

Development of Coaches: VIII. Are There Any Differences between Coaches from USA and from Other Countries?

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This eighth report concerns potential differences in responses to the Development of Coaches survey based on the country in which the coach is operating (and usually the country in which they were born and have lived most of their life). The results from this analysis of the survey results is particularly important because professional coaching has become truly international in recent years. While much of what we now call professional coaching began in England and elsewhere in Europe, the United States is usually considered the “birthplace” of coaching. At the very least, most of the early training programs and a considerable amount of the financial and organizational support for professional coaching came initially from the United States.

As professional coaching has spread to many other countries throughout the world, it is important to note that culture, history and societal norms undoubtedly impact on the perspective held by a professional coach (regardless of the training program, if any, in which they participated). Even more importantly, the perspective and needs identified by their coaching clients undoubtedly have influenced the perspectives and practices of the coach.

The key question is: are differences in these broader social-environmental practices manifest in the developmental path taken by the coaches and choices they make regarding their own training, supervision and continuing education? We turn to our data analyses in seeking to find an answer (or several answers) to this question. In this eighth study we examined ways in which coaches who identify themselves as coming from the United States (USA) might differ in their perspectives on development from those who identify as coming from outside the United States (non-USA). We assigned respondents to one of two categories based on their identification of current residency.

It should be noted that the USA group is larger than the non-USA group: 136 from the USA and 48 from the non-USA. This discrepancy is partially attributable to the fact that the survey was mounted inside the United States and partially attributable to the apparent larger number of

professional coaches operating in the USA. The field has become increasingly global – but the USA is still a center for professional coaching activities. Furthermore, we need to assert the important caveat that many coaches are globalists, in that they have either lived in several countries or work in many different countries. It is hard to isolate society and cultural influences when gathering data from these boundary-crossers.

Results

Having found results from the two surveys to be closely aligned in our initial analyses, we combined the responses to both surveys (having also done so in the analyses we offered in the previous reports). Furthermore, as we did in our previous analyses, we went beyond the calculation of means and variances for the two different groups. We conducted simple T-Tests to determine if differences between responses to any of the survey questions by the USA and non-USA coaches were significant. We present the mean, variance and T-Test Scores in this section of the report for each of the questions on which we focused in the first seven studies.

In addition, because some significant (or near significant) differences were found, we present not only the t-test score for each question, but also the degrees of freedom and, when significant, the critical value (cv) associated with the .10, .05, .01 or .001 level of significance.

I recognize that the critical values assigned to the determination of significance level for each t-test is not truly valid, for when multiple analyses are being conducted, the critical values should be set much higher – for there are likely to be more false positives with multiple analyses. Furthermore, it is not generally acceptable to declare a result “significant” if the differences only reach the .10 level. I am engaging these “lax” criteria because this study is to be considered preliminary. “Significant” results should be considered quite tentative, given these lax criteria and the small sample population responding to the inventory. The “significant” results obtained should be selected as the focal points for future studies.

At this point in my review of results from the Development of Coaches Surveys, I will also begin to link results from my previous analyses with results from this analysis of potential differences between USA and non-USA respondents. I will focus, in particular, on my analyses of ICF and non-ICF respondents, as well as those primarily doing personal coaching and organizational coaching. These initial comparisons lead the way to the more comprehensive

statistical analyses I will be conducting during phases two of this study. I will see if there is a clustering of certain characteristics and ways in which these clusters might relate to several general outcomes regarding coaching development. Hopefully, this interweaving of results will yield important questions that can be addressed in future studies. Now on to the results from my eighth analysis.

Question: Since you began formally working as a coach . . .

	USA Coaching	Non-USA Coaching	T-Test	P Level
<i>How much have you changed overall as a coach?</i>	Mean=4.03 Variance=0.90	Mean=4.00 Variance =0.91	t = 0.22 df = 205	>.05
<i>How much do you regard this as progress or improvement?</i>	Mean=4.41 Variance=0.77	Mean=4.38 Variance =0.87	t = 0.22 df = 205	>.05
<i>How much do you regard this as a decline or impairment?</i>	Mean=0.15 Variance=0.27	Mean=0.26 Variance =0.40	t = 1.22 df = 205	Fairly Near Significance <.10 cv=1.29
<i>How much have you succeeded in overcoming any past limitations in your coaching skills and knowledge?</i>	Mean=3.85 Variance=0.90	Mean=3.95 Variance =0.72	t = 0.67 df = 205	>.05
<i>How much have you realized your potential as a coach?</i>	Mean=3.72 Variance=1.27	Mean=3.95 Variance =0.93	t = 1.37 df =205	Near Significance <.10

				cv=1.29
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Results from these two surveys (combined) suggest that there are not major differences between the USA and non-USA respondents regarding their report of development as a coach since they begin working in this field. There are several near significant differences, however, that offer an intriguing view into the way these two populations view their work as coaches over time. The non-USA coaches, for instance, might be a bit more pessimistic (or at least modest) about shifts in their work as a coach over time – indicating that they are slightly more likely to describe their own work as a coach to be in decline or subject to an impairment. They also are slightly more likely to believe that they have reached the peak in terms of their ongoing development as a coach. This is about as good as it is going to get – and there might be some decline in store for them.

Conversely, the USA-based coaches might be considered a bit more “brash” in their self-analysis and they might be somewhat more ambitious or at least optimistic: things will continue to improve. It can always get better. To quote Al Jolson, the famous American performer of the early 20th Century, “you ain’t seen nothing yet!” Is this nothing more than the classic American bravado – contrasting with the more tempered perspective offered by those coaches who are operating outside the United States? And does this slight difference in perspective influence the character of coaching being done, the nature of the problems on which the coaches and clients focus, and the outcomes of the coaching engagement? These are important questions to consider when preparing a follow up to this preliminary study of professional coaching development and performance.

It is interesting to reflect on the results of this analysis when compared to the previous analysis of differences between those doing personal coaching and those doing organizational coaching. We found that those who are most often oriented toward personal coaching are slightly more likely to identify change in their coaching practices (from when they began working as a coach) as a decline, while organizational-oriented coaches are slightly more likely to identify this change as an improvement in performance.

