Executive coaching impact on leader development in a South African bank

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ABSTRACT

This case study was conducted within a South African bank and it seeks to add value in the overall skills development fraternity within a South African context, particularly in leader development. The aim of this research was to investigate and evaluate the impact of executive coaching in developing leaders of a South African bank using Kirkpatrick's evaluation model. The data was collected through face-to-face interviews within a South African bank where the questions were semi-structured to allow for flexibility in the direction of the conversations. There were a total of fourteen respondents that included six divisional executives, two managing executives, five executive coaches and one executive coach coordinator.

There were three key findings of the study that were consistent with literature, namely, i.) Executive coaching has a positive impact in developing leaders in a South African Bank and this was the general view from different executive coaches' perspectives. In the main, it is the emotional competence or at least, self-awareness created which benefits the executives, not just in their professional, but also in their personal lives; ii.) the Kirkpatrick evaluation model can be used to measure the impact of executive coaching with few reservations within level two and three. iii.) There were three key cases presented by the respondents showing financial benefits from the executive coaching in the bank. Overall, all the participants shared their moving experiences and it was clear that there are some critical gains that are priceless and can never be measured in any financial currency.

DECLARATION

I, **Sandile M. Phungula**, declare that this research report is my own work except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or any other university.

Signed at ……………………………………………………

On the …………………………….. day of ………………………… 20…..

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this MBA achievement to my late grandmother, Mrs. Beatrice Phungula, who was key in the overall support from my primary education and up to my first degree. When going through the valley of darkness, she also encouraged me to pray and trust in the trinity of the higher power, God the Father, the Holy Spirit and the Son. Without such foundation and values, achieving this major milestone in my life, wouldn't have been possible.

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From a very good foundation, I later met other key and God sent angels like Sisana Machi, Philani Majola, Felicity Kent, Lerato Maupa, Ps. Mngomezulu and Bishop M. Sono who all played different and critical roles in my holistic development as young man. I salute you.

I wouldn’t be where I am at if it wasn’t for the bursary sign-off from my employer, through our Managing Executive, Mr. S. Gericke. This financial institution truly believes in the skills development of our country, especially the HDI. We need more firms and leaders like you in our country. I really appreciate it. Some may call it luck or privilege, I call it the grace of God that I got the funding.

To my entire family, especially my lovely wife, Khanyo and my two daughters, Olwethu and Lwandi, thank you for your support and understanding. You had to understand why I was always scarce at home. For that, I thank you a lot. To my friends who were encouraging me throughout this journey, your kind words kept be going.

To my employer who gave permission for this study and all the respondents who sacrificed their precious time despite their hectic deliverables and businesses, thank you for making this happen. It’s because of you I now see things differently.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research is to investigate and evaluate the impact of executive coaching as a leader development instrument in a South African bank.

1.2 Context of the study

South Africa is regarded as one of the youngest democratic countries in the world after the first democratic election in 27th April 1994 which gave birth to the new government led by the oldest liberation organisation in Africa, the ANC, which turned 104 on the 8th Jan 2016. Two decades later, a lot has positively changed politically, socially, economically and educationally. The skills development initiatives, which aimed to redress education imbalances prior to 1994, gave birth to legislation like South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act 58 of 1995, Skills Development Act (SDA) 97 of 1998, Skills Development Levy Act (SDLA) 9 of 1999, National Qualification Framework (NQF) Act 67 of 2008. Related to this legislation, state-funded organs like Sector for Education and Training Authorities (SETA's) and National Skills Fund (NSF) were also formed in 1998. The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) then developed the Human Resources Development Strategy (HRDS) and National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS). In essence, the existence of all this legislation and state-funded organs seem to have similar objectives which is to redress the skills development imbalances of the past, curb inequality, improve employment and the alleviation of poverty whilst growing the country's economy (DHET, 2016). Denton and Vloeberghs echoed these sentiments by implying that, One of the key issues facing South Africa, post 1994, is poor literacy level leading to more people, especially blacks, not to find jobs and those who can are unskilled, at most (Denton & Vloeberghs, 2003).

The 1994 changes also created new business opportunities for both international and local firms, meaning the South African markets became characterised by open, free and fair trades, to some degree. This means, firms had to compete on intellectual property, human, financial and physical resources. Thus, with regard to human resource or talent competition, firms with better skilled employees, including leaders, stand better chances to win more customers and grow their businesses. Today, South Africa is regarded is one of the emerging markets, and some global investors see South Africa as the gateway to the rest of the African market. To attest to this, South Africa is now a member of BRICS, G20 and WTO (Alden & Schoeman, 2013) and if media reports are anything to go by, the talks are in advanced stages to have a BRICS bank. Such outcomes can create further employment opportunities, which can be attributed to skills development through learnerships funded by employers, government, NFS and SETA's born out of the new democratic government.

Haven said that, according to the NSDS III, "South Africa South Africa is challenged by low productivity in the workplace, as well as slow transformation of the labour market and a lack of mobility of the workforce, largely as a result of inadequate training for those already in the labour market"("Department of Higer Education and Training ", 2016). This sounds consistent with the recent statistics released by Stats SA on the 1st Mar 2016 that, for 2015,, the GDP has only grown by 1.3% which represents about 13% decline from 2014 GDP ("Statistics South Africa," 2016). Both these figures are a far cry from 5% GDP seen in 2007 and 5% average GDP growth rate needed up to 2030 for the successful implementation of NDP 2030 ("Treasury," 2016).

To make it worse, the National Treasury through the Minister of Finance, Mr. Pravin Gordhan, in his budget speech tabled in parliament on the 24th Feb 2016, projected 2016 GDP growth to be 0,9% due to the global slow growth rate and the decline in prices for the commodities, like gold and platinum, resulting in job loses ("Treasury," 2016).

Despite these on-going challenges, South Africa has managed to assume a leadership role on the continent, both politically and economically, since 1994. According to Alden and Schoeman, the South African Minister of International Relations and Corporations, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, once described South Africa's role as that of peace-maker and negotiator who has the African continent's interest at heart when interacting with other global stakeholders (Alden & Schoeman, 2013). From the above passages, it does seem that indeed, South Africa plays a key leadership role on the continent which means leadership development too, is vital in this country.

An executive search firm based in Cape Town, Jack Hammer (2014), released interesting statistics on CEO's qualifications for the top 40 JSE listed companies. It revealed, 65% from Finance; 20% from Engineering; 10% from Science; 5% from Law and 3% from Social Sciences ("Executive Report 1," 2016).

Moreover, when Barro and Lee included South Africa, which was the only African country in the study out of the 37; South Africa came last when the Grade Seven scholars were evaluated on maths (34.8%) and science (31,7%) educational attainment (Barro & Lee, 2001). This should be concerning for South African leaders, firms and the population at large. If we are to improve productivity, employment, equality and grow our economy, skills development, in particular leadership development through executive coaching, should also play a key role.

Coaching is defined in different ways. Popper and Lipshitz once said coaching has two goals and these are, improving performance at a skills level and establishment of relationships which permit coaches to grow their trainees' psychological development (Popper & Lipshitz, 1992). O'Flaherty later implied that, the essential role of a coach is to provide a good learning and enabling environment in which coachees examine and discover new ways that makes them efficient in their jobs (O'Flaherty & Everson, 2005). On the other hand, Joo's (2005) definitions of executive coaching is seen as, a process of one-on-one relationship between a professional coach and an executive for the purpose of improving the executive displacement in behaviour through self-awareness and learning which eventually leads to the success of an executive and his firm (Joo, 2005). In this research report, we use this definition as a base of the evaluation of executive coaching efficiency.

Leadership is also defined differently by lot of authors. For this reason, Bolden argued, it does not matter which definition is used, as long as it is informed by organisational inclinations, situations and/or beliefs (or values), but with an awareness of the underlying inferences and expectations of the particular approach (Bolden, 2004). For this reason, in this research a choice is made to use Northouse's definition which defines leadership "as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (Northouse, 2013). The effectiveness of executive coaching for leader development in this research is evaluated using a modified Kirkpatrick training evaluation model. As Bates put it, the Kirkpatrick model has been key in training evaluation for over thirty years (Bates, 2004). The definition of evaluation in the training context varies but in this research, the following is preferred, comparing results with intensions (Kaufman & Keller, 1994). According to Kirkpatrick (1996), the training evaluation has four levels, namely (Kirkpatrick, 1996):

- Level 1: Reaction, which measures learner satisfaction
- Level 2: Learning which measures knowledge acquired, skills improved or attitude changed due to training
- Level 3: Behaviour which measures on-the-job behavioural changes due to training
- Level 4: Results, which measures the final results occurred and attributed to training. This could include financial, work quality, productivity and staff retention

1.3 Problem statement

1.3.1 *Main problem*

The aim of this research is to investigate and evaluate the impact of executive coaching in developing leaders of a South African bank using the Kirkpatrick evaluation model.

1.4 Significance of the study

The study provides guidance and support to firms, all leaders (from junior to senior) coaches, coachees, managers, learning practitioners, authors and academics on the best possible benefits and areas of improvements of executive coaching within a South African context. The firms' sizes that stand to benefit could vary from Small Medium Micro-Enterprise (SMME) to big and/or listed in Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE). That is because executive coaching should be applied across all kinds of businesses, firms or even in public sectors. If proven to be effective (positive impact) and cost-effective in this research, the guidelines can save firms' cost and get better returns on training investment. Through a talent management framework, skills development also contributes to staff motivation and retention (Glen, 2006) and thus reduces recruitment cost. As Allen once argued, cost associated with staff attrition includes cash, time and other resources and the total replacement cost could be between 90% and 200% of employee annual income (Allen, 2008). So, if the talent is retained through executive coaching as a leadership development instrument, a firm can save money, up profit, be competitive in what Allen (2008) refer to as 'talent war' and be more efficient and productive as a business which could be a good thing for the country's economy.

To add, Thach discovered that, once leaders go through executive coaching, their peers and managers rated leadership effectiveness as having gone up an average of 55% and 60% respectively during the two phases, as a result of the overall coaching and 360 degrees feedback process (Thach, 2002). A similar point was made by

Passmore and Fillery-Travis when they said, "with the idea of an evolving and developing knowledge base, supplied by appropriate research, there comes the probability of improving coaching performance of today's coaches. Training and development hence becomes a process of on-going professional development for coaching practitioners" (Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011).

A similar qualitative research method conducted by McGovern et al., concluded that executive coaching was effective and provided a sizeable return on investment and for this reason, additional firms should be stimulated to use executive coaching (McGovern et al., 2001). Irrespective of what the research outcomes are in this research, it is likely to add a significant knowledge base for learning, general coaching, executive coaching and leadership development within the South African context. The interpretations of emotions of interviewees at the analytical phase of the qualitative research, could be an added advantage to validate the data and manage outliers where possible.

Another reason for the significance of this research is that the skills, productivity and efficiency levels of South African employees and firms can also improve should they apply the lessons from this research. When that happens, that could lead to better job opportunities and close the equality gap in our society. From there, these firms can start thinking about expanding to other parts of the continent and to solidify their position as the key emerging market and economic leaders.

Lastly, the learning fraternity, be it formal or informal, can also benefit from this study and be able to develop employees or any learner, especially leaders, better and faster. For example, the informal training practitioners and learners would choose the appropriate coaching model that could suit leaders' needs at a particular moment of their development and career. If the results are beneficial for the employees and a firm, the training provider/practitioner stands a good chance of sustaining their business. As Reid once put it, "Business Schools are learning environments that are tasked with crafting learning programmes that are appropriate to firm's contexts and will have business positive impact through developing relevant leadership competencies that not only focus on the 'knowing', but also the 'doing' and 'being' of leadership and facilitate the transfer of learning to others" (Reid, 2012). Therefore, the overall significance of this study will be reaped by focusing on three areas, namely; executive coaching, leadership development and Kirkpatrick four-level learning evaluation model.

1.5 Delimitations of the study

The following are included:

This study is conducted within a South African bank which is one of the top five biggest banks and listed on Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE). The participants or respondents are in the employment of this bank or work as external coaches for the bank. In other words, the participants are drawn from internal executive coaches, external executive coaches, Divisional Executives Managers, Managing Executives, Learning Managers, Organisational Development practitioners, Organisational Effectiveness practitioners or any individuals involved in coordinating executive coaching within the bank. The modified Kirkpatrick evaluation model was used.

The following were not included:

This study was limited to one bank and did not look at the South African banking industry as a whole, meaning, South African Government departments, State Owned Enterprises (SOE's), Small Medium Enterprises (SME's), Small Micro-Medium Enterprises (SMME's) and other did not form part of this study. To add, there was little focus on leadership theories, leadership styles and leadership development. However, to provide some context, the author may have touched on some characteristics of these. Lastly, the coaching models and coaching philosophies were not the focus of this study.

1.6 Definition of terms

- SDA: Skills Development Act
- SDLA: Skills Development Levy Act
- NQF: National Qualifications Framework
- SAQA: South African Qualifications Authority
- ANC: African National Congress
- BRICS: Brazil; Russia; India; China and South Africa
- G-20: Group of 20 major international economies
- WTO: World Trade Organisation that manages trades between different countries
- SETA: Sectors for Education and Training Authority
- NSF: National Skills Funds
- DHET: Department of Higher Education and Training
- HRDS: Human Resource Development Strategy
- NSDS: National Skills Development Strategy
- NDP: National Development Plan
- Stats SA: Statistics South Africa
- ROI: Return On Investments
- CIB: Corporate & Investment Banking
- RBB: Retail & Business Banking
- MBTI: Myers-Briggs Personality Types Indicators

1.7 Assumptions

- A South African bank granted permission to do this study
- At least fifteen participants including, seven executive managers, two executive sponsors, five executive coaches and one executive coaching coordinators participated in the study
- These leaders should be going or have gone through executive coaching within the past twelve months in their leadership roles
- Professional coaches (internal and external) and learning managers did not mind sharing any relevant and additional information regarding coaching practices and their experiences in the bank
- The results of coaching practices were shared by the coaches (internal and/or externally).

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this literature review section, a background of executive coaching and related studies, are looked at. It is in this section where a detailed foundation for the study is laid and the importance of executive coaching as a form of developing leaders is explained. From there, different evaluation methods and the impact of executive coaching in developing leaders will be discussed before presenting the research question. To do this, the author uses previous studies as references to build his argument.

2.2 Definition of topic or background discussion

According to Denton and Vloeberghs (2003), the environment in which South African firms used to operate in prior to April 1994, were drastically changed and these firms started facing unique, new and interesting challenges brought by international firms, new labour regulations and trade unions strengths (Denton & Vloeberghs, 2003). They further argued that, these challenges were magnified by the fact the “South Africa had low productivity, lacked international business exposure, poor products and services quality records and a lack of research and development” (Denton & Vloeberghs, 2003, p. 86) and DHE (2016). They went on to argue that, “One of the key challenges facing the democratic South Africa is lack of literacy which leads to more people, especially blacks, not to find employment and those who can, are unskilled, at most” (Denton and Vloeberghs, 2003). Similar sentiments were uttered by the South African Higher Education and Training Department (DHET, 2016).

About fifteen years ago, the UK government was quoted as saying, "Our productivity as a nation is already lagging behind our competitors in North America and Europe. By tackling our management and leadership deficit with real vigour, we will unlock the doors to increased productivity, maximise the benefits of innovation, gain advantage from technological change and create the conditions for a radical transformation of public services" DfES (2002) as cited in (Bolden, 2004, p. 4). On the other hand, out of 144 countries, the Global Competitive Index 2015-2016, ranked South Africa number 49 which is the highest in Africa, but the lack of education and workforce inefficiencies are two of the contributing top eight factors that pulls the country down (Schwab, 2015). Therefore, the author argues that, South African workplace leaders, irrespective of sector, should play a key role in improving the education and skills of the workforce, which could result in better productivity and efficiencies. However, even the leaders themselves, need to develop in order to unlock inefficiencies that hinder productivity. That is providing leadership.

Many scholars define leadership differently. For example, Tubb (2005) defined it as "influencing others to accomplish organisational goals" (Tubbs, 2005 as cited by Tubbs and Schulz (2006). Northouse (2013) defined leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. According to Northouse (2004), as cited by Bolden (2004), this leadership definition was born out of four leadership themes identified, namely, "leadership is a process; involves influence; occurs in a group context and involves goal attainment" (Bolden, 2004, p. 5). So, in the author's view, for leaders to provide leadership that is needed in a workplace, they need to have required competence to achieve this. If they do not have it, leaders will need to be developed.

One of the pioneers of the 'competency' concept, a psychologist, David McClelland, (1973), as cited by Garman and Johnson (2006), was not pleased with the wide-spread use of the term, 'intelligence' and the associated tests which he felt was not aligned with practical outcomes. He then made a strong assertion that competencies – outcome relevant measures of knowledge, skill, abilities and traits and/or motives should be adopted as a user-friendly aptitude measurement (Garman & Johnson, 2006, p. 13).

Garman (2004) listed seven broad competencies for senior management in the health sector. These are charting the course (strategic vision, systems thinking and innovation); developing work relationships (physician relations); broad influence (political skills; persuasion and collaboration); structuring the work environment (work design and coordination; feedback giving and performance management); inspiring commitment (building trust; tenacity, decision-making and listening/feedback receiving); communication (energising, crafting messages and speaking) and self-management (balance and resilience and self-restraint) (Garman, Tyler, Darnall, & Lerner, 2004, p. 312). According to Geoghegan and Dulewicz (2008), project managers need to have ten leadership competencies classified into the following three main dimensions, namely Intellectual (IQ); Emotional/Social (EQ) and Managerial Dimensions (MQ) (Geoghegan & Dulewicz, 2008, p. 62) as shown in figure 1 below:

Intellectual Competence (IQ):	Emotional/Social Competence (EQ):	Managerial Competence (MQ):
1) Critical Analyses & Judgement 2) Vision and Imagination: • Strategic Perspectives	3) Self-Awareness: • Emotional resilience • Intuitiveness 4) Sensitivity: • Influencing • Motivation 5) Conscientiousness	6) Managing resources 7) Engaging communication 8) Empowering 9) Developing 10) Achieving

Figure 1: Managerial Dimensions (MQ), Source: Geoghegan & Dulwicz (2008)

It is worth noting that one of the pioneers of emotional intelligence, Goleman (1998) and Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2002) had already put in place what he referred to as an Emotional Competency Framework, in figure 2 below, which in essence divides emotional competence into two broad categories, namely, personal and social competence.

The Emotional Competency Framework	
Personal Competency	**Social Competency**
Self-Awareness:	**Empathy**
· Emotional awareness	· Understanding others
· Accurate self-assessment	· Developing others
· Self-confidence	· Service orientation
Self-Regulation	· Leveraging diversity (DE2 and Marieke)
· Self-control	· Political awareness
· Trustworthiness	**Social Skills**
· Conscientiousness	· Influence
· Adaptability	· Communication
· Innovation	· Conflict management
Motivation	· Leadership
· Achievement drive	· Change catalyst
· Commitment	· Building bonds
· Initiative	· Collaboration and cooperation
· Optimism	· Team capabilities

Figure 2: Emotional Competency Framework, Source: Goleman (1998)

O'Reilly and his colleagues identified six competencies in a health care organisation relevant to different levels of leadership, which include the CEO, Centre and Department leaderships and these are; (1.) Clearly articulates the strategy; (2.) Provides a compelling vision (3.) Provides measurable objectives for implementing the vision; (4.) Recognizes and rewards progress in implementing change; (5.) Responds effectively to resistance to change and (6.) Personally inspiring and motivating for the change (O'Reilly, Caldwell, Chatman, Lapiz, & Self, 2010).

In figure 3 below, Dye and Garman (2006) Leadership Competency Model has x16 leadership competencies (Dye & Garman, 2006, p. 10):

Cornerstone 1	Cornerstone 2	Cornerstone 3	Cornerstone 4
Well-Cultivated Self-Awareness	**Compelling Vision**	**Real Way With People**	**Masterful Execution**
1.) Leading with Conviction (or living by personal conviction)	3.) Developing Vision (or Being Visionary)	6.) Listening like you mean it	11.) Generating informal power
2.) Using Emotional Intelligence (or Possessing emotional Intelligence)	4.) Communicating Vision	7.) Giving Feedback	12.) Building Consensus
	5.) Earning Trust and Loyalty	8.) Mentoring others	13.) Making Decision
		9.) Developing Teams	14.) Driving Results
		10.) Energising Staff	15.) Stimulating Creativity
			16.) Cultivating Adaptability

Figure 3: Leadership Competency Model, Source: Dye & Garman (2006)

However, a distinction between leader development and leadership development is acknowledged by the author based on Day's (2001) argument that leader development is based on old-fashioned and personal conceptualisations of leadership where at the core, leadership depends on the individual leader's development (Day, 2001). This assertion was made after reviewing a number of studies and he went to argue that, leadership looks at an organisation's social capital quoting interpersonal competency and social awareness skills from Goleman (1998), whereas, leader development focuses on the intrapersonal competencies and self-awareness skills, also from Day (2001).

