

Evaluation of an INGO Leadership Coaching Programme

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ABSTRACT

This study reports on the relevance and effectiveness of the ActionAid International (AAI) coaching programme as part of its Senior Leadership Development Programme. AAI is an international NGO (INGO) operating in 52 countries whose mission is poverty eradication based on a human rights and social justice approach. Data was collected from 18 senior managers from across 8 countries using semi-structured interviews. An overall positive experience of coaching was reported with coaching identified as a relevant leadership development method for the INGO sector. Specific leadership coaching applications included: situational/strategic leadership; leadership transition management and collaborative relationship building. The highest impact reported by leaders was an increased self-awareness, improved cognitive flexibility and self-efficacy. The study highlights relevance of coaching for INGO's (International non-governmental organisations) as part of their leadership development strategies.

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade coaching has increasingly been practiced in the INGO sector as a core aspect of senior leadership development. Given the complexity and human resource demands of the INGO sector, the leadership development gap has been identified as a risk to the sector's effectiveness and sustainability. This leadership deficit is impacting programme effectiveness, leadership succession and organisational sustainability.

Despite recognizing this gap many INGO's internal leadership development efforts are constrained by financial and donor pressure requiring mission spend, sometimes at the expense of staff capacity building. In this prevailing context, there are a few INGO's who have continued to invest in senior leadership development using coaching as a strategic means to strengthening management and leadership capacity for programme and organisational effectiveness. This study reports on the relevance and effectiveness of AAI's leadership coaching programme which forms a core part of its Senior Leadership Development Programme (SLDP) running annually since 2013.

The reality of the INGO sector and AAI specifically is that the organisation by nature of its human rights work attracts radical activists who are formidable campaigners and public rights advocates. Often they are hired or promoted to senior management positions and not adequately prepared for the organisational demands of their roles. This in turn has an impact on programme and organisational impact. At the time of research, the author was a full time employee of AAI in the role of Senior Head responsible for Governance, Leadership and Accountability based at the International Secretariat office in Johannesburg.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the last decade there has been a significant changes in the INGO sector that has demanded a higher capacity of its leaders. This is related to the rapid increase in scale and intensity of global humanitarian issues including natural disasters, increasing poverty, gross human rights violations, wars and an

unprecedented forced migration crisis. Added to this demand humanitarian agencies are faced with severe funding pressures, increased donor demands, complex organisational change and shrinking political space in different operating environments. Organisations are struggling with the demand of responding to the 'humanitarian imperative' and the need also for increased efficiency, effectiveness and professionalization in the sector (Dickmann et al. 2010).

LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES FACING THE INGO SECTOR

In their review of 19 global humanitarian agencies, Clarke & Ramalingam (2006) confirmed the need for a distinct type of leadership that is able to cope with this emerging complexity. The last decade has seen a marked increase in the time and resources devoted to identifying and developing humanitarian leaders; however evidence suggests that ineffective leadership is still a major constraint to effective humanitarian action (Smith & Scriven 2011; Dickmann et al. 2010).

The global recession of 2008 also had a detrimental impact on the future financial sustainability of development organisations. People in Aid (2013:6) predicted that this will be the new norm as INGO's struggle to fulfil their mission, many of whom are dependent on government aid and institutional funding. Given the demands of the sector some parts of the humanitarian network called for a professionalization of humanitarian work (Walker 2010). Dickmann et al. (2010) observe that historically INGOs have failed to invest in the development of high-calibre leaders and managers for the humanitarian sector. Hailey (2006) described this as a 'leadership deficit' predicting that it would become a matter of urgency as the sector expanded. He noted that part of the problem would be that many of these senior jobs would be filled by individuals recruited from outside the sector with limited experience of running non-profits. This raises the critical need to have robust talent management and leadership development strategies that nurture internal talent while not being overly-dependent on the professional, external-to-sector manager.

Oxford Brookes University interviewed ten CEO's of large INGO's such as Save the Children, CARE UK and Oxfam to understand what their biggest leadership challenges and their capacity building strategies. All CEO's in the study acknowledged that the complex, fast changing global environment made their jobs as senior leaders even more difficult. The study concluded that while INGOs have made progress in technical aspects of humanitarian work that progress on leadership has been weak (Angus et al. 2012). Most CEO's reported personal deficiencies in core humanitarian competencies confirming this leadership gap. As part of their personal development, leaders identified coaching and action learning sets as two of the most desirable and useful tools to support them.

