coaching. However, they argue that "possibly due to its diverse roots, there has been little published academic research on coaching, with only 131 papers in the peer-reviewed behavioural science press" (as at December 13th 2003) (Grant & Zackon, 2004:1).

A subsequent unpublished study by Grant (2005) revealed that by September 2005, 417 published papers on 'coaching' were available to scholars on Ebsco's Business Source Premier. Of these, 105 were empirical studies, while the remaining 312 articles discussed theories or the application of techniques associated with coaching. However, of these 417 published papers, only 9 were published in journals categorised as being accredited according to the South African definition and none of these papers explored an integral coaching intervention.

Flaherty (1999), O'Flaherty and Everson (2005b) and Sieler (2003a;2003b) all refer to the emergent nature of integral or ontological coaching as a profession. The literature survey results have demonstrated the dearth of peer-reviewed literature with respect to theory, techniques and empirical studies associated with integral coaching. Although Flaherty, O'Flaherty and Everson, and Sieler have done much to advance the theoretical foundations of integral coaching, it is important to note that the integral coaching discipline calls for studies which link coaching outcomes to the current body of theoretical knowledge. As a result, this paper aims to examine the relationship between the self-reported outcomes of integral coaching and the intended outcomes, as postulated by the current theory.

The primary purpose of the research is to explore whether integral coaching can lead to increased self-understanding amongst leaders and managers. Such self-awareness leads to enhanced relationships within the workplace for both managers and their reports. Flaherty and Handelsman (2004:3) state that enhanced inter-personal work relations result in the following outcomes: "For organisations it makes a difference when people are fulfilled because they stay longer and generate better results."

This research focuses on determining whether the reported outcomes of an integral coaching intervention, currently on-going within a multi-national corporation, corroborate or contradict three research propositions.

- P1. Managers are able to develop greater self-understanding.
- P2. Managers are able to cultivate enhanced relationships with others.
- P3. Integral coaching creates an environment for new ways of thinking and learning.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In order to achieve this objective, a qualitative research methodology was adopted and the following process was undertaken:

- The corporation's survey questionnaires evaluating the effectiveness of the integral coaching intervention were obtained and examined. An analysis of this data revealed a number of behavioural themes. These themes were in some cases self-reported and in other cases reported by middle management on the changes noted in the behaviour of senior management.

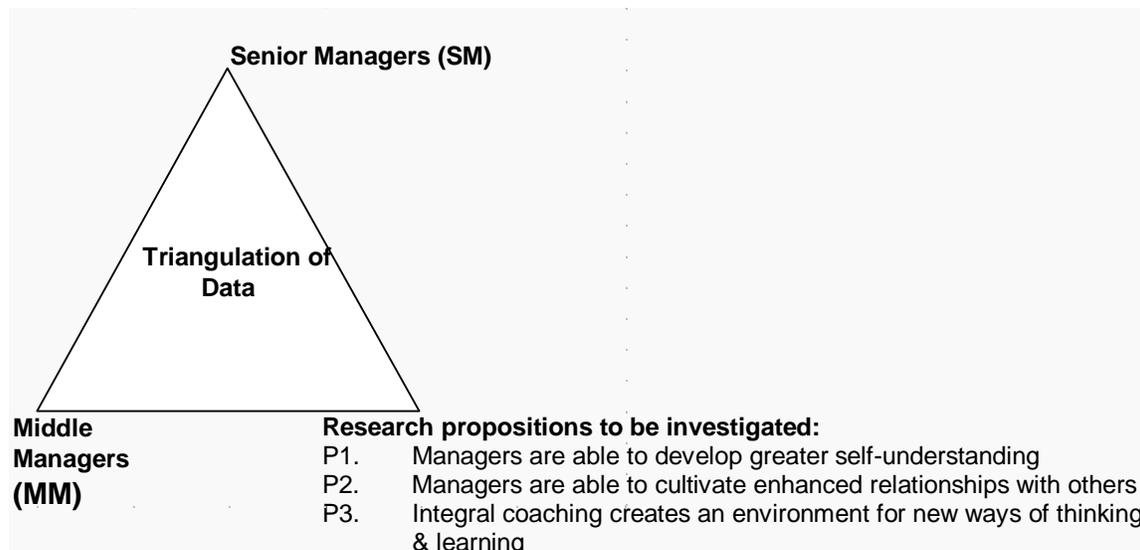
- The themes were compared with the anticipated outcomes of the integral coaching intervention. By asking the question, “Do the outcomes support the propositions or not?” the research team was able to reach a conclusion.