These results align with those in the present study, with non-USA population responding to the inventory in a manner similar to the personal coaches, and the USA population responding to

the inventory in a manner similar to the organizational coaches. In the previous study, I asked if the personal coaches have higher standards for themselves than the organizational coaches, or perhaps higher expectations regarding their performance? Could we consider the same question regarding the non-USA and USA respondents? Those coaches who do much of their work in organizations and/or come from the United States seem to be slightly more positive about their work (over time) as a coach and their improvement (over time) as a coach than are those coming from outside the United States or doing much of their work as personal coaches.

Is it because the USA and organizational coaches are more experienced than the non-USA or personal coaches? Or are those from the United States and/or oriented toward work in organizations more likely to over-estimate their abilities? Alternatively, are the Non-USA and/or personal coaches more likely to underestimate their abilities? In future studies we will be doing more sophisticated analyses that begin to identify potential clustering of perspectives on coaching and the development of coaches, based on multiple coaching demographics.

Question: Overall at the PRESENT time . . .

	USA Coaching	Non-USA Coaching	T-Test	P Level
<i>How effective are you at co-creating the working partnership with clients?</i>	Mean=4.37 Variance=0.52	Mean=4.32 Variance=0.55	t = 0.42 df =203	>.05
<i>How authentically personal do you feel while working with clients?</i>	Mean=4.55 Variance=0.37	Mean=4.50 Variance=0.44	t = 0.52 df =203	>.05
<i>How good is your general theoretical</i>	Mean=4.23 Variance=0.65	Mean=4.29 Variance=0.54	t = 0.81 df =199	>.05

<i>understanding of coaching?</i>				
<i>How empathetic are you in relating to clients with whom you have relativity little in common?</i>	Mean=4.38 Variance=0.51	Mean=4.25 Variance=0.81	t = 1.10 df =203	>.05
<i>How effective are you in communicating your understanding and concern to your clients?</i>	Mean=4.42 Variance=0.43	Mean=4.43 Variance=0.54	t = 0.05 df =203	>.05
<i>How much mastery do you feel you have of the techniques and strategies involved in practicing coaching?</i>	Mean=3.97 Variance=0.61	Mean=3.96 Variance=0.84	t = 0.02 df =203	>.05
<i>How well do you understand what happens moment by moment during coaching sessions?</i>	Mean=4.11 Variance=0.69	Mean=4.04 Variance=0.84	t = 0.54 df =203	>.05
<i>How effective are you at stimulating client insight?</i>	Mean=4.31 Variance=0.47	Mean=4.32 Variance=0.73	t =0.11 df =203	>.05
<i>How much precision, subtlety and finesse have you attained in your coaching work?</i>	Mean=3.95 Variance=0.81	Mean=4.02 Variance=0.85	t = 0.50 df =203	>.05

<i>How confident do you feel in your role as a coach?</i>	Mean=4.28	Mean=4.28	t = 0.40	>.05
	Variance=0.60	Variance=0.69	df =203	

There appear to be no significant or even near significant differences between USA and non-USA coaches regarding their perspective on current practices. While the first set of questions (“Since you began . . .”) concern shifts over time in the respondents’ assessment of their own coaching practices (a motion picture), this second set of questions “Overall at the present time”) concern the respondents’ assessment of their coaching at the present time (a snapshot). Overall, the results from neither of these first two sets of questions yielded significant results – regardless of the perspective being taken. In most cases, the USA and non-USA respondents exhibited minimal differences in their reflections on coaching practices – when reviewing their practices at the present time (snapshot).

It is worth noting, however, that there were several significant or near significant results when coaches reflected on changes in their practices over time (motion picture). We might find that cultural differences are more likely to be revealed through examining developmental shifts rather than by looking at one’s current developmental state. Obviously, this is highly speculative, since I am basing this hypothesis on the absence (rather than presence) of significant findings. Nevertheless, this distinction between developmental shifts and current states might be worth keeping in mind when future studies are being conducted.

Question: Currently, how often do you feel . . .

	USA	Non-USA	T-Test	P Level
	Coaching	Coaching		
<i>Lacking confidence that you can provide a beneficial effect for a client.</i>	Mean=1.45 Variance=0.49	Mean=1.50 Variance =0.44	t = 0.45 df =203	>.05

<i>Unsure how best to deal effectively with a client.</i>	Mean=1.47 Variance=0.42	Mean=1.52 Variance =0.44	t = 0.47 df =203	>.05
<i>In danger of losing control of a coaching conversation to a client.</i>	Mean=0.90 Variance=0.58	Mean=1.00 Variance =0.57	t = 0.82 df =203	>.05
<i>Unable to have much real empathy for a client's experiences.</i>	Mean=0.63 Variance=0.33	Mean=0.78 Variance =0.40	t = 1.59 df =203	>.05
<i>Uneasy that your personal values make it difficult to maintain an appropriate attitude toward a client.</i>	Mean=0.69 Variance=0.35	Mean=0.72 Variance =0.39	t = 0.35 df =203	>.05
<i>Distressed by your inability to impact a client's life or work situation.</i>	Mean=1.03 Variance=0.59	Mean=1.09 Variance =0.69	t = 0.53 df = 203	>.05
<i>Troubled by ethical issues that have arisen in your work with a client.</i>	Mean=0.63 Variance=0.38	Mean=0.67 Variance =0.53	t = 0.72 df =203	>.05
<i>Irritated by a client who seems to be actively blocking your efforts.</i>	Mean=0.97 Variance=0.58	Mean=1.04 Variance =0.56	t = 0.58 df =203	>.05
<i>Unable to comprehend the essence of a client's problem.</i>	Mean=0.85 Variance=0.42	Mean=0.91 Variance =0.54	t = 0.62 df =203	>.05
<i>Unable to find something to like or respect in a client.</i>	Mean=0.34 Variance=0.23	Mean=0.54 Variance =0.48	t = 2.33 df =203	Significant (p. 02)
<i>Conflicted about how to reconcile obligations to a client and equivalent obligation to others</i>	Mean=0.82 Variance=0.56	Mean=0.85 Variance =0.77	t = 0.24 df =203	>.05
<i>Bogged down with a client in a relationship that</i>	Mean=0.97 Variance=0.57	Mean=1.02 Variance =0.51	t = 0.38 df =203	>.05

<i>seems to be going nowhere.</i>				
<i>Frustrated with a client for wasting your time</i>	Mean=0.75 Variance=0.57	Mean=0.69 Variance =0.37	t = 0.61 df =203	>.05

If we first look back at our previous study, we find that the statistical analysis of differences between personal and organizational coaches responding this specific question yielded the most significant results yet obtained in this study. By contrast, there is only one significant difference to be found between USA and non-USA coaches – but it is an interesting difference and quite significant (.02 level).