In a study conducted by the Centre for Creative Leadership (CCL, 2010) thirty seven International aid and development organizations and fifty six individuals gave their viewpoint around leadership and talent management challenges. They identified two key issues relevant for this study: 1) an increased focus on leadership development and 2) a recognition of value and the need to be better informed about the practice and value of coaching.

2.3. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN THE INGO SECTOR

Given the complexities of INGO sector and the need for high quality leaders, leadership development is becoming an important investment across many organisations. The reality of INGO's is that often in times of cost pressure, learning and development spend is cut back as a 'soft' cost saver. However, some organisations have managed to keep employee development focus despite this pressure (Jayawickrama 2011). INGO's are exploring creative and cost effective ways of employee development with a focus on strengthening internal capacities. At the same time there has been an increased interest in coaching and mentoring programmes, especially where they are carried out by in-house coaches.

Given the shortage of talented leaders and the growth of the sector generally, Apostu (2013) asserts that there is some urgency in the identification, support

and development of future leaders. He argues that leadership development programmes designed for NGO leaders must as a consequence incorporate best practice and current experience rather than rehashing traditional approaches with personal behavioural transformation as a key measure of success of LDP's. Also reflecting on the humanitarian leadership deficit, Clarke (2013) suggests that one way in which the supply of suitable leaders might be increased is to train individuals in leadership skills recognising that this no 'quick fix'. In his interviews with successful humanitarian leaders it is clear 'learning from experience' was the most commonly cited leadership development 'processes'. Interviewees also talked about the value of coaching and learning from role models.

Hailey (2006:22) argues for a systems approach to senior leadership development and the use of coaching in senior management development: "It is arguable that once senior managers reach a certain stage in their career, attending formal training courses has less impact, and that as a number of INGOs have found, including Oxfam and the Red Cross, personalised support through coaching has more value." NGO leaders don't want or need traditional skill-based training programmes (Hailey 2006).

Rather they want flexible, personalised, process-based programmes. As a result there has been a move away from generic, skill-based traditional approaches to leadership training to more bespoke, process-based programmes. Coaching and mentoring serve this need in combination with LDP's. In addition to development coaching, LDP's can also serve to remediate unacceptable leader behaviour or attitudes. This is both about the abuse of power for personal benefit and also autocratic behaviour displayed by some NGO leaders which becomes 'addictive' and disempowering (James 2005). Such negative behaviour, which may have a highly detrimental organisational effect, can be addressed through self-awareness and consciousness-raising which is core to coaching practices.

2.5. EVALUATION OF LEADERSHIP COACHING

Despite the widespread use of coaching, few empirical studies have validated the effectiveness of coaching. Part of the challenge relates to the diverse approaches used in evaluating coaching effectiveness which includes subjective self-reports, multi-rater feedback and limited pre-post studies (Ely et al. 2010).

The most relevant research related to this current study is that of Fischer & Beimers (2009) who conducted a pilot evaluation of a 6 month executive coaching programme in the US non-profit sector. Data was collected through customised surveys and semi-structured interviews with 9 executive directors and 5 coaches exploring the effectiveness of the coaching delivery and usefulness of the coaching experience. Overall, coaching was rated as very helpful and supportive in the development of executive directors as non-profit leaders. This study was valuable despite several limitations including small sample size, observational design relying on retrospective self-data and short term data. The study serves to identify short term leadership development benefits but is not long enough to assess sustainable performance and other succession and retention issues.

Results were grouped into three substantive areas: participant's views of coaching, goal accomplishment and the impact of coaching. Both participants and coaches reported being equally satisfied with coaching in six of nine cases (67 %). There was a nearly unanimous view to extend coaching beyond six months. Coaches described the unique value of coaching to the NGO sector. Confidentiality and coach-client relationship was also highlighted. In terms of goal accomplishment, both executives and coaches reported large or moderate improvement in six identified goal areas: time management, personal – professional balance, leadership skills and confidence, management skills, stress reduction and relationships with staff and board. Impact of coaching was described in two categories: personal growth and skill development. Executives displayed growth primarily by increased confidence in their role as non-profit directors. One of the more significant areas of skill development was in the area of strategic thinking. Coaches also identified improvement among executives in specific skill areas including: long-range

planning, financial management, personnel management, board reporting and interaction, communication skills and leadership within the organisation.