Tubb and Schulz (2006) argued that competencies can be defined in terms of Knowledge, Skills and Ability with the acronym KSA (Tubbs & Schulz, 2006) and for the purpose of this study, this definition is adopted. They went on to classify competencies in Core Personalities (fixed and difficult to change as developed from childhood), Individual values (more malleable than values, but more resistant to change than behaviours), behaviours and skills (meta-competencies) (more likely to be changed through leadership development) (Tubbs & Schulz, 2006, p. 29). Within these meta-skills, they then identified fifty taxonomy of leadership competencies categorised into seven meta-competencies, namely: (1) Understanding the big picture; (2) Attitudes are everything; (3) Leadership the driving force; (4) Communication, the leader's voice; (5) Innovation and creativity; (6) Leading change and (7) Teamwork and fellowship (Tubbs & Schulz, 2006, p. 33). Northouse (2013) argued such competencies as intelligence, self-confidence, determination, sociability and integrity could be regarded as one of the leadership traits which not everybody possesses and that is when leadership is seen as property as opposed to a process.

On the other hand, Northouse (2013) went on to argue that leaders need to be flexible and accommodate the competencies of their team members based on different situations. In other words, a leader may need to provide direction, coaching, support or delegate based on each situation. That is what he referred to as situational leadership. For example, where coaching is needed, it is when there is high support and direction needed and given by the leader due to lower levels of development for their teams (Northouse, 2013). So, in the author's view, such leadership style is indeed relevant in the executive coaching context for any firm.

Moreover, Northouse implied that, the essentials and the motives of the leaders' teams or direct reports, also have to be taken care of, beyond any forms of tangible rewards, in order for their teams to perform at their optimum levels. This concept, he referred to as transformational leadership (Northouse, 2013). It is therefore the author's view that leaders or executives, can positively influence their teams, using different sets of skills or provide opportunities, to achieve goals through leader or executive development programmes. Coaching is one format that can be used to achieve this. The next section on executive coaching, looks at how the author came to such a point of view.

Coaching and Executive Coaching

The term, “coaching originated from the Hungarian village of Kocs and the more comfortable, covered wheeled wagon first developed there to carry its passengers through the harsh terrain, protected from the elements on their way from their point of departure to their ultimate destination and executive coaching as an evolution where a coach helps an executive on similar journey” (Hendrickson, 1987 as cited by (Stern, 2004, p. 154).

On Executive Coaching, Kauffman and Coutu (2009) defined executive coaching as “a confidential, individually-tailored engagement designed to meet the needs of both of the executive being coached and the organisation paying for the services” (Kauffman & Coutu, 2009, p. 3). Ennis (2012) and her colleagues had this to say, “Executive Coaching is defined involves an executive, his coach and his organisational context (as represented by the interests of his organisation and supervisor, including the fact that his organisation typically pays for coaching services. Executive coaching is an experiential and individualised leader development process that builds a leader’s capability to achieve short and long-term organisational goals. It is conducted through one-on-one and/or group interactions, driven by data from multiple perspectives, and based on mutual trust and respect. The organisation, an executive, and the executive coach work in partnership to achieve maximum impact” (Ennis, 2012, p. 10). According to de Haan and his colleagues, *executive coaching* aspires to be a form of organisational and leadership development made possible through a string of contracted one-on-one conversations with a qualified coach that leads to high occurrence of relevant, actionable and timely outcomes for clients (de Haan, Duckworth, Birch, & Jones, 2013, p. 41).

Moreover, Joo (2005) also defined executive coaching as a process of one-on-one relationships between a professional coach and an executive for the purpose of improving the executive displacement in behaviour through self-awareness and learning, which eventually leads to the success of an executive and his firm (Joo, 2005). In this research report, the author uses this definition as the base of the evaluation of executive coaching impact. The following figure 4, shows the considerations Joo (2005, p. 476) took, before coming up with his own definition.

Author(s)	Year	Definition and Purpose
Peterson	1996	Coaching is *the process of equipping people with the tools, knowledge, and opportunities* they need to develop themselves and become more effective (p. 78).
Kampa-Kokesch and Anderson	2001	Coaching is *a form of a systematic feedback intervention* aimed at enhancing *professional skills, interpersonal awareness, and personal effectiveness.*
Orenstein	2002	Executive coaching is referred to as a "*one-on-one intervention with a senior manager for the purpose of improving or enhancing management skills*" (p. 356).
McCauley and Hezlett	2001	Executive coaching involves *a series of one-on-one interactions* between a manager or executive and an external coach in order to further *the professional development of the manager* (p. 321).
Bacon and Spear	2003	Coaching in business contexts can generally be defined as an informed dialogue whose purpose is *the facilitation of new skills, possibilities, and insights in the interest of individual learning and organizational advancement* (p. xvi).
Hall, Otazo, and Hollenbeck	1999	Coaching is meant to be *a practical, goal-focused form of personal, one-on-one learning* for busy executives and may be used *to improve performance or executive behavior,* enhancing a career or prevent derailment, and work through organizational issues or change initiatives (p. 40).
Kilburg	1996	Executive coaching is a helping relationship formed between a client who has managerial authority and responsibility in an organization and a consultant who uses a wide variety of behavioral techniques and methods *to assist the client to achieve a mutually identified set of goals, to improve his or her professional performance and personal satisfaction,* and consequently *to improve the effectiveness of the client's organization* within a formally defined coaching agreement (p. 142).
International Coaching Federation (ICF)	2003	Professional coaching is *an ongoing professional relationship that helps people produce extraordinary results in their lives, careers, businesses, or organizations.* Through the process of coaching, clients deepen their learning, improve their performance, and enhance their quality of life.

Figure 4: Definitions & Purposes of Executive Coaching, Source: Joo (2005)

One way of assessing the impact of executive coaching is to quantify it and to do this, McGovern and his colleagues conducted a study that looked at eleven tangible and nine intangible business impacts (McGovern et al., 2001). In the study, an executive perspective was taken and 100 executives interviewed. The top six results from each category are: Top Six Tangible Business Impact: Productivity (53%); Quality (48%); Organisational Strength (48%); Customer Service (39%); Reduced Complaints (34%) and Own Retention (32%). Top Six Intangibles Business Impact: Improved Relationship: direct reports (77%); Improved Relationship: stakeholder (71%); improved teamwork (67%); improved relations: peers (63%); improved job satisfaction (61%) and reduced conflict (52%) (McGovern et al., 2001). Later on, Thach also found the positive impact of executive coaching could be summed up in the following points (Thach, 2002): a) Executive coaching and 360 degree feedback increased leadership effectiveness and self-awareness (similar to Emotional Intelligence); b) Frequent executive follow-ups and increased number of coaching sessions led to increased self-perceived leadership effectiveness and c) The stakeholders linked to the coachees also noticed positive changes in leaders' effectiveness after executive coaching (Thach, 2002).

Sherman and Freas (2004) argued that executive coaching does work and made a couple of points to back their stance, for example a) people gets to know themselves better, live more consciously and contribute more; b) unlike other forms of coaching, executive coaching achieves business results; c) executive coaching acknowledges that people who need therapy do not make good candidates for coaching; d) the well-structured coaching with objective feedback assists the executives to learn, change behaviour and nourish their growth, e) a strategic change coaching also leads to developing the entire senior leadership in an organisation (Sherman & Freas, 2004). Parker-Wilkins (2006) conducted a study in an attempt to discover the monetary value of executive coaching and some of his findings were; respondents (coachees'/leaders) stated that executive coaching assisted them in the development of three main competencies: leadership behaviour (82%); building teams (41%) and developing staff (36%) amongst other benefits like improved teamwork (58%); team member satisfaction (54%) employee retention (31%); increased productivity (31%) and increased consultation quality (31), to mention a few (Parker-Wilkins, 2006).

2.2.1 The Impact of Executive Coaching from different stakeholders' Perspectives

Looking at the impact of executive coaching from the executives' perspectives, Paige (2002) was one of the authors whose study confirmed there are several positive impacts in participating on this kind of coaching, both professionally and personally (Paige, 2002). However, she also noted from coachees' feedback that a lack of literature exposure may derail the effectiveness of executive coaching (Paige, 2002). De Haan and his colleagues cited several studies like Olivero, Bane and Kopelman (1997); Bowles, Cunningham, De La Rosa and Picano (2007) and Parkins (2007) that proved executive coaching has a positive impact in the business (de Haan et al., 2013). They then went on to do a study of their own where executive self-efficacy was also improved after executive coaching, but not without dependencies like, coach-coachee relationship strength, the coaches' used of variety of coaching techniques and the Myers-Briggs Personality Types Indicators (MBTI) profiles' matches between a coach and client proved to have no bearing on the executive coaching outcome (de Haan et al., 2013).

2.3 Evaluating the impact of executive coaching

In general, there has been significant financial investment and adoption of coaching and executive coaching, as skill development instruments within the bank. However, there is very little empirical evidence, if any, on the impact of executive coaching, in particular, within the bank. The bank's executives play direct and indirect critical roles, in the sustainability of the bank and the country's economy, respectively. So, their development becomes paramount and taking them off their daily deliverables should really add value in the business. Therefore, the author will evaluate the impact of executive coaching in developing South African bank leaders. To do this, the author uses Kirkpatrick's four levels learning evaluation model. The next section unpacks the most influential learning evaluation models which include the Kirkpatrick's model and then briefly touches on how it has been modified in recent years.

2.3.1 The Training Evaluation Models

The definition of **evaluation** in the training context varies but in this research, the following is preferred, comparing results with intensions (Kaufman & Keller, 1994). According to Eseryel (2002), there are six main training evaluation approaches identified by Bramley (1990) as cited by Eseryel (Eseryel, 2002), namely; a) Goal-Based evaluation; b) Goal-free evaluation; c) Responsive evaluation; d) Systems evaluation; e) Professional review; f) and Quasi-legal. Different frameworks have emerged based on the goal-based and system-based approaches and the Kirkpatrick evaluation model is goal-based which is based on four main levels and these are reaction, learning, behaviour and results (Eseryel, 2002). As an example of how influential Kirkpatrick has been over the years, Kaufman and Keller modified the levels, acknowledged the importance of learning enablers and then extended them from four (organisational impact) to five to include societal impact of training (Kaufman & Keller, 1994).

At the same time, Eseryel (2002) cited there are several influential models based on a systems evaluation approach and these include (as compared with Kirkpatrick) the following three: Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) Model (Worthen & Sanders, 1987); Training Validation System (TVS) Approach (Fritz-Enz, 1994) and Input, Process, Output, Outcome (IPO) Model (Bushnell, 1990; Eseryel, 2002) as shown in the following figure 5 but only level 1 and 2 are normally used by training practitioners due to complexities when it comes to other levels (Eseryel, 2002). In recent years, the goal-based (Kirkpatrick) and system-based approaches, shown in figure 5 have continued to be quoted as the most influential training evaluation tools within the learning and development fraternity (Dahiya & Jha, 2011). Hence the author choose Kirkpatrick and argues that even if the new evaluation has to be developed, it will move from at least a Kirkpatrick evaluation model which has stood the test of time.

Kirkpatrick (1959)	CIPP Model (1987)	IPO Model (1990)	TVS Model (1994)
1. Reaction: to gather data on participants reactions at the end of a training program	1. Context: obtaining information about the situation to decide on educational needs and to establish program objectives	1. Input: evaluation of system performance indicators such as trainee qualifications, availability of materials, appropriateness of training, etc.	1. Situation: collecting pre-training data to ascertain current levels of performance within the organization and defining a desirable level of future performance
2. Learning: to assess whether the learning objectives for the program are met	2. Input: identifying educational strategies most likely to achieve the desired result	2. Process: embraces planning, design, development, and delivery of training programs	2. Intervention: identifying the reason for the existence of the gap between the present and desirable performance to find out if training is the solution to the problem
3. Behavior: to assess whether job performance changes as a result of training	3. Process: assessing the implementation of the educational program	3. Output: Gathering data resulting from the training interventions	3. Impact: evaluating the difference between the pre- and post-training data
4. Results: to assess costs vs. benefits of training programs, i.e., organizational impact in terms of reduced costs, improved quality of work, increased quantity of work, etc.	4. Product: gathering information regarding the results of the educational intervention to interpret its worth and merit	4. Outcomes: longer-term results associated with improvement in the corporation's bottom line- its profitability, competitiveness, etc.	4. Value: measuring differences in quality, productivity, service, or sales, all of which can be expressed in terms of dollars

Figure 5: Some Influential Systems Evaluation Models, Source: Eseryel (2002)

In an attempt to evaluate training, different studies like Phillips and Phillips (2005), Praslova (2010), Dahiya and Jha (2011) and Lawrence and Whyte (2014), to count a few, have made references to one or more of these training evaluation models, especially Kirkpatrick, and/or at least have modified it. For instance, Phillips and Phillips (2005) added the fifth level on the Kirkpatrick model as shown in the following figure 6 (Phillips & Phillips, 2005).

Evaluation Levels	
Evaluation Level	**Measurement Focus**
1. Reaction and Planned Action	Measures participant satisfaction with the program and captures planned actions.
2. Learning	Measures changes in knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
3. Application and Implementation	Measures changes in on-the-job behavior and progress with application.
4. Business Impact	Captures changes in business impact measures.
5. Return on Investment	Compares program monetary benefits to the program costs.

Figure 6: Modified Kirkpatrick Evaluation Model, Source: Phillips & Phillips (2005)

2.3.2 *The Kirkpatrick Evaluation Model*

Though some authors argue that the Kirkpatrick model is not so useful in evaluating the learning impact in its current form (Kaufman & Keller, 1994; Holton, 1996; Bates, 2004 and Yardley & Dornan, 2002) there is enough conviction from the different studies mentioned above, that Kirkpatrick is a useful model to evaluate learning. Hence it is used in this study. As Bates put it, the Kirkpatrick model has been key in training evaluation for over thirty years (Bates, 2004). The definition of evaluation in the training context varies but in this research, the following is preferred, comparing results with intensions (Kaufman & Keller, 1994). Moreover, Dahiya and Jha (2011) also contested that sometimes it may not be the training evaluation tool that is an issue, but the manner in which the tool is used, meaning it needs to clearly underline the benefit of training and unless that is done properly, getting buy-in from key sponsors, could be a challenge to learning and development practitioners (Dahiya & Jha, 2011) and the same could be said about Kirkpatrick evaluation model.

The Kirkpatrick four levels of training evaluation are i.) Level 1: Reaction which involves the learner training feedback related to factors that may have impact on training, for instance, housekeeping/venue, competence of the trainer, relevance of the training content, and so on; II.) Level 2: Learning involves a trainer assessing the learners whether the knowledge has been transferred which could include formative assessment like classroom activities (individual and groups), quiz or test at the end of the session; III.) Level 3: Behaviour looks at whether the skill learnt in class can be applied in the workplace and whether that shift is positive; Level 4: Results involves evaluating the impact of training for an organisation.

These results could be tangibles, intangible and/or be of financial value (Kaufman & Keller, 1994; Kirkpatrick, 1996, Bates, 2004; Phillips & Phillips, 2005; Praslova, 2010 and Lawrence & Wyte, 2014). In this study, this approach is used in the similar manner to evaluate the impact of executive coaching. Authors like, Kaufman and Keller (1994), Kirkpatrick (1996), Parker-Wilkins (2006), Praslova (2010), kept the financial value within level 4. However, Phillips & Phillips (2005) added the fifth level and argued that level five should just focus on ROI and then saw ROI as a comparison of coaching cost versus a firm's financial gain (Phillips & Phillips, 2005) and the author acknowledges that but will not adopt that modified Kirkpatrick approach. According to Lawrence and Whyte (2014), "financial ROI is defined as an explicit formula or calculation translating the outcomes of coaching into a monetary value" (Lawrence & Whyte, 2014, p. 11). When it comes to calculating the ROI, authors like Phillips and Phillips (2005), Parker-Wilkins (2006) and Grant (2012) used the same formula expressed as the following:

ROI = ((Estimated Coaching Benefit - Cost of Coaching) / Cost of Coaching)*100

2.4 Conclusion of Literature Review

This section has articulated the background of the executive coaching in developing leaders. The author has then made a strong argument on what impact executive coaching has in the leadership development, both at personal and professional levels, using a variety of studies. In other words, based on previous studies, it can be argued that, leadership competences and the Kirkpatrick evaluation model can be used to measure the impact of executive coaching to develop leaders in a South African bank too. However, this evaluation model effectiveness is investigated in this particular study as it is put into practice.

2.4.1 *Research Question*

What is the perceived impact of executive coaching in leader development of a South African bank?

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

There are two types of research methodologies and these are quantitative and qualitative, according to de Vos (2011) and Bryman (2012). This section discusses the qualitative research methodology which was used in this study to address the research question identified in the above section. Theory and previous practical studies are used to motivate and justify why a research methodology, design, sampling, data collection tools and analyses approaches are applied. Then the limitations of the study are outlined, again based on theory and previous practices from similar studies. To address these limitations, the author then formulates proposals to close the gaps that could derail or compromise the process and the findings of the study.

3.1 Research methodology /paradigm

In this study, the author made use of qualitative research methods to address the two research questions mentioned above. Qualitative research is a strategic research method that focuses more on words, as opposed to numerical data, when collecting and analysing data (Bryman, 2012). Bryman went to argue that, most researchers do not always see eye-to-eye on the definition of qualitative research (Bryman, 2012). This was the same asserting made by Johnson, Buehring, Cassell, and Symon (2007) few years earlier and this point is acknowledged in this study. Nevertheless, his definition is adopted in this study. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007, p.55) as cited by de Vos (2011) (de Vos, 2011, p. 323): “How (qualitative researchers) proceed is based on theoretical assumptions (that meaning and process are crucial in understanding human behaviour, that descriptive data are what is important to collect, and that analysis is best done inductively), such data-collection traditions (such as participants observation, unstructured interviewing, and document analyses) and generally substantive questions. In addition, all researchers bring their own specific background to a study” (de Vos, 2011, p. 323).

“Unlike quantitative research, qualitative is not a linear process and has not fixed design” (de Vos, 2011, p. 327) and Bryman (2012) demonstrated this point graphically as shown in figure 7 below. This kind of flexibility is useful in this kind of study and to address the stated research questions. Moreover, de Vos argued, “qualitative researchers typically employ a wide range of strategies or framework of inquiry from which a researcher must make a selection. Each of these strategies has its own philosophical-theoretical assumption or paradigm and methods of data collection and analyses” (de Vos, 2011, p. 327). An outline of the main steps of qualitative research is shown:

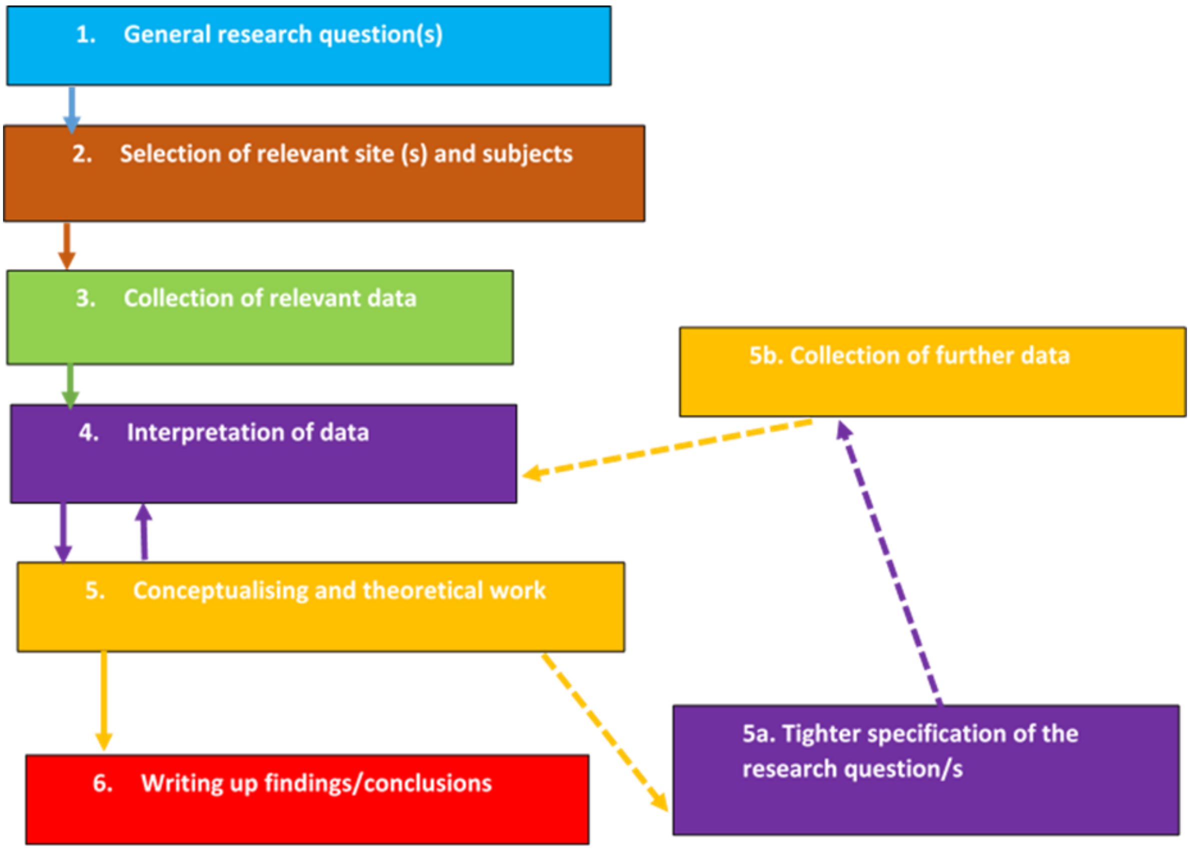

Figure 7: The Main Steps of Qualitative Research, Source: Bryman (2012)

Byrman also noted some key criticisms, with reasons, of the qualitative research, namely, it is too subjective, difficult to replicate, has a problem of generalisation and lacks transparency (Bryman, 2012, pp. 405-406). Therefore, the benefits, criticism and/or short-comings of qualitative research are all acknowledged in doing this study. The researcher acknowledges that what could be seen as both the strength and a weakness at the same time, is the flexibility of qualitative methods, as opposed to quantitative. As de Vos argued, “in quantitative the design is like a static recipe and it determines the researcher’s choices and actions where as in qualitative, the researcher’s choice and actions will determine the researcher’s design and strategy. Put differently, qualitative researchers will, during the research process, or even design their whole research project around the strategy selected” (de Vos, 2011, p. 312) and Paige applied this principle well in her case study on the effectiveness of executive coaching (Paige, 2002).