While most of the respondents to this inventory indicated that they rarely are “unable to find something to like or respect in a client”, the mean score is higher for the non-USA coaches. We might speculate that the USA coaches are embracing a classic American character of liking everyone they meet. Will Rogers, the famous American humorist and Hollywood cowboy, indicated that he never met anyone he didn’t like. Another Rogers (“Mr. Rogers”) offered a similar universal opinion about all human beings. There is even a third Rogers (the famous therapist, Carl Rogers) who preached (and practiced) “unconditional positive regard.”

Are USA coaches, perhaps, permeated with this Rogerian positive regard – which might complement a more general sense of optimism and an action-orientation. If this is the case, then we might wish to speculate about how this influences the nature of coaching being engaged. Perhaps, an appreciative perspective is more common among American coaches. We might also point to the ICF emphasis on placing responsibility for problem-solving in the hands of the coaching client and the comparable emphasis on being sure that the monkey (problem-ownership) remains on the client’s shoulder (Bergquist and Mura, 2011). Future studies might focus in part on this fascinating and important difference – if it does exist – between USA coaches and coaches residing in other countries.

I would also suggest that these cultural issues might be interwoven with issues regarding the coach’s personal values and ethics, when working with clients. In the previous essay on personal and organizational coaches, I noted that:

. . . organizational coaches are slightly more likely to be uneasy or troubled about these matters when working with their clients than are personal coaches. Is this because values and ethics issues are more prevalent or challenging in an organizational setting than they are in a personal setting? Or do these concerns on the part of organizational coaches relate to their use of subtle (and perhaps sometime elusive) practices, rather than the “tried and true” techniques and strategies that might be more frequently (and effectively) used by personal coaches? Is part of the “Mastery” that personal coaches report more frequently than do organizational coaching related in some way to their clearer sense of personal values and ethical practices as related to their coaching work? Does the mastery of coaching techniques and strategies provide more structure for the personal coaches, allowing them to feel more comfortable than organizational coaches in negotiating the relationship between their work with clients and their own personal values and ethics? These are important questions that should be addressed in future coaching dialogues.

Are there some inter-connections between these ethical issues and the unconditional acceptance of a client’s worth and capacity to solve problems? Do we find that an appreciative/positive perspective regarding our coaching clients is more likely to be aligned with a more flexible ethical code? Is one of the costs of a strict code of ethics the tendency to be more judgmental not only about one’s own coaching practices, but also about the level of respect for one’s clients? We will be exploring this interplay in our future studies using the existing inventory data – and hopefully data from additional studies.

Question: When in difficulty, how often do you . . .

	USA Coaching	Non-USA Coaching	T-Test	P Level
<i>Try to see the problem from a different perspective</i>	Mean=3.91 Variance=0.78	Mean=4.08 Variance =0.69	t = 1.12 df =201	>.05

<i>Share your experience of the difficulty with a client</i>	Mean=2.84 Variance=1.55	Mean=2.79 Variance =1.86	t = 0.68 df =201	>.05
<i>Discuss the problem with a more experienced colleague</i>	Mean=3.10 Variance=1.55	Mean=3.28 Variance =1.63	t = 0.91 df =201	>.05
<i>Consult relevant articles or books</i>	Mean=2.66 Variance=1.72	Mean=2.92 Variance =1.92	t = 1.26 df =201	Fairly Near Significance <.10 cv=1.29
<i>Involve another professional or organization in the case</i>	Mean=1.76 Variance=1.76	Mean=1.68 Variance =2.03	t = 0.36 df =201	>.05
<i>Make changes in your coaching contract with a client</i>	Mean=1.66 Variance=1.63	Mean=1.53 Variance =1.52	t = 0.66 df =201	>.05
<i>Simply hope that things will improve eventually</i>	Mean=0.85 Variance=0.78	Mean=0.68 Variance =0.72	t = 1.23 df =201	Fairly Near Significance <.10 cv=1.29
<i>Seriously consider terminating coaching</i>	Mean=1.24 Variance=9.74	Mean=1.11 Variance =0.83	t = 0.88 df =201	>.05
<i>Review privately with yourself how the problem has arisen</i>	Mean=3.66 Variance=1.33	Mean=3.70 Variance =1.68	t = 0.19 df =201	>.05
<i>Just give yourself permission to experience difficult or disturbing feelings</i>	Mean=3.28 Variance=1.41	Mean=3.21 Variance =1.24	t = 0.37 df =201	>.05
<i>See whether you and your client can deal together with the difficulty</i>	Mean=3.35 Variance=1.47	Mean=3.42 Variance =1.36	t = 0.32 df =201	>.05

<i>Sign up for a conference or workshop that might bear on the problem</i>	Mean=1.47 Variance=1.52	Mean=1.38 Variance =1.70	t = 0.54 df =201	>.05
<i>Modify your stance or approach with a client</i>	Mean=3.38 Variance=1.24	Mean=3.25 Variance =1.23	t = 0.18 df =201	>.05
<i>Avoid dealing with the problem for the present</i>	Mean=0.90 Variance=0.65	Mean=1.08 Variance =0.84	t = 1.32 df =201	Near Significance <.10 cv=1.29
<i>Show your frustration to the client</i>	Mean=0.78 Variance=0.80	Mean=0.91 Variance =1.05	t = 0.84 df =201	>.05
<i>Explore the possibility of referring the client to another coach</i>	Mean=1.66 Variance=1.12	Mean=1.43 Variance =1.10	t = 1.35 df =201	Near Significance <.10 cv=1.29
<i>Refer the client to some other non-coaching professional</i>	Mean=1.78 Variance=1.41	Mean=1.38 Variance =1.01	t = 2.18 df =199	Significant P=.015

A considerable number of significant or near significant results were obtained when the scores of USA and non-USA respondents to this question were compared. The most significant difference (at the .01 level) concerns the willingness of coaches to refer a client to some noncoaching professional if they are experiencing difficulties in working with their client. USA coaches are significantly more likely to refer than is the case with non-USA coaches. While we must be cautious about assigning too much credibility to these findings, given the small and distorted population being sampled and the large number of computations being made, these

could be “real” results, both because of the significance level and other findings from the analysis of scores for this question (to which I will turn shortly).