One useful way of evaluating coaching effectiveness is drawing on a wider body of literature in training evaluation. In this regard, evaluating leadership coaching effectiveness is in some ways similar to training evaluation which includes the collection of descriptive and judgmental information necessary to make decisions about the value of coaching efforts while identifying areas for modification and improvement (Goldstein & Ford 2002). However, the unique nature of coaching makes it much harder to apply a typical training evaluation methodology.

Extending the training evaluation of (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick 1994) a useful framework for summative and formative evaluation has been developed by (Ely et al. 2010). This framework also consolidates many of the evaluative models described in the foregoing review and is described in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Summative Evaluation Framework

| | Focus of assessment | Relevant data sources |
|---------------------|---|---|
| I Reactions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client's perception of coaching effectiveness • Client's perception of coach (e.g., competence) • Client's satisfaction with coaching relationship • Client's satisfaction with the coaching process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-report satisfaction • Behaviorally anchored rating scales (client) |
| II Learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Cognitive flexibility • Self-efficacy • Job attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction, organizational commitment) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre and post self-assessments (client) • Self-report cognitive flexibility, self-efficacy, and job attitudes (client) |
| III Behavior | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in client's leadership behaviors (e.g., managing personnel resources) • Client's achievement of coaching goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre and post 360 ratings multi-stakeholder |
| IV Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee retention • Pipeline to fill senior leadership positions • Job satisfaction and performance) • Changes in customers' satisfaction • Customer satisfaction survey • Return on investment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratings of goal achievement • Organizational records • Succession planning • Satisfaction and commitment ratings |

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. OBJECTIVES

This study explored the effectiveness and value of coaching for leadership development in AAI based on the summative and formative measures as described by Ely et al. (2010). Summative evaluation assesses programme experience and the extent to which agreed outcomes were met. Formative measures evaluate the coaching process and systemic variables that impact coaching outcomes. At a summative level, the framework of (Ely et al. 2010) builds on the hierarchy of four training evaluation levels as described by (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick 1994): Level I: Reactions; Level II: Learning; Level

III: Behaviour and Level IV: Results. Formative evaluation explored opportunities for programme improvement and elements informing a business case for coaching. Distal outcomes recommended by Ely et al (2010) were explored to a lesser extent given the limited scope of this study.

Based on the organisation mandate and evaluation framework four objectives were identified. Objectives 1 and 2 form the substantive part of the study focusing on summative outcomes which explore: a) the experience of coachees as primary clients of the coaching programme and b) the extent to which coaching objectives were met. Objective 3 focuses on formative and distal outcomes exploring: a) the business case for coaching. Objective 4 explored recommendations and changes in future coaching programmes.

3.2. INVESTIGATION DESIGN

The qualitative method was chosen as the most appropriate research design. This was informed by the difficulties inherent in coaching measurement (De Meuse et al. 2009; Ely et al. 2010; Tooth et al. (2013)) and the limited utility of scientific empirical methods (Grant 2016:77). Other factors that support a qualitative approach include the exploratory nature of this study recognising limited empirical studies

The most comparably relevant pilot study was conducted by Fischer & Beimers (2009) of non-profit CEO's in a limited US context. Second, given the limited timeframe for the Management Challenge (MC), there was no opportunity for longitudinal pre and post coaching study. Third, given the small sample size of 18 respondents, the researcher had to find a methodology more efficient in allowing for deeper thematic analysis and highly insightful narratives (Grant, 2016). Finally, the investigation explored coachee self-reports and perceptions of coachees and other stakeholders, suggesting a greater value in the use of a subjective methodology. Qualitative research is concerned with making sense social phenomena based on peoples experience and perceptions (Denzin & Lincoln 2006; Hancock et al. 2007).

3.3. PROCEDURE

The semi-structured interview method was considered the most appropriate qualitative instrument for this study ensuring that key theoretical concepts and evaluation measures in coaching surveys could be incorporated into a semi-formal conversation with respondents (Denzin & Lincoln 2006). Semi-structured interviews ranging between 45-60 minutes were conducted with participants either by Skype or face to face over a three month period. Interview data was transcribed, then analysed using thematic coding.