3.2 Research Design

According to Bryman, there are five basic research designs, namely (i) experimental and related designs (e.g. quasi-experiment); (ii) cross-sectional design (e.g. survey); (iii) longitudinal design (e.g. panel and the cohort studies); (iv) case study design and (v) comparative design (Bryman, 2012, p. 45). As Bryman once put it, in this study, the author used a case study which required detailed focus and intensive analyses on a single organisation (Bryman, 2012), which is a South African bank, in this instance. Bryman went on to argue that a case study is unique in that, it uses an ideographic approach where a researcher is often concerned about revealing the peculiarity of each case (Bryman, 2012, p. 69).

This flexible nature of a qualitative research, of which case study is one of its research designs, could compromise the validity and reliability of the study, which could be made worse by the fact that the researcher comes from the same background. So, if the design has no clear cut steps to follow, the whole findings of a study could be questionable. To mitigate this risk, the author took guidance from theory, past studies on similar subjects and from the research supervisor to make sure that, in this case study, the findings are not questionable.

3.3 Population and sample

3.3.1 *Population*

The population comprised divisional executive managers of a South African Bank, the executive coaches (internal and external) and executive sponsors. The divisional executive managers (Divisional Executive Committee (DIVCO) members), from the site (a bank) are more than a hundred, but those who have received executive coaching in the past twelve to eighteen months, could not be confirmed due to confidentiality involved. When it comes to executive coaches, there are a handful of them who coach at the executive level, including internal and external executive coaches. The executive sponsors are the line managers of divisional executives, also referred to as Managing Executives and there are about thirty five of them across the bank.

The Case Site - The South African Bank

The bank is made up of four main clusters and these are Retail & Business Banking (RBB); Wealth; Corporate & Investment Banking (CIB), and Rest of Africa (ROA). Each cluster is headed by the Group Managing Executive (Group ME's). These clusters account to Bank's Group that has a team of top management led by the Chief Executive Officer (Bank's Group CEO). The Bank's Group CEO has the following key direct reports, Chief Financial Officer (CFO); Chief Operations Officer (COO); Chief Risk Officer (CRO); Chief Governance & Compliance (CG&C); Group Managing Executive for RRB; Group Managing Executive for Wealth; Group Managing Executive for CIB and Group Managing Executive for ROA. However, for the purpose of a sound span of control, one of the Group ME for ROA accounts to the COO.

Each cluster has several divisions headed by a Managing Executive (ME) who also has a couple of Divisional Executives who are sometimes referred to as DIVCO members. At the Bank's Group top management levels, there are equivalent DIVCO members who may not necessarily belong to the four main clusters mentioned above. So, put differently, the DIVCO are two or three levels to the Bank's Group CEO, depending on their location in the bank. Meaning, they all report to and ME or an ME equivalent who reports either to the Group ME or to the COO.

Moreover, there are other divisions located at Group and outside these four main clusters. These are Balance Sheet Management (BSM); Risk, Strategy & Regulation (RS&R); Group Strategy; Group Marketing, Communications & Corporate Affairs (GMCCA); Group Human Resources (GHR) and Group Special Projects (GSP). Each of these divisions has an ME who leads their own DIVCO members. Due to time limitations and other logistics of the study, the author struggled to obtain in-depth information to conclude the exact number of these DIVCO members across the bank. However, it is safe to say in the bank that has around thirty thousand employees, the author is convinced the number goes beyond a hundred. Having said that, the author will at least indicate the cluster in which each executive is coming from and the number of their peers. No further information on divisions or job titles is given in order to honour the confidentiality of the participants as agreed.

3.3.2 *Sample and sampling method*

According to Bryman, in qualitative research, sampling revolves around purposive sampling, as oppose to probability sampling linked to quantitative (Bryman, 2012). He went on to define purposive sampling as "a process that is followed when selecting units (which could be firms, people, documents, departments and so on, with direct reference to the research questions being asked" (Bryman, 2012, p. 416). In the study to define qualitative management research, Johnson et al. (2007) also followed this purposive sampling method. So, in this study, the sample size was fifteen people, selected from four groups of stakeholders, namely, one from executive coaching coordinators, nine divisional executive managers, five executive coaches (two internal and three external), and two executive sponsors, who are also called Managing Executives (ME's). The divisional executive was limited to those who have received executive coaching in the past twelve to eighteen months. All the respondents were interviewed at least once and where clarity was needed, especially during data analyses, a follow-up but brief interview was conducted. In addition to the WBS research letter, permission from a bank Group Head of Human Resources and Group Manager of Coaching was acquired in a form of a letter and/or email.

From there, the selected respondents were emailed, with a brief purpose of a study and relevant letters will be attached to seek their participation. In this study, the author first selected the site, (a South African bank); then specific people (typical profile of all participants as shown in table 1 below and the selected respondents' profiles are in chapter 3) and then limited the final sample to participants who have received executive coaching in the past twelve to eighteen months. Moreover, Wealth and CIB clusters won't be included in this study. This process both addresses the research questions in this study and makes the study manageable. This process is synonymous with what Bryman has defined as purposive sampling, specifically, a generic purposive sampling (Bryman, 2012) five key sample selection criteria were set up front, (i) executive managers (ii) who received executive coaching in the past twelve to eighteen months; (iii.)Executive Coaches (internal and external); (iv.) Executive Sponsors and (v.) Executive Coaching Coordinator. The isolation of Wealth and CIB by the author, could also be seen as a sampling frame (Bhattacherjee, 2012) which in this case is meant to simplify the process since the two clusters account for less than 20% of the total head count for the bank.

Table 1: Profile of Respondents

Profile of respondents by context and titles	**Number to be sampled**
Divisional Executives in the bank's group finance reporting an ME' equivalents, are at least 20 Divisional Executives in the bank's group Chief Operations Office reporting an ME' equivalents, are at least 15 Divisional Executives in the bank's group Chief Risk Office reporting an ME' equivalents, are at least 5 Divisional Executives in the bank's group Chief Information Office reporting an ME' equivalents, are at least 45 Divisional Executives in the Retail Banking reporting ME's, are at least 105	7 from the total of 190
Managing Executives (ME's) and ME's equivalents are at least 33, which are also referred to as Executive Sponsors in this study.	2 from 33
Executive Coaching Coordinators which includes Learning & Development Managers across the bank, are at least 25	1 from 25
Internal Executive Coaches are at least 10 External Executive Coaches are at least 15	5 from 15
Total Sample Target	**15**

3.4 The research instrument

In this study, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were scheduled and the data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires, meaning, the author has developed a list of questions related to the research questions, like Bryman (2012) suggested, these are at most referred to as interview guide, but both the interviewer and interviewee have flexibility on what order to ask the questions (and to add more, based on the direction of the interview to get more insight) and how to answer the questions, respectively (Bryman, 2012). In this study, the research instrument is attached as Appendix A.

3.5 Procedure for data collection

In this study, one-on-one semi-structured interviews were scheduled with executive managers (sample) and the data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires. According to Bryman, a semi-structured interview naturally talks to the context in which an interviewer has a range of generic questions in a questionnaire where there is flexibility on the order in which they can be asked with options to probe where necessary (Bryman, 2012, p. 212). The author's questions, as attached in Appendix A, originate from the two research questions, from literature review and through probing from what a coachee would be saying, verbally or non-verbally. In other words, close attention was paid to non-verbal gestures from an executive during the interview.

Orne (1962) as cited by Harper (2011) warned against such assumptions on body language (Harper, 2011, p. 3). This probing could help allay fears that come from the flexibility or unstructured nature of qualitative research. In doing this, the interviewees' response was captured verbatim as Harper (2011) put it, "descriptive phenomenologists try to avoid the researcher's categories or theories. Rather the aim is to capture the essence of a participant's subjective experience in their own terms, delineating key elements and using the participant's terminology" (Harper, 2011). In a similar study to examine the effectiveness of executive coaching in South Australia in 2002, Paige use this approach and interviewed five executives coming from the public and private sector, who had received coaching in the previous six to twelve months prior (Paige, 2002). As Bryman put it, semi-structured interview is normally referred to as one of the qualitative interviews, relevant for qualitative research (Bryman, 2012) and the author has seen the befit of using it in this case study.

3.6 Data analysis and interpretation

Here grounded theory approach was used to analyse data. According to Strauss and Corbin, grounded theory "is the theory derived from data, systematically gathered, and analysed through the research process. In this method, data collection, analysis and eventually theory stand in close relationship to one another" (Strauss and Corbin 1998, p.12) as cited by (Bryman, 2012, p. 387). One of the difficulties about grounded theory that needs highlighting, is that, it does not really construct theories, but concepts (Bryman, 2012) which is fine in the author's view because concepts are indeed aimed to be developed in this study, not theories and Bhattacherjee (2012) simple saw as grounded because it originates from data collected. These concepts, Bryman (2012) and Braun & Clark (2012) also refer to as thematic analyses.

According to Boyatzis (1998), "thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your set in (rich) detail. However, frequently if it goes further than this, and interprets various aspect of the research topic" Boyatzis (1998) and cited by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 79). They went on to argue that, "there are six main phases to follow when doing thematic analysis, namely (i) familiarising yourself with your data; (II) generating initial codes; (III) searching for themes; (iv) reviewing themes; (v) defining and naming themes and (vi) producing the report" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). The author acknowledges that the general flexibility throughout qualitative research, also comes into question at this kind of data analysis for this case study, seeing that it become the researcher's discretion, capability or background that determines what themes are relevant but to dismiss this concern, Braun and Clark provide a clear fifteen point checklist to follow when using thematic analysis, which should promote reliability, validity and consistency of the research findings. These fifteen criteria are grouped within five processes, namely, (i) transcription; (ii) coding; (iii) analysis; (iv) overall and (v) written report (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 96). Therefore the author also followed the above processes and tools to analyse the research data and the transcriptions of interview recordings were outsourced to speed up the process without compromising the ethical principles and confidentiality of the study, meaning as part of coding process, the author bore in mind the three phases involved as suggested by Bhattacherjee (2012, pp. 114-115), namely, i) open coding is aimed at identifying concepts or key ideas that are hidden within textual data, which are potentially related to the phenomenon of interest; ii.) axial coding is where categories and subcategories are assembled into causal relationship or hypotheses that can tentatively explain the phenomenon of interest; and iii.) Selective coding involves identifying a central category or a core variable and systematically and logically relating to this central category to other categories; and these phases, he went on to argue, could be applied simultaneously (Bhattacherjee, 2012, pp. 113-114).

3.7 Limitations of the study

Only fifteen executive managers were interviewed for this study. The author is aware that the site (a bank) selected is using executive coaching as a form of developing its leaders across the bank, meaning, there is a possibility there might have been more than fifteen executive managers who had received coaching in the past twelve to eighteen months who would have been willing to be part of the study. Put differently, the sample may end up not being representative enough but it is important that this study is completed within the time frame given by the institution for the purpose of the qualification. Therefore, there are still opportunities to further explore this study, outside the given timelines.

Secondly, this study only focused on the executive managers who have received coaching, the executive coaches, the sponsors and the coordinators of the executive coaching. Other people surrounding these coachees like peers and direct reports were not interviewed, meaning, the findings might have a ‘self-efficacy’ focus which could compromise the objectivity of the study. However, to mitigate such risk, the author ensured that probing to seek more meaning during interviews was applied and also kept the door open for a possible second round of brief interview during the data analyses stage to seek more clarity.

3.8 Validity and reliability

According to Bryman, “Validity is concerned with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research” (Bryman, 2012, p. 47). The reliability is defined by Bhattacherjee (2012) as “the degree to which the measure of a construct is consistent or dependable” (Bhattacherjee, 2012, p. 56). Therefore, “reliability and validity, jointly called “psychometric properties” of measurement scale, are the yardsticks against which the adequacy and accuracy of our measurement procedures are evaluated in scientific research” (Bhattacherjee, 2012, p. 55). So the researcher ensured there is consistence in the results by interviewing different executive coaching stakeholders (details were mentioned earlier in this chapter), in order to get different perspectives on the research topic. These are executive coaches, divisional executives, executive sponsors and executive coaching coordinator. Moreover, there is enough literature covered in this study that could be compared with the research findings as a means to ensure validity. The researcher attempted to use what Bhattacherjee (2012) would call, “criteria-related validity, where empirical assessment of validity examines how well a given measure relates to one or more external criteria, based on empirical observation” (Bhattacherjee, 2012, p. 58).

3.8.1 *External validity*

The external validity concern is about whether the research study results can be generalised outside a specific context (Bryman, 2012). Different authors like McGovern et al., (2001) and (Yardley & Dornan, 2012) also applied the Kirkpatrick model, in their studies, which builds the author's confidence in this study. Hence, similar steps were followed in this study too, meaning, the author was confident the selected sample, settings and timing are no issue here. In fact, one of the objectives of the study is to contribute to the body of knowledge not just within a selected site or a bank, but across the leadership development landscape, especially throughout South Africa. In addition, the author also applied the bank's code of ethics, which included integrity, and his own personal values, which includes honesty. These form the core in the ethics and governance, not just of the research an author signs and abides by, but also of the bank on which the author conducted the case study.

3.8.2 *Internal validity*

According to Bryman, "internal validity talks to whether a conclusion that's integrates causal relationship between two or more variables holds water" (Bryman, 2012). This concept is key in this case study. In evaluating the impact of executive coaching, there might be a chance that it could be other factors that are not related to the actual coaching sessions that could improve, for example, the development and growth of an executive, both at professional and personal levels. Though ROI was not calculated in this study, as seen in previous studies from Phillips and Phillips (2005), Parker-Wilkins (2006) and Grant (2012) all isolated other factors when measuring ROI for executive coaching. The author is confident that the Kirkpatrick evaluation model guidelines that were followed in conjunction with selected instrument mentioned earlier, assisted in improving the internal validity. The face-to-face interviews from the questionnaire, were also used to seek clarity and during the data analyses, other obvious contributors to executives' development, not related to executive coaching were noted and eliminated.

3.8.3 *Reliability*

Reliability is concerned about whether the research results are repeatable and/or consistent (Bryman, 2012). There is a chance that the 'themes' deduced from the data could be illogical, subjective and end up making inaccurate conclusions. To avoid this, the author ensured that there is a link between theory and findings, remained honest at all times and bounced his themes off the supervisor to ensure conclusions are not biased or subjective. This means, the author's supervisor could be used to practice a concept of 'call auditing' to see if the same themes or conclusion about data, at high level, could be arrived at (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) as cited by Bryman (Bryman, 2012). At the same time, interviewing different stakeholders should also mitigate any bias and improve the reliability of the author's findings as well. According to Bhattacherjee (2012), such concept is referred to as internal consistency reliability, which "is a measure of consistency between items of the same contract" (Bhattacherjee, 2012, p. 57).

3.9 Demographic profile of respondents

The author had planned to use the Bank's Group Head of Coaching to identify the sample of all the DIVCO members who had received executive coaching in the past eighteen to twenty four months. From there, the author would send invitations via emails to all of them and then select the first fifteen executives to be part of the study, irrespective of their gender, age, race, education background or divisions in which they come from. In practice, there was a change of plan for the author, hence he decided to use triangulation to collect the data.

The first to agree was executive coaching coordinator who agreed to participate was selected; then first two to agree internal and senior executive coaches were selected, then the first three senior external executive coach were selected; then the first six to agree DIVCO or executives were selected and the first two to agree ME's or sponsors were also selected. As a consequence, there were a total of fourteen participants in the study. There were a lot of instances where executives did not indicate interest to participate or felt they did not meet the set-criteria of the past eighteen to twenty four months. On random bases, the author took advantage of being employed in the same bank and asked some of the executives face-to-face if they would like to participate if the criteria were met. Hence two of these participants were the result of such an approach. Some participants made further recommendations of their peers or colleagues but to no avail in certain instances. In short, table 2 shows brief demographics of respondents and table 3 has detailed profiles of the participants.

Table 2: Respondents Demographics

Executive Coach Co-ordinator (ECC)	**Executive Coach (CN- internal and CX - External)**	**Divisional Executive (DE)**	**Executive Sponsor (ES)**
ECC1 is male with 50-65yrs of age	CN1 is female with 30 to 45yrs of age	DE1 is male with 35-50yrs of age	ES1 is male with 50-65yrs of age
	CN2 is female with 30 to 45yrs of age	DE2 is male with 35-50yrs of age	ES2 is male with 50-65yrs of age
	CX3 is female with 50 to 65yrs of age	DE3 is male with 30-45yrs of age	
	CX4 is female with 30 to 45yrs of age	DE4 is male with 50-65yrs of age	
	CX5 is female with 30 to 45yrs of age	DE5 is male with 35-50yrs of age	
		DE6 is female with 30 to 45yrs of age	

Table 3: Detailed Respondents' Profiles

	Respondents' Profiles
1.	ECC1 is responsible for team effectiveness in his division. That's entails working with teams to become more effective, diagnosing what issues are, crafting, sourcing and tailoring interventions. Then negotiating with the leaders of the teams and then executing those interventions. Later on evaluating whether those interventions have made difference or not. It's been 2yrs in this role. Otherwise, I have been with the bank for about 37,5 years in different roles for example in Forex (NB Capital), L&D, Sales, Credits/all lending, process re-engineering, project management, BA, coordinating executive coaching, etc. ECC1 is also one of the senior internal professional coaches in the bank with 12 years of experience. Hence he also fulfil the role of executive coaching coordinator, especially for the executives who may need external coach.
2.	CN1 is Regional Sales Manager, CPT who need to ensure that branches are trained and able to sell the right products to the clients. She also does cross-sell and ensure there's products holistic view for the bankers from Personal Loans, Home Loans, Cheque Accounts, Credit Cards, etc. She also works with Area Managers around their marketing strategies if they need to put their plans together. Then link that up to the W/Cape General Area Manager. She then feedback from the national level to Retail & Business Banking (RBB) as to how the bank's products can be supported in the Branch Networks. On another side, she is also an internal coach and qualified as a supervisor for coaching. Meaning she supervises all the bank's coaches in the W/Cape and sometimes in GP/JHB as well. She has been with the bank for 15yrs and been coaching within the bank for 13yrs. She has done executive coaching throughout the bank, including Rest Of Africa (ROA) cluster. CN1 is also completing her PhD

	on Coaching with one of the universities in Europe and has more than 2 000 hours of coaching and most people argue, that’s Master Coach level.
3.	CN2 is the Head of Human Resources for her division at the Bank’s Group. She is responsible for the full HR function within her division, which includes HR, L&D, MIS Analytics, Coaching and Mentoring. She has been with the bank for about 17yrs and been coaching for 8yrs now at all levels including the executive level. Her work background and formal education is BCom, did her articles and always been in the finance roles for 15yrs within the bank until a year ago when assumed this current role. So, she sees herself as having more business lenses who has just became a coach, not HRBP who became a coach which gives her a different view of her clients. The passion for both numbers and people could be a reason for her choices. There's still a chance she could still go back to finance again one day. CN2 has more than 1 500hrs which could be a Master Coach level in the International Coaching Federation (ICF).
4.	CX3 has been working as a coach in her own practice for fourteen years, don't work exclusively, for this bank, but for many other organisations as well. As former bank’s employee, she coached for three years internally before she retired and then been in her own practice since 2005 and this bank has been her client ever since. CX3 has about 3 500 hours of coaching which could be seen as Master Coach level, according to International Coaching Federation (ICF).
5.	CX4 For this specific bank she started coaching about three years ago but have been coaching for ten years and has been a business owner before that. When she sold her business she did a Master’s Degree in Business and Executive coaching, also at Wits. She did a few other qualifications through University of Cape Town, like ACC programme, PCC programme, currently a PCC coach with International Coaching Federation (ICF), almost at her Master’s level, of which she will be completing the requirements soon. She also work as a

	professional associate at Gibbs where she also coach and work with executives.
6.	CX5 and her coaching started in the bank in 2010 so it's been a number of years. She trained as an internal coach in the internal coaching programme for the bank and did the integral coaching through University of Cape Town (UCT). She did some other coaching qualifications in the interim and last year got her Master's in Coaching from Stellenbosch. So in terms of her coaching background and qualifications, she also qualified in a number of other disciplines as well. Before leaving the bank, internal coached since 2010 all the way through until December 2016 of last year. So, she has only been an external coach for about two months and working on her own. So in that time she was one of the first groups of internal coaches to be qualified in the bank. They were involved in a lot of the decision making around how coaching's going to be rolled out, a lot of the area collaboration projects, a lot of the Africa projects. So they were involved in a lot of executive coaching at that level.
7.	DE1 has been in the current Executive role for about three years. His core function is to drive sales and service strategy within the Retail bank. They sell all the bank's products through the channels, hence he has sound relationship with all product houses throughout the bank. From consumer business side, these products includes unsecured (e.g. Credit Cards and Personal Loans) and Secured (e.g. Home Loans and Vehicle Finance), and need to ensure they are tailor-made for the right clients and managed the risk of such sales at the same time which could include insurance sales too. On the business side, they also partner with RRB who manages professional banking and small businesses. The biggest internal channel and client is branch networks and call centres. There other alternatives distribution channels they use. They also coordinate area collaboration for the bank's group and ensure the execution of marketing and communications for the rest of Retail & Business Banking. As an enabler, he drives strong projects and initiatives to become better as a team, including

	Treating Customer Fairly, etc. DE1's background is logistics from Transnet. Then joined the bank in 2000 as Head of Card Merchant Services in Cape Town before he joined Retail Sales team as the Regional Manager where he also led the Small Businesses team before becoming the National Manager and so on. It came out that DE1 has an MBA from Stellenbosch University as well.
8.	DE2 I've been with the bank for ten and a half years. Before that he worked for two different banks for five years in the space of seven years. Prior to entering the banking industry, he had a year off and before that worked for Deloitte's, as a Chartered Accountant. His current role is head of one of the key business within Retail sub-division. His portfolio is a national one which involves managing around 850 000 clients and their whole sales, product, and account management. In addition to being a Chartered Account, DE2 has also completed Master's Degree in Management at Wits Business School in about three years ago.
9.	DE3 heads up one of the key sub-divisional operations in the Retail bank with more than 230 employees. He has been with the bank for nine years and been in this current role for four years, going into four years. Before that, he spent four years in his previous executive role. So he has been in the bank for a total of eight years. DE3 has an MBA from Wits as well.
10.	DE4 is one of the Executives for Rest Of Africa (ROA) divisions, and that really entails leading a team that provides IT solutions through to the bank's Africa subsidiaries. So he also an inherent believer in coaching, as a philosophy. He has been in the current role for about fifteen months but I've been in bank for twenty nine years occupying various executive roles. Beyond that, though, he is a trained professional coach trained at the University of Cape Town Business School, he didn't do the certification as he felt that unnecessary but completed done all the training programme.