Integral coaching is an emerging discipline. The researchers have been unable to access any peer-reviewed research studies of a similar nature to the one they have undertaken, and they therefore regard their research as exploratory.

It is the research team’s intention to allow the data to dictate the outcome, irrespective of whether it is positive or negative, and unanticipated results will be included. Based on an investigation of contemporary qualitative methods, the grounded theory approach to data analysis was adopted (Locke, 2001:34).

The research approach will be briefly explored in the sub-sections below: The nature of the intervention itself is outlined and the validity, target group, levels of access to primary data, assumptions and limitations are discussed. The stages in the research process are listed and the approach to data analysis outlined. The issues of reactivity, reflexive validity, generalisation and reliability are considered.

**Figure 1: Triangulation of survey responses and research propositions**



### **Nature of the Integral Coaching Intervention**

The coaching intervention referred to in this paper took the form of a 6-month process for each participant. The first element was a 3-day workshop called OneLeader, where day 1 focussed on developing each individual’s unique leadership voice, day 2 focussed on teaching the participants the theory of integral coaching and how to coach others, and day 3 comprised of a day of action learning groups called Coaching Circles (O’Flaherty & Everson, 2005b) where participants practice coaching on each other with the assistance and further teaching from an experienced coach-facilitator. The second element of this intervention was four 6-weekly follow-up Coaching Circle days with a coach-facilitator, focussing on embedding coaching conversation skills and the ability to coach others. The final element took the form of 6 months of 1-on-1 personal coaching with an external professional integral coach.

### **Validity**

“How might your results and conclusions be wrong?” (Maxwell, 2005:4).

It is recognised that the data provided by senior managers via a survey questionnaire is based on their subjective reality. As a result, the reliability and validity of survey answers will be assessed through a triangulation of data sources (Figure 1). Middle managers within the organisation also completed a questionnaire that set out to ascertain whether they had observed any changes in the senior leadership, both as individual line managers and as a leadership team. Completing the data triangulation are the research propositions associated with integral coaching. Triangulation involves the use of “several methods to reveal multiple aspects of a single empirical reality.” (Miller, 1997:25).

### **Target Group**

The senior management team of the organisation being studied constituted the research target group. This group fell into a 30 – 60 year age group, and was predominantly male. English is the business language at the organisation, although for some participants Afrikaans was their first language. The research was based on their experiences as a result of being exposed to integral coaching practices, namely: the 3-day OneLeader workshop, coaching circles and one-on-one executive coaching. Eighteen Senior Management and 23 Middle Management survey questionnaires were coded and analysed out of the group of 114 who had been through the process.

### **Access to Primary Data**

With the assistance of the Centre for Coaching situated at the University Of Cape Town Graduate School Of Business, primary data (raw and un-manipulated) was received from the multinational FMCG organisation. The organisation is in the process of undergoing an integral coaching intervention that is being delivered by the Centre for Coaching.

The organisation's head office is located in Stellenbosch and employs circa 2500 employees. Since 2003, the organisation has provided over 400 senior and middle managers with integral coaching training. Given the cost implications and the temporary loss of productivity inherent in so many senior staff attending these sessions, the organisation has demonstrated a clear commitment to the program. In order to assess the effectiveness of the program, the Human Resources (HR) department conducted an internal survey. The research makes use of the survey findings and the following aspects need to be noted:

- a) The sampling of the survey was undertaken by the organisation concerned. The HR report indicates that the participants in the survey were drawn from different departments and formed a cross-functional sample.
- b) The questionnaire design was undertaken by the organisation concerned. The report indicated that the questionnaire was intended to gather the thoughts and opinions of the managers who had experienced the integral coaching intervention, using open-ended questions.
- c) The survey was conducted by the organisation concerned.

### **Assumptions**

That this is a representative sample of the organisation's senior and middle management populations.

### **Limitations**

The paper does not focus on coach/coachee relationships. Instead, the participants' experience of being coached and/or coaching others in the workplace after the intervention had taken place is examined.