The key point of inquiry is obvious: why the difference in willingness to refer? I would offer several possible reasons. First, there might be a greater number of credible resources available in the USA. For instance, mental health services are often more widely accepted and made available in the United States than in some countries. We know in many countries that mental health issues are often either dismissed (or ignored) or redefined as a matter of poor health, spiritual crisis or (in education settings) the child’s (not the family’s) problem. When it comes to referring coaching clients to a therapist (because the underlying issues require deeper work), we might find that the referral is easier to make because there is not only a more positive attitude regarding these services, but also because there are many well-trained professionals in the USA who are working in the field of psychotherapy (psychologists, social workers, counsellors, etc.)

I bring in a second near significant finding from the analysis of this question, in my posing of a second possible reason for the referral differences. The USA coaches indicated that they are more likely than non-USA coaches to refer a client to another coach when experiencing difficulties. While this difference only approaches near significance ($p < .10$), it is aligned with results regarding referrals to noncoaching professionals.

Perhaps there is a broader hesitation of non-USA coaches to do any referring. This, in turn, might be attributable (at least in part) to the more recent establishment of professional coaching in countries other than the United States (as well as Canada and certain European countries). If a new profession is being established, then there is often reluctance to admit to difficulties. Referrals can easily be interpreted as a failure and acknowledgement that other professionals can do a better job than we can do.

I offer a third possible reason. While all of the results obtained in these Development of Coaches Surveys must be cautiously received, there is a pattern related to the USA coaches being a bit more action and results oriented and more flexible in seeking to assist clients in finding solutions to their presenting problem(s). It might just be the case that the USA coaches are saying to their clients (in their words, actions or even nonverbal communication) that we (coach and client):

. . . should push forward and see what happens. If it isn't working, then I can help you find another resource that could be of greater use in helping you solve your problem(s). We can always pass on the baton if it isn't working!

This third possible reason might be closely related to the second that I offered. American pragmatism might be aided by a shared sense that professional coaching is established and here to stay: "there is no longer any reason to prove its worth. So, let's not be afraid to refer!"

There is a fourth possible reason that relates to the near significant difference ($p < .10$) found regarding the turning to other resources for assistance with a difficult client. Non-USA coaches report that they are more likely to "consult relevant articles or books" than is the case when USA coaches respond to this question. Could this be a greater tendency for non-USA coaches to turn to external authorities for assistance than is the case with USA coaches? We might find that USA coaches are more "self-reliant" – looking to their own experiences rather than turning to another source. If it doesn't work out for the USA coaches, then they can simply refer out to another professional: a quick, action-oriented, pragmatic solution. As an aside, I wonder if there is a cost associated with this quick referral (and self-reliance). There might be less personal learning on the part of the USA coach.

There is another way to frame this potential reason. It might not be a matter of turning elsewhere for assistance. It might instead be a matter of the resource to which a coach is likely to turn. While USA coaches might be more inclined to turn to another professional (via referral), the non-USA coach might look not to another person, but instead to a nonhuman resource. If this is the case, then we might ask if the turning to an article or book is somehow related to the more "bookish" orientation of non-USA coaches.

The USA coaches might be less bookish. Perhaps, these coaches are more likely to choose action rather than reflection when dealing with client difficulties. Once again, it might be a matter, in part, of professional coaching outside the USA being less established. When a coach looks to an article or book for guidance, they are now letting it be known to other members of their society that they don't have all the answers (as demonstrated in the act of referral). Action is stopped as the coach sits down to read an article or book. In the term used by Daniel Kahneman (2011), the bookish coach is engaging in slow thinking (rather than fast thinking) – and their clients might begin modeling this more reflective approach to their problem(s).

There is one other possible reason which always must be considered when cross-cultural or cross-national comparisons are being made. Are there some powerful societal norms that help to determine the actions to be taken? In the domain of human services, we might find that personal failings are stigmatized. These failings (and related fears and depressive thoughts) must be kept out of public view. They are to be confined as “secrets” that are held by family members (and perhaps some religious official who, in some form, can hear “confessions”).

In some cultures, not only is professional coaching (and many other human services) not fully accepted. Any “exposure” of a client receiving these services is unwelcomed. This push toward secrecy might even apply to asking another professional to do work with a difficult coaching client. We hide our problems, even if this means not receiving proper care. I would suggest that this problem of secrecy (and the fear of stigma associated with revealing any personal failing) is to be found in the USA as well as many other countries – it just might not be as great a problem in the USA.

Question: In your RECENT coaching how often . . .

	USA Coaching	Non-USA Coaching	T-Test	P Level
<i>Do you feel you are changing as a coach?</i>	Mean=3.53 Variance=1.31	Mean=3.62 Variance =1.41	t = 0.54 df =200	>.05
<i>Does this change feel like progress or improvement?</i>	Mean=4.00 Variance=1.26	Mean=4.11 Variance =1.09	t = 0.74 df =199	>.05
<i>Does this change feel like decline or impairment?</i>	Mean=0.15 Variance=0.18	Mean=0.11 Variance =0.11	t = 0.83 df =199	>.05

<i>Do you feel you are overcoming past limitations as a coach?</i>	Mean=3.44 Variance=1.83	Mean=3.45 Variance =1.77	t = 0.06 df =199	>.05
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<i>Do you feel you are becoming more skillful in practicing coaching?</i>	Mean=3.93 Variance=1.04	Mean=4.13 Variance =0.93	t = 1.42 df =199	Near Significant <.10 cv=1.29
<i>Do you feel you are deepening your understanding of coaching?</i>	Mean=4.05 Variance=1.09	Mean=4.12 Variance =0.99	t = 0.53 df =199	>.05
<i>Do you feel a growing sense of enthusiasm about doing coaching?</i>	Mean=3.90 Variance=1.37	Mean=4.11 Variance =1.11	t = 1.33 df =197	Near Significance <.10 cv=1.29
<i>Do you feel you are becoming disillusioned about coaching?</i>	Mean=0.37 Variance=0.70	Mean=0.29 Variance =0.67	t = 0.67 df =199	>.05
<i>Do you feel you are losing your capacity to respond empathetically?</i>	Mean=0.15 Variance=0.27	Mean=0.10 Variance =0.26	t = 0.72 df =199	>.05
<i>Do you feel your performance is becoming mainly routine?</i>	Mean=0.40 Variance=0.34	Mean=0.38 Variance =0.64	t = 0.25 df =199	>.05
<i>How capable do you feel to guide the development of other coaches?</i>	Mean=3.59 Variance=2.01	Mean=3.67 Variance =1.87	t = 0.41 df =199	>.05
<i>How important to you is your further development as a coach?</i>	Mean=4.68 Variance=0.59	Mean=4.67 Variance =0.67	t = 0.10 df =199	>.05