11.	DE5 has been with the bank for fifteen years. It’s a broken service record, he contracted for one year after being employed for six years. So he is currently employed as an executive, which means he runs one of the bank’s strategic sub-division partly responsible for all the payment related systems from an innovation and support and maintenance or operations point of view. The function is about ensuring that we execute on the business and group technology strategy, and that we have synergy in the two to achieve the right business result. There is a strong element of people, management in the role and a strong commercial orientation in the role as well.
12.	DE6 has been with the bank for three years and prior to that she was with another bank for at least seven in another executive position. So for the bank she looks after risk management for group risk. She is the cluster risk officer for group risk and recently moved from Group Technology, where she was the executive for I.T risk.
13.	ES1 been in the bank for thirty three years. He has spent most of that time in retail banking, so it’s predominantly been retail bank, and he currently fulfil the role of a Managing Executive (ME) for one of the key client-facing channels within Retail & Business Banking (RBB) which is all about physical points of presence across the country which includes our branches, and other sales channels. It came out that ES1 has obtained his PhD in 2013 from University of KZN.
14.	ES2 is Managing Executive (ME) for one of the key and strategic divisions within Retail & Business Banking (RBB). ES2 is a Chartered Accountant who has been with the bank for twenty eight years and in this role as ME in the last ten. So he serves on the bank’s Retail and Business Banking group executive

	and runs a business of about 1,200 people that runs an integrated business and is a profit centre.

CHAPTER 4. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

Fourteen participants were interviewed for this study, aged between 35 and 65 years old. The planned fifteen could not materialise due to time constraints and other logistics. Of the fourteen, one is male and qualified as a professional coach, aged between 50-60yrs, has been with the bank for at least 37,5 years occupying different roles in different divisions. In this study, he is referred to as ECC1. Besides being a coach himself, one of ECC1's responsibilities is to coordinate all coaching activities for his division, including executives. Five females, aged between 35 and 65, are qualified as executive coaches. Three of these five are external executive coaches and only one of them has not worked for this bank before. In this study, CN1 and CN2 are internal coaches who are still working for the bank. The other three are referred to as, CX3, CX4 and CX5.

On the other hand, there were six divisional executives who were interviewed, aged between 36 and 65 and only one, who also happened to be a female, has only worked for 3yrs in the bank. However, she has been in the executive role with another bank for about 10yrs. In this study, she is referred to as DE6 whereas the other five are referred to as DE1, DE2, DE3, DE4 and DE5. The last two from the fourteen participants are two males, aged between 55 and 63. These two are the Managing Executives who are referred to as executive coaching sponsors. In other words, they are at an executive level that manages all the DE's. Table 2 and 3 above show the code names of the participants and their roles in the bank.

Of the fourteen participants, thirteen were interviewed by the author, face-to-face. For CN1, who is based in Cape Town, the author and the interviewee agreed that a video conference be used to minimise the cost of the study. The same recording device as the video conference machine was used, interviews were transcribed later and the machine worked perfectly for the rest of the participants. For the interviews, a semi-structured questionnaire was used to facilitate the discussion and gather relevant data.

The first participant, ECC1 also played a key role in piloting the questionnaire and ensuring the phrasing of the questions made sense for the remaining interviews. As a result, there were minor adjustments made on the questionnaire before the next participants were interviewed. In this chapter, the author took the responses as they were. Only in the next chapter does the author attempt to interpret any emotions or body languages observed. The author used an excel spread sheet for coding data, analysing it and generated seven themes from all fourteen transcripts. These seven themes are, i.) Executive Coaching has Goals; ii.) The Executive Coaching Process; iii.) The Potential Derailers of Executive Coaching; iv.) The Enablers of Executive Coaching; v.) The Impact of Executive Coaching; vi.) Evaluating Executive Coaching using Kirkpatrick (levels 1-4); and vii.) Financial the Impact of Executive Coaching. The origins of these themes are mixed. Some originate from the literature, some from the collected data and some from both. All seven themes seek to answer the research question and are in line with the purpose of the research as well.

4.2 The Results of the study

In this section, the research question is answered through five main themes deduced from both the literature and the collected data. These five themes are, every executive coaching has goals; the executive coaching process; the potential derailers to executive coaching; the enablers of executive coaching; and the impact of executive coaching. Each main theme has sub-themes identified to further clarify the findings of the study.

4.2.1 Every Executive Coaching Has Goals

All the participants were asked about their executive coaching goals or objectives, be it they were coaches, coachees, organiser or sponsors. It was evident that there are a variety of executive coaching goals or objectives for different sessions. The chosen groups of executive coaching stakeholders agreed on specific coaching goals for a specific executive. In the next section, a focus is given to four sub-themes that emerged from the goal-related data.

i) Coaching Goals: Executive Coaching Coordinator's Perspectives

When the question was directed to the **ECC1,** who was also interviewed first (pilot/test questionnaire) took a few seconds, paused, silence and then slowly had this to say, "Usually is about stress levels and work-loads and also sometimes about personality traits in a way of relationships that are not necessary helpful in building effective relationship. Those are the things that we generally come across. The executives are generally under stress." ECC1

ii) Coaching Goals Executive Sponsors' Perspectives

The sponsors were also asked of their objectives in recommending and/or sponsoring executive coaching for their EXCO's. It was clear that they are strong supports of executive coaching. The fact that they were once exposed to it, witnessed the benefits, both on their personal and professional lives, made it easy to sponsor executive coaching for their teams. They wanted their EXCO members to reap the same or their own fruits of executive coaching. The author noted these points from the statements below:

- "I'm a very strong supporter of coaching. I believe there is massive value to be gained out of coaching, if applied appropriately. So I wanted to, get a sense of what my leadership capability and opportunities were and then start working on those through the executive coach. So I've been a coaching journey with my executive coach for the last seven years and I still continue that journey today." ES1

- "So the greatest gap and the greatest development opportunity is **self-awareness**. So it's either a lack of self-awareness and the opportunity is to have **greater self-awareness,** and, you know, leaders and managers are either good or not by the way that they **show up**, and people show up as they are, they don't pretend to show up, they show up who they are, as they are, and sometimes, and I speak from personal experience, one doesn’t see the impact that you have on people. You don't see the blind spots.” ES1

- “At a professional level I got to understand some of the shadows, **some of the blind spots,** some of the things that I didn’t even see that were **tripping me up, as a leader**. So immediately I started to feel the impact with the necessary changes I had to make, and the benefit of those impacts. So the executive coaching at a professional level was just enormously valuable and that got me thinking, well, you know, if I’m feeling this benefit, I’m sure if I afford the opportunity to my team, where necessary, but broader than that, how do you have a deeper understanding of the relationships with each other at a team level.” ES1
- “I found that coaching was at one level a big discovery process, discovery of self, where learning and teaching is all about them, what must I do for them, to them, with them versus coaching which says what must I start doing with myself to be relevant. Coaching is all about self-awareness, impact of self on others, what is it that you need to be to be seen to be credible and to be allowed to lead others? It is very introspective process with the objective of application externally, but you’ve got to be anchored and you’ve got to be centred in terms of who you are, where your growth opportunities are, and to be very self-aware. ” ES

iii) Coaching Goals: Executives’ Perspectives

The author picked up from different conversations with participants that there would be times where the sponsor would recommend coaching for their EXCO team members. There are also instances where EXCO members themselves, pro-actively source executive coaching services (or joint decision). Either way, the sponsors had to agree up-front that executive coaching can go ahead. Looking at the examples of statements from some executives below, one can note that they also had a variety of coaching objectives and not one, namely:

- "I suppose it's a little bit like an older brother, I'm the eldest of three children but I wanted almost like an older brother who could help me both in my work and help me in life in general, because I figured that these people had gone through exactly what I was going through and they'd learned lessons which they could then pass down to me. What I found is people like that have lived it before, they can help me with **dealing with specific situations**, they help me a lot in maturing and how to understand the **politics of an organisation**. I've certainly taken it on as my own responsibility to go and find these people, so I'm less reliant now on the bank," DE2

- "It was more an individual level to look at transitioning from managing a small team to managing a large two hundred plus team. So it was out of supposed both personal choice and manager recommendation. I think it was that and also just personal appreciation, if that's the right word, or personal introspection to find **who you are as a leader**, as a person, as somebody who's going to have the responsibility of leading people." DE3

- "Before the coaching sessions started, I could not see why I was **not growing in my career** at the time. So going in that was the theme that I wanted to be coached on, to understand what it was that I could change or do differently to actually grow in the organisation." DE5

- "I think for me it was more just how to fast track my career. I think at the time I just wanted to get a sense of how do I become a better leader, how do I get more from the people that work for me and the people that I work with. That was mostly the intent initially." DE6

Looking at all executive coaching objectives from the different participants interviewed, DE4 had the most unique objective in authors view. This is how he put it:

- "So my objective on going on coaching was to become a coach because you can't coach unless you've been coached. You cannot be a successful coach unless you have been coached. I don't know if all coaching programmes make that statement but certainly the one from the University of Cape Town Business School makes that fundamental very, very clear.” DE4

iv) Goals: Executive Coaches’’ Perspectives

From the executive coaches’ point of views, coming up with generic executive coaching goals was not easy. It is obvious that these objectives differed from one executive to another and largely depends on where the executive is on their career development journey. However, there seem to be a general consensus that emotional intelligence is the main objectives the coaches (and stakeholders) seem to address and all other competencies get taken care off.

- “It depends what we I am working on. Most of the cases I work with the coachees on **who they are** and how that impact on their **leadership style**. I then **create awareness** on how they **show up** and how that **affects their team with**. Sometimes it could be **self-confidence**, leadership style and I then become their thinking partner” CN1

- “I think it’s a tricky question because people come with different goals. I think, by and large, if I were to generalise, one of the areas we always seem to work with is that of relationships, influence, communication, **EQ (Emotional Intelligence)”** CX1

- “Well I think that there are a variety because different people need to develop different areas in order to **execute on their duties and be effective**. So I don't personally believe that there’s a specific category. Mainly what I would say, that it is about developing the individual, their own level of **self-awareness and understanding of who they are** and in turn understanding how that impacts how they relate to others, so to stakeholders, to their team and also how that impacts how they execute their responsibilities.” CX4.

However, there are instances where technical, leadership, business-related objectives like execution of strategic duties and so on, are noted as well. For instance, one can see these from ECC1, CN1, DE3, DE5 and CX4 statements quoted above. Whereas

ECC1's above statement and that of CX5 quoted below mentioned thought executive work-load and business demands are the major coaching objectives.

- "I guess from my experience of coaching the executives across the bank a **number of things** that really came up. One of them is that the executives are so busy and I guess because of the way we structure the organisation here, also because of our cost cutting focuses is that actually more and more is coming to the plate of the executive, from a time pressure perspective and portfolio size perspectives. So not only is the **workload** increasing, the demands and the turnaround times are increasing as well." CX5

It needs to be mentioned that, there are instances at the beginning of coaching or contracting stage, where both the coach and the executive would agree on the objectives but later on, the coach discovers other underlying issues than what was earlier presented and signed for. As a result, most respondents, including the executives, used a phrased like, "it's all boils down to self-awareness".

4.2.2 The Executive Coaching Processes

In the author's mind, the executive process in the bank is influenced by different factors but key to it are two. At first, is the executive coaching stakeholders' experiences where the executive coaching coordinator, the executive coaches, the divisional executives and the sponsors are referred to as stakeholders. No other stakeholder is considered for this study due to limited timeframes of the study and the experiences in this context is about the exposure these stakeholders have in the executive coaching. So, in essence, the participants had to share how they experience executive coaching. Second to that, is the competencies addressed or had to be coached during the executive coaching process. Different perspectives are recorded and are unpacked in this section. Based on the data collected, it is also the author's view that the executive coaching process as a whole, is not a straightforward one and figure 8 attempts to visually make the point. The whole picture is viewed as the executive coaching process where the arrows symbolises the unpredictability of the process.

The experiences and competences are clarified next but bearing in mind that there are other factors affecting the whole processes. Therefore, derailers and enablers symbolises these factors that could be at opposite ends of each other.

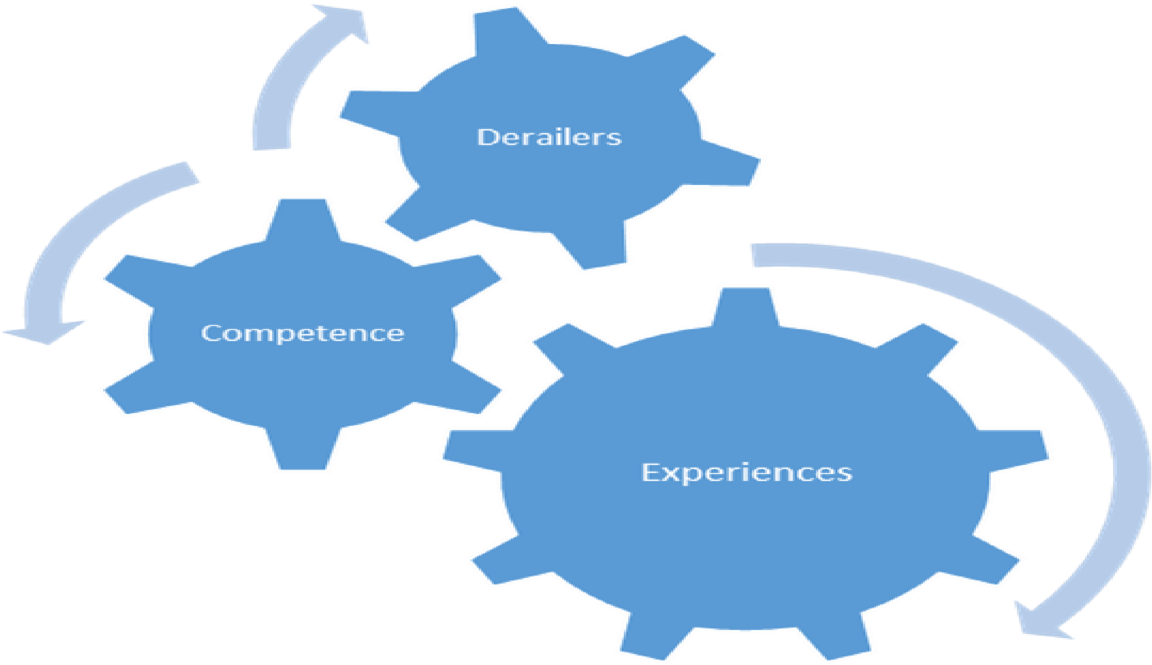

Figure 8: Executive Coaching Process

i.) The Executive Coaching Stakeholders' Experiences

There was a general consensus that the executive coaching experience has been positive for all stakeholders with very few exceptions. These few exceptions were largely from instances where the line managers or sponsors recommend or impose coaching to their executives. This could be noted from the statements form the coaches below.

- "The feedback has been awesome, not just okay. You learn a lot about the individuals and how they think" CN1
- "I guess I've had a couple of difficult assignments. When I say difficult, with people being sent for coaching and actually not wanting to be at coaching. So

those things do happen, so to speak. However, by and large the level of commitment, the development work has been very good” CX3

- “So that then also means that I have a good experience doing it because you’re only as good as the people you’re coaching, at the end of the day, because you can't coach someone who doesn’t want to be coached or who isn’t engaged in the process.” CX4

It is worth noting that, none of the six executives and the two sponsors interviewed expressed dissatisfaction on their executive coaching experience or that of their teams. At the same time, it does seem like the coaching journey was not always seamless judging by the example from DE5 below,

- “Going into the sessions and you can see it from what my theme in the coaching contract was *(also quoted in the above section on objectives),* I had a very narrow minded view of my performance and the world in which we operated in, but I didn’t realise I had it. So my experience in being coached was that the **conversations were not always easy.** It was not nice to get to self-realisation and understand you have had a problem here that you did not even see, but at least now you can look at it. So the result and the process was excellent, the coach was really competent in actually coaching me, allowing me to get self-realisation rather than mentoring me. So for me that was key. Sometimes learning lessons that I did during these sessions was not easy for me but my blind spots got wiped out.”DE5

It also came out and was interesting to note from the interview with DE5 that, (i.) he volunteered to be coached (ii.) he was a senior I.T. manager when he started experiencing executive coaching, and (iii.) DE4 who was, apparently about to retire at the time, was his executive coach.

- “Coaching programme that I did, we’re coaching to four dynamics, the inner I, the outer I, the how I get things done, how I execute and how I relate. All of these are interconnected. So if have a dysfunction in the inner I it will affect how

I relate. If have a dysfunction in how I relate, the chances are it's going to affect how I execute which speaks to performance" DE4

He went on to contest that, for the fact that he understands these coaching principles, it makes him easily coachable too, as an executive and he ultimately practices self-coaching as well. This is evident from his statement below:

- "So that's why ultimately the idea is that you can self-heal because you pick up the disconnectedness in how you're operating. You pick up your own discomforts, you become more sensitised to your own feelings, you become more sensitised to your emotions. You become more sensitised to observing what's going on around you. Suddenly you say something and you see someone on the corner flinch and you know somehow you've inadvertently maybe offended that person. I get to notice these things as both as a coach and coachee because one of the first key things we teach is self-observation. That's how you get to know yourself. As you get to know yourself you can change things." DE4

What was interesting to note from the above DE4's response was that, it was similar to utterances from ES1 where his team and himself were going through team coaching facilitated by CX3. The facilitator, CX3, noticed ES1's negative reaction when given feedback by his team member during the session. It was a reaction that alienated that team member throughout the day and CX3 noticed that.

- "I'm going to give you a personal example. I had my coach facilitating a team coaching event and one of my team was giving me feedback and I never said a word in response. After the session I never said a word in response and yet the person giving me the feedback all of a sudden went quiet and afterwards my coached debriefed with me and said to me, do you recall the conversation that you were having with X and how they shut down quite quickly? So I said, yes, I do, I don't know why that happened. She said, when X was giving you the feedback your eyes turned to steel and your eyes made a shift about a tenth of a centimetre and what that person read through your bodily behaviour was, I don't want to hear this anymore. So we started a piece of work from a coaching point of view on SOMATIC work." ES1

Looking at the data, this self-observation is taught by the executive coaches in the bank, either at one-on-one and/or at team levels. Such examples were given by the executives and contribute to the overall positive experience they had in their coaching sessions.

ii.) Competencies Addressed During Executive Coaching

The interviewees were also asked to highlight any competencies that were addressed during coaching sessions. As much as these competencies varied, thirteen out fourteen participants mentioned self-awareness as one of the key competencies that are addressed during executive coaching. Only one respondent never used the term "I", self or awareness and that was DE1 where he said, for him 'building relationship' was the main competency he improved from executive coaching. This how he put, "is how do I build relationships and the types of relationships" DE1. Four coaches explicitly used the term self-awareness and the fifth one used the term self-confidence.