### Stages in the Research Process

The stages include:

- a) Capture of text data
- b) Separation of text data into positive and negative survey responses
- c) Linking research objectives to specific survey statements for triangulation
- d) Coding of responses into themes
- e) Analysis of relationship to the three research statements for triangulation
- f) Interpretation and discussion of themes

### Linking Research Objectives to Specific Survey Questions

The research objectives were linked to specific survey questions. The appropriate survey question was selected from the senior management questionnaire to substantiate the research objective. In support of the triangulation process, an appropriate question from the middle management survey was selected to support the senior management experience.

Maxwell (2005:69) states: "Your research statements [objectives] identify the things that you want to understand; your interview questions generate the data that you need to understand these things." The research team did not design the questionnaire, and therefore asked the following questions in order to link the appropriate survey question(s) to the specific research objectives. These questions form part of a research questions/research methods compatibility matrix developed by Maxwell (2005:100-102).

- What do you need to know?
- Why do I need to know this?
- What kind of data will answer the questions?

### Data Analysis: Grounded Theory Approach

The decision to adopt the grounded theory approach was based on its data-emergent nature, which allows the data to "speak for itself". This approach allows the "truth" or "reality" to be revealed and is not obstructed or clouded by generalisations and existing theory and frameworks. "When this eschewal of pre-existing theories is combined with an emphasis on research and 'discovery', it results in a conception of knowledge as *emergent*." (Locke, 2001:34).

#### **Open coding**

Open coding is one of the data analysis methods used to categorise qualitative data. This categorising strategy involves organising the data into broad themes by simply asking the question when analysing the data, "What is this about? What is being referenced here?" (Borgatti, n.d:2).

#### **Coding process**

The coding into themes was undertaken in the following manner:

- a) By asking the question, what is the data telling me? For example, if the data says, "I now trust in people and I believe they trust me," the coded theme that emerged is "Trusting others".
- b) The data was regarded as holding the answer to the research objective. "Open coding is the part of the analysis concerned with identifying, naming, categorising and describing phenomena found in the text." (Borgatti, n.d:2).

### **Reactivity: Objective and Independent View**

“The influence of the researcher on the setting or individuals studied, generally known as ‘reactivity’, is a second problem that is often raised about qualitative studies.” (Maxwell, 2005:108). Since the research team was not involved with the delivery of the integral coaching intervention and as such had no contact with the participants at all, there is no threat of reactivity within this research. However, the objectivity of the respondents may have been influenced by the conductors of the survey, an aspect which the researchers have no means of measuring or verifying. In addition, the research team was at a disadvantage in that it was unfamiliar with the particular organisational culture, and was therefore unable to fully interpret the nuances and subtleties of the language and tone used by the respondents.

### **Reflexive Validity**

The concept of reflexivity is based on the fact “that the researcher is part of the world he or she studies” and this is particularly evident in interviews in which the researcher has a “powerful and inescapable influence” on the interviewee (Maxwell, 2005:109). The researchers did not compile the surveys or conduct the interviews, and they need to state that they are therefore unable to assess the objectivity of the respondents. The research team is also unable to comment on whether there were any influences that affected the subjects whilst the surveys were conducted.

### **Generalisation**

“Internal generalisability refers to the generalisability of a conclusion within the setting or group studied, while external generalisability refers to its generalisability beyond that setting or group.” (Maxwell, 2005:115). The research findings are based on a high internal generalisability as the sample was drawn from a cross-functional sample within this particular organisation. Because this survey was carried out within a single organisation, these results lack external generalisability.

### **Reliability**

Even though the data was not collected first-hand, it was received in its raw and un-manipulated form. The data are referred to as primary data, since the organisation concerned conducted the survey to evaluate the effectiveness of the integral coaching intervention.

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003:488) have defined reliability as the “degree to which data collection methods...will yield consistent findings, similar observations would be made or conclusions reached by other researchers or there is a transparency in how sense was made from the raw data.” The ability to interpret the raw data through the use of coding by categorisation is a time consuming but relatively uncomplicated process.

## **FINDINGS**

The research findings for each Proposition are discussed below, highlighting first the positive and then the negative responses coded under each theme.