In reviewing the results obtained, it should first be noted that nonsignificant differences were prevalent (as is the case with most of the analyses done regarding differences between USA and non-USA coaches). Nevertheless, there are two of the questions that yield near significant (<.10) results, which introduces several additional hypotheses for further testing. The first item is “Do

you feel you are becoming more skillful in practicing coaching” The non-USA coaches scored slightly higher than the USA coaches on this item. Similarly, on a second question (“Do you feel a growing enthusiasm about doing coaching”), the non-USA respondents scored slightly higher (near significance at ,10 level). As always, we need to very cautious about arriving at conclusions regarding these marginal differences between the two respondent groups.

I would simply suggest that the more recent emergence of professional coaching as an established field of human service outside the USA might represent two important factors: (1) there is much still to learn among those working in a new field (hence it is not surprising that the non-USA respondents feel they are becoming more skillful), and (2) a newly emerging field is always a potential source of enthusiasm for those practicing in this field as well as for those touting its advantages. On the less positive side, there might also be a “topping off” of new learning and enthusiasm among those from the USA who are working in a field (professional coaching) that is already fairly well established.

As we move to our report on the final two questions, we wish to note that the respondent scale changes from a 1-5 rating to a scale that ranging from plus 3 to minus 3. Hence, the mean scores will usually be lower than is the case with the previous questions.

Question: How much influence has each of the following had on your OVERALL development as a coach?

	USA Coaching	Non-USA Coaching	T-Test	P Level
<i>Experiences in coaching clients</i>	Mean=2.73 Variance=0.31	Mean=2.75 Variance =0.31	t = 0.28 df =180	>.05
<i>Taking coaching specific courses, seminars or workshops (including online courses)</i>	Mean=2.20 Variance=1.00	Mean=2.37 Variance =0.63	t = 1.07 df =180	Fairly Near Significance <.10 cv=1.29
<i>Collaborating with other coaches</i>	Mean=2.05	Mean=2.00	t = 0.35	

	Variance=0.92	Variance =0.82	df =180	>.05
<i>Getting formal supervision, mentoring or consultation</i>	Mean=1.88 Variance=1.22	Mean=2.13 Variance =0.98	t = 1.42 df =180	Near Significance <.10 cv=1.29
<i>Having informal case discussion with colleagues</i>	Mean=1.74 Variance=1.09	Mean=1.80 Variance =1.04	t = 0.38 df =179	>.05
<i>Reading books or journals relevant to your coaching practice</i>	Mean=2.03 Variance=0.62	Mean=1.98 Variance =0.78	t = 0.37 df =179	>.05
<i>Observing coaches in workshops, films or on tapes</i>	Mean=1.48 Variance=1.23	Mean=1.39 Variance =1.16	t = 0.51 df =179	>.05
<i>Getting personal coaching</i>	Mean=2.14 Variance=1.07	Mean=1.88 Variance =1.03	t = 1.51 df =179	Near Significance <.10 cv=1.29
<i>Giving formal supervision, mentor coaching, or consultation to other coaches</i>	Mean=1.81 Variance=1.52	Mean=1.75 Variance =1.15	t = 0.32 df =179	>.05
<i>Teaching coaching courses or seminars (face to face or online)</i>	Mean=1.64 Variance=1.83	Mean=1.68 Variance =1.66	t = 0.22 df =179	>.05
<i>Doing coaching related research</i>	Mean=1.09 Variance=1.48	Mean=1.43 Variance =1.57	t = 1.67 df =179	Near Significance <.10 cv=1.29
<i>The institutional conditions in which you practice</i>	Mean=1.08 Variance=1.28	Mean=1.20 Variance =1.32	t = 0.63 df =179	>.05

<i>Experiences in your personal life</i>	Mean=2.19 Variance=0.71	Mean=2.04 Variance =1.12	t = 1.02 df =179	>.05
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What do these results regarding overall influences on coaching practices tell us about potential differences between USA and non-USA coaches? Mostly, as in the case of our previous analyses, the results tell us that there are not many differences or that our categorization is too general (with all respondents from outside the United States being placed in one category). Yet, there are several questions yielding near significant ($p < .10$) differences. We might find that non-USA coaches are more likely to be influenced by engagement in formal supervision and by conducting coach-related research, whereas the USA coaches are more likely to be influenced by their own experiences as someone receiving personal coaching.

Is a pattern detectable here? It does seem that coaches from outside the USA are more likely than those inside the USA to be influenced by the more formal structures of the coaching profession: supervision and research. Conversely, the USA coaches are “carrying their own baggage” with them. They were influenced by their own personal coaching experience. They are now on their own – being influenced perhaps by their own experiences that they themselves interpret (without the assistance of an outside supervisor). There is no need for research or evidence-based coaching practices, if we are going to rely on our own internal guidance and acquired wisdom.

We don’t need to read books if we are our own “in-house” expert. In an earlier essay on results from this Development of Coaches study, I concluded with the following observation and recommendation:

As Francine Campone noted in her request for participation in the first Survey, the field of coaching should build a culture of research and evidence. I would add a further recommendation to this proposal: this culture should move coaching beyond isolation and autonomy. It should move the field to a culture of collaboration, in which thoughtful dialogue is accompanied by evidence-based information, reflective practice and a desire to advance the inter-discipline of professional coaching through critical

inquiry. Hopefully, this set of articles, reporting on results from the Development of Coaches surveys, is contributing in a small way to building such a culture.