From the executives' side, one of them, DE3, used the terms situational-awareness and self-assurance which was similar to the term CN1 referred to as self-confidence under coaching objectives. Other executives mentioned how they 'show-up' and their impacts on others. One executive put it as follows,

- "That's problem solving I picked up there, whereas the others are more about the journey of self-discovery on how can you grow. Getting negotiation and buy-in from senior stakeholders in the bank, discovering different ways and approaches to resolve conflict. That was quite key, and I think the approach of taking time to reflect on the situations or scenarios." DE5

- I think for me the main one I will highlight is number one understanding people's strengths and areas of development. It taught me how to look at each of them differently and know that I can ask the same question from the three of them but ask it differently to get the same results from all three of them." DE6

4.2.3 The Potential Derailers of Executive Coaching

The executive coaches and the executive coaches were generally more vocal about derailers of executive coaching in the bank. It was obvious that was based on their own experiences. Though some executives briefly touch on what is coaching and what is not, their experiences of executive coaching were positive. There are a few examples of these derailers that could be mentioned.

I.) The Lack of Consistent Feedback

Some coaches do not always have access to the business where they can observe if their clients are indeed applying the skills they learnt in coaching sessions. As a result, at times they cannot tell whether there has been value and improvement due to coaching.

There are also cases where the 360 feedback is not done. For instance, "Often we don't even include 360s before and after, depending on the nature of the coaching engagement. I do think there's a gap in that process." CX5

II.) Lack of Coaching Delegate Preparation

There is a sense that some executive coaching sponsors send their executives for coaching without preparation. In such coaching sessions, a candidate becomes reserved and un-coachable. One coach, CN2, referred to it as getting stuck at a point without knowing how to become unstuck. Such challenge is also evident from the statement,

- "The organisation always need to play its role in the coaching process. The line manager should not send executives for coaching hoping to solve all problems they cannot fix. It has to be a holistic partnership geared to help the executive.

Though they are few exceptions, generally this bank has good HR and OD who understand what coaching is, what is not and when to recommend it." XC4

III.) The lack of the bank's coaching strategy

It has not been clearly defined, said one coach and this is how she put it, "There's got be clear outcomes that your coach will work with you on the leadership personas and this is the outcome that we want. So that when you do the assessment at the end, your score is going to go up on that persona. Then we will see the shift. So we have to be clear on what is it that we coaching to and contract on that what is the outcomes" CN2

IV.) The Executive Coaching Confidentiality Clause

The Executive Coaching Coordinator discussed confidentiality between an executive and a coach. He made mention that, if the organisation is not privy to the coaching discussions and the objective, it will be impossible for the bank to even start measuring and quantify the coaching impact. Therefore, he argued there should be an element of disclosure and DE2 shared the same sentiments.

V.) The Non-Business Coaching Goals

The setting of coaching goals that are only personal in nature and little to do with business growth like assisting executives to meet financial targets. The executives do not come with such objectives, as CN2 put it, "As I said, there's nothing about growing business."

VI.) The Work Environment

The work environment which does not allow for strategic objectives to be properly executed. For instance, as two participants put it:

- "So the observers get to see that because they are team members who look up to the executives and see the dysfunction. It plays out in the team itself. You see dysfunction from team members from different clusters working together. Outside observers become aware of this. These guys can't agree on anything. You know. So if you do proper diagnosis, you can get a sense of the mood surrounding that project." ECC1

- As long as the culture that they go back into is able to adapt and change with them. For someone who really works well, and they have done all the development work but when they go back to a culture, that's like a "no"-culture, they say, "no" to everything, you won't" see the change. They are fighting against the culture that's already 'innate' in the organisation or department." CN1

4.2.4 The Enablers of Executive Coaching

From the study, the author learnt that there are four enablers that are worth mentioning here. These are, executive coaches' credibility; executive coaches' competencies; the bank's approach to executive coaching and the coachees' commitments to executive coaching. The next part of this paper, briefly unpacks each.

I.) Executive Coaches Have Credibility

It came out from ECC1 that an executive coach must have credibility for the coaching to work. Such credibility comes from having corporate experience in order to have context during the coaching sessions. "The corporate experience is important at an executive level. It gives context and in that way they gain credibility with the coachees. In theory, coaching is not about content and not about mentoring. It's about helping people to self-exploration, self-development and reflecting under EQ and so on. So, a highly competent coach without any corporate experience, should be just as good as the one with corporate experience, in theory. However, in practice, executive coach with no corporate experience won't have any credibility with the executives. I believe that with some sort of context is helpful." ECC1

II.) Executive Coaches Are Competent

All the participants indicated the importance of having competent executive coach. A couple of skills, attributes or behaviours noted by the ECC1, executives and some coaches themselves could be summed up as follows: Good communicator; Good listening skills, e.g. listen to understand, not competitive listening; Flexibility, including knowing what coaching environment is suitable for a session and/or coachee; Presence during the coaching sessions; Create self-awareness and highlight blind spots, don't advise; Hold the coachees to account; Discussion Executive-focus, not coach's focus (about the executive, not the coach); Encourage time-off and reflection; Facilitation skills, not training skills; and Good understanding of what coaching is, and what is not (e.g. it is not mentoring, not psychotherapy, it is not fix-all solution and so on).

III.) The Bank's Executive Coaching Approach Is Good

Though it came out that the executive coaching does not apply the same approach for executive coaching, there were good practices noted. As much as executive coaching is largely one-on-one and customised discussion with high levels of confidentiality, some participants indicated that they do 360 degree feedback yet some say they do not. Those who do, would circulate the questionnaire at the beginning of the coaching session and at the end, say of session ten, depending on the length of the journey. In that way, they can somehow monitor the progress an executive is making. However, they do not do it all the time and hinted that the environment does not allow for such. Here are the two examples;

- "Well you would only know from a three way perspective or if you conduct 360s. If you conduct 360s at the beginning of a coaching assignment with a selected group of direct reports, line manager, peers and you conduct 360 with the same audience again at the end of the coaching assignment, you are going to get a sense of what has been achieved" CX3

- "Then I have my clients send me, usually after about session 6 and again towards the end, what they feel the key learnings were and where possible I would also do something like a 360 at the beginning of a coaching engagement and then again a bit later, to see whether that learning has translated into any shifts or changes. My belief is that is what coaching is. Coaching is about learning. If there's no learning then I don't know if there's been coaching, if that makes sense." CX4

There are other instances where the line manager of an executive and a coach sits down and discusses the progress of an executive, meaning, both the line manager and the coach would solicit feedback from each other. What was clear is that this kind of feedback is high level in order to maintain some level of confidentiality. If a coach had the privilege of observing an executive in action, or received some kind of feedback, that gets discussed too. There are instances where all three parties, the coach, the coachee and the line manager, sit in one room to discuss the progress.

There are two executives who highlighted the value of having team coaching. The journey had started with their own executive coaches. One executive, DE2, started the executive coaching journey whilst he was still working for one of the top five South African banks. The executive coach was external which had made it easy for DE1 to maintain the coaching relationship for more than a decade now. In recent months, DE2 recommended his executive coach to come and do team coaching within the bank and the feedback has been positive.

Another executive, who is also a sponsor, ES1, also started the executive journey with the executive coach, more than seven years ago. Due to the benefits he saw in his own life, he recommended team coaching as well. It came out from the data that, that executive coach happened to be CX3 and she did a good job with ES1's team over the years too. Another executive, DE5, made another point that some sort of a detailed master executive coaching agreement with specific outcomes, needs to be drawn up and driven from the CEO's office, cascading down to divisional executives where all parties are clear of their expectations.

IV.) Good Coachees' Commitment

What has become clear from the data is that the commitment of the executives largely drives the outcome of the coaching. If the executive is not willing to be coached or/and has no commitment to the coaching, the coaching experience for all stakeholders become unpleasant and eventually leads to premature coaching cancelation. When that happens, it becomes a mutual agreement. For instance, CN1 quoted an example where the sponsor has recommended coaching for his executive team member and told the team member he would solicit continues feedback from the coach. The executive coach was not privy to that information in the first two sessions. Then in the third session, the information was revealed to her by the coachee. The coachee felt he could not trust the coach, the confidentiality of the session would be compromised because of that, there was a mutual agreement taken by the coach and the coachee to terminate the coaching sessions. So, where there is full commitment and willingness from the executives, the coaching outcomes are always positive.

4.2.5 The Impact of Executive Coaching

I.) Impact - The Coaches' Perspectives

There was a general sense that executive coaches do not often get a chance to observe the fruits of their coaching in the executives' workplace. They rely on the feedback, be it formal or informal from the executives or their sponsors. If formal, it comes in meetings set up with the executive or their sponsors or both at the same time. However, it is rare to have both the executive and the sponsor in one room, it seems. There are instances where coaches solicit feedback through a 360 degree questionnaire. One of the rare occasions given by one external coach, CX3, is when the one-on-one coaching extends to team coaching. That is when a sponsor or an executive recommends the same coach to facilitate team coaching.

Here is an example how CX3 put it; “We don't always, as coaches, get to see the benefit in the field, except in cases where one carries on or works with the client, with the team, over a period of time, then one can see the level of maturity that grows in the individual, the quality of their relationships, the conscious impact of their leadership” CX3

Other coaches relies on observation during the coaching sessions, as CN1 put it, “The biggest for me is when they get a ‘Aha’ moment once I have highlighted some blind spots for them and when you see them later, they are way ahead than where they were before.” Another coach made a similar statement in agreement, “unfortunately as a coach sometimes you’re limited to the engagement with just yourself and the client, so the only gauge that you have on progress or success is what you’re hearing and seeing in those sessions” CX5

II.) The Impact- The Executives’ Perspectives

It is interesting to note from the data, the richness of stories from the executives themselves. All the stories displayed the positive impact executive coaching had in their both personal and professional lives. Some are still reaping these rewards years after the coaching had stopped. Some have since developed long term relationships with their coaches who later became their social friends too.

From the personal front, the executives have noted that due to coaching, their self-awareness and relationships have improved. Like most adult human beings who are working hard with huge responsibilities in the bank, it came out from the discussions that, all these executives were either married at some point, or still married with children. The work and personal life of an executive can therefore be stressful at times and ECC1 noted this point earlier on the coaching objectives.

One executive put it elegantly, “I personally don't differentiate, when people talk about work-life balance, I don't differentiate between work and the rest of my life, I live at work, when I’m not at work I’m still, in a sense, working because I’m talking to people, I’m thinking, I’m engaging, I’m rejuvenating.” DE2

Such statements insinuate that, an executive is at work 24hrs and it is clearly accentuated in the data that, they too, go through difficult times in their lives, be it personal-life, work-life or both. These are related. For instance, career transitions, relocation due to promotion, divorce, sickness, death and so on, all negatively affect the executives somehow. However, through executive coaching, they rise above such challenges because they are more aware of what is happening in their own lives, what is happening around them, how their emotions affect others and they can keep relationships. For them, that is a key positive impact of executive coaching in their personal lives.

From the professional front, executives have also seen huge benefits of coaching. Some see their coaches as their thinking partners when they hit a brick wall. The execution of their strategic business deliverables, financial targets and the quality of their output improved due to coaching. This how one executive stated it: “So the major impact for me, if you listened to what my title or the theme was why am I not growing, and actually I realised that during coaching if I change my approach and how I grow the organisation and play my part in growing the organisation, the recognition that I’m after would come and today I’m sitting here, evidence that that has worked because I've since then been promoted three times and it’s just by approach to achieving the results that changed” DE5

Therefore, both in the executives’ personal and professional lives, coaching had a positive impact. Even the sponsors witness these benefits within themselves and in their teams as one of the sponsors declared, “I saw the immediate impact and benefit of coaching. Within the first year I saw wonderful benefit and that benefit was around my development opportunities as a human being. Coaching became this was not coaching just at a professional level, it was about my evolution as a human being to being a better human being, which would impact my personal and professional relationships; I certainly felt that at a personal level and I felt that at a professional level as well" ES1

III.) Impact- Organisational Level

Though most of the coaches expressed challenges in connecting the dots from what they achieve in coaching sessions and the business impact, it was the connection that was clear from the executives. From the data, the author summed up the results and graphically presented it in Figure 9.

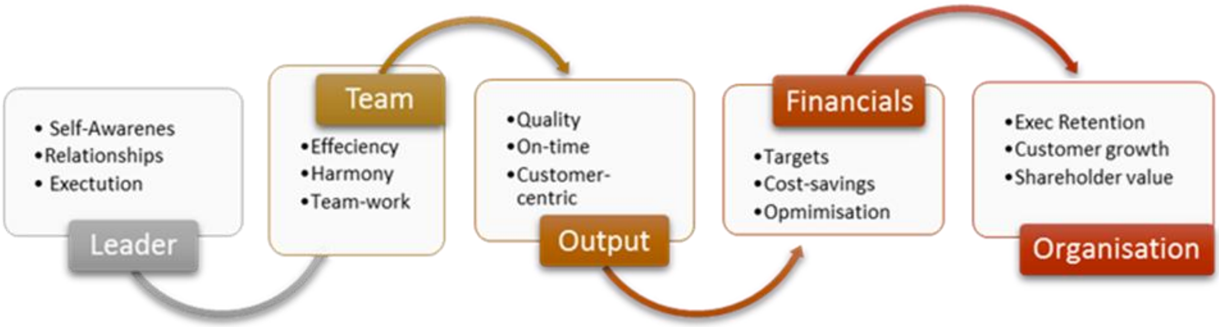

Figure 9: Graphic Summary Impact of Executive Coaching in the Bank

In other words, the executives said their improved self-awareness has helped them deal with their blind spots, maintain good relationships and execute their strategic objectives better. The spill-over effect on that was the team started operating efficiently with harmony and improved team-work. It is at this level, where the leaders' teams felt free to approach their leader with innovative ideas because they know their leader accepts criticism and any feedback. The quality of the teams' end-product or output did not just improve but became customer-centric and delivered on time.

The customer-centric product, be it tangible or a service, led to the better financial performance for the teams. This in some instances was achieved through project optimisation that looked at the most efficient ways of doing business which meant in some instances, improved processes, re-engineering and organisational re-design. These improved financial results have led improved and sustainable organisational performance, low executive attrition, executive promotion and good client growth which should be pleasing to shareholders as their value of their investment improves too.

Conclusion

This study has shown sufficient evidence that this bank use goal-focus executive coaching and all the stakeholders interviewed attest to this. These goals varied based on the journey each executive is on when contracting for executive coaching, meaning, some goals are performance-driven whilst others are personal in nature. In the process of executive coaching, all the participants shared their experiences where most were positive. The incidents where the coaching had to be cancelled, were recorded from the executive coaches, one internal and one external to the bank. The author also noticed that some coaching goals were the same as competencies and emotional intelligence dressed in self-awareness stood out for the author.

Like any form of leader development intervention, it was detected from the data collected that there are derailers that have the potential of harming the executive coaching outcomes if not well managed. However, these were not strong enough to deter goal attainment for the executive coaching. On the other hand, the enablers were enough, in the author's view, to impact positively, the goal attainment and overall positive impact, both at personal and professional level of the executives in the bank. One of the major impacts noted was self-awareness and/or emotional intelligence. Some executives would start the executive sessions with different goals in mind but end up working on self-awareness as a root cause. Therefore, there was enough conviction and evidence from the participants that, indeed, executive coaching has a positive impact in leader development in a South African bank.

4.3 Results presentation using Kirkpatrick Evaluation Methodology

In this section, there are two themes identified from the use of the Kirkpatrick evaluation methodology. The first one is evaluating executive coaching using the Kirkpatrick evaluation model focusing on level 1 to 4 which includes financial impact of the executive coaching in the fourth level. The next section presents the detailed results in relation to both themes.

4.4.1 Evaluating Executive Coaching using the Kirkpatrick Evaluation Model

To check whether executive coaching had any impact on leader development, Kirkpatrick evaluation levels 1-4 was used. The participants were asked to give their opinions on certain variables that characterise the Kirkpatrick four evaluation levels. These variables were generated from both the theory and data collected. In reaction or Level 1, these variables were the coaching venue, the competence of the executive coach and the value of the discussion. All respondents felt positive about all these variables.

In Level 2 which is learning, the three variables chosen were, meeting coaching goal or objective, any negative experiences or cancelations of coaching sessions, and the whole coaching experience. Not all participants could see the correlation between executive coaching and the chosen variables. For instance, ECC1 did not see correlation between learning and coaching objectives are met plus coaching cancellations, but he felt the experience was positive. CN1 and CX3 had each had one coaching session cancelled. All other participants felt coaching objectives were met, no coaching sessions cancelled and had positive coaching experience.

In the behaviour or level 3, the three variables were executives' access to resources, the executive's workplace culture and on the job competency-shift of the executives. Here, all executive coaches did not see any correlation. On the other hand, all executives and sponsors saw positive change about workplace resources, the workplace culture and a shift in their competencies.

Level 4 which are results, there were four results categories identified in relation to business impact, namely, intangible business impact, tangible business impact, business-specific impact and financial business benefits.

The first category, tangible business impact; the six chosen variables were, i.) Productivity; ii.) Work quality; iii.) Organisational strength; iv.) Customer service; v.) Reduced complaints; and vi.) Staff Retention. Out of the six tangible business impact, ECC1 felt productivity and staff retention had unknown correlation with business result and other four had no or negative correlations with business results. Other coaches felts some variables also had no correlation or had negative correlation with business impact. From the executives, only DE5 felt work quality, customer service and reduced complaints had no or negative correlation with business results. Other executives and sponsors felt positive for all six variables.

The second category, intangible business impact had six variables as well. These are, i.) Direct report relationships; ii.) Stakeholder relationships; iii.) Teamwork relationships; iv.) Peer relationships; v.) Job satisfaction (of the executives and their teams) and vi.) Reduced conflict. For all variables, business results, except for job satisfaction where CN1 and CX4 felt there are negative correlations.

The third category, specific business impact had three variables, namely, i.) Collaboration; ii.) Problem-solving and iii.) Innovation. These variables were identified as additional competencies, specific to the bank at the time of the study. Most participants felt these competencies could be improved through executive coaching but CX3, CX4, and DE4 felt negative when it comes to innovations. DE3 saw no correlation with all three. The fourth category looked at financial impact of executive coaching and is presented under the next theme below.