3.4. PARTICIPANTS

The sample comprised eighteen (18) respondents who were coachees in one of three AAI SLDP cohorts 2013/2014/2015. Respondents were from 8 countries, mostly in Africa and a few in Asia. There was an even distribution of participants on the basis of gender, prior experience of coaching and their organisational location either at country or based in the International Secretariat (IS).

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings related to the four objectives will be presented using the summative and formative evaluation frameworks of (Ely et al. 2010). The summative evaluation uses Kirkpatrick's four-level taxonomy identifying relevant leadership coaching evaluation criteria for each level. Table 3 is an integration of summative and formative evaluation indicators.

5.1. OBJECTIVE ONE: ASSESSING COACHING EXPERIENCE

This objective seeks to explore to what extent coaching was experienced positively by coachees and the extent to which expectations were met. As the key stakeholder group, coachees provide the most significant feedback in this

evaluation. Coachee satisfaction is positively correlated with coaching impact and overall effectiveness (Ely et al. 2010; Tooth et al. 2013).

All coachees on the programme reported overall positive experience with high levels of satisfaction with the coach and the coaching process. This study confirms that coachee experience is a valuable first level indicator of coaching effectiveness based on Kirkpatrick's Level I: Reaction domain. Coachee overall positive experience was triangulated with evaluation of expectations met and coach effectiveness (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick 1994).

The factors contributing to overall positive experience rating is related to the generic factors necessary for coaching success as identified by Fillery-Travis & Lane (2008:63): a) coach attributes; b) coachee attributes; c) coaching process. These will be discussed in relation to this study. From an organisational perspective collecting reaction data is also useful in making decisions about programme changes (Ely et al. 2010).

a) Coach attributes: Positive coach attributes correlated strongly with overall positive ratings of coach effectiveness. Quality coaching relationship is possible the single most important factor in coaching effectiveness (Boyce et al. 2010). Positive coach attributes reported in this group refer to effective interpersonal and communication skills; instrumental support; the extent to which the coach does not push their own agenda or prove a particular coaching model/approach. In addition to professional competence coaches supporting this programme displayed a high level of interest and commitment to the mission of the organisation. Many electing to work with AAI felt their coaching was a contribution to their commitment to humanitarian and social justice work. This commitment was valued by AAI coachees.

b) Coachee attributes: Respondents in the study demonstrated a high level of commitment to the coaching process. Generic barriers to coaching effectiveness include: lack of motivation; unrealistic expectations; lack of follow-through and psychopathology (Fillery-Travis & Lane 2008). Only 'unrealistic expectations' presented as a barrier for a few of the coachees,

mostly those who were first time coachees. These were resolved early in the coaching process. All respondents completed the coaching programme with the only common issue being delays, rescheduling attributed to high workload and short time frame of coaching. Respondents in this study highlighted that the organisation should be selective in who receives coaching and that it should not be a mandatory programme component.

- c) Coaching process:** was positively evaluated in this study with suggestions for future programme improvement. This refers to adaptation/flexibility to coachee issues/context, duration of coaching and the extent to which the generic 6 stages of coaching (Clutterbuck & Megginson 2005) are effectively implemented: formal contracting, relationship building, assessment, getting feedback and reflecting, goal setting, implementing and evaluating.

5.2. OBJECTIVE 2: EVALUATION OF COACHING OBJECTIVES

The extent to which individual coaching goals have been achieved is the primary indicator of coaching programme effectiveness (Fillery-Travis & Lane 2008). In addition to self-reports of coaching experience, this objective explored the extent to which individually contracted objectives were achieved over the four month period based on pre-post competency ratings.

Apostu (2013) identifies personal behavioural transformation as a key measure of success of leadership development programmes. There was a significant level of leadership competency development reported over the four month coaching. This was based on self-reported pre and post competency ratings on individually contracting coaching competencies. Based on a review of Individual Coaching Objectives, respondents in the interview reported several leadership competencies that benefited from coaching. These included strategic leadership, managing power and politics, people and team management, managing leadership transitions, crisis and change management and collaborative working. Many of these competencies are critical for the INGO sector (Dickmann et al. 2010b).