In reflecting back on this concluding statement and relating it to the tentative findings in this latest analysis of the development of coaches data, I would suggest that the need for a culture of evidence and collaboration might be even more needed – especially in the United States. It might also be the case, however, that a move to this culture is not very closely aligned with the mentality of autonomy and self-referral found among at least some American coaches.

How do the tentative findings from this comparison of USA and non-USA coaches compare to the previous analyses I have conducted? There were significant differences regarding influence (overall) for ICF certified and non-certified coaches – which amplifies on the sense that ICF certification is part-and-parcel of a field that is becoming more established and its activities becoming more circumscribed. Conversely, I noted in the previous essay that there are virtually no differences of significance between respondents who work primarily as personal coaches and those who work primarily as coaches in an organizational setting, though I noted that:

. . . there is a near significant difference in the item concerning coaching course, seminars and workshops, with personal-oriented coaches being often influenced by these activities than organization-oriented coaches. . . . It will be interesting to see if a subgroup of the organizational coaching group (those who provide training) are less influenced by training they have received as learners than are the coaches that they themselves train. This will have to await future analyses.

Perhaps the organizational coaches and those coming from the USA are great at teaching others (and perhaps even providing supervision to newly minted coaches) – but are not themselves inclined to still learn from others or be influenced much by the research evidence being accumulated. These coaches might indeed embrace a culture of autonomy and self-sufficiency. They might be good storytellers (about the “good old days” when this was still a field saturated with new ideas and innovations that often come from other fields that are far-afield and radical. They might even be good short-term teachers who are sharing their personally acquired insights and wisdom with those just entering the field. However, they probably would be unfit as certifiers of coaching competencies or formal instructors in a structured training or academic degree program.

Question: How much influence does each of the following have on your CURRENT development as a coach?

	USA Coaching	Non-USA Coaching	T-Test	P Level
<i>Experiences in coaching with clients</i>	Mean=2.60 Variance=0.40	Mean=2.45 Variance =1.12	t = 1.24 df =205	>.05
<i>Taking courses, seminars or workshops (including online courses)</i>	Mean=1.85 Variance=0.98	Mean=2.11 Variance =0.86	t = 1.71 df =205	>.05
<i>Getting formal supervision or consultation</i>	Mean=1.74 Variance=1.45	Mean=1.63 Variance =1.80	t = 0.58 df =205	>.05
<i>Having informal case discussion with colleagues</i>	Mean=1.82 Variance=0.82	Mean=1.61 Variance =1.37	t = 1.36 df =205	>.05
<i>Reading books or journals relevant to your coaching practice</i>	Mean=1.82 Variance=0.80	Mean=1.98 Variance =0.85	t = 1.16 df =205	>.05
<i>Getting life coaching for yourself</i>	Mean=1.56 Variance=1.48	Mean=1.57 Variance =1.49	t = 0.04 df =205	>.05
<i>Getting coaching on your coaching work</i>	Mean=1.62 Variance=1.51	Mean=1.40 Variance =1.61	t =1.15 df =205	>.05
<i>Coaching other coaches on professional or life issues</i>	Mean=1.61 Variance=1.47	Mean=1.79 Variance =1.52	t =0.92 df =205	>.05
<i>Giving supervision or consultation to other coaches</i>	Mean=1.52 Variance=1.82	Mean=1.61 Variance =1.48	t =0.44 df =205	>.05
<i>Teaching coaching courses or seminars (face to face or online)</i>	Mean=1.55	Mean=1.64	t =0.44	

	Variance=1.87	Variance =2.20	df =205	>.05
<i>The workplace conditions in which you practice</i>	Mean=0.93 Variance=2.34	Mean=0.66 Variance =2.34	t =1.15 df =205	>.05
<i>Experiences in your personal life outside coaching</i>	Mean=1.78 Variance=1.35	Mean=1.75 Variance =1.79	t = 0.15 df =205	>.05

This final analysis of differences between USA and non-USA coaches reveals no significant differences regarding current influences. We find similar negative results when looking at other categorizations of coaches. For instance, very few differences were found between personal and organizational coaches. When it comes to sources of influence at the present time, everyone seems to be going their own way (as indicated by the high variance scores). It should be noted, however, that there are a cluster of t-scores that hover on the edge of marginal significance – suggesting that there might be something here that the current study has not been able to access. Perhaps there are some real differences when the non-USA respondents are more carefully sorted by country.

Even though no significant differences were found between USA and non-USA coaches, I would offer my own opinion (perhaps bias) that dialogue might be of great value if the forum for this dialogue is global in scope. We have much to learn from our coaching colleagues in different regions of the world. As I noted in a previous essay:

Given the isolation to be found among coaches (as we noted in an earlier report based on these two surveys), it might be important to identify and support those areas where dialogue does occur and where the walls of the professional silo can be breached.

Discussion

In bringing this essay to a close, I start with the most obvious finding: there are not many significant differences among survey respondents as a function of the country from which they come. The same negative conclusion was reached in most of the earlier reports regarding differences as a function of age, gender or the type of coaching in which they are engaged. This was not the case, however, among respondents as a function of whether or not they completed

ICF certification. The results, overall, suggest that primarily focus in future studies should be directed to the impact of certification on coaching development and performance – though in each of the eight reports I have identified several specific areas for further study.

Those few significant or near significant differences we did find between USA and non-USA coaches must be considered tentative and our interpretation of these differences is speculative at best. Once again, we should be cognizant of Rey Carr’s cautionary note regarding Survey Monkey results. Furthermore, we need to be reminded that when many statistical calculations are being performed, the use of .05 and .01 confidence levels become suspect. Put simply, if one hundred calculations are performed, then five of them will be significant by chance.

Technically, the levels of confidence should be adjusted, and the “bar” of significance raised when multiple t-test (or analyses of variance) are performed. Nevertheless, I will venture forth and do some speculating.

Referrals and Assistance

The most significant difference (at the .01 level) we found in comparing the responses of coaches from the USA with those from other countries concerns the willingness of coaches to refer a client to some noncoaching professional if they are experiencing difficulties in working with their client. As I have already noted, USA coaches are significantly more likely to refer than is the case with non-USA coaches. Having reported these results, and urged caution in giving them too much credence, I concluded that these could be “real” results, both because of the significance level and other findings from the analysis of scores for this question.