Table 4: Level 1- 4 Executive Coaches' Comments

	ECC1	CN1	CN2	CX3	CX4	XC5
Level 1: Reaction and Level 2: Learning	**Level 2:** So whether we do 360 with peer, 360 with subordinates or bosses observation for behaviour. We can get a baseline matrix- e.g. get an assessment and baseline EQ. this is where we are, we want to move 10points by a year, 18mths time. Then re-run the that assessments and see if we get different data. We don't do it today though. We don't do it today.	**Level 2:** Its all about contracting upfront on what is the purpose and the outcome of this coaching. You may have an instance where a senior manager/Exec would say this person I want him to be coached on 'this'. But then when you start doing the coaching, there's underlying topic that's need to be worked on. The underlying topic needed to fix this, may not what the manager had indicated. So, it becomes a parallel process.	**Level 1:** Different coaching schools will have different philosophies in the way you coach. So, other coaches may be completely be fine with this environment, I'm not because I don't want this table between you and I. it blocks the energy. If its professional set-up and but i prefer more relaxed venue like a garden.	**Level 2:** The only way I could respond to that is if the competence we're working on is displayed during the coaching sessions then I would be able to see. That's the only interaction I have with my client. So maybe my coachee is listening better, might be asking different questions.	**Level 1:** I usually coach in meeting rooms and I think that's a function of time. However, having said that, I often encourage my clients to meet me outside their office building. * I would rate my ability as a coach is whether my clients recommend or not meand thet do recommend me. Importantly, with coaching is you can only be as good a coach as your client is engaged in the coaching process.	**Level 1:** *I think something I'm quite conscious of and I think one can never do enough of is grounding yourself as a coach so that you are fully present in the coaching session. I think the coachee value is really determined around how present I think you really are in the session. So I do a lot of mindful practices on myself to ensure I can be the best person for that particular client, that I don't bring in my own issues.
Level 3: Behaviour and Level 4 Tangible	**Level 3: On Relationships**: You see dysfunctioning from team members from different clusters working together. Outside observers become aware of this. These guys cant agree on anything	**Level 3: Feedback formal and informal:** So what I turn to do is to speak to the manager or the subordinates. Or ask the staff member to go us feedback from 5 or 6 people they work with have get a balance. But sometimes their line managers can make it formalise and say, here are the questions I need you to ask. Its all depends on the individual im working with. That's include 360's from their peers, depending on who you working with.	**Level 3:** I might have a client that says to me, 'I know im not there yet, but you have given me enough tools and I have got enough practices and things to do to help me get there, let me try on my own for a while and I will come back. You have given me enough tools, let me go figure it out on my own for 2-3mths. Then 6mths later, they need a check-in with you. So, I allow that flexibility as well. Typically, you got to reach some goal but, we adults, I dont force anyone.	**Level 3**: The outcome of the coaching is not (entirely) dependent on me, the outcome of the coaching is dependent on the client, whether they're going to apply themselves to what it is they've undertaken and committed to work on. So I can't make them do anything.	**Level 2:** So I track that at the end of every single session and I also ask them so what does that learning mean. It's one thing to learn something but if it just stays in your head it doesn't translate to anything. So I always ask what was your key learning and how will that learning impact how you go forward or how will it show up in action?	**Level 4 Tangible:** I've seen it where I think there's been increased retention by the teams because the teams are feeling a lot more comfortable with the leadership and the relationships between themselves and their leader has improved. So from that perspective, definitely. I think sometimes from a leader's perspective, themselves, maybe reduced retention because they're starting to see things in a different light and potentially might pursue opportunities outside of their current organisation
Level 4 Tangible & Intangible and Financial Benefits	**Level 4 Tangible: Org Strength:** At an individual level, that impact will be very tiny, in particular if they lower down the rank. So, even an Executive in GT, who start to function 40% higher, im not convinced it will shift the organisation's strength	**Level 4 Tangible:** As long as the **culture** that they go back into is able to adapt and change with them. For someone who really really works well, and they have done all the development work but when they go back to a culture, that's like a **"no"-culture**, they say, **"no" to everything,** you won't see the change. They are fighting against the culture that's already 'innate' in the organisation or department.	**Level 4 Intangible: Most definitely**, that's typically some of the the things that come up when we work on leadership and those kind of things. So, it comes back to, **Self-Awareness**, help them understanding other people. I do a lot of,,, personality model work,,, like eanergrams, helping them on self-awareness on that	**Level 4 Financial:** Well you would only know from a three way perspective or if you conduct 360s. If you conduct 360s at the beginning of a coaching assignment with a selected group of direct reports, line manager, peers and you conduct 360 with the same audience again at the end of the coaching assignment, you are going to get a sense of what has been achieved.	**Level 4 Tangible:** Yes, because I think if your employees are more resilient, more self aware, have better stakeholder management of better decision making, that does improve **organisational strength.**	**Level 4 Financial:** Culturally, coaching in this bank is still very much a private intervention between coach and coachee. There's no strategic coaching where we coach teams to achieve strategic objectives and leaders to achieve tangible goals and objectives. So the nature of coaching at here doesn't align itself to interfacing in the business, it's still about own personal development and how I show up as a leader and that's almost like a very private and confidential coaching engagements.

Table 5: Level 1 - 4 Divisional Executives Comments

	DE1 and DE5	DE2 and DE4	DE1 and DE3	DE4 and ES1	DE5, DE6 and ES1	DE6 and ES2
Level 1: Reaction and Level 2: Learning	**DE1> Level 1:** It's in my bosses office over there and sometimes we meet at coffee shops. The irony is, he learns too. Its actually safe to provide feedback and he invites feedback. I think that's one thing I appreciate about him.	**DE4> Level 2:** A manager would call and say, someone needs coaching because his interaction is aggresive. We have to agree on a coaching problem, why is that person here, what's brought that person here, was it the guy wants to shift. So it could be anything from I feel aggressive or I'm a procrastinator or I have poor time management, etc. and what's we call the presenting problem but 9/10 times that's not what you end up coaching the person on.	**DE3> Level 1:** The coach was very flexible, we had … it was whatever suited me, and then it was also around she appreciated but at the same time respected that a lot of things are happening, you're new to the job, you can let it slip but they still remind you it is your problem to solve, it is your investment. So, yes, the environment matters and the environment is not whether you get coffee or not, is it conducive to facilitating the discussion that's required.	**DE4> Level 3**: So I reached the pinnacle of awards that can be got and that didn't stop me competing with everybody. If I went into a room I wanted to prove I was the smartest guy there, the best guy there and everything and it took a coach to turn around and delve into it. Firstly people made me aware of this because I didn't realise I was doing it.	**DE5> Level 2:** I think it was perfect, I wouldn't have wanted to add or take anything away from what happened in the coaching sessions. I still reap the benefit of it.	**DE6> Level 4 Tangible:** Coaching does help individuals where [indiscernible] to being coached and the people that you're working with. So all of those things, for me, it's a no brainer. Really a no brainer.
Level 3: Behaviour and Level 4 Tangible	**DE5> Level 3:** I think the collaboration and cooperation from peers was also a key thing, where previously I would have been in competition with my peers, I shifted my mind to really go coperate and collaborate.	**DE2> Level 4 Tangible:** What I'm going to tell you now is part executive coaching but it's part that whole experience. When I came back, I'd been back for about a month and I think I'd been fuelled, and I think saw the world in a much bigger way, I saw it from multiple different angles, and we were battling with a particular business problem related to Operations and Digital Technology	**DE3> Level 4 Tangible:** Your improvement, as a person directly impacts how you gauge with your day to day work. So a leader who is committed, confident and he's on a path of development, self correction, can only improve the current status of a business or the immediate surroundings, because they appreciate and they drive energy, the energy gets transmitted back into the team, which is what then leads to achievement of results.	**ES1> Level 3:** I've seen the most amazing shifts with people. One of the arts of leadership is around asking great questions, from telling to asking, because when you ask great questions people generally learn the quickest. I've seen leaders in my business go from a telling mode to articulately ask questions that enable growth of individuals. Other shifts have been around self-awareness, of their impact and engagement with people.	**DE6> Level 3:** There's hardly time to stop and reflect. So for me I'm trying to give you a sense of why I would continue to do coaching and why I would pay anything for coaching because an opportunity in this fast paced environment, to just stop and reflect is very rare, that's one. Number two, an opportunity to have space about me, as an individual, and just talk to me about me. For me, that's also quite a big thing.	**ES2> Level 3:** Yes, it's interesting. Because it's a qualitative matter, in my view, I can, through observation, sometimes very clear see such and such a person who I sent in the period after the intervention are very aware of self and very aware of impact on others and how they moderate and engage and deal with their own development and invariably those people who inculcate those skills and that awareness, that self awareness, grow.
Level 4 Tangible & Intangible and Financial Benefits	**DE1> Level 4 Financial:** So, for a year, we had a target of +-1,3mil transactional sales and we came short. We came short by +-140k. We came short by +-R100mil. This is the stuff that we did good, and we still grew revenue by +-6% and we contributed to the bottom line of +-R20mil as an example, etc, and the point is that,, when I could give feedback, I could give feedback that, though our target has grown, we reduced our sales staff, you know. Also we were busy with a project of optimising by +-R35mil, changing the business proposition,,, changing the strategy, so it's the strongest point in the context for the Bank's Group Leadership.	**DE2> Level 4 Financial:** The outcome of the strategic project rsulted in the bank's cost saving of R20mil p.a.	**DE1> Leve 4 Tangible/Intangible:** It's difficult to move from coastal city to Joburg. My Exec Coach/Line Manager gave me all the support. He's such a caring leader you know. The impact has been deeper than work. It's difficult to move from coastal city to Joburg. My Exec Coach/Line Manager gave me all the support. He's such a caring leader you know. The impact has been deeper than work.	**DE4> Level 4 Intangible:** The secrets will differ individual to individual, overall I think there other intangible benefits as well. Relationship, you talk about relationships there, but they're kind of expressed in the work [indiscernible] relationships. I've seen impact on people's personal relationships at home, relationships with their wives, with their children, it spills over, and when that relationship improves the person … it results in your tangible. The person's productivity improves	**ES1> Level 4 Financial:** So there's 1,500 at an average REM of about 250,000/person. So, we are looking at 375 million. Now you've got to be cautious with that because I would have done without coaching because it's easy to dictate a rule and it's easy to dictate because you're the boss, but that's what I say. The actual ROI really lies in what you managed to prevent, because I could have done this quite dictatorially and the rest of the people that were unaffected by this say, well is this really the culture that I want to work with or be part of, and people can vote with their feet and they can leave. So it is difficult to apply a rand value. I think the bigger question is not making the connection between coaching and return on investment and rand value, it's what you manage to prevent, I think is more important	**ES2> Level 4 Tangible:** *Well I'm sort of tentatively answering the question because I think intuitively the answer is yes. To draw those correlations directly is another story because some of it is intangible yet you can build good examples to support what you say. One that I would venture is leadership that is not values based is problematic and I believe that through coaching and self introspection, it also goes to look at and get you to evaluate your centre and what it is that you stand for, and what are those values*So in that sense it is no doubt that a well grounded set of values that goes through the leader into an organisation, and if that's your reference point, that it will have a direct bearing on those very measurable things that you mentioned. So I have no doubt about it. If you, say, compare it to the inverse of that which will be value destroying.

4.4.2 Financial Benefits of Executive Coaching

Looking at Tables 4 and 5, most participants commented on the financial benefit of executive coaching. Some made qualitative recommendations and insisted that sometimes, it is not the rand value that is so important to them but the tangible and intangibles business impact they had already mentioned that is so key. Some felt, it is difficult to measure and had no suggestions or related reference points. However, DE1, DE2 and ES1 each had examples they felt directly or indirectly could be attributed to executive coaching and that their businesses reap positive financial results. Table 6 demonstrates these as scenarios as given by the three participants. These three scenarios are from DE1, DE2 and ES1, and are detailed in table 6.

Table 6: Level 4: Financial Benefits of Executive Coaching- Three Scenarios

Scenario 1: DE1	Scenario 2: DE2
Goals Achieved: the coaching with my line manager was informal> what is it like to be in the bank CEO's shoes as an objective; How to prepare Quality reports and tell the good story well; How to Quality Assure own team's work; Due to Coaching/Support from my line/Coach: so, for a year, we had a target of 1,5mil transactional sales and we came short. We came short by 142k on…. And we were short by R130mil. This is the stuff that we did good, and we still grew revenue by 7% and we contributed to the bottom line of R21mil as an example, etc, and the point is that,, when I could give feedback, I could give feedback that, though our target has grown, we reduced our sales staff, you know. Also we were busy with a project of optimising by R40mil, changing the business proposition	Let me again tell a story. I was fortunate enough to go to INSEAD in 2014 and part of that whole programme included executive coaching. That course, I understand, cost the bank somewhere like R550,000 for a month to do an Advanced Management Programme. Now that is an extraordinary amount of money. What I'm going to tell you now is part executive coaching but it's part that whole experience. When I came back, I'd been back for about a month and I think I'd been fuelled, and I think saw the world in a much bigger way, I saw it from multiple different angles, and we were battling with a particular business problem at that time. Over about a week something started developing in my mind and I started integrating all of this information and then it was at the time of a post office strike and I read an article by Alec Harvey, and again, it was must another piece of this building block and I realised there was an opportunity – where our clients were impacted by protracted national strike in the country. It has zero to nil effect on our credit risk so I realized something extraordinary was happening here. Here was an opportunity, which presented, to actually solve the business problem within the framework laws, and to use a very political argument to say because of the strike we would simply use technology to solve the business problem. After involving all relevant stakeholders and getting buy-in and sponsorship from our ME, that initiative saves the bank R16mil every year.

Scenario 3: ES1
Through Optimisation Project: I can give you the value of the fifteen hundred, we can get that from finance, I don't know it off the top of my head. So you can multiply fifteen hundred by … I mean I can give you just based on my knowledge of the average head count, and I'll just do the calculation quickly. So there's 1,500 and the average REM has got to be about 250,000, so here's the thing, you're looking at 375 million. Now you've got to be cautious with that because I would have done without coaching because it's easy to dictate a rule and it's easy to dictate because you're the boss, but that's what I say. The actual ROI really lies in what you managed to prevent, because I could have done this quite dictatorially and the rest of the people that were unaffected by this say, well is this really the culture that I want to work with or be part of, and people can vote with their feet and they can leave. So it is difficult to apply a rand value. I think the bigger question is not making the connection between coaching and return on investment and rand value, it's what you manage to prevent, I think is more important. *The ROI can be easily measured in the one data point I gave you around the fifteen hundred heads that we've optimised.* If we as a team had not invested in team coaching and individual coaching, because by the way, I've given some of my team my coach as their coach and I've sponsored them, so the benefit that I've received they've received, and I do that based on the development conversation and what their development needs are. If we had not done that for team coaching and the individual coaching, that fifteen hundred might well have been seven hundred. So that's the ROI impact for me. We might not have built the strength to make these tough decisions, to optimise the roles that we need to optimise and we might have done it without the coaching, we might have done it but we might have created devastation in the process because we wouldn't have managed it with a great self awareness of our impact on our broader nine thousand people, and so you could still achieve the fifteen hundred but you could have created mass destruction, *people leaving the organisation,* ***[Value-Match measures (desired v actual) sits at*** ***nine***. It's been as low as six which, by the way, I think is not healthy, I think you can get to a point where it's too healthy and then you're running a country club as opposed to running a business. So for me, the ROI measure is what is the opportunity cost of not investing in coaching and do we take that into account, and I don't think we would have achieved the optimisation, so the rand savings, in the manner that we did, maintaining … our **Value Measure (Bar)** sits at eighty percent (80%), **Culture Measure (NSS) sits at 80%,** it's one of the highest in the group, every touch point from a people point of view is absolutely at phenomenal records, and that's because we have a deep understanding of our leadership capability, what we need to approve, what we need to develop, as a result of the coaching investment. It's not the only thing but it's a massive contributor to the heavy lifting that we've been through in the last couple of years.

When asked if there are any competencies that could be improved through executive coaching and give any closing remarks, tables 7-8 below, show examples from some of the participants.

Table 7: Closing Remarks from Executive Coaches

	ECC1	CN1	CN2	CX3	CX4	XC6
Some closing Remarks and competencies that can be improved through executive coaching	Employee engagement; Deal with change management	Personal connection and people will deliver for you.	So, not just self-awareness but also awareness of people	Employee engagement	Employee engagement	Strategic execution meeting business objectives
	If you focus on ROI, it's a right place to be. For me its not so much about the model but its making coaching something that you want to measure. But I don't know where the blockage comes from. That's the main issue for me, it's the reluctant to measure it.	A lot of its soft skills. That's how you have compassion for the individuals, how you empathise with individual but you don't jump into trying to rescue them but you have the understanding on how that could impact the environment and how they work.			Culture gets impacted	Ability to be mindfull and see things in a new/different perspectives

Table 8: Closing Remarks from the Executives

	DE1	DE2	DE3	DE4	DE5	DE6	ES1	ES2
Some closing Remarks and competencies that can be improved through executive coaching	Great leaders prepares you as a holistic person	Strong emphasis on peer-relationship was made- one of the key benefits of coaching	I think my very essence of coaching is on the soft, the heart, you're coaching the heart.	So to me when people are more courageous they will think, I believe they will express themselves more innovatively	coaching is really about your inner-self	For me I think it's more the change in the person being coached, the change in behaviour, outlook, in just how they view life and work in general	One of the things that I'm very comfortable with is courageous conversations.	One that I would venture is leadership that is not values based is problematic and I believe that through coaching and self introspection, it also goes to look at and get you to evaluate your centre and what it is that you stand for, and what are those values
	Leaders must have ability to coach and nurture the people on the journey. Because that is what is lacking in our business	No need to overcomplicating things- at the heart of executive coaching and leadership analogies is real values and it's right from the top bank's leadership.		Emphasis on the benefits good relationships at both personal and professional levels				

Research Question:

What is the perceived impact of executive coaching in leader development of a South African bank?

Conclusion

Looking at the data collected, there was sufficient evidence that a modified Kirkpatrick evaluation model can be used to measure the impact of executive coaching in the bank. However, there were some concerns at level 2 and 3 from the executive coaching coordinator and executive coaches related to both confidentiality and the bank's executive coaching strategy as a whole. As a result, in Kirkpatrick level 2 and 3, one can notice clear differences in responses where either zero or -1 dominates the executive coaches' side as opposed to the executive managers' side. The same theme is recorded in level 2 and 3 where all the executive coaches, mentioned that this was because they do not have access to on-the-job executive behaviour which the bank needs to be address somehow in the future.

It was worth noting that Kirkpatrick was not easy to quantify in financial terms, especially from the executive coaches. This is due to the complexities of attributing the business results specifically to executive coaching. The isolation process is not a straightforward one, but is not an impossible task if the executive strategy, time and resources allow for it. However, the three cases presented by the two executives and one sponsor, were enough to conclude that, indeed the Kirkpatrick evaluation model can be used to measure the executive coaching impact.

4.4 Summary of the results

The study has shown positive results at the most. Based on both literature and theory, a total of seven themes were recorded, namely, i.) Every executive coaching has goals; ii.) The coaching process; iii.) The potential derailers of executive coaching; iv.) The enablers of executive coaching; v.) The impact of executive coaching. The use of the Kirkpatrick evaluation model proved to be practical in evaluating the executive coaching impact in all four levels including tangible, intangible and financial business impact benefits.

All the participants indicated there are always goals for every executive coaching and made mention of these, but emotional intelligence or self-awareness stood out for most of the participants, meaning, there were instances where these goals were performance related. The executive coaching process is influenced by different factors but core to this, in the author's view, are the executive coaching journeys each stakeholder experiences and the competencies addressed, aimed at eventually shifting the executives' behaviour in their workplace. This process was overall noted as positive.

There were a few derailers noted in the study and these were, lack of consistent feedback; lack of delegate preparation; lack of the bank's clear coaching strategy; the confidentiality clause; non-business related goals and work environment which could not be conducive for an executive to flourish in their roles. However, these derailers are mitigated by four key enablers. These are, executive coaches' credibility; the executive coaches' competencies; the bank's executive coaching model and the executive or coachees' commitments. These enablers were key to the overall recorded positive executive coaching impact in the bank.

Then when the Kirkpatrick evaluation method was applied, it was generally user-friendly with a few instances that may need more work. For instance, at the reaction level 1, all participants were positive based on the variables used to facilitate the discussions. When moving to learning level 2, it was difficult for the participants, especially the executive coaches, to feed back with confidence that indeed the learning does happen in each session without any measuring tool. The limited access to the workplace and lack of on-the-job observations was recorded at behaviour level 3 for some executive coaches. On the other hand, the executives or coachees, including the sponsors, were able to respond with confidence that, indeed, they have seen an overall positive change in executives' behaviour due to executive coaching, in the workplace.

In results level 4, only tangible and intangibles were looked at, based on the top six results from the McGovern (2001) study done with 100 executives from other parts of the world. The tangible business impact results top six chosen for this study were, productivity; work quality; organisational strength; customer service; reduced complains; and staff retention. On the other hand, intangible business impact results top six chosen were; direct report relationships; stakeholder relationships; teamwork relationships; peer relationships; job satisfaction; and reduced conflict. Generally, these were largely positive, especially from the executive or coachees and sponsors points of view. In the few instances, for example. staff retention and job satisfaction, the results were seen to perhaps have a negative impact for the bank if an executive decides to resign due to self-awareness created in executive coaching. Though there is no evidence from the data such has happened before, it may not necessarily be a bad thing for the bank if that happens. In addition to tangible and intangible business impact from the literature, the author added questions that asked if the three business specific competencies which also appeared in the literature, collaboration, problem solving and innovations could be improved through executive coaching. Though few were not so convinced about innovation, generally the participants were optimistic about these three.

When it comes to financial benefits of executive coaching, it proved to be a difficult question for most participants. Hence not all attempted to quantify, in monetary terms, the benefits of executive coaching for the bank. However, the three cases from the two divisional executives and one sponsor, were enough evidence to conclude that indeed the Kirkpatrick model is a useful tool to measure the impact of executive coaching.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the author discusses and analyses the results from the study and draws some parallels with the literature reviewed for this study. These parallels are expected to either be aligned or conflict with the literature. In the process, the author also provides insights on why, in his opinion, the results may look in a particular way. The opinion could be based on the literature reviewed, educational background and his fifteen years professional experience in learning and development fraternity. However, the emphasis is more on literature reviewed and the data collected.

The flow of this chapter follows the previous chapter's flow for the ease of discussion and the analyses. Hence, the following seven themes, in the following order, are addressed, i.) Executive Coaching has Goals; ii.) The Executive Coaching Process; iii.) The Potential Derailers of Executive Coaching; iv.) The Enablers of Executive Coaching; v.) The Impact of Executive Coaching. From there, the author demonstrates how Kirkpatrick is used to evaluate the executive coaching which includes tangible, intangible and financial business impact.

5.2 Discussion Pertaining to Research Results

5.2.1 Every Executive Coaching Has Goals

From the literature, authors like Hendrickson (1987) as cited by Stern (2004) saw coaching as a journey, which the author assumes involves a destination or goals, some scholars like Kauffman and Coutu (2009) saw it as meeting individual and firm's needs and Ennis (2012) explicitly included the term, 'goals' when defining executive coaching. These goals could be personal, business-related or both. In this study, all the participants agreed there were set goals at the beginning of the coaching journey which is in line with what some authors mentioned when either defining coaching or executive coaching. However, the author finds it intriguing to note that some of these goals do change after the second or third session when the executive coach discovered different underlying issues. At most, these underlying issues led to coaching goals related to Emotional Intelligence competency, as quoted by different researchers before Goleman (1998), Goleman et al. (2002) and Geoghegan and Dulewicz (2008) meaning, in a case where the sponsor or organisation has been involved in setting these goals, they may need to be informed by either a coach or the coachee in order to manage expectations at the end of the coaching journey. This was not clear from the data whether that happens or not. What was evident was, the level of confidentiality between the coach and the coachee, especially where an executive had their own motivation to want to be coached.