### **Research Proposition One: Managers are able to develop greater self-understanding**

#### ***Positive responses***

The data coding process showed thirteen themes coming from both the 18 senior managers and their 23 direct reports. These themes were increased self-observation, an observed change towards a more coaching style of interaction, more attentive listening and understanding of others, improved trust relationships resulting in more delegation and less control, improved relationships and interactions, and a “dramatic reduction in blame culture”. The climate was reported to have shifted towards being more open, authentic and relaxed. Middle managers in particular felt more empowered, commenting that the environment now “allows people to think for themselves” and that this, coupled

with improved delegation skills, resulted in a much better utilisation of resources by the senior management.

Whilst the senior managers reported an improved confidence in their leadership skills, the middle managers highlighted their new willingness to handle difficult conversations and difficult situations. Team members reported a greater feeling of inclusion, of being part of the bigger picture now. Senior managers reported being more open and willing to learn from each other. One respondent recognised the need to become more innovative and to challenge the status quo. Both senior and middle managers noted that the environment had shifted to enable the team to interact and "get ideas" from each other, with "more opportunities being created". Managers felt that there was evidence of human values now being expressed in the workplace, with middle managers in particular noting a change with "lots of empathy" being expressed in the workplace.

### ***Negative responses***

Two recurring themes were identified by both management categories: the inappropriate use of coaching in certain situations, and the retention of old leadership styles in the workplace - some comments pointed to a lack of understanding and clarity of how best to utilise and deploy the newly learned coaching skills, which resulted in confusion to self and others. Senior and middle managers alike felt that coaching had its limitations, and cited instances where "straight and direct answers were called for". Both levels of management noted that traces of old styles of leadership, including authoritarian control, were still evident eighteen months after the integral coaching intervention commenced.

### **Research Proposition Two: Managers are able to cultivate enhanced relationships with others**

#### ***Positive responses***

Over and above the themes covered above, eight new themes emerged linked to teamwork, introspective vision, acceptance of diverse inputs, trust, dedication in the workplace, humaneness, inspiration towards own tasks, and flexibility towards others.

An improvement in team cohesion, visibility, attitude, and willingness to embrace inter-departmental teamwork was highlighted by both senior and middle management groups. Some senior managers noted that positive teamwork efforts were conducive to a more solutions-focussed approach with improved levels of accountability and a "dramatic reduction in blame culture". The vision of the senior managers regarding the role of coaching in their leadership style was noted with phrases such as "a stronger focus on coaching will benefit the team".

Certain senior managers expressed an improved appreciation for the value of the diversity of the team, noting that integral coaching has "sensitised people to challenges each of us are facing and more awareness of what each person faces". It was noted that diversity could not be valued in a culture in which trust did not exist, with one manager stating "we trust each other." A newly increased level of dedication in the workplace had been noticed by senior management.

Statements from both senior and middle management discussed the change towards more openness, more gathering of inputs, fresh ideas, fairness and humaneness in the workplace. A marked improvement in the previously rigid leadership style was noted in some cases, with middle managers noting that once senior managers had learned to engage honestly with each other, they generally became more receptive to others.

#### ***Negative responses***

The results show that although there has been a positive and noticeable change within the senior leadership team, familiar mannerisms emerged when the team was under pressure to deliver. "When people are challenged, they revert back to the old way". Managers also queried if leaders were not being forced to use a coaching style within the workplace. Finally, some questioned whether the

intervention provided enough preparation to ensure that all managers were able to adopt a coaching style at will, without falling back onto old, less participative leadership styles over time.

**Research Proposition Three: Integral coaching creates an environment for new ways of thinking & learning**

***Positive responses***

This research proposition elicited the strongest set of responses, with senior and middle managers expressing overwhelmingly positive responses to the improved working and organisational climate. An increased openness was characterised by a greater freedom to question, share and give points of view resulting in people being “more willing to speak and to approach things in a positive manner”.

Senior managers observed a definite climate shift in favour of both internal and cross-functional teamwork, supported by the greater trust and openness in the workplace. Team cohesion and responsibility had improved – “team commitment is high”.