I offered several possible reasons why these differences might be “real”. First, I mentioned that a greater number of credible resources might be available in the USA. Second, I added in the finding that USA coaches indicated that they are more likely than non-USA coaches to refer a client to another coach when experiencing difficulties. While this difference only approaches near significance ($p < .10$), it is in alignment with the results regarding referrals to noncoaching professionals. Perhaps there is a broader hesitation of non-USA coaches to do any referring. I expanded my hypothesis, indicating that this difference, in turn, might be attributable (at least in part) to the more recent establishment of professional coaching in countries other than the United States (as well as and Canada and certain other European countries). Referrals can easily

be interpreted as a failure and admission that other professionals can do a better job than we can do.

I offered a third possible reason, based on a pattern of differences related to the USA coaches (as compared to non-USA coaches) being a bit more action and results oriented and flexible in seeking to assist clients in finding solutions to their presenting problem(s). I suggested that this culturally based action orientation and pragmatism among USA coaches might be closely related to the second reason I offered. American pragmatism might be aided by a shared sense that professional coaching is established and here to stay: “there is no longer any reason to prove its worth. So, let’s not be afraid to refer!”

A fourth possible reason is also culturally based. Non-USA coaches report that they are more likely to “consult relevant articles or books” than is the case with USA coaches. Could there be a greater tendency for non-USA coaches to turn to external authorities for assistance than is the case with USA coaches. We might find that USA coaches are more “self-reliant.” In other words, it might be more a matter of the resource to which a coach will turn – their own experience and wisdom or that offered by someone else. Either option requires some slow thinking (Kahneman, 2011) on the part of the coach. Are USA coaches ready and willing to slow down and reflect – that might be the key question to ask.

There is yet one other possible cultural factor. Societal norms might determine the actions being taken. I suggested that human failings might be stigmatized, and therefore must be kept out of public view. In some cultures, not only is professional coaching (and many other human services) not fully accepted, but any “exposure” of a client receiving these services is unwelcomed. This push toward secrecy might even apply to asking another professional to do work with a difficult coaching client. We hide our problems, even if this means not receiving proper care. This challenge of stigma and failure to receive help might be greater in other countries, but it certainly is also found in the USA.

How Coaches Handle Their Difficulties

The relative abundance of significant or near significant results obtained from looking at differences between USA and non-USA coaches stands in contrast to results obtained from our analyses of results from comparisons between other populations of coaches. For instance, there doesn’t seem to be much difference between personal coaches and organizational coaches in

their responses to difficult coaching situations. They seem to handle these difficulties in a similar manner. Our analysis of ICG certified and non-ICF certified coaches similarly yielded very few differences (only a difference regarding the greater tendency for ICF certified coaches to terminate the coaching engagement).

I indicated in the essay regarding personal and organizational coaches that we “have to look elsewhere for potential differences in the way difficult situations are handled.” I wondered at the time if “perhaps there are deeply-ingrained tendencies for all coaches (or maybe most people in contemporary societies) to face difficulties in a similar manner.” Results from the present analysis of differences between USA and non-USA coaches suggest that people (or at least coaches) might not all face difficulties in a similar manner. Future studies are warranted that address this potential difference in a more detailed manner (including a potential examination of differences among the non-USA societies that I grouped together in this initial study).

The Frontier Town

In bringing this eighth analysis to a close, I turn to the metaphor of a frontier town that I have deployed in previous essays and elsewhere (Bergquist, 2011). The professional coaching community might already be on the threshold of establishment as a real “town” with law and order, a schoolhouse and some legitimate businesses. This being the case, we might be finding that the earlier occupants of this community find it a bit too “tame” and no longer a site of radical entrepreneurship. They (USA coaches) might be getting a bit bored and are making plans to move on to another newly discovered territory. Conversely, the new arrivals (non-USA coaches) might be excited about the prospects of living and working in this wonderful new (for them) town. I am obviously engaging a metaphor that is much too fanciful for any serious analysis of the marginal results obtained from this preliminary study. Nevertheless, the dynamics operating in this metaphor do align with what has already been proposed regarding fads (Maher and Pomerantz, 2008) and the diffusion of innovation (Bergquist, 2011) in the field of professional coaching

In my further engagement of this frontier metaphor, I look to results obtained from all of my previous analyses. The organizational coaches were a bit more positive than were the personal coaches, but the differences (if any) were minor. Organizational coaches perceive themselves to

be a bit more skillful in practicing coaching than do the personal coaches who responded to this survey, and feel more like they have a growing sense of enthusiasm about engaging in the coaching enterprise than do their personal coaching colleagues. Perhaps, organizational coaching is newer and more like a frontier town than is personal coaching. We do know that personal coaching tended to precede organizational coaching in many countries (including the USA) (Brock, 2012). Are the personal coaches (especially in the USA) most likely to move on to other ventures—following their own advice to “follow your bliss”?

Is the frontier town metaphor appropriate in understanding potential difference between professional coaches from different countries? Is this metaphor (like many metaphors) compelling but not very accurate? After all, coaching has been in place for many years in some non-American countries. What we now call “coaching” has gone by many other names in various countries—so we need to be careful about declaring that this is a “new” field of human service in most countries. There might be an even more damning critique regarding the use of this metaphor: it might now be out of date. Yes, 10 years ago we could talk about a “frontier”, but probably not today. Organizations such as ICF have successfully promoted professional coaching in many countries, and membership in ICF is remarkably international in scope.

Still, there is something of value in the metaphor of a frontier to which some people are attracted during the early years, while other people are attracted during the later years. This pattern is aligned with a widely accepted model of innovation diffusion first offered by Everett Rogers (yet another Rogers in this analysis!) (Rogers, 2003). Five stages of innovation diffusion have been identified. Put all to simply, the populations associated with each stage are labeled: (1) innovators, (2) early adopters, (3) early majority adopters, (4) late majority adopters and (5) recalcitrants (non-adopters). Elsewhere, in addressing the diffusion of another innovative human service field (faculty development), I introduced parallels between these populations and those found in the creation of a town in the frontier (Bergquist, 2010). I later applied this metaphor to the field of professional coaching (Bergquist, 2011).