Executive Coaching Goals Identified

One of the advantages of qualitative research method, is the flexibility that comes with it (Bhattacherjee, 2012) and the author took advantage of this, not just in presenting the results, but also looked at body language during the interviews. The author noted the body language from the first respondent, ECC1 where there was a few seconds pause, a silence and then he slowly mentioned the stress level related to work-load and personality traits. The author took the body language into account and concluded the answer was given enough thought and he was comfortable that these goals were the most prominent in the respondent's view. As much as ECC1 did not appear as a regular in coaching executives, there was enough conviction during the study that ECC1 is one of the most senior and well respected coaches in the bank. Moreover, judging by his previous roles and the current one, in the 37,5 years in the bank of which 12 years of that was including coaching, the author has no doubt ECC1's response is well informed.

When one looks at what other participants, i.e. executive coaches, coachees and the two sponsors, there is indeed similarities that boil down to emotional intelligence as described in the literature by different authors like, Goleman (1998), Goleman et al. (2002), Dye and Garman (2006) and Geoghegan and Dulewicz (2008). For instance, the terms that kept coming the most are, 'self-awareness', 'how the leader shows-up', 'knowing yourself', 'discovery of self', 'understanding the impact a leader/self has on others', 'self-confidence', 'identifying own blind spots', 'taking time to reflect' and so on. These types of EQ, Goleman (2002) and his colleagues, would refer to them as personal competency (Goleman et al., 2002).

The other participants made references to goals like, 'understanding politics of the organisation', 'improving leadership capabilities', 'dealing with specific situation', 'fast-tracking career', 'relationships', 'influence', 'communication', and 'developing others or exposing them so they can reap the same coaching benefits'. Again, looking at the Emotional Competency Framework by (Goleman

(1998) and Goleman et al. (2002) shown in figure 2 previously, the author argues all these fit well into social competency.

Emotional Competency Framework in essence, divides emotional competence into two broad categories, namely, personal and social competence. As some of the executive coaches pointed out, there were indeed very few coaching goals that were transactional or technical in nature. One of the rare examples, is where DE1 is using his own line manager as a coach, hence the coaching goals are job-specific and included improving the quality of his work.

In literature, there were six competencies in a health care organisation relevant to different levels of leadership, which include the CEO, Centre and Department leaderships and these are; (1.) Clearly articulates the strategy; (2.) Provides a compelling vision (3.) Provides measurable objectives for implementing the vision; (4.) Recognises and rewards progress in implementing change; (5.) Responds effectively to resistance to change and (6.) Personally inspiring and motivating for the change (O'Reilly et al., 2010). Furthermore, the Leadership Competency Model has x16 leadership competencies (Dye & Garman, 2006) (p10), as referred to earlier in figure 3.

Therefore, it is the author's view that all the executive coaching goals identified in this study, either come in the form of competencies or goals similar to different literature. Northouse (2013) referred to the above competencies as one of the leadership traits. There are at least two more leadership theories also aligned to this study in the author's view, these are situational and transformational theories (Northouse, 2013).

5.2.2 The Executive Coaching Processes

Figure 8 shows the key main factors affecting the executive coaching process which is not a straightforward one. Each factor has impact on the coaching process at different phases of executive coaching. In other words, it is the author's view that, whether at the beginning, middle or end phase of executive coaching, the coaches' competence plays a key role in positively affecting the coaching experience for themselves, but most importantly, for the coachee. At the same time, all the executive coaching stakeholders should take cognisance of all the possible derailers in order to minimise them and embrace or magnify all the executive coaching enablers. It is therefore an integrated process all together, the author argues.

I.) The Executive Coaching Stakeholders' Experiences

In literature, a couple of authors emphasise the importance of coachee commitment in order for the coaching to be successful (McGovern et al., 2001) and (Thach, 2002). In this study, there were instances where commitment is referred to as contracting. Generally, all participants had good coaching experiences overall, notwithstanding the two instances where coaches indicated one bad experience each, that resulted in coaching sessions being cancelled. This was due to lack of commitment from the two executives.

One of these two coaches, CN1, also mentioned the lack of trust from the executive. Apparently, the executive was told by the line manager that the coach would give feedback to him. So the executive thought there is not going to be any confidentiality between the coach and the coachee. However, instead of being up-front about it, it seemed, the executive became un-coachable and did not open up, hence, a mutual agreement to cancel the coaching agreement after the third session. Most executive coaching definitions the author looked at, made a similar point that, coaching is a one-on-one or confidential process between a coachee and a coach. For instance, (Kauffman & Coutu, 2009), in the following year it was (de Haan, Sills, Boyce, Jeffrey Jackson, & Neal, 2010) and later (Ennis, 2012) all agreed in the confidentiality involved in coaching. In the author's view, the situation must have been exacerbated by the false notion going on in the bank, as mentioned by some coaches, that when an executive is recommended a coach, it is because they are not performing.

In literature, a term 'evolution' a phrase used by Hendrickson (1987) as cited by Stern (2004, p. 154) when defining coaching, was used. On the other hand, Sherman and Freas (2004) saw a well-organised executive coaching as a journey with objective feedback as nurturing an executive's evolution, leading to improved learning and behavioural change. It is worth noting that the executive coaching journey is not always seamless. This assertion is based on comments such what DE5 referred to as being naïve about his own performance and the surrounding environment, hence he found the coaching conversation challenging at times.

The feedback given to ES1 by both his team members when CX3 was facilitating team coaching, was not a palatable one for ES1 to digest, yet essential. Once additional coaching work was done with him, the learning materialised and his skills developed which led to behavioural change. Moreover, DE1 also mentioned his executive coach has being tough on him yet caring about him as an holistic human being. Looking at both the literature and collected data, it is therefore the author's view, that evolution, coaching journey and leader development is not always seamless yet a beneficial experience at the end.

Having said that, the executive coaching experience was recorded as, overall, positive by all participants. If anything had to be changed, it was a minor house-keeping issue where CN2 preferred a more relaxed venue or coaching environment like a garden, instead of using office meeting rooms. Otherwise, she has had a good eight years' coaching experience in the bank as well. Ennis (2012) made reference to the executive coaching as an experiential and individualised leader development process that builds a leader's capability to achieve short and long-term organisational goals. Therefore, it is the author's view that the results here are consistent with the literature.

II.) Competencies Addressed During Executive Coaching

In the literature review, Goleman (1998), Goleman et al. (2002), Dye and Garman (2006) and Geoghegan and Dulewicz (2008) argued that self-awareness is always key for business leaders. The interviewees were also asked to highlight any competencies that were addressed during coaching sessions. As much as these competencies varied, thirteen out fourteen participants mentioned self-awareness as one of the key competencies that are addressed during executive coaching. Only one respondent never used the term “I”, self or awareness and that was DE1 where he said, for him ‘building relationship’ was the main competency he improved from executive coaching. As mentioned in the coaching, goals there were many instances where the participants saw the both coaching goals and competencies addressed as one thing which make sense if the answer was self-awareness in both sections.

At the same time, if the coaching objective was, ‘fast track career growth’ and then competencies was ‘self-confidence’, not all participants saw that as boiling down to emotional intelligence as argued by other authors mentioned above. For instance, it was interesting to note that the executive coaches generally sang the same tune for both objectives and competencies that say, ‘we create self-awareness. Meanwhile, looking at the data, most executive coaches only saw it as one tune only when reflecting on the impact of the executive coaching and not from the start of the coaching journey.

When looking at the emotional competence framework (Goleman, 1998) and Emotional Intelligence (EQ) by Goleman (2002) and his colleagues, it is evident that some of the objectives and competencies mentioned in this study could either be categorised as personal or social competence. For instance, Self-Awareness is defined as ‘knowing one’s internal states, preferences, resources and intuition’ and has three sub-categories namely, emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment and self-confidence (Goleman et al., 2002, pp. 327-328).

DE5 in particular made mention of problem solving, negotiation skills and conflict management. These competencies, in the author's view, are aligned to Goleman's (1998) social skill's definition which is an "adeptness at inducing desirable responses in others" which also includes examples like conflict management, described as negotiating and resolving disagreements (Goleman, 1998, p. 27).

In relation to competencies and the executive coaching impact, DE2 and ES2 made an intriguing argument that suggests, competencies are not as important as values. These could be good personal or organisational values, like accountability, integrity, respect, people-centric, pushing beyond boundaries, honesty, family, trust, teamwork, loyalty and so forth. They were adamant that, as long as leaders have leadership skills that are value-baseless, such leadership is problematic, not just in the organisation, but also in the society at large. It does not matter what technical competencies are improved through executive coaching. Hence the author rephrases it as, 'Just do-good first, the rest shall follow' (table 4.3b). This is consistent with Tubb and Schulz (2006)'s arguments that, "values are more learnable than changing person's behaviour" (Tubbs & Schulz, 2006, p. 31).

5.2.3 The Key Derailers and Enablers of Executive Coaching in the Bank

The coaching techniques, de Haan and (2013) colleagues talked about (de Haan et al., 2013) in literature and the continuous coaching skills necessary to improve goal-focus coaching skills and emotional intelligence (EQ) of the executive coaches (Grant, 2007), is aligned with the study results.

The overall recorded positive impact of executive coaching in the bank needs to be put into context. This context includes derailers or hindrances and enablers within the bank. It goes without saying that the enablers were more magnified than hindrances, looking at the feedback on the executive coaching impact. Alternatively, one may argue that the hindrances were not significant enough for the participants, especially the executives, to mention. In other words, the executive coaches were more vocal about what is currently not working, possible derailers or areas of improvement. This could be due to their holistic exposure to the bank's coaching strategy, the gaps in the whole process and limited exposure to the business impact of executive coaching. That seems to be frustrating for some coaches and hopefully their clients do not pick it up. Executive coaches are key custodians in the success of executive coaching in the bank.

However, it is encouraging to learn that these coaches are rich in coaching skills and their qualifications are sound. In addition to that, they are humble about their competency, never stop improving themselves and do a lot of practices before each session to ensure they are fully present, meaning, even if there are instances of feeling despondent about the bank's coaching strategy, their clients may not see it. In theory, Passmore and Travis (2011) commended continuous coaches' development and argue that this progresses their coaching performance (Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011, p. 72).

When asked, all executives and sponsors were positive about their executive coaches' competencies in the bank and the executive coaches themselves, expressed confidence in their own coaching skills but some indicated, they are as good as their participants. In other words, the executive themselves, have a potential to determine the outcome of the executive coaching through their levels of commitment and what Goleman (1998) would call motivation as one of the elements of personal competence, and this motivation, he further defined as, "emotional tendencies that guides or facilitate reaching goals" (Goleman, 1998, p. 26) and a few years later, he and his colleagues argued that coaching will only succeed if the coachee has the motivation and needs no extreme individual guidance (Goleman et al., 2002, pp. 77-78).

Therefore, it is the author's view that the positive impact of executive coaching seen in the bank, will not be possible if the few derailers or concerns expressed by the executive coaches are not addressed. At the same time, the culture and the environment should be conducive for the executive coaching to continue to be a success. The, ‘no’ or ‘can’t do culture’, as underlined by one of the coaches has the potential to derail the impact of executive coaching. At the same time, if the bank’s executive coaches go on developing themselves plus the executive commitment remains, there should be no doubt that the benefits of executive coaching in literature, will continue to be evident in the bank.

5.2.4 The Impact of Executive Coaching

A number of authors like McGovern et al. (2001), Thach (2002), Paige (2002), Sherman and Freas (2004), O’Flaherty and Everson (2005), Parker-Wilkins (2006), Theeboom, Beersma, and van Vianen (2014), Bachkirova, Arthur, and Reading (2015) and Haard (2016) are convinced about the positive impact executive coaching has in the business. Though most executive coaches had limited access to observe different shift in behaviours for their clients, there was a general sense that executive coaching had a positive impact at both personal and professional or organisational levels. As CX3 put it; “We don't always, as coaches, get to see the benefit in the field, except in cases where one carries on or works with the client, with the team, over a period of time, then one can see the level of maturity that grows in the individual, the quality of their relationships, the conscious impact of their leadership” CX3

From the executives and sponsors’ points of view, there was a definite consensus that executive coaching indeed had a positive impact at personal and professional levels. What seem to be key, was the spill-over effect from the self-awareness created during the coaching process, into social skills and interpersonal competencies that benefits the bank.

For example, some executives underlined the positive impact of executive coaching at their personal lives when they were going through very difficult times in their personal lives or families. This was as a consequence of being self-aware, their acknowledgment of their surroundings and their impact of how they show up, irrespective of where they are. DE2 put it eloquently, my personal and professional lives cannot be separated. They are one. In other words, what affects an executive, personally, it can also affect them professionally and vice versa. This assertion is similar to the four-dynamics coaching concept DE4 referred to where he said, an “inner, I” affects the “outer I” which has an impact on how an “I” relates to others and which affects how an “I” execute their duties. They are all interrelated, he declared.

It was also noted that DE4 does a lot of self-coaching as result of fully understanding such concepts, as a qualified coach himself who has suspended that part-time role due to his higher executive function that he assumed a few years ago. It is an author’s opinion based on the data collected, these executives interviewed also apply or have potential to apply such a skill which can only be good for themselves and the bank. Moreover, de Haan and his colleagues’ study also found that executive coaching did improve the self-efficacy of the coachees where one of the statements were, “I can always managed to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough” (de Haan et al., 2013, p. 49).

In addition, though most of the coaches expressed challenges in connecting the dots from what they achieve in coaching sessions and the business impact, the connection was clear to the executives. From the data, the author summed up the results in graphically in Figure4.2. In other words, the executives said, their improved self-awareness has helped them deal with their blind spots, maintain good relationships and execute their strategic objectives better. The spill-over effect on that was the team started operating efficiently with harmony and improved team-work. It was at this level, where the leaders’ teams felt free to approach their leader with innovative ideas because they know their leader accepts criticism and any feedback. The quality of the teams’ end-product or output did not just improve, but became customer-centric and delivered on time.

The customer-centric product, be it tangible or a service, led to the better financial performance for the teams. This, in some instances, was achieved through project optimisation that looked at the most efficient ways of doing business which meant in some instances, improved processes, re-engineering and organisational re-design. These improved financial results have led improved and sustainable organisational performance, low executive attrition, executive promotion and good client growth which should be pleasing to shareholders as their value of their investment improves too. Therefore, there is enough evidence and conviction from the literature that executive coaching has a positive impact at both the personal and professional level of an executive.

5.3.1 Evaluating Executive Coaching Using the Kirkpatrick Evaluation Model (Levels 1-4)

In this section, the author unfolds the stakeholders' perspectives on executive coaching impact using the Kirkpatrick model. Level 1 Reaction: looking at table 4, all three variables, all participants were positive, illustrated by 1, about the coaching venue or environment used, the competencies of executive coaches and the value of their coaching discussions. This could be attributed to the good training and experience the executive coaches have, meaning, besides the executives and sponsors demonstrating positive reactions, the executive coaches themselves felt confident of their own abilities and chosen venues for coaching sessions which is similar to other findings like Grant (2013) where he implied that self-efficacy and confidence can impact the executive coaching results positively.

Level 2 Learning: Amongst the executive coaches, there was a mixed feedback on whether learning indeed took place during the coaching sessions. ECC1 in particular, could not confirm nor deny whether the coaching goals were met or not and whether he had heard of a coaching cancellation before. This somehow makes sense because executive coach and coachee discussions remain confidential and do not necessarily get shared with him as an executive coaching coordinator. The executive coaching definitions by Joo (2005), Kauffman and Coutu (2009) and Ennis (2012) to mention a few, emphasise confidentiality and the bank does take executive coaching confidentially serious. Only two executive coaches mentioned the negative experiences where they had to cancel coaching sessions. This is shown by -1 on table 4 and bars going below the x-axis in figure 4.3b. This talked to the commitment of the executive coaches and the process of selecting executive coaching candidates. If the commitment is questionable, coaching will not be a success which is synonymous with the literature as mentioned above. The author is reminded of the argument made by Dahiya and Jha (2011), that the manner in which the tool is used is key if the true benefits of any training need to be seen by sponsors.

Level 3: Behaviour: There are clear differing views between executive coaches, including ECC1, and the executives at this level. Executive coaches did not know whether the behaviour did change in the workplace or not. One can notice this with zero's in the executive coaches' columns in table 4 whereas all the executives felt positive about the executive coaching and the impact it had in the behavioural change in the workplace. This is no surprise because, the impact of executive coaching is necessarily measured in the bank and those who do it using 360 feedback, are not doing it consistently. ECC1 even made a comment that the measurement is not really an issue but the organisation's willingness to measure it is the key issue. In the author's view, the lack of clarity in the bank's coaching strategy CN2 and CX5 talked about, relates to ECC1's point. In contrast, when one looks at the argument made by Geoghegan and Dulewicz (2008) that within the IQ category, lies crafting clear vision and strategy, the bank seems to lack this in relation to executive coaching.

Level 4 Results: It was pleasing for the author to witness consistency between the bank's data and McGovern (2001) and colleagues, found related to Business Impact Tangible results. Only in ECC1's response, the author could not detect a positive correlation with all the six variables in table 4 and as a consequence, one can notice in figure 4.3d bars going down in four variables, namely, work quality, organisational strength, customer service and reduced complaints, whereas productivity and staff retention remained at zero. A context needs to be created here, ECC1 coordinates the executive coaching for the bank's Group Technology (GT) division. This division does not regard themselves as client-facing and for that reason, no correlation is seen by the ECC1, whether that view is correct or not is another story. However, in the author's opinion, the internal bank's divisions and system's stability should be enough to link GT's output with any customer, whether internal or external to the bank. Whilst there are four more participants, including one executive, who were not in total agreement with positive correlations for all top six variables, it was not surprising since McGovern et al. also did not find 100% correlations from the executives interviewed in their study.

When it came to Intangible Business Impact, CN1 and CX4 thought job satisfaction may have a negative correlation or consequences to the business because of executive coaching, meaning, there is a chance any executive coaching may lead to the resignation of some executives due to newly realised self-awareness. If one thinks about, that is not really a bad thing for the bank if an executive discovered that what they do is not really what they want to continue doing in their career and decide to move on. According to Goleman (Goleman et al., 2002), that is what self-awareness is all about after all, especially in relation to executive coaching.

The author also underlined three of the competencies the bank aims to develop for the next three years, namely collaboration, problem-solving and innovations. The author felt these also confirm Goleman's competency framework and are worth special mention in the research. In table 4, it is referred to as Specific Business Impact, whether these are seen as tangibles or intangibles to the participants, it did not matter for this study.

What is interesting to note was, DE3 felt all the three could not be improved through executive coaching. Hence, a negative correlation was recorded as graphically shown. This is in contrast with Goleman et al. (2002), and Tubbs and Schulz (2006)'s arguments that, executive coaching can help improve some, if not all, of these competencies. CX3 and CX4 also felt the same when it comes to innovation, contesting such skill could be improved using other leader development interventions, not through executive coaching. In line with such a view, this is what O'Flaherty and Everson (2005) had to say, coaching aims to create the meaning of how the executives show up and behave in their environment which contributes to their competency development, including self-correcting and self-generating.

5.3.2 Financial Benefits of Executive Coaching

The other part of the impact talked to the financially positive impact executive coaching has had in the business. There are three main cases or scenarios that came out and featured in this study from two executives (DE1 and DE2) and one sponsor, ES1 shown in table 6. Though these cases were not explored in detail, they were enough to convince the author that indeed, executive coaching has a positive financial impact in the bank.