In terms of behaviours, a “can-do” attitude, positive feelings, less suspicion and more trust accompanied a new “willingness to share with team members”. The higher trust levels have resulted in more honesty and accountability between individuals in the workplace and have generated a culture of more personal contact and care. Despite the relaxation of authoritarian control, individuals still focus on team delivery. Those who enjoy the relaxed atmosphere also find the work environment more rewarding, indicating higher levels of job satisfaction and fulfilment.

Appreciation for the freedom to think, act and do, especially with regards to the decision-making process was high. Challenges were being approached differently, with a reduction in barriers and an increase in the resolution of problems in the workplace.

***Negative responses***

Only two single statements by different individuals raised any new themes, with one middle manager stating that trust had deteriorated between individuals and one senior manager suggesting that the program had “opened up a can of worms”. These statements suggest that the climate of trust within which the intervention had taken place is not yet sufficiently established in all areas, leaving some managers with feelings of apprehension and uncertainty.

**IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE OF THE RESEARCH**

South Africa, with its complex history and even more complex business environment, needs to encourage new behaviours, increased curiosity and openness in the workplace in order to ensure sustainable business practices in the context of the competitive global marketplace that business finds itself in. This study shows signs of a remarkable reported shift in the attitude and behaviours from 41 senior and middle managers of a South African division of a global multinational organisation and provides evidence for the efficacy of the coaching intervention undertaken within that organisation.

Academic research in the area of coaching remains sparse, with little or no prior evidence to support the assertions made by authors such as Flaherty (1999), Sieler (2003a:xiii) or O'Flaherty and Everson (2005b) of what the outcomes of a coaching intervention can or should be. Whilst the results of this paper are specific only to the South African organisation under study, the paper nevertheless shows a strong direct link between a coaching intervention and subsequent changes in behaviours and organisational outcomes that are in line with what the literature referenced above has postulated should happen. This clarifies the benefits that are being experienced and highlights the contribution that coaching can make to a shifting in “the way we do things around here” (Lundy & Cowling, 1996).

Most importantly, the changes in behaviour that have been noted show increases in tolerance for new ideas, diversity, inquisitiveness, levels of communication and conversation, openness, trust,

teamwork, delegation and difficult conversations. These behaviours have been directly linked in the literature to the values and norms that encourage innovation (Martins & Terblanche, 2003:72). This paper thus begs the question as to whether there is not a link between a culture of innovation and the outcomes of a coaching intervention.

An aspect not to be forgotten is that the paper further supports Sieler's (2003a:xiii) argument by showing a direct self-reported impact on the individuals within the organisation, with both self-perceived and triangulated evidence of improvements in commitment, trust, openness, a more relaxed and positive atmosphere, increased freedom of expression, appreciation of diverse inputs and a more rewarding work environment. All of these aspects contribute to employee loyalty and the long-term sustainability of the success of this organisation in line with the assertions made by Sieler (2003a:xiii), O'Flaherty and Everson (2005a; 2005b) and Flaherty (1999).

This paper has not only provided encouraging results to support integral coaching theory, but it also generates at least three exciting areas for future research. Firstly, this research shows that coaching can have measurable and visible impacts on both an organisation and the individuals within it. More studies such as this one need to be done using a valid and reliable assessment process. The design of such an assessment process would be of great benefit to any organisation involved in such an intervention as well as providing the coaching discipline with a much-needed framework with which to quantify benefits and impact. The second research area to examine is the link between the outcomes of a coaching intervention and the criteria surrounding successful changes in culture. Finally, the link between innovation and coaching also bears further investigation.

## CONCLUSION

This paper commenced with the need to provide evidence for the efficacy of an integral coaching intervention in a South African organisation. Despite limitations inherent in the nature of the raw data received from the organisation, clear triangulated evidence of workplace change was perceived. The organisation's managers were able to achieve heightened levels of self-understanding when their way was being shifted (Sieler, 2003a:34). The positive outcomes and inspired moments associated with increased self-management by the senior leadership were evident from the reported prospering interpersonal relationships within the organisation. The improved relational competence amongst the management teams created an environment characterised by increased trust, tolerance, respect and understanding, and fostered learning, growth and the creation of new opportunities.

The results of this research reveal encouraging signs that integral coaching has started to unlock the human soul within the organisation. Once this competence has become firmly entrenched, it may well have a positive effect in terms of business outcomes.

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