In relation to the Kirkpatrick Levels, the highest overall coaching impact was noted in the Kirkpatrick Level II: Learning. Self-reports indicate a high level of learning impact which is the foundation for behavioural change (Ely et al. 2010) in four key areas: a) increased self-awareness, b) improved cognitive flexibility, c) improved self-efficacy and d) job attitude changes.

a) Increased self-awareness was reported for 83% of the group and is one of the most frequently cited outcomes of coaching (International Coach Federation 1998). It is also one of the best indicators of coaching effectiveness (Tooth et al. 2013; Baron & Morin 2010; Ely et al. 2010). Through self-reflection leaders were able to understand how their thoughts and assumptions impacted their behaviour. This awareness opens the space for behavioural change.

b) Improved cognitive flexibility was reported as a high impact benefit for 61% in this group. This dimension refers to new ways of thinking about issues; appreciation of polarities, problem solving, strategic thinking 'seeing the big picture' and improved ability in negotiations. This cognitive behavioural benefit is a key feature of coaching impact (Cox et al. 2010) and is critical in dealing with the complexity of the sector (Clarke & Ramalingam 2006).

c) Sense of self-efficacy was reported as a high impact benefit area for 50%. Self-efficacy is defined as the belief that a person has of being capable of accomplishing a given task (Bandura 1994). Several respondents appointed into senior roles, reported how coaching helped in a growing sense of self confidence and efficacy which is consistent with the findings of Louis Baron & Morin (2010). Self-efficacy is also a strong predictor of coaching learning transfer (Ely et al. 2010).

d) Changes in job attitude were reported by 50% of this group as a high impact benefit of coaching. Together with self-efficacy, this is a key measure of affective learning impacting in changes to attitude and motivation which in turn impacts behaviours and performance (Ely et al.

2010). Coaching enabled a more positive appreciation of for their jobs, their teams and the organisation as a whole. Respondents reported an increased commitment based on the organisational training and coaching investment.

5.3. OBJECTIVE 3: BUSINESS CASE FOR LEADERSHIP COACHING

Organisational context and coaching mandate is a critical factor impacting coaching effectiveness (Ely et al. 2010) and continued use. This objective explored the business case for coaching and potential programme changes based on respondent's experience.

In this exploratory study, there was a strong confirmation of the value of coaching as an effective method of leadership development and is also confirmed by other studies (Kombarakaran et al. 2008; Theeboom et al. 2014; Bartlett et al. 2014). This is also consistent with the Fischer & Biemers (2009) NGO executive pilot study which found that coaching is effective for non-profit executive directors.

Only in the last decade has the benefit of coaching been recognised in the non-profit sector (Fischer & Biemers 2009). Coaching has value in addressing the leadership gap identified in the sector and also in specifically building senior manager capacity to cope with a complex and fast changing humanitarian context (Clarke & Ramalingam 2006).

As an accompaniment to the one week leadership development programme, coaching enabled participants to deepen their understanding and practice of key management and leadership concepts over the six month period. This is consistent with Hailey (2006) view that senior managers benefited more from individual coaching than stand-alone training programmes (Hailey 2006). In the case of AAI, there was clear benefit in an integrated approach. The value of blended learning is also confirmed by Wallis (2010) who found a return on investment (ROI) exceeding 300% and lasting at least six months post programme.

Three important areas of leadership coaching were identified as beneficial for this group, viz., 1) situational and strategic leadership, 2) collaborative relationships and 3) leadership transitions and which has been identified as significant leadership development areas in the INGO sector. Given the diverse and complex and rapidly changing nature of the INGO with multiple stakeholders (Angus et al. 2012), coaching helped leaders work through issues related to strategy, organisational change, engaging different culture and country contexts which were broadly categorised as situational and strategic leadership. In the domain of collaborative relationships, coaching helped leaders in understanding through increased self-awareness to learn how to be adaptive in their leadership style for interpersonal effectiveness (Acharya & Shrestha 2013).

At its heart, leadership is about working with other people which is made more challenging in complex organisations. Respondents in this study confirmed the value of coaching in learning how to manage upward, in negotiation, effective communication and conflict management. In the area of leadership transitions, coaching was reported as helpful especially for new senior managers. Many of the new senior managers reported that coaching came at the right time to help them set up the necessary foundation for personal and team effectiveness (Sargent 2011).

Given the financially constrained operating environment impacting INGO's - training and development are often the first budget cuts. This study confirms through leader self-reports that individual and organisational benefits outweigh financial costs of coaching intervention. Respondents in this study were at the same time both appreciative of the organisational investment and also mindful of the high cost of external coaching. Many coachees felt strongly that the cost of coaching should not be a barrier to leadership development. Instead innovative ways should be found including the training and use of internal coaches, pro-bono coaching services and group coaching.