Table 9: Level 4: Financial Benefits of Executive Coaching- Three Scenarios

<table>
<tr><th>Scenario 1: DE1</th><th>Scenario 2: DE2</th></tr>
<tr><td>Goals Achieved: the coaching with my line manager was informal> what is it like to be in the bank CEO's shoes as an objective; How to prepare Quality reports and tell the good story well; How to Quality Assure own team's work; Due to Coaching/Support from my line/Coach: so, for a year, we had a target of 1,5mil transactional sales and we came short. We came short by 142k on…. And we were short by R130mil. This is the stuff that we did good, and we still grew revenue by 7% and we contributed to the bottom line of R21mil as an example, etc, and the point is that,, when I could give feedback, I could give feedback that, though our target has grown, we reduced our sales staff, you know. Also we were busy with a project of optimising by R40mil, changing the business proposition</td><td>Let me again tell a story. I was fortunate enough to go to INSEAD in 2014 and part of that whole programme included executive coaching. That course, I understand, cost the bank somewhere like R550,000 for a month to do an Advanced Management Programme. Now that is an extraordinary amount of money. What I'm going to tell you now is part executive coaching but it's part that whole experience. When I came back, I'd been back for about a month and I think I'd been fuelled, and I think saw the world in a much bigger way, I saw it from multiple different angles, and we were battling with a particular business problem at that time. Over about a week something started developing in my mind and I started integrating all of this information and then it was at the time of a post office strike and I read an article by Alec Harvey, and again, it was must another piece of this building block and I realised there was an opportunity – where our clients were impacted by protracted national strike in the country. It has zero to nil effect on our credit risk so I realized something extraordinary was happening here. Here was an opportunity, which presented, to actually solve the business problem within the framework laws, and to use a very political argument to say because of the strike we would simply use technology to solve the business problem. After involving all relevant stakeholders and getting buy-in and sponsorship from our ME, that initiative saves the bank R16mil every year.</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Scenario 3: ES1</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Through Optimisation Project: I can give you the value of the fifteen hundred, we can get that from finance, I don't know it off the top of my head. So you can multiply fifteen hundred by … I mean I can give you just based on my knowledge of the average head count, and I'll just do the calculation quickly. So there's 1,500 and the average REM has got to be about 250,000, so here's the thing, you're looking at 375 million. Now you've got to be cautious with that because I would have done without coaching because it's easy to dictate a rule and it's easy to dictate because you're the boss, but that's what I say. The actual ROI really lies in what you managed to prevent, because I could have done this quite dictatorially and the rest of the people that were unaffected by this say, well is this really the culture that I want to work with or be part of, and people can vote with their feet and they can leave. So it is difficult to apply a rand value. I think the bigger question is not making the connection between coaching and return on investment and rand value, it's what you manage to prevent, I think is more important. The ROI can be easily measured in the one data point I gave you around the fifteen hundred heads that we've optimised. If we as a team had not invested in team coaching and individual coaching, because by the way, I've given some of my team my coach as their coach and I've sponsored them, so the benefit that I've received they've received, and I do that based on the development conversation and what their development needs are. If we had not done that for team coaching and the individual coaching, that fifteen hundred might well have been seven hundred. So that's the ROI impact for me. We might not have built the strength to make these tough decisions, to optimise the roles that we need to optimise and we might have done it without the coaching, we might have done it but we might have created devastation in the process because we wouldn't have managed it with a great self awareness of our impact on our broader nine thousand people, and so you could still achieve the fifteen hundred but you could have created mass destruction, <u>people leaving the organisation,</u> <u>[Value-</u><u>Match measures (desired v actual) sits at</u> <u>nine</u>. <u>It's been as low as six which</u>, by the way, I think is not healthy, I think you can get to a point where it's too healthy and then you're running a country club as opposed to running a business. So for me, the ROI measure is what is the opportunity cost of not investing in coaching and do we take that into account, and I don't think we would have achieved the optimisation, so the rand savings, in the manner that we did, maintaining … our Value Measure (Bar) sits at eighty percent (80%), Culture Measure (NSS) sits at 80%, it's one of the highest in the group, every touch point from a people point of view is absolutely at phenomenal records, and that's because we have a deep understanding of our leadership capability, what we need to approve, what we need to develop, as a result of the coaching investment. It's not the only thing but it's a massive contributor to the heavy lifting that we've been through in the last couple of years.</td></tr>
</table>

I.) Scenario 1 from DE1

Here, DE1 made a strong enough argument that, if he had not gone through executive coaching, he and his team, would not have managed to retrench some staff members to achieve R40mil optimisation and only miss their sales target by 9,5% ((142k/1,5mil)*100), yet still grew their revenue by 7%. In essence, what DE1's was saying, it is through executive coaching that, every team member had the courage to let go of unnecessary resources, or cut off 'fats', optimise the processes and remaining resources in order to achieve better business results. The exercise must have taken mature, self-aware and generally competent leaders and the team to digest and execute such a project.

DE1 has a matrix structure that requires a lot of cooperation and teamwork. So, an assumption is made that the financial benefits of executive coaching had other hidden or indirect cost too. For instance, DE1 has four other DIVCO colleagues, seven direct reports and seven indirect reports which means the author assumes all 19 received executive coaching. The author is aware that DE1 direct and indirect reports may not be in the same earning range as him. However, since there are other opportunity costs not factored in this formula, the annual executive coaching cost is kept the same at R30 680 per person on the assumption that they also did ten sessions each in a year. Though DE1 sounded very bold on the executive coaching benefit to the value of R40mil, the author did not ask his confidence level which could be explored in a different study.

II.) Scenario 2 from DE2

This second case was presented explicitly as a result of an executive coaching DE2 attended as part of his INSEAD Executive Development Programme to which the bank sent him, costing the bank about R550 000.00 excluding flights.. Mind you, this is not the only executive coaching he had received as underlined in the data. However, the outcome of this particular one was, DE2's executive coach from INSEAD, France, had such an impact on his life in such a way that, he started viewing the world around him differently. All of a sudden, a business idea was born on his head during the process of self-reflecting. After negotiating for sponsorship and relevant resources from his line manager, ES2, the end result was the business operational cost saving of about R16mil per annum, put conservatively. If this was in 2014, one is looking at no less than R50mil worth of savings. That is enough to buy about 166 four bedrooms houses in Soweto, pay Wits MBA studies for 166 students or pay for 332 bachelor's degrees to support the "Fees Must Fall" campaign. So, at a very basic level, DE2 argues that, if he had not been sent to that INSEAD Executive Development Programme, the bank would still be incurring the R20mil extra operational cost per annum, give or take. The author finds this an amazing benefit for the bank and in here, there was no confirmation of the confidence level from a respondent and this is also seen as outside the scope of this study.

III.) Scenario 3 from ES1

This sponsor made reference to another extraordinary case where the result of the optimisation project in another area led to the payroll savings of R375mil per annum without retrenching a single employee. How was this achieved? There were 1 500 roles that were optimised and each had a salary bill of about R250 000 per annum. In other words, the author interprets this as organisational re-design/re-engineering, streamlining certain processes, multi-skilling and improving systems' capabilities, to count but a few examples. This interpretation is also deduced from figure 4.2 that summed up the participants' responses on how impactful executive coaching was at different levels. If it was not for the benefits of executive coaching, for the ES1 and his team, the process could have led to chaos, loss of key talent, cultural barometer decline and financial damage. Looking at some tangible and intangible benefits noted by ES1, he mentioned self-awareness, receiving feedback, personal evolution that made him a better person and leader holistically competent enough to lead such a huge task with distinction and applause. The negative impact of not leading such processes correctly, could have more significant and unquantifiable reputational destruction to the bank, to say the least.

5.3 Conclusion

The impact of executive coaching in the bank has been overall positive, judging by participants' responses. Though there were instances where the results of respondents, especially executive coaches and the executives, were different, it was due rather to the lack of workplace exposure for the executive coaches than disagreements on the impact of executive coaching in the bank. It was also noted that, sometimes the executives would go to coaching hoping to solve one problem, but later to discover it was actually self-awareness that had to be created which all stakeholders eventually appreciate at the end. It should also be pleasing for the bank to have the executive sponsors who fully support the executive coaching and have witnessed its impact in their businesses too, in spite of the few potential derailers. In other words, the enablers were more powerful than the derailers, according to the findings of this study.

Therefore, one may conclude that, indeed executive coaching has a positive impact in the bank and a Kirkpatrick evaluation model can be used to measure the impact of the executive coaching in the bank. So, the findings of authors like McGovern et al. (2001), Thach (2002), Paige (2002), Sherman and Freas (2004), O'Flaherty and Everson (2005), Parker-Wilkins (2006), Theeboom et al. (2014), Bachkirova et al. (2015) and Haard (2016) are consistent with this study.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the author provides conclusion of the study. To do this, the summary of the findings for this study is provided within the South African context created at the beginning of this paper. The links with the literature reviewed are also drawn, whether they are consistent or contradicting the results of this study. Then in the following section, recommendations based of the results are given for each executive coaching stakeholder identified from the start. Lastly, the author provides suggestions for future studies based on the insights gained and questions emerged during this study within this South African bank.

6.2 Conclusions of the study

In this study, the author painted a picture on how South African leaders play a crucial role, not just for the economic development of the country but Sub-Saharan Africa as well. Such economic development cannot happen unless African economies are stable, peaceful and growing, too, meaning, it is not just an interest in South African leaders that need to be developed, but there is huge potential that other African countries can also benefit, especially seeing that year after year, South African companies are expanding their operations into other parts of Africa as well, and this bank is no exception. The author has made a strong argument that executive coaching is one of the leader development instruments that should be used for leader develop, due to its positive impact.

The author’s argument is consistent with different definitions of coaching and executive coaching, picked up in previous studies. For instance, O’Flaherty once implied that, the essential role of a coach is to provide a good learning and enabling environment in which coachees examine and discover new ways that makes them efficient in their jobs (O'Flaherty & Everson, 2005). Then Joo (2005) defined executive coaching as a process of a one-on-one relationship between a professional coach and an executive for the purpose of improving the executive displacement in behaviour through self-awareness and learning which eventually leads to the success of an executive and his firm (Joo, 2005). It has been noted that the executive coaches in this bank created such an enabling environment for the executives to learn or make executives efficient in their roles and how the executives themselves, including the sponsors, benefitted from executive coaching, on both personal and professional fronts. The business impact or benefits were not just tangibles but intangible, as well and were largely consistent with findings, for example, McGovern (2001) and his colleagues.

At the same time, it also came out from the study that the executive coaching impact and benefits goes beyond meeting executive coaching personal and/or professional goals, but emotional competence or at least self-awareness created from executive coaching is more frequent and meaningful than other types of competencies. The same emotional competence or at least self-awareness can propel the executives to revaluate their own values in line with the bank's values too. This has the potential to benefit their families, the bank and the society to which the executive is affiliated and that is a similar assertion made by Bolden (2004). In this study, it is acknowledged that leader development is a function of leadership development and Northouse (2013) defined leadership as a process where a team is influenced by their leader. One could note instances where the executives, including the sponsors, recommended the executive coaching to their teams and eventually positive impact was realised on different fronts.

The use of the Kirkpatrick evaluation model proved to be useful in this study but not without a few hindrances like in level two and three as unpacked in the study. Otherwise, the overall positive impact was noted at an executive personal and professional front which, as a consequence, also benefitted the organisation, not just with intangible and other qualitative tangibles, but also financially. As much as it is clear from the study, that measuring the financial impact for executive coaching in the bank is not easy task, the three cases married with the literature, provide a good foundation moving forward to even measure ROI. It also safe to say that the literature and data collected in the study were frequently aligned and the involvement of executive coaches had a positive effect in the bank.

Hence Grover and Furnham (2016) singled out the external coaches in their study and argued, “the executive coaches’ contributions saw them as perceived to be more credibility and therefore more effective than peer coaching in terms of work performance and satisfaction” (Grover & Furnham, 2016, p. 10). The financial benefits of executive coaching, from the cases presented by the three executives, including one executive sponsor should be encouraging for the bank. It is therefore on these bases that the author concluded, the executive coaching has a positive impact in leader development of a South African bank.

6.3 Recommendations

The stakeholders identified at the beginning of the study are business leaders, learning and development practitioners, executive coaches and coaching candidates from different firms, irrespective of the sector or size within a South African context. However, the benefits stand to spill over to other African states, especially where a local firm has footprints in other African countries too.

The executive coaching has a positive impact, all stakeholders can learn and build from this study. Some of the key learnings are, I.) Self-awareness should always be one of the coaching goals right from the start and all stakeholders should understand this; II.) Do not limit executive coaching benefits to ROI as there is more value from executive coaching than that of a simple financial nature. Hence other tangible and intangible business and personal impacts should not be undermined; III.) Personal gains from executive coaching could be ignored easily if not well documented. For instance, the study showed that leaders are humans too, and do go through personal trauma that could relate to relocation, loss of family members, divorce, to count a few, and through executive coaching, priceless personal support is also realised.

Learning and development practitioners, executive coaches and leaders of firms, irrespective of the sector or size, need to ensure that there is always a clear and well communicated executive coaching strategy in a firm. This is even better if communicated from the top management, cascading down to every employee which should minimise false myths surrounding coaching. For instance, first, they need to know what executive coaching is solving in the firm, including personal goals, and how they relate to the leader's professional performance. Second, at what point is individual or team coaching relevant, what the benefits of each are, and when to use a combination. Third, the study showed that there is value in doing 360 degree feedback to assess the impact of executive coaching, but it needs to be applied consistently by all executive coaches to fully procure its fruits.

Fourth, some level of transparency is important, but keep in mind the confidentiality of the art of coaching is needed. Otherwise, it may be difficult for different stakeholders, like peers, direct reports and line managers to assess the workplace shift in the executive's behaviour. Fifth, it has proven to be one of the key concerns from the executive coaches, not to have access into the business and observe the progress an executive has made through coaching. A classic case was recorded in the study where an executive coach was facilitating team coaching and discovered the blind spot an executive was not aware of, in connecting with receiving feedback and the negative impact it had on a team member. Later it became a coaching goal for almost a year and luckily, the outcome was positive, for the executive and for the bank.

For Learning and Development Practitioners, Leaders of Firms and Executive Coaches, there are three sets of recommendation the author proposes. First, to further the executive coaching study, it is important for the above coaching stakeholders in firms (private and public) to have willingness to measure ROI using the same formula and following similar steps to isolate other benefits not attributed to executive coaching. In that way, there should be consistency on how to measure ROI in a firm.

Second, the potential derailers should be identified and be dealt with or be minimised. At the same time, the executive coaching enablers should be magnified, for example, I.) Prepare and educate coaching candidates on what coaching is and what it is not, before recommending executive coaching, II.) The top management should play a key role to achieve this by driving the coaching strategy from the top to the bottom of the firm.

Third, there are certain enablers that should be non-negotiable for the executive coaching to be a success, e.g. I.) Clear executive coaching goals that include emotional competence, or at least self-awareness; II.) The credibility and competencies of the executive coaches should be informed by their corporate experience, their education, executive coaching track records, to count a few; III.) Clearer firm's coaching strategy that encourages executives' commitment to the coaching process. This would eliminate instances where executive coaches will have to cancel the coaching sessions due to 'un-coachable candidates' who lack commitment.

6.4 Suggestions for further research

There are different coaching models or schools of thoughts used in the bank and the impact of each should be an interesting topic to interrogate. This is evident from the different approaches each executive coach normally practices, though it is acknowledged that there is always going to be the personal touch in each coaching model, whether a coach graduated from Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS), Wits, Stellenbosch or UCT.

The process of matching executive coaches with executives coaching candidates, was not given enough attention in this study due to time constraints and chosen direction for the study. The author fully acknowledged this and suggests a study that will give more attention to it could provide informative results for executive coaching, especially in the South African context.

The future studies should also take more into account what executive coaching can or cannot do. For instance, it should be interesting to investigate instances where executive coaching has failed and the reasons for such failures. For instance, the two examples quoted in this study where executive coaching had to be cancelled provided an interesting trigger to interrogate further. The author was also reminded of an instance where one executive was coaching a junior employee, but later discovered the employee was more interested in impressing his senior leader than learning from the coaching process. There could be more instances that need investigation.

To future executive coaching researchers, the advantages and disadvantages of a modified Kirkpatrick evaluation model should be acknowledged and mitigated. For instance, Level two and three had a few challenges that this study related to, coaching confidentiality involved and the bank’s executive coaching strategy that does not allow a coach to do on-the-job observation, which makes the findings a bit limited to assess objectively. Therefore, the author recommends involving more stakeholders surrounding the executive coaching candidate.

Going forward, it would be interesting to study the results of research that combines quantitative and qualitative in assessing the impact of executive coaching in South African firms and this is similar to the argument made by Bryman (2004). As much as qualitative research advantages are acknowledged, quantitative could also provide a different lenses and insight for similar studies in the future. For instance, this qualitative study provided the author priceless engagement with all participants through interviews, using less rigid semi-structured questionnaire. However, on the other hand, quantitative could have provided more scientific insight on the correlations between McGovern’s business impact chosen top six variables, plus bank specific competencies like collaboration, problem-solving and innovations, and executive coaching outcomes. Moreover, through a quantitative research method where a survey is used, more respondents could have been studied since it proved to be difficult to secure 45mins interviews with the executives, in the limited timeframe of the study. So, the use of smart phones, tablets, laptops and so on, could have provided more flexibility on when to respond and somehow mitigated the confidentiality clause involved on executive coaching in the bank.

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APPENDIX A

Actual Research Instrument

Executive Coaching Research Questionnaire/Instrument

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Approach

- First, instead of using a pen, I will use this recording device. This will allow us to have good flow for our discussion and ensure that I don't miss any important points along the way.
- The recording will also be key when analysing the data and improve the validity and quality of the research report at the end.
- The information captured here will be confidential and will not be used for any other purpose other than, for this research.

So, please allow me to start recording as we officially start our interview?

The Main Problem Statement:

The aim of this research is to investigate and evaluate the impact of executive coaching in developing leaders of a South African bank using Kirkpatrick evaluation model.

The Research Question:

1) What is the perceived executive coaching impacts in leader development of a South African Bank?

Introduction:

As mentioned on and email and/or telephone before, my name is Sandile Phungula. I am a final year MBA student at WBS. As part of the qualification criteria, we all had to identify business related problems of our choice, and I chose the topic: ***Executive coaching impact on leader development in a South African bank***.

Does executive coaching has positive impacts in leadership development of a South African Bank?

There are two main reasons why I chose this topic and these are:

- It is related to the job I do in the bank, as the Learning & Development Manager and particularly interested in adding more value in leader development across the bank. One way to do that, is to fully understand and develop my competency in the leader development subject matter. I believe, executive coaching is and will continue to play an important role in the business.

- Secondly, we all know that the bank has been investing millions of Rand in skills development of it's employees for years now. To attest to this, the bank has won several awards as the most transformed bank or company in SA from the Bank SETA in recent years. However, little, if any, has been done to investigate the financial benefits for these interventions. The executive coaching, as a leader development tool, is one example. I hope this results of this study will work as a good base to measure other learning interventions too moving forward.

Therefore, I would really appreciate your time for this interview and I have no doubt it will be a good learning experience, especially for myself. So, I have a couple of question I will be asking and should take us +-35mins as mentioned before.

Section A

Question	Response
1. Can please confirm your position in the bank and what that entails?	
2. What is the core function of the…..?	
3. How long have you been working for the bank? And before that?	
4. Can you please give me the structure of your business and your team?	
5. When did you start part-taking in executive coaching?	

Section B

RQ: Does executive coaching has positive impacts in leader's development of a South African Bank?

Question	Response
6. What would you say are the reasons or goals for your executive coaching?	The author will note these goals down and will unpack in Section C below
7. Please tell me about your experience in executive coaching?	
8. What would you say have been the major impacts of executive coaching, both professionally and personally?	
9. What would you say are the competencies that you have improved due to executive coaching?	The author will note these competencies down and will unpack in Section C below

Section C

The application of Kirkpatrick evaluation model to measure the executive coaching impact.

Question	Response
10. **Level 1: Reaction:** participant's reaction after the executive coaching session: a) The environment in which the coaching took place? Where was it?	

b) The competence (knowledge; skills and ability) of your coach? c) The content of your coaching sessions? d) The value of the discussion/content? What would you change or do differently in the future to improve in this section? Why is that? How would you improve it?	
11. **Level 2: Learning:** to assess whether the learning objectives for the executive coaching were met: a) Objective/Goal 1 b) Objective/Goal 2 c) Objective/Goal 3 d) Objective/Goal "xyz" • What would you change or do differently in the future to improve in this section? • Why is that? • How would you improve it? Any improvement in this section that you won't attribute it to executive coaching?	These are objectives/Goals mentioned in Section A above
12. **Level 3: Behaviour:** to assess whether job performance changes or improved after executive coaching a) Competency/Goal 1 b) Competency/Goal 2 c) Competency/Goal 3 d) Competency/Goal "xyz" • What would you change or do differently in the future to improve in this section? • Why is that? • How would you improve it? Any improvement in this section that you won't attribute it to executive coaching?	These are competencies mentioned in Section A above
13. **Level 4: Results (Tangibles Business Impact):** To assess whether these tangible business impact based on literature/McGovern (2001) were also realised in this bank or not: a) Productivity b) Work Quality c) Organisational Strength d) Customer Service e) Reduced Complains f) Staff Retention g) Or any other…??	

• What would you change or do differently in the future to improve in this section? • Why is that? • How would you improve it? Any improvement in this section that you won't attribute it to executive coaching?	
14. **Level 4: Results (Intangibles Business Impact):** To assess whether these tangible business impact based on literature/McGovern (2001) were also realised in this bank or not: a) Direct report relationships b) Stakeholder relationship c) Teamwork relationships d) Peers relationships e) Job satisfaction (yours and your team combined) f) Reduced Conflicts g) Or any other…?? • What would you change or do differently in the future to improve in this section? • Why is that? • How would you improve it? Any improvement in this section that you won't attribute it to executive coaching?	

Interview Closure:

This is the end of our interview. Again, thank very much for sharing such an insightful information and for you time. I really learnt a lot from you. Do you, perhaps have any question/s; comments or anything to say?

From here, I will go transcribe, do the analyses and compile the report but this might take couple of week. I am happy to share the final findings with you if you don't mind.