The innovators are the explorers who set out to discover something new without quite knowing what they will discover or invent, while the early adopters are the pioneers who have some ideas about where they are moving (based on information and maps provided by the explorers) but fully realize that this will be a new land in which there will be minimal established

structures or social norms. The third group (early majority) is made up of the early settlers who build buildings, establish farms and bring a little law-and-order to their fledgling town. The next group (late majority) only move to the town when it is established. They often bring the structures and social norms from their old town (or city) to the new one. These are the burghers, who soon become the town officials, teachers and certifiers. Finally, there are the recalcitrant. These are the folks who stay “back home.” They don’t want to take any risks and often resist those who have left home with their resources and expertise. “Why do people have to change or move!”

Does this story of frontier town development ring true regarding the history of professional coaching as a new human service field? I would suggest that there is some alignment – especially as I review the remarkable history of coaching offered by my colleague, Vikki Brock (2012). There are the explorers (people like Galway, Erhard and Olalla) who were tinkering with some new ideas about how best to serve other people. They often brought in ideas and practices from various fields, disciplines and even religions (such as transpersonal and cognitive behavioral therapy, analytic philosophy and Buddhism). Pioneers can be found among the women and men (such as Thomas Leonard and Laura Whitworth) who established the first practices that could be called “coaching.”

The early settlers (such as my colleagues, Agnes Mura and Jeannine Sandstrom) were those who built the field’s credibility and helped to found the first “trade” organizations (such as ICF, the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches and, for a short period of time, the International Consortium for Coaching in Organizations). Late settlers included those who built ICF into a formable institution with extensive guidelines and levels of credentialing, as well as the big organizations such as WBECS that are now fully engaged in the marketing of coaching services. These settlers have also built complementary associations such as the Association of Coach Training Organizations and the Graduate School Association of Coaching. The professional coaching town is becoming a small city and appears to be well-established and here to stay.

We might now ask: are the explorers and pioneers going to hang around and become “citized” or will they move on to other ventures – or have many of them already left? What role will they play if they do hang around? As I mentioned earlier, these early-arriving coaches will probably

not be very effective as town officers, judges or formal instructors. Perhaps their primary role is to provide what Talcott Parsons (1955) called the maintenance of latent patterns in this community. The important question to ask might be: what will be lost if this “pioneering spirit” is no longer present in the professional coaching field? Is my push for a “culture of evidence” hammering a nail in the coffin of this pioneering culture? Am I pushing for too much respectability? Perhaps, my advocating for a more global dialogue is a counter-balancing plea to keep the pioneering spirit alive. With this expansion of boundaries, we are likely to find some fresh air (perhaps a minor hurricane) blowing through the town from other regions of the world. This gentle (or not-so-gentle) breeze might convey new ideas, provoke dialogue, and create a bit of town-unbuilding.

What about those in the fifth group? Sadly, I must nominate some of my fellow psychologists who insist that professional coaching is nothing more than unregulated and undisciplined “psychotherapy-for-normals.” We might include other human service professionals who view professional coaching as a threat to and intrusion on their own space: “why do we need anything more than we already have in our existing human service fields.” These recalcitrant are often those calling for the certification of all professional coaches by one or more of the established agencies and associations in other disciplines and fields that now license human service professionals.

Other recalcitrants can be found in countries where human services of any kind that smack of “psychology” and “psychotherapy” are considered unnecessary or even a source of malpractice. There is also the matter of professional coaching being sacrilegious by some conservative religious groups: “Don’t do work of the devil by trying to address spiritual matters from a secular perspective.” Matters of the human heart and spirit, as well as interpersonal relationships, can best be handled by physicians, teachers or religious leaders: “go back from where you came and leave us to our own proven services and solutions!” This eighth essay might be capturing some of this recalcitrance across different cultures (though not yet in some religious populations). Future cross-cultural studies are certainly warranted – especially given the primitive and highly tentative nature of the current study. This study, after all, is very exploratory – and perhaps pioneering – in nature. More established studies must be conducted – helping to build a culture of evidence in our field. Hopefully, this can be done

without losing the pioneering spirit. If the results from this study and studies done in the near future help to foster a more global dialogue then we might be able to retain this spirit.

Conclusions

With the completion of this USA/non-USA analysis, and the writing of this eighth essay, I will have brought this first phase of the Development of Coaches Study to a close. I have performed simple t-tests to see if there are differences between various coaching populations. A few important differences were found; however, in general I was unable to discern major differences as a function of age, gender or country of residence. The several differences that were found to be significant should be further explored.

It is now time to move on to the second phase of this study. I will be engaging much more sophisticated statistical tools to determine if there are some discernable patterns of developmental factors and if there are certain factors that seem to contribute the most to the development of coaches. Age is one of the demographic factors to receive the greatest attention during this second phase. It is important that we return to an investigation of potential differences as a function of age, because we can treat age as a continuous variable rather than as just two categories (below and above 50) as we have done in this first study. We will be able to conduct correlational analyses including responses to other survey items as related to age. We will also be exploring potential curvilinear relationships between age and responses to survey items. Most importantly, in the next phase we will be further exploring the role played by certification – for it seems to have some impact on the development of coaches. Clearly, further study is needed to better identify and discern the nature of differences that might not yet have been discovered regarding all the characteristics of coaches.

It is important to note that this second phase will still not be adequate to the task of informing the professional coaching community about the best ways in which to prepare coaches and provide life-long learning opportunities for those already in the field. A third phase is being planned which will be the design and implementation of a new, more focused study that solicits input from a much larger, more diverse and more representative population. Even more advanced statistical procedures can be applied to access some of the deeper and more systematic interweaving of various developmental factors.

A fourth phase is also envisioned in which data from the original studies on the development of clinicians done by David Orlinsky and his colleagues (Orlinsky and Rønnestad, 2005) can be compared with the data generated in the current study and phase three study. This comparison would be of great value in addressing the widely voiced question regarding how the practice of professional coaching compares to that of clinical psychology and specifically psychotherapy.

I would suggest that there are some important and exciting times ahead. Not only is there an opportunity to learn more about the field of professional coaching, there is also the opportunity to tangibly advance the movement to more evidence-based formulations of coaching theory and practice. These formulations could, in turn, build on a foundation of appreciative global dialogue among those providing professional coaching services, those receiving these services, and those benefiting from successful coaching engagement. Hopefully, the studies that we are conducting and that we are publishing in the Library of Professional Coaching can contribute to this dialogue.

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