Organisations looking to justify coaching purely on the basis of financial ROI will be hard pressed (Bower 2012). The benefits of coaching for leader

development extends beyond individual development value to organisational level benefits in employee engagement, reduced incidence of stress and burnout, higher levels of confidence and improved work performance. Although long term benefits were out of the scope of this study, literature of coaching in other sectors confirms this extended organisational benefit. The general approach focuses on the extent to which individual coaching outcomes are improved which in turn is assumed will have a positive impact on bottom-line results (Fillery-Travis & Passmore 2011). Changes in self-efficacy and interpersonal skills are broadly identified in this regard. There is a higher cost in unplanned leadership transitions, toxic organisational cultures and ineffectively led teams.

5.4. OBJECTIVE 4: PROGRAMME CHANGES AND IMPROVEMENTS

This objective is part of the formative evaluation which seeks to better understand the impact of coaching process with opportunities for learning and programme improvement. In order to better identify coaching programme improvements, evaluations need to extend beyond summative outcomes to formative indicators (Ely et al. 2010). The following areas were identified as possible programme changes:

- a) Duration of the coaching programme** was one of the most critical issues raised in this study. Although respondents valued the quality of individual coaching sessions, many felt that the duration should be extended from four to six months while others proposed up to twelve months.
- b) Follow-up coaching contact sessions:** This group confirmed the value of follow-up coaching support in the form of group coaching at regular intervals post programme to enable continued learning, accountability and behaviour change.
- c) The use of external coaches** was also raised in relation to cost coaching. Suggestions supported the training and support of an internal pool of coaches who could also extend the coaching practice to other than senior management levels. Internal coaches' credibility and professional was regarded as important.

- d) Role of Line Manager:** There was a mixed response in this group, most agreeing that the line manager should be involved in an accountability and support role and not directly in the coaching process.
- e) Coachee readiness** was also identified by this group as an important factor in coaching effectiveness and accountability. In this regard, coachees felt that the programme should not be mandatory but needs based with a strict selection process. Coaching should also be related to organisational objectives to justify the level of investment.
- f) Organisational culture** is also an important factor to be considered in coaching evaluation (Hawkins 2012). There is a clear buy-in from senior management, many of whom have been or are in coaching relationships. Respondents appreciated the commitment of senior management and stressed that this continues.
- g) Integrated approach to coaching:** Coaching impact is also dependent on the extent to which coaching is integrated into the organisations talent management system (Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005). Although coaching is part of the organisation-wide leadership plan it is not as integrated at individual performance management level.

Conclusions

The most significant findings of this exploratory study are confirmed by current thinking. The high positive ratings of coaching experience in this study confirmed anecdotal feedback from coachees over the years. What was useful in this study was a deeper understanding of the enabling factors which related to mandate for coaching, senior management buy-in, coach competence, coachee readiness and integration of coaching in the leadership and talent management culture of AAI. These are also reported by Tooth et al. (2013).

It was also useful to understand specific benefits of coaching in terms of the Kirkpatrick learning and behaviour domains: self-awareness, cognitive flexibility and self-efficacy consistent with literature (Tooth et al. 2013; Ely et al. 2010; Baron & Morin 2010) and how these benefits translated into leadership practice applications in the following areas: situational leadership,

new leader on-boarding, leadership transitions, and crisis and change management (De Vries et al. 2009).

This study also confirmed that coaching for senior leader development in the INGO sector is a relevant method and not just for the private sector (Hailey 2006). As an accompaniment to leadership training, coaching has increased the learning retention and deepened practice opportunity as managers contextualise their learning in personal development objectives (Wallis 2010).

Limitations of the Study

Despite its value as an exploratory study of INGO leadership coaching, several limitations are identified including small sample size, observational design relying on retrospective self-reporting data of coachees as well as the short term focus of the study. The scope of the study also did not allow for multi-source feedback from line managers and coaches or accessing longitudinal performance data. The study was sufficiently able to evaluate coaching effectiveness on Kirkpatrick's Level I (reactions), II (learning), to a limited extent on level III (behaviour) and unable to verify level IV (organisational results). Future INGO studies of leadership coaching effectiveness could adopt a more longitudinal period of at least 1-2 years post coaching which includes performance review and talent management data (career mobility, succession and retention). There will also be value in using multi-sources including line managers, staff and coaches.

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